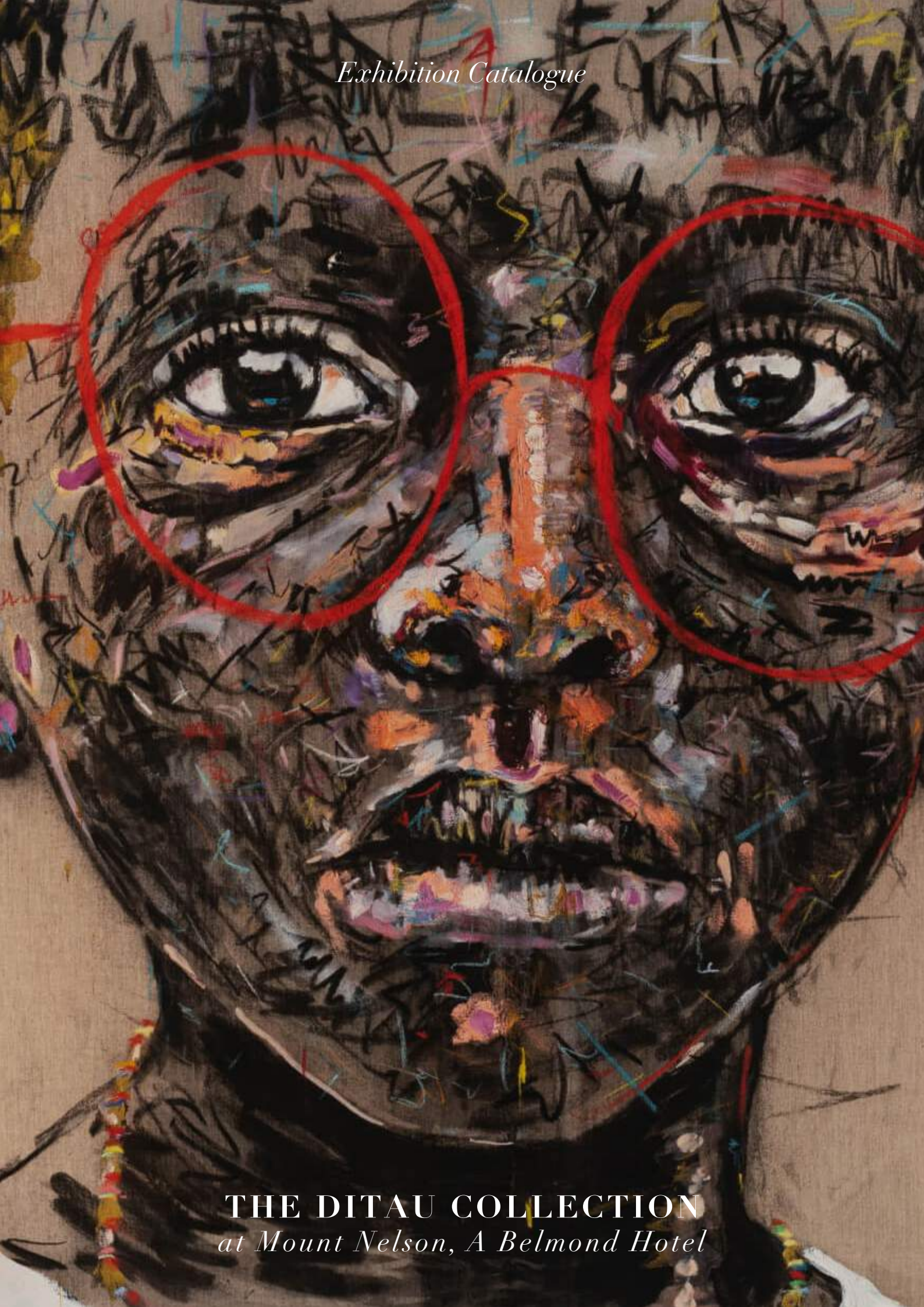


*Exhibition Catalogue*



**THE DITAU COLLECTION**  
*at Mount Nelson, A Belmond Hotel*

## **EXHIBITION**

Title of the exhibition: Vision of a Limitless Future

The title of the exhibition is drawn from the title of the Nelson Makamo artwork in the reception area. Nelson Makamo's painting, which the print in reception is based on, was used as the cover for TIME's 2019 Optimists issue. It was a seminal moment in Makamo's career and provided a platform to bring his work to a global audience.

The choice of this title is underpinned by its importance as a recurring motif among the 11 other artists in the exhibition. These artists envision and construct a boundless future for themselves through their artistic practice. This concept of unbounded potentiality is also an important thread that runs through The Ditau Collection. The overarching mission of the collection is to cultivate an enduring cultural legacy, achieved by supporting and championing the invaluable artistic voices that emerge from Africa and its diaspora.

## **THE DITAU COLLECTION**

The Ditau Collection is a family collection based in Cape Town, South Africa. The collection started in 2007 and focuses on artists from across the African continent and its diaspora. It aims to share the collection with the public in a manner that offers educational opportunities, captivates new audiences, and ignites a passion for art in future generations.

The collection wants to build an enduring cultural legacy, by supporting and championing the invaluable artistic voices that emerge from Africa and its diaspora. It places a special emphasis on the celebration of black joy and the telling of stories that trace the family's journey from its roots to its present, and ultimately, where the future leads.

The collection believes in the distinctive power of African art to consistently challenge conventional notions of what African art is expected to be. Africa, with its vast diversity and inherent contradictions, finds its reflection in the multifaceted expressions of its art.

Through endeavours to share the collection, The Ditau Collection has artworks that sit in museums, public collections and in the offices of start-ups across Africa. It hopes that the artworks kindle the spirits of the viewers, inspiring them to forge a brighter and more promising future for Africa.

## **ARTISTS IN THE EXHIBITION**

- (1) Nelson Makamo, South Africa
- (2) Themba Sibeko, South Africa
- (3) Sungi Mlengeya, Tanzania
- (4) Zanele Montle, South Africa
- (5) Muofhe Manavhela, South Africa
- (6) Zandile Tshabalala, South Africa
- (7) Toyin Ojih Odutola, Nigeria
- (8) Banele Khoza, Eswatini
- (9) Wonder Buhle, South Africa
- (10) Athi-Patra Ruga, South Africa
- (11) Deborah Segun, Nigeria
- (12) Cinthia Sifa Mulanga, Democratic Republic of Congo



**NELSON MAKAMO**

Visions of a Limitless Future, 2020  
Digital print on fine art rag  
104 x 104 cm

Nelson Makamo is an artist who is gifted with an astounding artistic aptitude in drawing and painting, Makamo honed his craft at Artist Proof Studios in Johannesburg, where he studied printmaking for 3 years.

Nelson's work is strongly influenced by the candid innocence of children, particularly those in rural South Africa. He believes that they embody the peace and harmony that we all strive for in life. For him, the joy and simplicity in which children perceive life and human interactions still reside in every one of us. Thus, he hopes to help the viewer relive these forgotten notions.



**THEMBA SIBEKO**

Kholwafuthi, K'yenzeka, 2022  
Oil and acrylic on canvass  
91.4 x 91.4 cm

Themba Sibeko is a self-taught artist who studied Analytical chemistry at the University of Johannesburg. Inspired by people around him, his work is a contemplative study of the unknown possibilities of walking into new scenarios, situations, relationships and territories in people's lives.

The removal of facial features signifies the need for recognition, approval and a sense of belonging. His work also questions authentic human interactions by removing all the stigmas attached to human connections, reminding everyone that we are humans first.



**THEMBA SIBEKO**

Ke Tshabadipuotshabatho, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
75 x 90 cm

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**THEMBA SIBEKO**

Champions are made in obscurity, 2022  
Acrylic on canvas  
61 x 76.5 cm

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**SUNGI MLENGEYA**

Constant II, 2019  
Acrylic on canvas  
150 x 140 cm

Sungi Mlengeya is a self-taught artist who works primarily in the acrylic medium on canvas creating paintings that are free, minimalist and with a curious use of negative space. Most of the works consist of dark figures in minimal shades of black and brown against perfectly white backgrounds, a commemoration of the women who surround her.

She hopes to show her subjects and audience the freedom and power they possess, by capturing them in an indomitable light and suspending them in infinite spaces filled with possibilities.



## ZANELE MONTLE

Siwum'deni I, II & III, 2020  
Acrylic on canvas  
25.5 x 25.5 cm (x 3)

Zanele Montle's work focuses on the anxieties of migrating to the city, especially as someone who has grown up in Kwa Zulu Natal. She explores aspects of adapting to a new space and nurturing a home away from home. Her subject matter is derived from old photographs of her family, particularly her mother and siblings.

She relies on the use of bright backgrounds to make the figures in her work more prominent. Each title of her work is in Zulu, as a way of keeping in touch with her Zulu upbringing, as well as evoking a feeling of nostalgia and community.





## ZANELE MONTLE

Siwum'deni IV, IX & V, 2020  
Acrylic on canvas  
25.5 x 25.5 cm (x 3)

Zanele Montle's work focuses on the anxieties of migrating to the city, especially as someone who has grown up in Kwa Zulu Natal. She explores aspects of adapting to a new space and nurturing a home away from home. Her subject matter is derived from old photographs of her family, particularly her mother and siblings.

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**MUOFHE MANAVHELA**

Rest study, 2020  
Oil on canvas  
20 x 26 cm

Muofhe Manavhela is a multi-disciplinary artist based in Johannesburg. Her work explores themes surrounding the black womanhood experience and captures the essence of such. Her vibrant work communicates the experience of a young black woman navigating the modern South African landscape.

Muofhe has taken her place as a social commentator by using her art to explore the positioning of Black women in the landscape of a society that underestimates them. Her work looks to deconstruct current and harmful narratives and reconstruct our perceptions of Black femmes and the space of Black womanhood.



**MUOFHE MANAVHELA**

Sitting real pretty, 2022

Oil on canvas

26 x 20 cm

Muofhe Manavhela is a multi-disciplinary artist based in Johannesburg. Her work explores themes surrounding the black womanhood experience and captures the essence of such. Her vibrant work communicates the experience of a young black woman navigating the modern South African landscape.

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**MUOFHE MANAVHELA**

Sister party study, 2020  
Oil on canvas  
28 x 30 cm

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**ZANDILE TSHABALALA**

The Flute Player, 2019  
Oil on canvas  
159 x 240.5 cm

Zandile Tshabalala is interested in topics of representation particularly the representation of black women in historical paintings. The artist noticed a pattern whereby the black woman in paintings was usually placed in the background and starts to disappear almost as if she is not present or is placed in compromising situations that reinforce the idea that the black woman is inferior and should be marginalized.

The artist felt a strong need to challenge these ideas and give back the black woman's voice in her paintings by placing the black female figure in a powerful position that allows her to be in control of her own body and the gaze that is exchanged between her and the viewer.



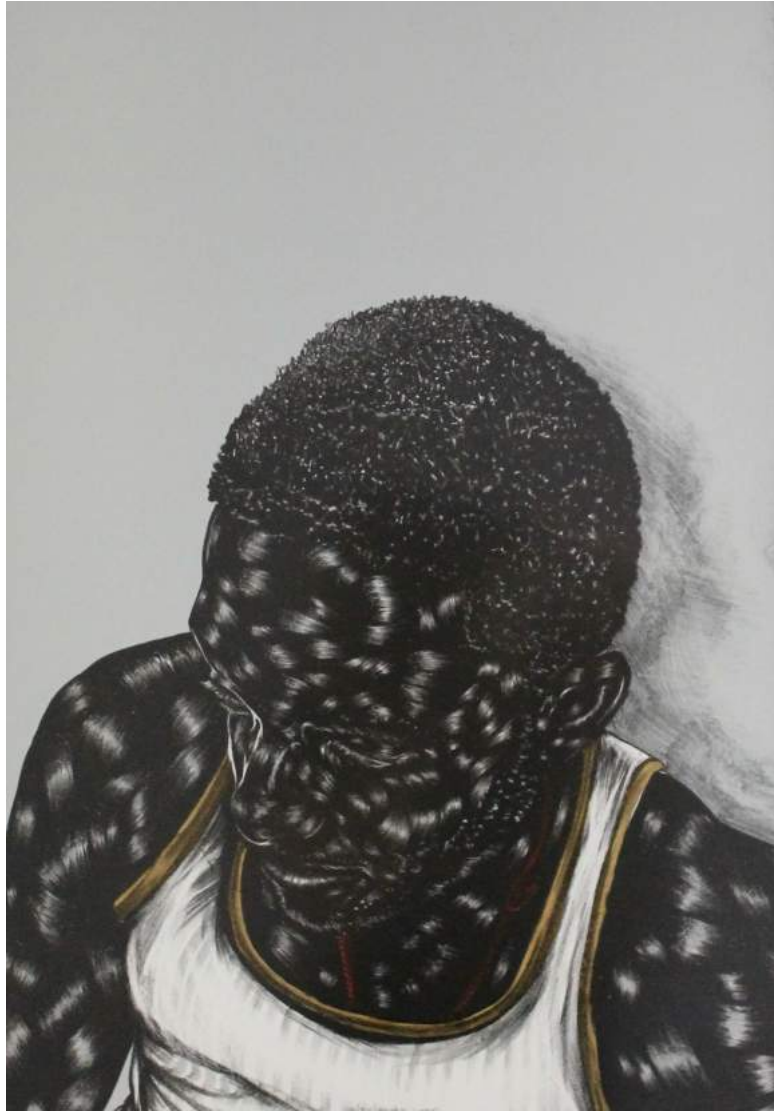
**ZANDILE TSHABALALA**

Lady in fur coat II, 2020  
Acrylic on canvas  
50 x 40 cm

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**TOYIN OJIH ODUTOLA**

Birmingham (Left), 2014  
Four-color lithograph with gold leaf on satin  
61 x 42 cm

Toyin Ojih Odutola is best known for her multimedia drawings and works on paper, which explore the malleability of identity and the possibilities in visual storytelling. Interested in the topography of skin, Ojih Odutola has a distinctive style of mark-making using only basic drawing materials, such as ballpoint pens, pencils, pastels and charcoal. This signature technique involves building up layers on the page, through blending and shading with the highest level of detail, creating compositions that reinvent and reinterpret the traditions of portraiture.



**BANELE KHOZA**

You've Been on my Mind, 2021  
Acrylic on canvas  
61 x 43 cm

Using a combination of reduction, romance, and irony, Banele Khoza's work addresses questions of identity, masculinity and of a young generation of creatives living and working in South Africa. Experimental and adventurous, Khoza shapes the terms and conditions of a public sense of society and community.

Romantic and dreamlike in quality, Khoza's abstract figurative works challenge the idea of gender norms; investigating identity and masculinity. He frequently subverts the traditional idea of the use of pink and blue as associated with females and males, respectively.



**WONDER BUHLE MBAMBO**

Bazokwenzani?, 2022  
Oil on canvas  
50 x 50 cm

Wonder Buhle's portraits depict spiritually charged visions of Black bodies in restful and contemplative poses, rendered in charcoal and acrylic against flat planes of colour. His signature motif is a gold flower-shaped pattern, which he overlays on top of his figures' skin.

Poetic and personal, this recurring symbol references a native flower used for ancestral practices in his rural South African village and serves as a reminder of the artist's strong ties to his community.

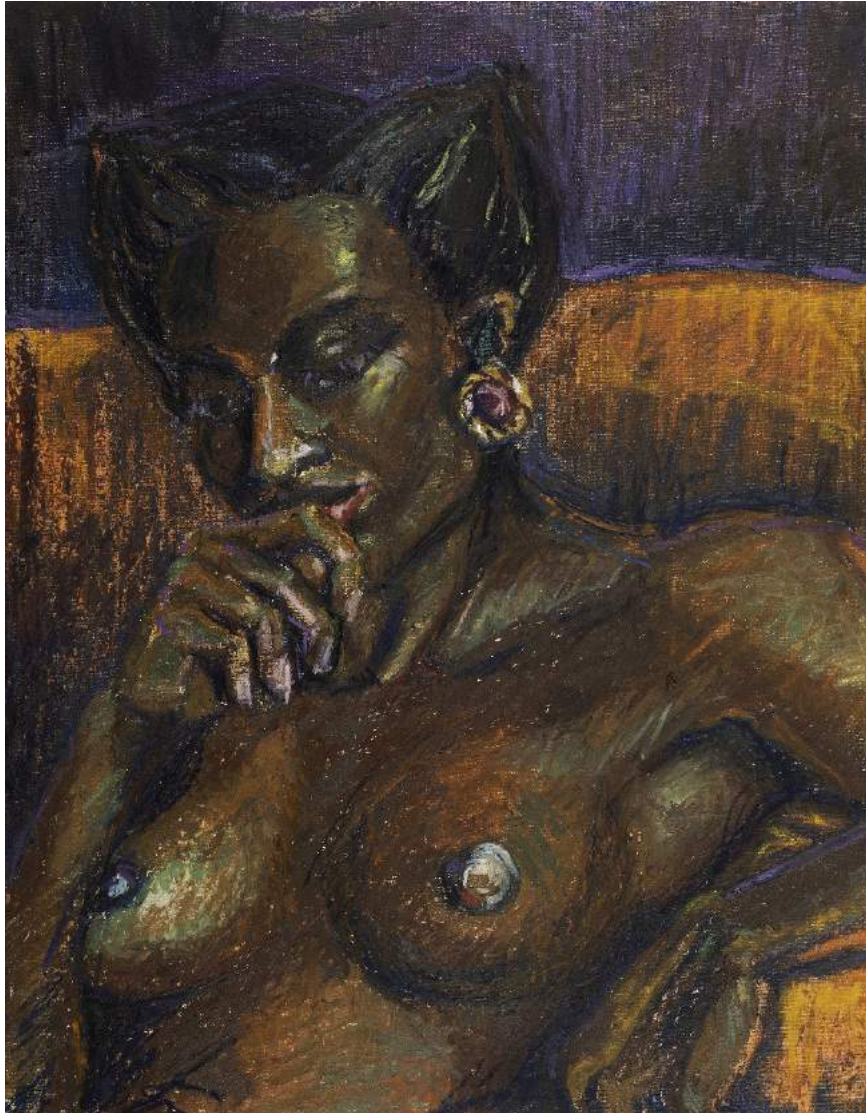


**MUOFHE MANAVHELA**

Platonic Dance, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
61 x 43 cm

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Muofhe has taken her place as a social commentator by using her art to explore the positioning of Black women in the landscape of a society that underestimates them. Her work looks to deconstruct current and harmful narratives and reconstruct our perceptions of Black femmes and the space of Black womanhood.



**ATHI-PATRA RUGA**

The Gift from Memnus...., 2020  
Oil Sticks and Pastels on Canvas Board  
50.5 x 30 cm

Athi-Patra Ruga is one of the few artists working in South Africa today whose work has adopted the trope of myth as a contemporary response to the post-apartheid era. Ruga creates alternative identities and uses these avatars as a way to parody and critique the existing political and social status quo.

Ruga's artistic approach of creating myths and alternate realities is in some way an attempt to view the traumas of the last 200 years of colonial history from a place of detachment – at a farsighted distance where wounds can be contemplated outside of personalized grief and subjective defensiveness. The philosophical allure and allegorical value of utopia have been central to Ruga's practice.



**THEMBA SIBEKO**

Behind the Red Curtain, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
122 x 91.5 cm

Themba Sibeko is a self-taught artist who studied Analytical chemistry at the University of Johannesburg. Inspired by people around him, his work is a contemplative study of the unknown possibilities of walking into new scenarios, situations, relationships and territories in people's lives.

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**THEMBA SIBEKO**

Fly like a butterfly, sting like a bee, 2023  
Acrylic on canvas  
102 x 76.5 cm

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The removal of facial features signifies the need for recognition, approval and a sense of belonging. His work also questions authentic human interactions by removing all the stigmas attached to human connections, reminding everyone that we are humans first.



**DEBORAH SEGUN**

Relaxation is Key, 2020  
Acrylic on Canvas  
150 x 120 cm

Deborah Segun adopts a deconstructed, reductive, and almost Cubist approach to her paintings, incorporating fragmented and exaggerated shapes, faces, and forms that delineate the female figure in contemplation or repose. Segun's work exaggerates the feminine silhouette and is perhaps a commentary on the representation of women in an art historical context.

Segun's work, however, is slightly more internalized. There is an element of truth that many artists need to self-reflect before turning the lens outward. And while inspired by her personal experience, and her awareness of her mental and physical sense of self, Segun's choice to focus on the individual becomes a reference point for a much larger schematic: transitions and phases in her life, including self-hate to self-acceptance, are undoubtedly issues that many women – African and otherwise – have experienced.





## CINTHIA SIFA MULANGA

Before the Oasis III, 2022

Acrylic paint, charcoal and collage on canvas  
61 x 76 cm

Cinthia Sifa Mulanga challenges the representation of Black women by investigating the individual's relationship with space. Space works on multiple levels in Mulanga's artworks: On the one hand, it represents the space itself; on the other, it is symbolic as an extension of the individual. The space embodies the human, morphing into an independent protagonist.

As is the case with different facets of the human soul, these multi-spaces exist in one moment, inviting one to reflect and interact with them when they are ready. It is in these liminal moments that Mulanga highlights the complexities of a Black woman's identity in today's world.