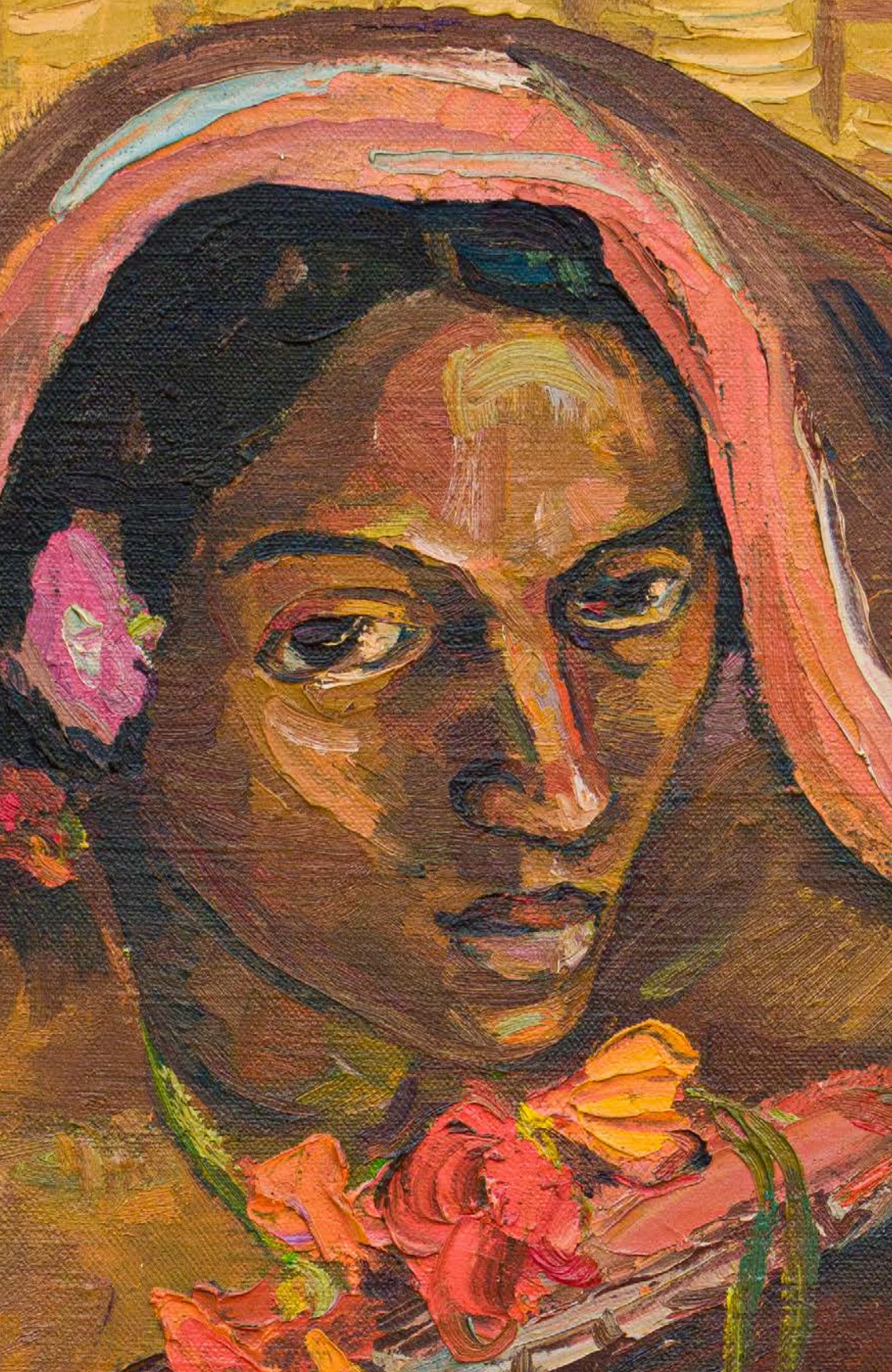


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Alexis Preller

SOUTH AFRICAN 1911–1975

Boy with a Crocodile

signed and dated '64/5; inscribed with the title, date
and medium on a label adhered to the reverse

oil on canvas

135,5 by 125,5 cm



PROVENANCE

Strauss & Co, Cape Town, 11 October 2021, lot 360.

EXHIBITED

Lidchi Gallery, Johannesburg, *Alexis Preller*, 20 October to 8 November 1965, cat. no. 19.

Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria, *Alexis Preller Retrospective*, 1972, cat. no. 116,
with the title *Boy on a Crocodile*.

Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg, *Alexis Preller: Africa, The Sun and Shadows*,
13 October to 5 December 2009.

Norval Foundation, Cape Town, *Alexis Preller: Mythical Lexicon*,
30 November 2023 to 17 November 2024.

LITERATURE

Esmé Berman and Karel Nel (2009) *Africa, the Sun and Shadows*, Johannesburg:
Shelf Publishing, illustrated on pages 244 and 245.

Esmé Berman and Karel Nel (2009) *Collected Images*, Johannesburg: Shelf Publishing,
illustrated on pages 212 to 215.

Die Burger, *Kuns*, 4 January 2010, illustrated.



Conceived on a mural-like scale, *Boy with a Crocodile* is a dazzling and heart-stopping mix of symbol, blazing colour and surprising pattern. Executed in the mid-1960s during a period of mature experimentation, particularly along purely abstract lines, the painting hints at the wide range of Preller's visual sources, his unique interpretations of African mythologies, and his irrepressible, richly-coloured imagination. The painting was first exhibited at the Lidchi Gallery in Johannesburg in the summer of 1965, alongside other landmark works such as *In the Beginning*, *Temple of the Sun*, *Solomon and the Queen of Sheba I*, *The Gold Temple*, *Royal Stele* and the 1965 version of *Primavera* (fig 1).

The composition is dominated by a heraldic figure – a stylised and virile princeling of sorts – wooden in body, still, with a mango-shaped head shown in profile, pouting lips, and an elaborately patterned headpiece. Clutching a staff, a highborn accessory, and with a sash across his chest, the boy stands on a carved crocodile. The reptile, a sacred and totemic animal in so many southern African cultures, is here simplified in form, toothless, and with scales reduced to silvery blue triangles and crescents. Seemingly enthroned, the boy is surrounded by a hard-edged expanse of electric orange, and framed by flat, concentric discs. These asymmetrical and *mandorla*-like devices cause wonderful, decorative confusion: they enclose sections of lavender and mauve overpainted with flashes of blue and purple.



Figure 1: *Primavera*, 1965 illustrated in Esmé Berman and Karel Nel (2009) *Africa, the Sun and Shadows*, Johannesburg: Shelf Publishing, page 215.

Boy with a Crocodile was first acquired by Dr Cyril Ross of Pretoria. Writing about the painting to its new owner in April 1968, Preller made it clear that the work was part of his evolving visual language: 'the various motifs and decorative elements derive from much of my earlier work, the origin of which is always Africa'. Indeed, the painting brings to mind so many of the artist's celebrated pictures, his iconic symbols, ornamental flourishes, cultural quotations and artistic allusions. The very subject of the painting, for instance, the boy himself, is the visual descendent of the *Woman with a Lyre* (1956), while the figure's tabletop shoulders owe something to the sculpture of the Dogon and Luba cultures that inspired *Garden of Eden* (1954) and *In the Beginning* (1962). The boy's circular 'fish-eye', moreover, can be traced back to *Fetish Enthralled* (1945), via such diverse paintings as *The Gateway* (1949) and *Mozartian Fish* (1952). Other decorative details, although strikingly reworked, conjure previous sources: the tight bracelets on the arms and ankles make reference to the artist's enchanting Mapogga series, while the scything, horn-shaped forms appearing at the figure's sides recall the bold patterning on the Swazi cloths Preller started collecting as far back as 1937.

Interestingly, a variation of *Boy with a Crocodile* (fig 2), completed in 1964 in shades of brown, mustard, olive and blue, was shown that year on the Exhibition of International Art at the New York World Fair. The painting, along with examples by Bettie Cilliers-Barnard and Jean Welz, disappeared shortly thereafter, only to re-surface in Cape Town in 2007. Another is *Young King* (fig 3), sold by Strauss & Co, is created in deep blues, vibrant golden yellows, and accented with red and pink tones. This version has a more painterly style compared to the other two renditions. The artwork features a cartouche, symbolising pharaonic presence. Together, these works represent a period where Preller searched for imagery that spoke to the significance, power and beauty of art conventions which had evolved in Africa over centuries.



Figure 2: *Boy with a Crocodile*, 1964 illustrated in Esmé Berman and Karel Nel (2009) *Africa, the Sun and Shadows*, Johannesburg: Shelf Publishing, page 245.



Figure 3: *Young King*, 1964, Strauss & Co, Cape Town, 19 March 2025, lot 34, Sold 4 346 250.





Deborah Bell

SOUTH AFRICAN 1957–

Sentinel VII

signed, dated 2004 and numbered 5/5

bronze

height: 248,5cm; width: 40cm; depth: 40cm

LITERATURE

David Krut Publishing (2004) Deborah Bell, Johannesburg: David Krut,
Taxi-Art Book 010, another cast illustrated in colour on page 78.



In the 2004 publication on the artist, Deborah Bell discusses the initial clay edition that the present lot in bronze derives: 'These figures were a leap in faith. It was a time in my life when I found myself between places, with no home, no kiln, nor a studio to work in. When the brick manufacturer, Corobrik, offered us their facilities to experiment on a large scale for the Earthworks/Claybodies show in 2003, it resolved the practicalities of where and how I could make the sculptures. I assumed that I would continue to work with the same processes as in the Unearthed figures. However, a tour of the production line of brick manufacture showed me raw clay in a different form: it was not the soft malleable 'stuff' that I had always coiled and modelled with, but solid slabs more reminiscent of stone.

The clay at this point, though 'green', had a dry, hard quality to it, which suggested that it be carved, a technique I was not familiar with. Working with carving and this new columnar form made me remember quite different traditions and conventions. My hands would recreate memories of gothic imagery, guardian doorposts, carved verandah posts, wooden staffs, reliquary statues and many others.

I was particularly interested in their architectural scale and quality since I was in the process of building a new house and was caught up in the world of architects and builders. This whole project, including working in a brick factory whilst I was literally building a new life with bricks and mortar, had poetic resonance for me.

In the process of working, these columnar figures became guardians or sentinels. It came to me that if on a subatomic level, everything exists as a sea of energy, then who are the observers who hold this material world in focus? I liked the idea of gods or angels who hold this world in place, and protect us, so that we can experience grand adventures.'

*'I chose to make nine
Sentinels, five in terracotta
brick clay, and four in white.
Nine is one of the mystical
numbers. It is the trinity of
trinities, a complete image of
the three worlds: Underworld,
Heaven, Earth, Mind, Body,
Spirit, Father, Son and Holy
Spirit. The nine Sentinels are
our protectors, symbolising
fortitude, constancy and
eternal stability.'*¹

– Deborah Bell

1. David Krut Publishing (2004) *Deborah Bell*, Johannesburg:
David Krut, Taxi-Art Book 010, another example of the
edition illustrated on page 77







Edoardo Villa

SOUTH AFRICAN 1915–2011

Thrust II

signed and dated 1983
painted steel

height: 250cm including base; length: 440cm

LITERATURE

Karel Nel, Elizabeth Burroughs and Amalie von Maltitz (eds) (2005).
Villa at 90, Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball with Shelf Publishing,
illustrated in colour on pages 88 and 89.

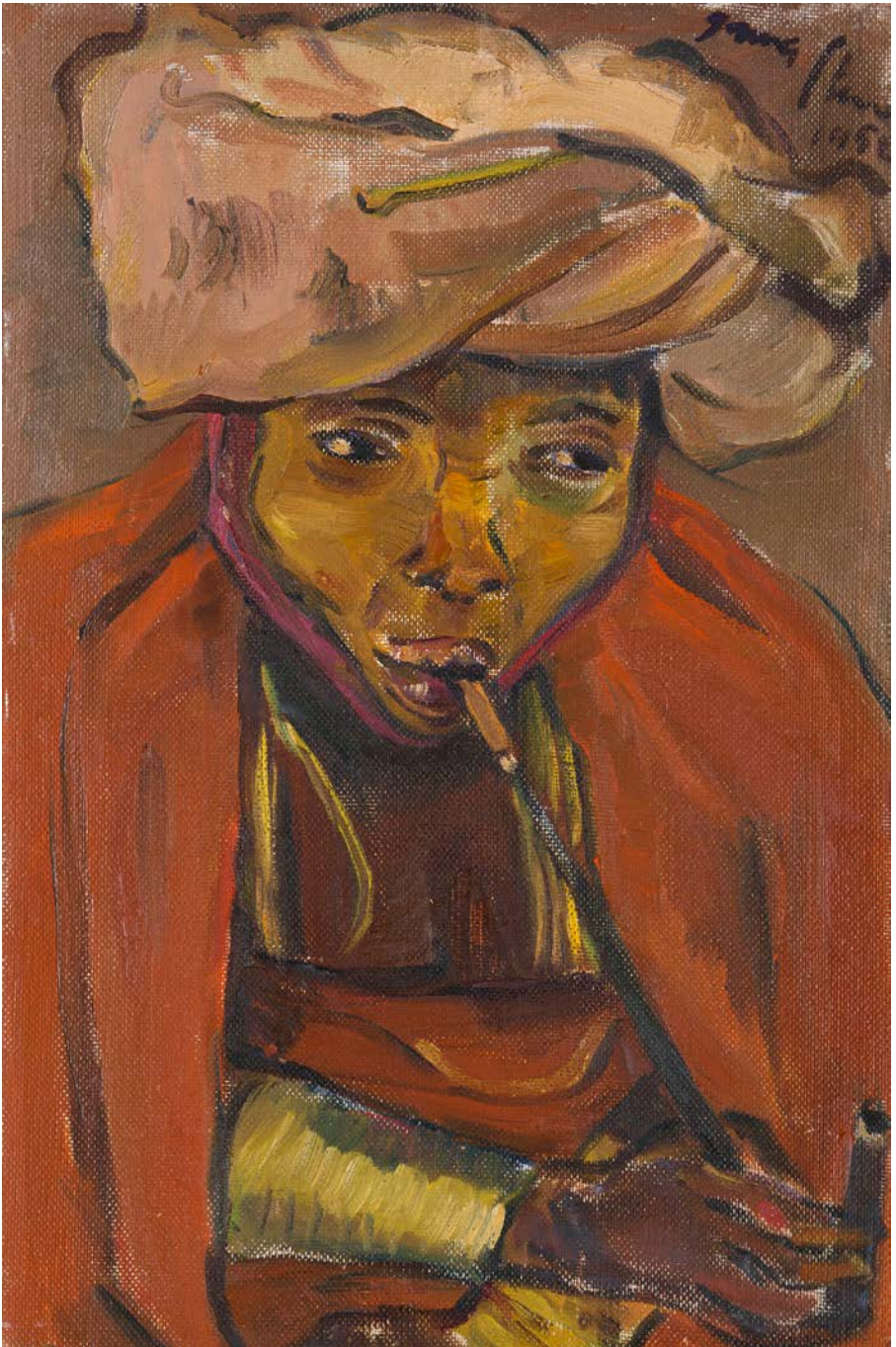


In the mid-1980s, Edoardo Villa evolved the relationship between pipes and metal sheets into some of the most open, large-scale, space-related works he ever made.

In this outstanding series of works titled, *Thrust* (also sometimes referred to as *War Machines*) the human element of his earlier works, *Prisoners and Cages* is

replaced by expansive compositions dominated by thick pipes that mimic the aggression of tanks, cannons and rocket launchers – the tools of war. These impressive but threatening works are intended to alert the viewer to the misplaced ingenuity in the making and use of sophisticated weapons of war.





Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Pondo Vrou met Pyp (Pondo Woman with Pipe)

signed and dated 1952; inscribed with the date and title on the reverse
oil on board

59,5 by 39,5cm excluding frame; 76 by 55 by 6cm including frame

PROVENANCE

Gainsborough Galleries, Johannesburg.

Dr AEF Bosman and thence by descent to his daughter Liza Bosman Greef, 1998.

Dr Matthys Johannes Strydom Family Collection



This tightly cropped portrait depicts an AmaMpondo woman drawing smoke from a traditional long-stemmed pipe, a privilege of motherhood. The portrait was most likely produced after Stern's travels to the Transkei, now Eastern Cape, in 1952. Formerly known as Pondoland, Stern made numerous research trips to this region from the 1920s onwards. In a 1953 interview she spoke of changes, both in herself and the peoples she had recently encountered. 'The old ease of communication had gone,' remarked Stern.¹ Portraits of indigenes from this later period were well received when they were first exhibited. 'They are a long way from her sometimes inchoate and tumultuous creations which bear so strongly the imprint of the Brücke period in German painting,' noted a Sunday Times critic of similar works.² This portrait was acquired in the late 1950s from the Gainsborough Galleries in Johannesburg. The purchaser, AEF Bosman, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Heidelberg, was a neighbour of Matthys Strydom. The dominee agreed terms to pay it off piecemeal with Stern. The portrait was proudly displayed in the parsonage's lounge, much to the consternation of some of the churchman's more conservative congregants. Strydom acquired the work years later from the dominee's daughter. He too agreed instalment terms with the seller.

1. Marion Arnold (1995) *Irma Stern: A Feast for the Eye*. Cape Town: Fernwood Press, page 75.

2. BL (1952) 'Irma Stern Explores New Fields', *Sunday Times*, 23 January.





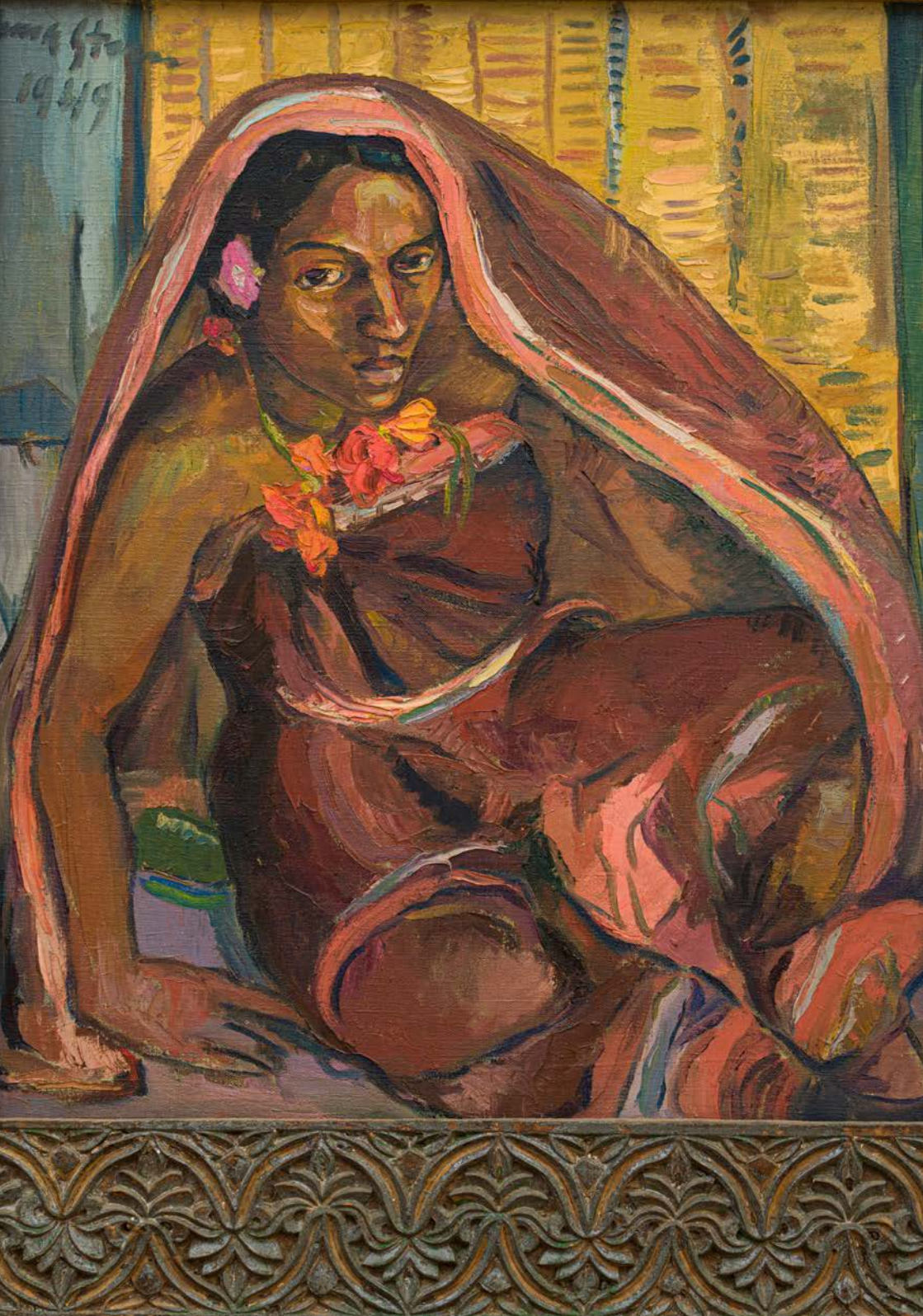
Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Indian Girl, Zanzibar

signed and dated 1949; inscribed with the artist's name, the title, the date, medium and catalogue number 57 on a Grosvenor Gallery label adhered to the reverse; inscribed with the artist's name on an Irma Stern memorial exhibition label for Grosvenor Gallery adhered to the reverse; inscribed with the artist's name, the title 'Indian-meisie, Zanzibar' and the title 'Indian Girl', the date and catalogue number 37 on a Pretoria Art Museum label adhered to the reverse; inscribed with the title 'Indian Girl, Zanzibar', the date, medium and numbered 37 on an Homage to Irma Stern Exhibition label for Rembrandt Art Centre adhered to the reverse

96,5 by 86,5 cm excluding frame
121 by 98,5 by 5 cm including frame
oil on canvas with Zanzibari frame



PROVENANCE

Stephan Welz & Co in Association with Sotheby's, Johannesburg, 30 August 1994, lot 330.

EXHIBITED

Grosvenor Gallery, London, Irma Stern Memorial Exhibition, 14 March to 15 April 1967.
Rembrandt Art Centre and Pretoria Art Museum, Johannesburg and
Pretoria, *Homage to Irma Stern*, 1968.





Irma Stern

SOUTH AFRICAN 1894–1966

Still Life with Flat Irons, Apples and Blossoms in a Jug

signed and dated 1955

oil on canvas

86,5 by 68cm excluding frame; 103,5 by 85 by 3,5cm including frame

LITERATURE

(1966) *Artlook*, Vol. 1 No. 1 November, illustrated in black and white on page 2.



The focus of this late yet consummate still life by Irma Stern is clearly the tall jug with a nude figure painted on the surface of one of her own ceramic artworks. No fewer than fifteen of these are listed in the 1971 inventory of the contents of Stern's house, The Firs, now the Irma Stern Museum, administered by the University of Cape Town. The figure establishes a sinuous, curved line, repeated in the shape of the jug, its one handle, as well as the curved black branches full of white blossoms. The figure is posited against a thin white background that resembles a veritable train, or veil, echoed in the blossoms forming a bridal veil of some sort over the whole composition. The jug, positioned on a decorated orange-brown table, is flanked by two black flat irons, their shapes enhancing the subtle diagonal lines of the table on which they are placed at a jaunty angle. The orange-brown tones contrast with the green ones of the apples in the bowl and on the surface of the table, creating an interesting interplay of secondary colours. Blossoms and apples together in this still life inadvertently suggest seasonal changes: from buoyant early spring to the harvesting in late autumn. The curved branches lend an additional dynamic to this very lively composition.





Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

Die Levuvu (sic) Rivier, Naby Louis Trichardt, Northern Transvaal

signed; signed, inscribed with the title and 'Posbus 1248; Pretoria' on the reverse;
further inscribed with a dedication on the reverse
oil on board

51,5 by 64cm excluding frame; 76,5 by 89,5 by 4cm including frame



Originating in the Soutpansberg Mountains, a northern range frequented by Jacob Hendrik Pierneef, the Levubu / Levuvhu River flows in an easterly direction for about 200 km before it joins the Limpopo River in the Kruger National Park. Steeply descending at first, the river flows through a diverse landscape characterised by rapids, riffles, runs and pools. As is shown in this impressionistic work by Pierneef, in its lowveld reaches the river channel is incised into the landscape. It is unclear when Pierneef visited this spot when he produced this colourist scene, but from dates attached to works depicting the Soutpansberg region it is clear that he was an enthusiastic return visitor from at least the 1920s.

Travel, coupled with acute observation in the field, was central to Pierneef's method as an artist. This experiential way of working is linked to his camping excursions north of Pretoria at Pienaar's River, often with sculptor Anton van Wouw, who counselled him to look carefully as an artist. During his subsequent travels, including to the Soutpansberg in 1941, he made many persuasive drawings portraying trees, leaves and thorns, blossoms or curled seed pods, all with 'the accuracy of a botanist'.¹ Equally, when it came to painting the places he visited, Pierneef never abandoned his early love for impressionistic colour.

Esmé Berman, who knew Pierneef, observes that the artist was 'not essentially concerned with transient impressions, nor with optical sensations'.² This is true, but also disputed by the glorious choreography of colours – marshalled bands of yellow, pink, green, even blue – that in this composition produce a vivid sensory statement. Despite subordinating colour to formal design in his later works, it was never an ideology. A muted palette was also never a must.

'One of Pierneef's inheritances from Impressionist landscape was a 'blonde' colour range,' writes art historian Anna Tietze. 'The Impressionists famously moved away from the reliance on blacks, browns and dark greens that had characterised much earlier landscape art and substituted these with lighter colour effects. Blues, greens, pinks, violets became the foundation of a sunnier vision and shadows were indicated with a darkening of the dominant hues rather than by recourse to earth colours.'³ Of course, in the foreground of this composition Pierneef uses brown, but it is his overall use of vivid colour that intensifies the dramatic effect of this recessive rural landscape.

1. JFW Grosskopf (1947) *Pierneef: The Man and his Work*, Pretoria: Van Schaik, page 13
2. Esmé Berman (1993) *Painting in South Africa*, Halfway House: Southern Book Publishers, page 46
3. Anna Tietze (2022) *Iziko South African National Gallery, Masterpiece of the Month: Jacob Hendrik Pierneef, N'tabeni (1930)*, online, <https://www.iziko.org.za/masterpiece/masterpiece-of-the-month-jacob-hendrik/>, accessed 20 August 2024.





Jacob Hendrik Pierneef

SOUTH AFRICAN 1886–1957

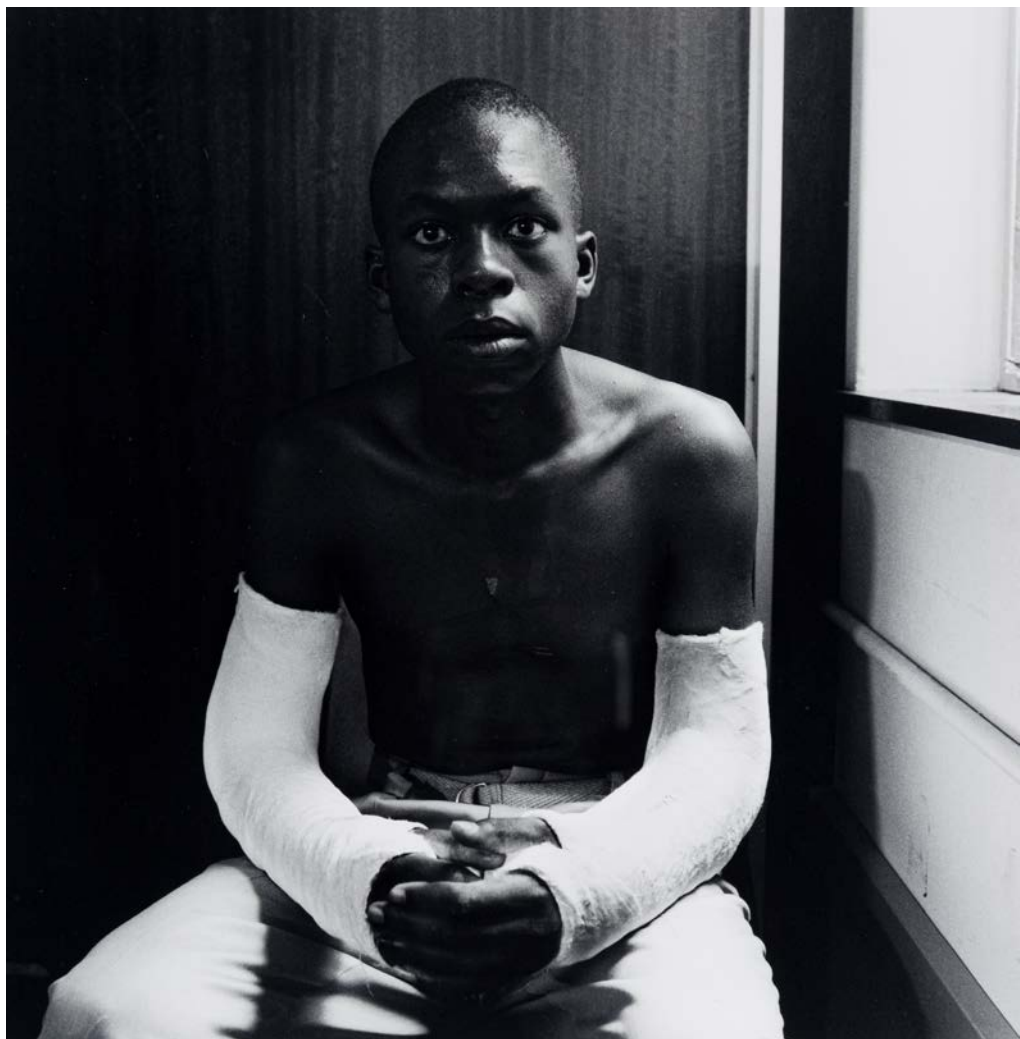
Kommandoboom, Northern Transvaal

signed and dated indistinctly 1928

oil on canvas

45 by 55cm excluding frame; 70,5 by 80,5 by 4,5cm including frame





David Goldblatt

SOUTH AFRICAN 1930–2018

*Fifteen-year-old Lawrence Matjee after his assault
and detention by the Security Police, Khotso House,
De Villiers Street*

signed and dated 25/10/85 on the reverse

gelatin silver print

image size: 18,5 by 17,5cm; 36 by 34,5 by 2,5cm including frame



EXHIBITED

The Jewish Museum, New York, *South African Photographs*, 2 May to 19 September 2010, another example exhibited.

The South African Jewish Museum, Cape Town, *Kith, Kin and Khaya: South African Photographs*, 31 October 2010 to 11 February 2011, another example exhibited.

Standard Bank Gallery and Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, *David Goldblatt: The Pursuit of Values*, 21 October to 5 December 2015, another example exhibited.

Centre Pompidou, Paris, *David Goldblatt Retrospective Exhibition*, 21 February to 13 May 2018, another example exhibited.

LITERATURE

Goodman Gallery (2010) *David Goldblatt: Kith Kin and Khay—South African Photographs*, exhibition catalogue, Cape Town: Goodman Editions, another example illustrated on page 179.

The Standard Bank of South Africa and The Goodman Gallery (2015) *David Goldblatt: The Pursuit of Values*, exhibition catalogue, Johannesburg: The Standard Bank of South Africa and The Goodman Gallery, another example illustrated on page 91.

Jonathan Cane (2015) *Aperture Archive*, David Goldblatt Interview with Jonathan Cane, online, <https://archive.aperture.org/article/2015/3/3/david-goldblatt>, accessed 22 January 2025, another example illustrated.

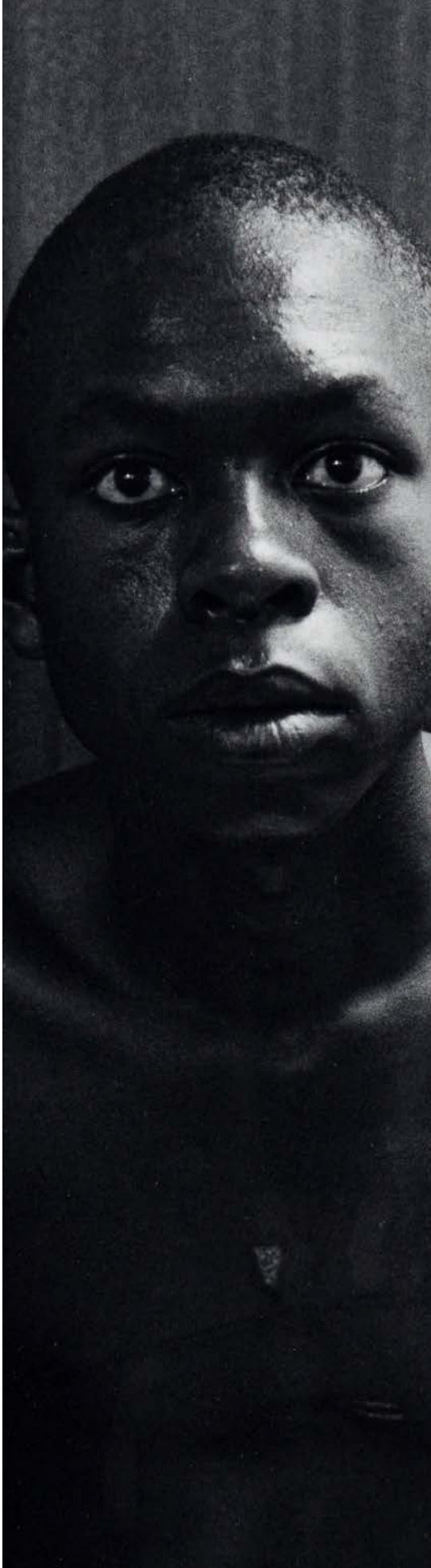
Centre Pompidou (2018) *David Goldblatt*, exhibition catalogue, Paris: Centre Pompidou, another example illustrated on page 26.

Osei Bonsu (2018) 'Another Landscape: 70 Years since apartheid became law in South Africa , David Goldblatt's photographs offers profound insight into what it means to bear witness', *Frieze Magazine*, issue no 195, online, <https://www.frieze.com/article/david-goldblatts-photographs-and-what-it-means-bear-witness>, accessed 5 February 2025.

Accompanied by the article: Osei Bonsu (2018) 'Another Landscape: 70 Years since apartheid became law in South Africa', David Goldblatt's photographs offers profound insight into what it means to bear witness', *Frieze Magazine*, issue no 195, pages 33–34, adhered to the reverse.

'In an image from 1985, for instance, a teenager looks just past the frame that Goldblatt has placed around him. His arms form a second frame. They are encased in white plaster and clasped between his knees. In a formal reading of this composition, these arms draw our eyes around the image and back to the boy's face, over and over. Though he looks calm, his face registers both alarm and exhaustion; urgency behind a veil of fear. In the years before apartheid was dismantled in 1994, and before Nelson Mandela ascended from being a political prisoner to the first black president of South Africa in the first election to allow black people the vote, violence was, of course, commonplace. Matjee's plaster-cast arms are the result of a police arrest, during which he was dragged by his feet from his home, his arms dislocated in the process.'

1. Pippa Milne (2019) *Vault*, David Goldblatt Review, 24 (Nov 2018 – Jan 2019), online, https://vaultmagazine.com/ISS24/features/goldblatt_feature.php, accessed 16 January 2025.





William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Landscape with Billboard

signed and numbered 68

charcoal on paper

56 by 75,5 cm excluding frame;

87 by 104 by 4,5 cm including frame

PROVENANCE

Acquired from the artist, and thence by descent to the current owner.

This undated charcoal drawing distils motifs and ideas central to William Kentridge's celebrated drawing practice. The composition centrally depicts a hoarding in a sparse landscape with dissimilar trees and an empty bench. These elements are staged as much as observed beneath a leaden sky featuring tendrils of moisture that offer no replenishment to the parched landscape. The blank hoarding, far from saying nothing, offers a rich invitation to consider Kentridge's drawing processes as well as speculate on the pronounced influence of cinema on his overall practice.

Kentridge's landscape drawings frequently include blank cinema screens, billboards and other infrastructures of communication. The early drawing *Flood at the Opera House* (1986) provides an important clue as to their visual origin. Kentridge's drawings from the 1980s were, in the main, darkly toned and depicted people, animals and things crowded together in theatres, cafes and suburban redoubts. The surrealistic bourgeois decadence they recorded was a correlative of social decay. Trees were introduced later, in 1998, when he made the animated film *Stereoscope* and adapted Monteverdi's 1640 opera *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse* for the stage in New York. The late 1990s was a period of spectacular international ascendance for Kentridge. By this time his drawing practice had undergone noticeable shifts, both in style and content. In 1989, Kentridge presented the *Johannesburg, 2nd Greatest City after Paris*, the first animated film in his on-going Drawings for Projection series. The demands of his artisanal filmmaking process, which eschews computers, favouring instead evolving a scene for the camera on a single piece of paper through erasure and redrawing, inevitably changed his drawing style.

Among other changes, his scenography became less claustrophobic and collagistic, and also more recognisably of Johannesburg. Of his decision to venture beyond the safe bourgeois redoubts of his early Weimar-inspired drawings, Kentridge has stated: 'I started calling myself an artist in my thirties when I discovered not just the necessity but the pleasure of drawing the landscape just to the south of Johannesburg, to the south of the leafy suburb I lived in. And also when I discovered the pleasure of a soft chamois leather dipped into charcoal dust and wiped across the white surface of the paper, leaving not just a train of dark charcoal grit on the paper but also of a darkening sky above a light horizon.'¹





There is striking continuity between Kentridge's rich understanding of his drawing process and the things he portrays. 'Charcoal and paper are not perfect substances,' writes Kentridge in *Six Drawing Lessons*. 'Charcoal can be erased easily, but not perfectly. The paper is tough and can be erased, redrawn, erased, and still hold its structure – but not without showing its damage. The erasure is never perfect.'² The same broadly holds of the human interfered landscape in this composition. 'It is a landscape that is explicitly social. It is also temporal – everything in the landscape has the signs of having been put there and having been made – all features have the potential to be unmade.'³

Kentridge's billboard unavoidably operates like a blank screen for projection, a familiar motif from art history that encompasses artists as diverse as Jeremy Wafer and Hiroshi Sugimoto. The blank screen is a bountiful subject, inviting deliberations on leisure, spectacle, industrial fabrication, technology, light and time. But what does it propose in relation to Kentridge's drawing? One possible answer involves the artist's abundant love for film.

Kentridge has directly quoted filmmakers Dziga Vertov, George Méliès and Federico Fellini in his work. A suite of drawings from 1985 variously depicts Ingrid Bergman, Humphrey Bogart, Marlene Dietrich, James Dean and Groucho Marx. In 1998, when Kentridge exhibited at the Drawing Center in New York, curator and art historian Michael Rush wrote a penetrating review linking Kentridge to the avant-garde tradition of French filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard. The history of film, like its companion history of art, is a replenishing source for Kentridge.

1. William Kentridge & Jane Taylor (2018) *That Which We Do Not Remember*, Sydney: Naomi Milgrom Foundation. Page 102.
2. William Kentridge (2014) *Six Drawing Lessons*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Page 95.
3. William Kentridge (1998), 'Felix in Exile: Geography of Memory', in William Kentridge, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev (ed.), Brussels: Société des Expositions du Palais des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles. Pages 95–96.





William Kentridge

SOUTH AFRICAN 1955–

Untitled (Drawing from The Deluge Series)

signed and dated '89

chalk pastel and charcoal on paper

66 by 50cm excluding frame; 83,5 by 68 by 5,5cm including frame

LITERATURE

Dan Cameron, Carolyn and Coetzee Christov-Bakargiev, J M Coetzee (1999) *William Kentridge*, London: Phaidon Press, another drawing from the series illustrated in colour on page 44.



Throughout much of his early drawing, filmmaking and collaborative theatre practice, William Kentridge grappled with making visual and narrative sense of the tumultuous politics in the period between 1976 and 1994. Strongly influenced by two key German art movements, Expressionism and its politically radical successor New Objectivity, Kentridge's early work negotiated the strong urge to witness with the need to produce art. Kentridge, who regarded himself as neither active participant nor disinterested observer in the upheavals of the time, determined that the best working solution was to subject the facts of South Africa to the torsions of metaphor. In simpler terms, he refused to be a cartoonist. 'A political cartoon has to be unambiguous and clear,' said Kentridge. 'My drawings certainly have a political view, but it is also a very personal one.' This untitled drawing, part of a grouping informally known as the Deluge series, is a particularly fine example of Kentridge's early drawing practice. It dates from 1989. In this year of resistance, protest, sanctions and emergency laws, Kentridge released *Johannesburg, 2nd Greatest City after Paris*. The animated film, which fully inaugurated his experimental process of using drawing and erasure to progress filmic action, included scenes of disquiet, protest and brutal violence. In one scene, Soho Eckstein, a cartoonish industrialist redolent of D.C. Boonzaier's Hoggeneimer character and George Grosz's Weimar capitalists, throws food and table scraps at a procession of black protesters. This lot directly references this damning action, but does not visually materialise the insult. Instead, the viewer is presented with a scene absent of humans. Various fish, a tin can and telegraph pole levitate above a flooded industrial landscape redolent of Johannesburg. The familiar is also surreal.

It bears noting that Kentridge works in a highly iterative mode. Aspects of the *mise en scène* in this lot, especially the swampish pool, ladder and ramshackle landscape, rehearse ideas from earlier drawings (notably *Plunge Pool I & II*, 1987). He continued to produce drawings in this style in 1990, changing aspects of the landscape and suspended detritus. He also continued to explore the theme of flood and deluge, culminating in waterlogged scenes of his celebrated 1994 film *Felix in Exile*.

1. Michael Auping (2009). 'Double Lines: A Stereo Interview about Drawing with William Kentridge', in *William Kentridge: Five Themes*, San Francisco, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art et al, page 236.





Chris Soal

SOUTH AFRICAN 1994–

A Line to Listen To

2024

found bottle caps and electric fencing cable on board

height: 116 cm; width: 95 cm; depth: 12 cm





Tafadzwa Tega

ZIMBABWEAN 1985–

Maidei

signed twice and dated 2021 on the reverse
acrylic and stencil on canvas
130,5 by 120 by 4 cm, unframed

EXHIBITED

Mimmo Scognamiglio Artecontemporanea, Milan, *Zumbani*, 2022.
The Investec Art Fair, Cape Town, 2022.

A key work within his acclaimed 2022 exhibition *Zumbani*, at Mimmo Scognamiglio Artecontemporanea in Milan, *Maidei* reflects the rich dialogue between the artist's deeply rooted African identity and contemporary expression.

Rooted in postmodern African portraiture, *Maidei* is a vivid meditation on self-reflection and identity, rendered in his signature bold palette and intricate pattern work. Born in Harare, Zimbabwe, and now based in South Africa, Tega's practice explores themes of memory, migration, and cultural heritage, drawing from personal experiences and broader African diasporic narratives.

In this composition, a woman sits at a vanity, gazing into a mirror. The reflection – both familiar and slightly distinct – invites contemplation of the dualities within the self: the outer appearance versus inner essence, the present versus the remembered. The richly patterned background – a tapestry of vivid blue, orange, and yellow florals – envelops the figure, grounding her in a space that feels both personal and symbolic.

Zumbani marked Tega's inaugural solo exhibition in Italy, a milestone he navigated remotely due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. The exhibition garnered overwhelming acclaim, culminating in a sold-out collection with works acquired by prominent Italian collectors and even a distinguished American bank. Tega reflects, 'The best thing for me was the opportunity for people to interact with my work.'

The resonance of extended to the Cape Town Art Fair, allowing Tafadzwa to reconnect his artistic journey with African audiences. 'Africa is my land, so I wanted people here to be able to see it too,' he shares.

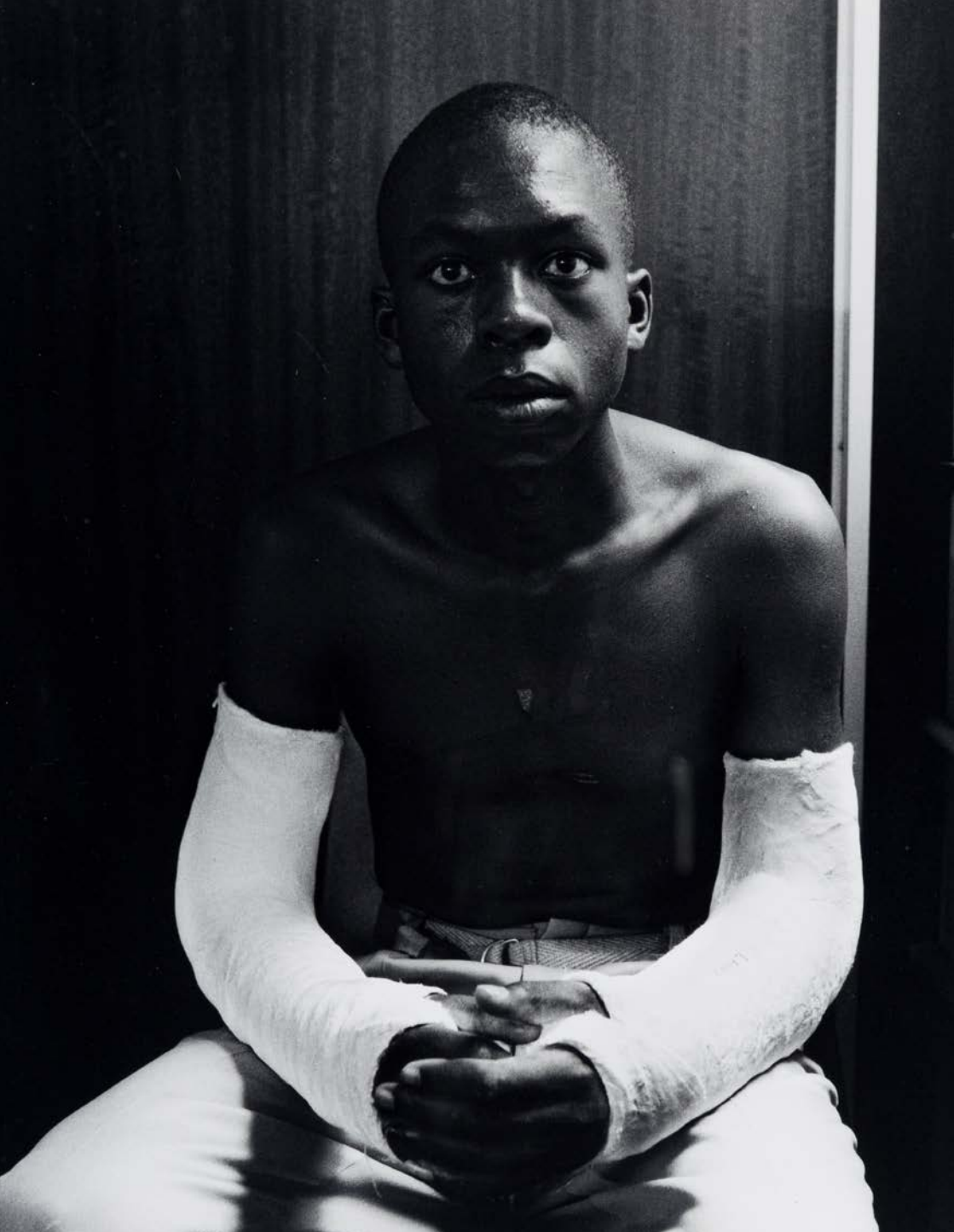
A review of his Milan exhibition captures the essence of *Maidei*: 'Look at Tega's works. Look at them carefully. They have the colours of Africa, and that's fine, everyone can say that. They have the colours of genius, like those of Andy Warhol, and that's also very true. They have the symbols of revenge from the racial segregation implemented in South Africa and everywhere in the world.'²

1. <https://nandoscreativity.co.za/2022/03/10/ncx-artist-enjoys-sell-out-exhibition/>, accessed 3 February 2025

2. <https://www.artapartofculture.net/2022/03/03/tafadzwa-tega-zumbani-egologiatecnomagia-tradizione-e-afromania/>, accessed 3 February 2025







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