
ARTIST STATEMENT

“I found myself drawn to the social realists and became interested in Hogarth’s social allegories, Goya’s “Disasters of War” as well as Diane Victor’s “Disasters of Peace.” Encouraged by my patron Clive H. Viveiros, and my teachers, I was urged to find subjects that were more familiar and hopeful in their outlook. Thereafter I began to etch poignant compositions based on what I saw in my local community. My figures, drawn from photographs I had taken, show how families survive in poverty. My subsequent themes, based loosely on the experiences of my mother, led to a series concerning single mothers as heads of their households. Many of my prints depict mothers as the central and most elevated figure in my compositions, conveying the message that despite hardship and unemployment, women still manage to find ways to feed their families, nurture and protect their children and keep their families in relative security. I became the head of a household of women when my father left the family. I grew up in a culture of alcoholism, amidst the breakdown of my own family structure. Many of the men in my community spent their time and income drinking in shebeens. In a more recent body of work my focus shifted to migrant communities.”

BIOGRAPHY

Bambolwami Sibiya was born in KwaThema, Springs, near Johannesburg. Sibiya interned as the assistant gallery curator for the APS Gallery during his third and fourth year. Sibiya gained experience in handling the artwork of professional artists during the internship. Sibiya worked on the large-scale linocuts of several leading artists such as William Kentridge, Diane Victor, Norman Catherine and Colbert Mashile. Sibiya was moved by the scale and depth of these weeks to such an extent that he extended his own work on a larger scale as he tackled more ambitious images with added confidence.

EDUCATION

During his high school years he trained at Mbira School of Music and Art under the late Paul Madi Phala, who recommended that he should apply to Artist Proof Studio (APS) to attend printmaking classes in the Saturday programme while continuing to support himself. When he completed his schooling, he attended Benoni Technical College and studied graphic design and art. His determination to succeed and his natural talent convinced Lucas Ngweng, a teacher at APS, to recommend him as a full-time student, where Sibiya caught “the printmaking bug”. In 2008 he was offered a full bursary to enter his second year as a full-time student. While he was always a strong draftsman, in his second year at APS his work started showing social content and engagement with his community. As a student he was encouraged to develop his own voice through cultural and art-historical research and by participating in social advocacy programmes.

ART COMPETITIONS

Bambo Sibiya has fared exceptionally well in various art competitions over the years. In 2008 he was a finalist in the Ekurhuleni Art Award. In 2009, Sibiya won the ‘top student of the year’ award at Artist Proof Studio and he was a semifinalist in the Thami Mnyele Awards. In 2010 Sibiya received the Merit Award at Thami Mnyele Awards for the ‘art on paper’ category, receiving a Merit Award. In 2011 he was in the top ten nominees for this award. In 2012 he was a finalist in the Absa L’Atelier awards and the winner of the prestigious Gerard Sekoto Award, which provided him with a three-month residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris in 2013. In 2012 he was recognized by the Arts and Culture Trust (ACT) awards for the most promising visual artist for 2012, an award given to him by the Johannesburg art community.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

Local and International Solo Exhibitions

2013 - '*Khumbula Ekhaya (Home Sick)*', Gallery2

2013 - '*Human Spirit*', ABSA Gallery

2015 - '*Umlambo Uzwiwa Ngedondolo*', traveling exhibition, ABSA Gallery, Johannesburg

2015 - '*Umlambo Uzwiwa Ngedondolo*', traveling exhibition, Port Elizabeth

2015 - '*Umlambo Uzwiwa Ngedondolo*', traveling exhibition, Durban,

2015 - '*Umlambo Uzwiwa Ngedondolo*', traveling exhibition, Cape Town

2015 - '*Umlambo Uzwiwa Ngedondolo*', traveling exhibition, Pretoria

2016 - '*Image Copyright: Saki Zamaxaba I*'

2017 - '*Tales of Migration*', Red Room Art Gallery 2017

2018 - '*Freedom Did Not Just Come, It Was Invited*', Everard Read Circa, Johannesburg

2020 - '*What Now*', META foundation, 2020

2020 - '*Slow Down Tiger*', Everard Read, 2020

2011 - International Group Exhibition in Abu Dhabi, Middle East

2013 - '*Khumbula Ekhaya (Home Sick) II*', Seychelles Kenyan House Gallery

2015 - '*Uzwiwa Ngedondolo*', Botswana

2017 - '*Ubuntu Ngabantu*', London, United Kingdom, Jack Bell Art Gallery

2018 - '*Izikhali Ze Mpilo (The Weapons of Life)*', Jack Bell, United Kingdom

2019 - '*Umdlalo Wamaphepha (Township Casino)*', Jack Bell, United Kingdom

Group Exhibitions

2008 - “*Ekasi*”, Spring Art Gallery

2009 - ‘30/30’, Springs Art Gallery

2009 - “*Unfolding*”, Artist Proof Studio

2010 - ‘*Seeking*’, Artist Proof Studio

2010 - ‘*People and Spaces*’, Gallery 2, Johannesburg

2010 - Thami Mnyele Award exhibition at the Art Centre, Ekurhuleni

2011 - FNB JHB Art Fair, Sandton Convention Centre, Sandton

2011 - David Brown exhibition, Sandton Art Gallery

2011 - Arts on Main Canteen, Arts on Main Gallery, Johannesburg

2011 - Belledewar Advertising Exhibition, Belle Dewar National offices, Sandton

2011 - IStore Art Exhibition, Apple Mac National Offices, Sandton

2011 - Gray Advertising Exhibition, Sandton

2011 - Sharon Sampson Studio Exhibition, Illovo

2012 - ‘*Coming of Age*’ exhibition, Johannesburg Art Gallery with Artist Proof Studio

2012 - ‘*Coming of Age II*’ exhibition, Gallery 2

2012 - FNB JHB Art Fair, Sandton Convention Centre, Sandton

2012 - ‘*Art Child*’ exhibition, Design Indaba with Absa Gallery

2012 - ‘David Brown’ exhibition, Sandton Art Gallery in 2012

2014 - Guns and Rains

2014 - Arts and Culture Trust

2015 - Turbine Art Fair

2015 - KKNK Absa

2016 - ‘*Jazzuary*’ art exhibition in collaboration with Khaya FM, RES gallery

2019 - Red Room Gallery

2020 - ‘*Staring Straight into the Future*’, Everard Read

International Art Fairs

2017 - 154 London Art Fair 2017

2018 - 154 New York Art Fair

2018 - 154 London Art Fair AKA

COMMISSIONS AND PUBLIC ART

2011 - Johannesburg Development Agency 2010 BRT Public Art Consortium

2012 - Anglo American Gold Ashanti

2013 - BASA (Business and Art South Africa), Springs

2013 - Art Gallery Art

2013 - Ogilvy & Mather

BIENNALES

2015: Beijing Biennale

COLLECTIONS

- Pinpoint one Human resources
- PPC LTD
- Bidvest Group
- Johannesburg Development Agency
- Ukhozi FM
- Sasol Limited
- Rand Merchant Bank
- Artist Proof Studio
- Business and Art South Africa
- ABSA Bank
- Spier South Africa
- Sasol Corporate Collection in Mozambique
- Johannesburg Art Gallery
- Millennium Hotel in Abu Dhabi
- Khaya Fm