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Space for the imagination: Simphiwe Ndzube's collaborators in Hofmeyr with one of their creations

Walls of the Mine Moon

In December Simphiwe Ndzube and Dada Khanyisa found ways to connect with community through murals

At Christmas, Simphiwe Ndzube painted murals across his hometown of Hofmeyr in the Eastern Cape, working with family members to enliven public spaces with characters from his imaginative universe, the Mine Moon.

For Ndzube, gathering a crowd and intervening on the walls of buildings was a way of responding to the community's lack of access to libraries, public art and art books.

"I've been contemplating doing something, but with the distance [of living in Los Angeles] it became clear that I needed to start somewhere without overthinking it," he said. "After we had a few power cuts, spending our days waiting for network signal to come back, I thought to make use of the time productively and get my nieces and nephews to share in the creative experience.

"The idea was not to take the images too seriously but to respond to the walls – they suggested so many possibilities. The project really came out of an impulse to do

something for the community that holds major memories from my childhood, especially when it comes to the games we played as kids, like drawing on the gravel road and creating clay sculptures with muddy soil after heavy rains."

In Cape Town, Dada Khanyisa worked with Free The Walls, a mural production agency, to present *May we continue to hold space for each other beyond these times* in Kwa-Langa. Initiated by the Open Society Foundation, their mural sought to raise awareness of the risk still posed by Covid-19 while spotlighting the warmth of 'chosen family'.



PHOTO: GIANLUIGI BIERCIA

La Serenissima: Portia Zvavahera, photographed in her studio in December while working towards the Venice Biennale

Venice and other stories

● Portia Zvavahera will show new paintings in the 59th international art exhibition of the Venice Biennale. Curated by Cecilia Alemani and titled *The Milk of Dreams*, the exhibition's lines of inquiry include 'the representation of bodies and their metamorphoses'. Zvavahera, whose paintings find their genesis in her dreams, previously exhibited in Venice in 2013 at the Zimbabwean Pavilion – where Stevenson first encountered her work. The biennale opens on 23 April.

● Jo Ractliffe is one of the four shortlisted artists for the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize 2022, alongside Deana Lawson, Gilles Peress and Anastasia Samoylova. Ractliffe was nominated for her survey book *Photographs: 1980s – now*, published by Steidl and The Walther Collection. The

artists each present work at The Photographers Gallery in London from 25 March to 12 June. Ractliffe's selection of black and white images focuses on landscape, collapsing the boundaries between bodies of work and their particular narratives to look in a nuanced and layered way at the politics of land and space.

● *The Walther Collection: Image and Self-image in Photography from Africa and Its Global Diaspora* opens at K21, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, on 9 April. The show takes its impetus from the collection's inaugural exhibition curated by Okwui Enwezor, *Events of the Self* (2010), 'while re-examining the critical developments that have taken place in photography and the collection's history'. Zanele Muholi, Jo Ractliffe, Penny Siopis, Guy

Tillim and Edson Chagas all find their places in this survey.

● Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa's Koyo Kouoh is artistic director of the eighth Hamburg Triennial of Photography, working with the theme of *Currency* to explore 'the myriad ways in which value and meaning are attached to photographs, and how that meaning is produced, circulated and interpreted'. *Currency: Photography Beyond Capture*, at Deichtorhallen Hamburg, features Jo Ractliffe's short film *Something this way comes*, a collaboration with composer Philip Miller and filmmaker Catherine Meyburgh; Edson Chagas's *Factory of Disposable Feelings* and Mame-Diarra Niang's *Lethé*. At the Hamburger Kunsthalle, work by Frida Orupabo is part of *Give and Take: Images upon Images*. The opening is from 19 to 22 May.

The game is on!

Alexander Richards and Phokeng Setai are co-curators of *Exhibition Match*, a football game and a show at A4

Just like football, art is a connector of people. The parallels between the game of football and the art world are distinct – artists can be seen as players, galleries as clubs, museums and cultural institutions as powerful governing bodies, and biennials and art fairs simulate transnational tournaments.

It's rumored that a football match took place between cultural workers participating in the second Johannesburg Biennial in 1997. The two of us have agreed that to recreate something akin to this today is a superb idea. Considering the mental and emotional toll of the past couple of years, we believe that bringing people together over a game of football, the world's most accessible sport – known for uniting people from all spheres of life – is a refreshing way to ease existing tensions.

Exhibition Match, this active metaphor, will take the form of an industry-wide tournament, a small open-access exhibition oriented around the game of football, and a curated club lounge at A4 Arts Foundation to accompany the spectacle.

Presenting *Exhibition Match* during the Cape Town Art Fair harnesses the excitement in the city to facilitate lateral engagement among visitors while fostering new kinds of collaborative networks. Having spent over two years speaking to



Art meets football: Curator/academic Phokeng Setai and Stevenson's Alexander Richards at Badgers Academy in Cape Town

people such as Franklin Sirmans (curator of many exhibitions on football) and Achille Mbembe (social theorist and football lover), we've discovered unexpected avenues for critical and cross-national interconnectivity. It's their stories, experiences and advice that spurred us on to produce this intervention.

Our hope is that the game and exhibition become contact zones for people to connect under the unified umbrella of art and football. While compiling the teams we were struck by how male-dominated our teams were – yet another instance of overlap between the art and football worlds. Women's football is one of the fastest growing sports in the world, not unlike the representation of women in the cultural sector – and across both sectors this 'speed' is too slow.

While we plan how future iterations of *Exhibition Match* can have increased gender representation, we extend structural support to those already doing the work by collaborating with the Badgers Academy, a not-for-profit organisation that focuses on the training and development of women through football. They will host the match on their grounds in Breda Street, Gardens, Cape Town, on Sunday 20 February, 3 to 5pm.

Behind our desire to make this intervention a regular fixture in the art-world calendar is the belief that this convivial interaction can cultivate a space of enjoyment and collective solidarity, inspired by the affinity we have for art and football.

Exhibition Match is on view at A4 Arts Foundation from 16 to 28 February, with works by Penny Siopis, Dada Khanyisa, Zanele Muholi, Robin Rhode and more.

Calendar Feb-May

4 February

Zazise, a solo exhibition by Zanele Muholi, opens at the Finnish Museum of Photography in Helsinki TO 29 MAY

5 February

Stevenson Amsterdam reopens, offering art videos on demand in *Stevenson and Chill* TO 26 MAR

8 February

Last week to see Neo Matloga exhibit alongside Singarum J Moodley in *We just want to be closer* at Marta Herford Museum, Germany TO 13 FEB

10 February

Zanele Muholi presents *Being Muholi: Portraits of Resistance* at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston TO 8 MAY

11 February

Sean O'Toole's *Photo Book! Photo-Book! Photobook!* at A4, Cape Town, features Zander Blom, Zanele Muholi, Jo Ractliffe, Robin Rhode, Guy Tillim and others TO 29 APR



12 February

Zander Blom's *Monochrome Paintings* go on show at Stevenson Johannesburg TO 18 MAR

12 February

Landings, Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi's first Cape Town solo, opens at Stevenson, with new paintings and a sound installation TO 19 MAR

15 February

Frida Orupabo is part of *Not Without Joy* at Galerie Rudolfinum in Prague. Last week to view TO 20 FEB

16 February

Exhibition Match unites art and football at A4 Arts Foundation, Cape Town. Hang out in the members' lounge on 18 and 19 Feb, 6 to 9pm, and attend a friendly match between art world players at Badgers Football Academy on 20 Feb, 3 to 5pm TO 28 FEB

17-20 February

Investec Cape Town Art Fair takes place in real life at the Convention Centre. Find us at booth D2 and join the VIP programme to attend artist walkabouts

18 February

Last days to see Serge Alain Nitegeka's installation in *Ubuntu*, *A Lucid Dream* at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris TO 20 FEB

19 February

Drents Museum in Assen opens an exhibition of self-portraits, including Deborah Poynton's *In-Between Self*, commissioned by the museum

22 February

Last days of the Rupert Museum's *Any Given Sunday*, documenting a series of public artistic interventions in Cape Town in 2016. Zanele Muholi is included TO 27 FEB

23 February

Last week to view the Norval Sovereign African Art Prize exhibition at the Norval Foundation,

Cape Town. Mawande Ka Zenzile is one of the finalists TO 28 FEB

26 February

Fotomuseum Winterthur presents *I have seen a million pictures of my face and still I have no idea*, Frida Orupabo's first solo exhibition in Switzerland (pic below). Showing concurrently at the museum is Tilda Swinton's *Orlando*, including work by Viviane Sassen TO 29 MAY



9 March

Last days to see Zanele Muholi, a survey adapted from their Tate Modern show, at Gropius Bau, Berlin TO 13 MAR

12 March

The 23rd Biennale of Sydney, *rivus*, is themed around aqueous ecosystems. Barthélémy Togo shows painting and installation TO 13 JUN

21 March

Human Rights Day, South Africa

22 March

Simphiwe Ndzube has work in *In Some Form or Fashion* at the Momentary, a satellite to Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville, Arkansas TO 27 MAR

23 March

Zander Blom takes part in *We Paint*, an exhibition by past winners of the Jean-François Prat Painting Prize, at the Beaux-Arts de Paris TO 24 APR

24 March

Last days to see *How Rest the Brave*,

featuring Frida Orupabo, at Nest, Den Haag TO 27 MAR

25 March

The Deutsche Börse Photography Prize exhibition, with Jo Ractliffe one of four shortlisted artists, opens at The Photographers Gallery, London TO 12 JUN

25 March

Frida Orupabo is included in *Anti-Monument*, curated around the tapestries of Hannah Ryggen, at Nordenfjeldske Kunstmuseum, Trondheim TO 14 AUG

26 March

Sculptures by Jane Alexander are paired with paintings by Shine Shivan (pic below) at Stevenson Cape Town TO 30 APR



26 March

Bird Sounds Orientations', Rahima Gambo's first solo show with the gallery, opens in Johannesburg TO 6 MAY

2 April

A solo exhibition of new work by Serge Alain Nitegeka takes place at Stevenson Amsterdam TO 7 MAY

6 April

Another iteration of Zanele Muholi's Tate Modern survey opens at IVAM, Institut Valencià d'Art Modern TO 4 SEP

7 April

Stevenson's *Studios* project goes

live online, providing virtual visits to the studios of Odili Donald Odita, Robin Rhode and Penny Siopis, among others TO 24 APR

8 April

Frida Orupabo is included in ARS22, the 10th instalment in this series of exhibitions at Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki TO 16 OCT

9 April

The Walther Collection: Image and Self-image in Photography from Africa and Its Global Diaspora opens at K21, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf. Artists include Zanele Muholi, Jo Ractliffe, Penny Siopis, Guy Tillim and Edson Chagas TO 25 SEP

15-18 April

Easter weekend

23 April

Portia Zvavahera shows in *The Milk of Dreams*, the main exhibition of the 59th Venice Biennale. On view concurrently in Venice is the Future Generation Art Prize 2021, including shortlisted artist Frida Orupabo and winner Aziz Hazara TO 27 NOV

27 April

Freedom Day, South Africa

1 May

Workers' Day

4 May

Last week to see Zanele Muholi, a survey adapted from the Tate Modern show, at Bildmuseet, Umeå TO 8 MAY

5 May

Neo Matloga's first Cape Town solo exhibition opens at Stevenson. Mack Magagane exhibits as part of the *STAGE* series TO 25 JUN

11 May

Paulo Nazareth's solo exhibition at Stevenson Amsterdam opens concurrently with the 10th edition of Amsterdam Art Week TO 19 JUN

14 May

A solo exhibition of new work by Mawande Ka Zenzile, *Nqanda nanga'manzi engene'ndlini*, opens at Stevenson Johannesburg TO 24 JUN

17 May

Neo Matloga won the 2021 ABN AMRO Award for which he presents an exhibition, *along came your eyes*, at the Hermitage, Amsterdam

18-22 May

Stevenson takes part in Art Rotterdam for the first time, showing work by Viviane Sassen and Cian-Yu Bai



19 May

The 8th Hamburg Triennial of Photography opens. Edson Chagas, Mame-Diarra Niang (pic above) and Jo Ractliffe take part in *Currency: Photography Beyond Capture* at Deichtorhallen Hamburg TO 18 SEPT. Frida Orupabo is included in *Give and Take: Images upon Images* at Hamburger Kunsthalle TO 29 AUG

27 May

Stevenson's second *Collectors' Selection* goes live with special secondary market works by gallery and other artists TO 10 JUN



Ecosystems of place and space

In 2021 Rahima Gambo and Aziz Hazara were included in Sisipho Ngodwana and Sinazo Chiya's *my whole body turned into something else*; in 2022 they will present first solo shows with the gallery. Here they discuss creating archives from a place of care, and the complexities of making images in contested landscapes

Sisipho Ngodwana: Rahima, before you started the *Walk* series, you were photographing young schoolgirls in Nigeria; and Aziz, you're working with children who grow up in conflict zones. I wondered how you negotiate representing people who may not have the means or leverage to tell their own stories?

Aziz Hazara: For me, it's important to engage with the community. Where I'm from we have these giant families with 30 to 40 cousins living in the same neighbourhood. In 2018, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) sent a suicide bomber to blow himself up in a tuition centre where young children were studying, and that was an extraordinary shock

to the community. From then on I started engaging with my cousins and neighbours actively – I wanted to have a record of them because so many of them will probably be gone soon. Recently, they bombed the school that the *Bow Echo* boys attend. They literally slaughtered more than 100 children. It's so heavy. That's partly why most of the children I work with are cousins and family members – we hang out and then ideas pop up. I try not to dictate to them; instead I've collaborated with them, with most of the ideas coming from them, such as the games or the objects they're playing with.

Rahima Gambo: This is an enduring question for me. I'm working with

real people in real time and real spaces; some have experienced trauma. I have to process the fact that there is this power imbalance present, and this has always been emotionally difficult. I am in the process of creating a model that I feel is ethical, that is less about me being an extractive artist and more about giving something. As a result I created a workshop, and the students you see in my photographs are participants, performers and collaborators who are paid for their labour. There's a lot of unseen engagement, activities and relationships that happen outside of those images, that goes beyond the making of the work, that I'm writing about while exploring more equitable ways of working with the students. In a way, *A Walk* grew out of this experiment in how to tell stories about other bodies; I was coming into an awareness of my body in these spaces and how I was being affected by the activity of



Left: Aziz Hazara, still from *Bow Echo*, 2019, 5-channel video installation. Above: Rahima Gambo, *Instruments of Air*, 2020, single-channel digital video

producing that work. In my artistic practice, I've been searching for a way of working where I'm not a singular being that is the sole author, but more part of a whole, part of a wider movement and ecosystem of place and space; where it's not just my limbs making, but also their limbs making. It's not just my ideas, but their ideas too. The goal has been to create a model for collaboration that feels right for me, as an artist and documentarian. No one teaches you how to make these very specific models, especially not in journalism school. And – I guess, Aziz, you would know this well – being from a place and trying to represent that place, but also being directly affected by the events of that place, that shifts and changes you as well.

This is an extract from a conversation between curators Ngodwana and Chiya and artists Gambo, Hazara and Monilola Olayemi Iluaju at the time of *my whole body changed into something else* (Stevenson Cape Town and Johannesburg, 2021).



Rahima Gambo (born 1986, London; lives between Abuja, Nigeria, and London) is a multimedia artist with roots in photojournalism. In 2020 she received the FOAM Talent of the Year award, and a Contemporary African Photography Award. In 2019 she founded A Walk Space, a studio and mobile art space that explores the complex intersections of the 'moving' image. She has most recently shown at Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; New Arts Exchange, Nottingham; and Kadist, Paris (2021). Her solo exhibition *Bird Sounds Orientations*¹ is at Stevenson Johannesburg from 26 March to 6 May.



Aziz Hazara (born 1992, Wardak, Afghanistan; lives between Kabul and Berlin) works across film, sound and installation to address questions of identity, power and surveillance. He is the winner of the 2021 Future Generation Art Prize. He has presented solo exhibitions at Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin (2022); Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona (2020); Hessel Museum of Art, New York (2020); and has participated in the biennales of Sydney and Busan (2020). He features in the upcoming Carnegie International (2022) and will show at Stevenson Cape Town in the second half of 2022.

Reading matter

New additions to our shelves



Jo Ractliffe *Being There*.
Published by Stevenson, 2022.
Design by Gabrielle Guy.
Limited edition of 300 copies.



Viviane Sassen *Venus & Mercury*.
Published by Aperture, 2022.
Poems by Marjolijn van Heemstra
and text by Jerry Stafford.
Design by Irma Boom.



Pieter Hugo *Solus Vol 1. Concerning Atypical Beauty and Youth*. Published by RM, 2021.

From the press

→ Niren Tolsi, the writer/journalist who collaborated with Simon Gush on *Welcome to Frontier Country*, spoke to the artist about his exhibition *The Busiest Airline in Africa* (Stevenson Johannesburg, Oct - Nov 2021)

NT: The separation of work and home is essential to your intellectual and artistic enquiries. Did the pandemic lockdowns change how you approached your practice on a personal and intellectual level, and how so? Has it changed anything for ordinary workers in South Africa?

SG: Marx points to this problem of the separation of productive and reproductive labour, home and work in *Capital*, but really doesn't develop these ideas sufficiently. It is Marxist feminist thinkers such as Silvia Federici who really start to develop this analysis in conversation with another key Marxist concept: primitive accumulation, or the enclosure of the commons and land dispossession. These ideas are really important to me. There is a tradition here, for example, the late Marxist sociologist Harold Wolpe looks at the reproduction of the labour force, but there is a lot of work still to be done.

Increasingly, I am interested in thinking about work in a way that acknowledges the unpaid work – cooking, cleaning, raising kids, caring for the elderly, etc – that makes waged labour possible without reproducing this capitalist separation in my analysis. I'm trying to conceive of work as a network of the exchange of labour across households, families and communities, where the precarity is often shared, rather than thinking through an individual's relation to employment.

'Simon Gush's art is labour as concept', *New Frame*, 15 November 2021,
<https://www.newframe.com/Long-read-simon-gushs-art-works-labour/>

WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO

Associate director Sisipho Ngodwana recommends *On Our Own Clock*, a collaborative album released by Mushroom Half Hour and Total Refreshment Centre in 2021, and *Danger*, a 1976 LP by the Lijadu Sisters. The former is the result of the work of 14 artists in different locations spanning South Africa, Senegal and London co-ordinating over two years to create a jazz equivalent of a 'cross-continental call and response'. The latter is a reggae/soul/funk/afrobeat LP smorgasbord by twins Taiwo and Kehinde, one of the few female acts to make it to the forefront of the 1970s Nigerian music scene. In Ngodwana's standout track, *Life's gone down low*, the sisters speak of connection as a cure, singing: *Life's gonna give you | A little bit of understanding | Stop and look (oh yeah) | Or we headed for the nuclear power ...*

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