

Gocini's art bound to his social experience

SOMETHING of the personality of Livingstone Mphati Gocini is expressed through his artwork. It is simple. It is what he believes.

He began his career at Rorke's Drift Art and Crafts Centre in Dundee where he worked for two years experimenting in various graphic techniques. There he was given a theoretical grounding, and, after two years, graduated in photography, drawing, sculpture, painting, etching, lino cuts and basic design.

Prior to that, he had concentrated solely on drawing, and, looking for stimulation and encouragement in his work, became part of this workshop environment.

His works were exhibited in Pretoria and Pinetown in late 1977, and then at the Community Arts Project in Mowbray this year.

In 1977, too, the Mowbray Community Arts Project offered a grant for which Livingstone applied and was accepted. He has since then been resident artist there, and his current focus is on linocuts and woodcuts. Compared with the possible three months'



AN example of work by Livingstone Mphati Gocini.

work that a sculptor demands, a woodcut may be completed within 20 minutes. Livingstone feels that this adds dynamic to his creativity.

As an artist, he finds freedom in self-expression, and it is through that freedom that he strives to represent his own social environment rather than any other. He wants to confront reality, and in his woodcuts, his ideals are carved. For the permanence of art in fastly moving times to be felt, he attempts to record moments in his history. He feels that accuracy, both technical and emotional, is important.

He has a willingness to feel pain, and in some of his linocuts, 'Weeping Orphan,

Unarmed, Conflict, Friendship, Days of Darkness, Untitled Trees, Unhappy Family, Washing the Baby, Self-Portrait With Words, they reflect his conviction that people suffer more from the abuse of power than from lack of it.

To convey his message, Gocini aims at simplicity and says of the demanding work that he does: 'Man makes his own dreams, so I am also a dream maker, especially about art.'

And why are his works so sad?

His art is closely bound to his social experience and he replies: 'Look at the pictures, and find out for yourself.'

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