



ROOTZ AFRICA

ARTS MUSIC & CULTURE



JAZZART

CREATIVE EXPLOSION

HOTEP GALETA

JAZZ MAESTRO

**IZINTOMBI
ZENGUGCE**

WOMEN POWER

GRAHAMSTOWN FESTIVAL

YOUTH CELEBRATION

2007 VOLUME 24
RSA R19.95 (INCL. VAT)
NAMIBIA N\$21.25 (INCL. VAT)
OTHER COUNTRIES 21.25 (EXCL. TAX)



• Magic at Midnight • Showcase • Time of the Writer • Blagpearl



VOYAGE ENSEMBLE



Dream of the Sea Anels, oil on canvas by Everton Mbumber Nsumbu

BEYOND BORDERS



The second Voyage Ensemble a visual art exhibition by twelve artists at the Scalabrini Centre in Cape Town will hopefully change the tendency of local galleries. The theme of this year's Voyage Ensemble is "A Journey Together" and its aim is to explore movement and change on the African continent.

The exhibition forms part of the annual Migration Week activities in conjunction with the Xcape Art Circuit. It showcases individual works of visual artists from South Africa together with artists from Congo, Burundi and Mozambique who live and work in Cape Town. Their mission is, "to celebrate a journeying of

both visual art and people that are not defined by borders and differences but by a broader African imagery".

After speaking to a group of 'migrant artist' who are part of the exhibition it is clear that a vast majority of art galleries in the Mother City are still extremely euro-centric in their outlook, despite 13 years into our new democracy.

Most of the artists in the Voyage Ensemble have exhibited their works in the many galleries in Europe and North America but when it comes to the Cape, sponsored group exhibitions are the order of the day.



THE MAJORITY OF ART GALLERIES IN CAPE TOWN ARE STILL EXTREMELY EURO-CENTRIC IN THEIR OUTLOOK. AFTER KNOCKING ON MANY DOORS TO HAVE HIS WORKS EXHIBITED, A PAINTER FROM KINSHASA BECAME TIRED OF HEARING THE GALLERY OWNER'S MANTRA, "SORRY, WE ONLY DEAL WITH SOUTH AFRICAN ARTISTS, TRY A CURIO SHOP ..."

Maurice Mbikayi, a 33 year-old painter from Kinshasa, sees himself as one of many that did not flee the DRC, but came to South Africa in 2005 out of a sense of curiosity. After knocking on many doors with the intention of getting his works exhibited, Mbikayi became tired of hearing the gallery owner's mantra: "Sorry, we only deal with South African artists, try a curio shop."

Andries Loots of 34 Long Fine Art Gallery agrees with Mbikayi. "There are very few galleries in Cape Town that specialise in contemporary international art. Others seem to lack the knowledge and experience and prefer to stay with what they feel comfortable with," he said.

His gallery recently exhibited works by Gonzalo Mabunda, the young Mozambican sculptor, who specialises in making art from recycled weapons. They also have an on-going relationship with Esther Mahlangu, internationally recognised Ndebele artist whose talent was discovered by the Pompidou Centre in Paris during the late eighties.

Before being discovered most of Esther's works would have been considered as traditional Ndebele art and craft, but now that her pieces grace the collections of Musee des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie in Paris, World Bank Collection and the BMW Art Car Collection, her work is considered 'high art'.

Kirsty Cockerill, director of the Association of Visual Arts (AVA), says, "Quality, and the market dictates. The AVA's work is to promote emerging contemporary art. Public works are mandated and funds from government are limited for the arts. So, if there is an overwhelming sense of rejection then the artists haven't tried the AVA as an avenue."

Mbikayi said he gets inspiration from events in his childhood, politics and the strife from the recent civil war. Many of his pieces reflect movement of people.

His painting 'After the War' shows all these elements. Mbikayi feels that despite Cape Town being such a beautiful city with so many different people there is a serious need for a cross-cultural challenge to address xenophobia. The challenge is not to leave Cape Town till his name is known.

Sophie Peters can be described as an internal migrant because she grew up in Eldorado Park in Johannesburg and moved to Cape Town in 1985 where she was trained at the Community Arts Project (CAP) in Woodstock. She said that she found the experience of working with the various migrant artists enriching. Her colourful urban landscapes have been selling since her training days.

Lizette Maria Eduardo Chirime, a mother in her early thirties, came to the city from Maputo to get a different perspective and to share the culture of the Mother City. She finds the city is more supportive in terms of the arts.

"There is a very strong artistic movement in Mozambique but I had a calling for a journey, which would give me a chance to grow with my work and expand lines of communication with other artists." Her works are full of texture as she utilizes skin and hessian in most pieces and reflect herself in the world on a quest for harmony.

Her advice is: "Try to be true to yourself and love yourself. By doing that, you learn to understand and accept each other."

The other artists in the Voyage Ensemble fold are: Abdul Dube (SA) – photo-artist; Anzu Phillips (France) – painter, sculptor, blacksmith, animator, glass blower; Derix Raphael Ndong (Congo Brazzaville) – painter, sculptor; Everton Mbumba Nsumba Nsumbu (DRC) – painter; Jaliyaa Jane Versfeld (SA) – illustrator, ceramicist, fabric artists; Joy Nikelo (SA) – painter; Julie Felicite Loubelo (Congo Brazzaville) – painter; Zavick Zaroff Botha (SA) – quiltage (fabric collage), painter; Ruth Carnesson, Kathy Coates, Stephan Fourie, David Jason Etherington and Abdul Kader Moses (SA) – painters.

Check out Voyage Ensemble's blog site: www.voyageensemble.blogspot.com ■