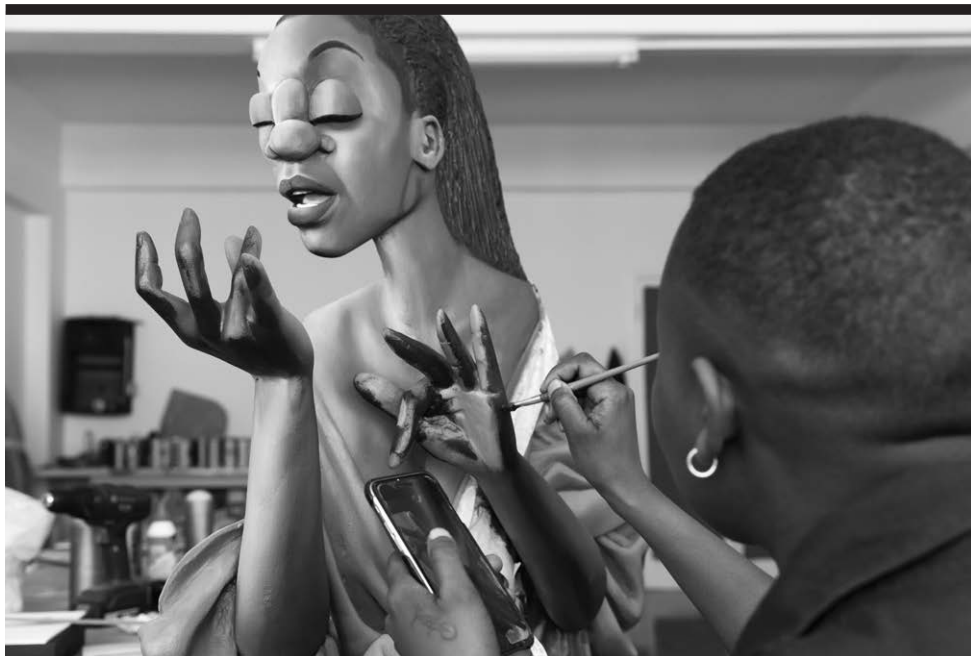


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Dada Khanyisa in his studio in Woodstock, Cape Town, working towards his exhibition *Good Feelings* PHOTO: MARIO TODESCHINI

Three first solos for JHB in 2020

Dada Khanyisa,
Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi
and Neo Matloga to hold
their first exhibitions
in the city

While 2019 was a year of physical and structural renewal, for 2020 Stevenson looks forward to a new, intimate set of firsts.

Dada Khanyisa kicks off our calendar with *Good Feelings*, his first solo exhibition in Johannesburg (1 February to 13 March). For the latest presentation in his 'solution-based practice' – described as *nakanjani* ('by whatever means') –

Khanyisa replaces narrative tableaux with solipsistic scenes set against the backdrop of communal living. Fundamentally isolated yet deeply entwined, each character is cast as self-contained, complex and variable in these new single-panel works. He notes, 'There's a wealth of stories in the individual paintings. It's about *going out* culture, but also *going in* culture – as in going into the self.'

Over the duration of the exhibition, the works will be rearranged twice, in alignment with their relational nature. *Good Feelings* will include sketches by the artist in lieu of the scripted or

multimedia elements found in his 2018 Cape Town solo, *Bamb'iphone*.

As an observer and participant in the South African socio-political terrain, the cultural scene, and the Twittersphere, Khanyisa acknowledges the social facts of performativity and projection and responds with a mutable form of storytelling. Making room for different narratives to emerge with the new dynamics created, he states: 'Depending on how you see yourself, who you're next to says something different. I am also trying to be an individual in a community. These works give me Good Feelings.' CONT.→

→ Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi (20 March to 30 April) and Neo Matloga (9 May to 19 June) make their South African solo debuts, also in Johannesburg. Nkosi presents new works in her *Gymnasium* series. Inversely echoing Khanyisa's take on the essential value in people, regardless of their context, Nkosi remarks in conversation with Miss Rosen for *Document Journal*: 'When I paint figures in this series, it's not about the individual. The gymnast doesn't have to be a star; she is important no matter who

she is. There is power in not being specific and not being special.'

Neo Matloga recently presented an exhibition at Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, titled *Neo to Love*. One reviewer observed, 'Matloga's work is political, personal and universal at the same time. Growing up in a deeply troubled, racist society does leave its traces. These are counterbalanced by family life, love, friendship and the joy of living. This energy is translated to the canvas, in an elaborate play with painterly techniques and

collage.' Matloga's upcoming show is titled *Back of the Moon* – so named 'not because I'm illustrating this beautiful phenomenon', Matloga says, but because the artworks 'were made at night by the light of the moon in my studio in Limpopo'.

The exhibitions by Khanyisa, Nkosi and Matloga will be accompanied by gallery catalogues. See works by these artists and others at our Art Basel Miami Beach booth (H12). Nkosi's *Gymnasium* wall painting at the Africa Center in New York is on view until 5 January 2020.



PHOTO: HANNA HACHULLA

Above: Robin Rhode speaks to young patrons of the Stedelijk Museum about his exhibition *Jericho*, at Stevenson's new Prinsengracht space. From November 21 to 24 Stevenson participated in Amsterdam Art Weekend for the first time. For this event, Amsterdam galleries host three days of special dinners, talks and performances to coincide with RijksOpen, the annual open studios at the Rijksakademie. This year, RijksOpen was organised by Gabi Ngcobo and Nomaduma Masilela, and included a presentation by Michaelis graduate and iQhiya member Lungiswa Gqunta.

The city of Jericho is positioned 12 kilometres north of the Dead Sea, and 10 kilometres west of the river Jordan; settlement in the town dates back to 10 000 BCE. It is known as 'The City of the Moon', after the Canaanite word for moon, yareah. Today, Jericho finds itself in the midst of one of the most protracted geopolitical conflicts in the world. Against this backdrop, Rhode has constructed new visual poems, commissioned by Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg for *Memory is the Weapon*, his career survey at the museum. *Jericho* is on view in our Amsterdam space until 22 February 2020.

Meet our new partners

Introducing Sinazo Chiya and Lanese Jaftha

Stevenson's ownership structure is, to the best of our knowledge, unique in the global art world. The gallery was started by Michael Stevenson in 2003. In 2011, he decided to sell equity to a handful of its directors. He structured the gallery like a law firm, where committed, hard-working associates could 'make partner'. This approach acknowledges and rewards intellectual contributions of key gallery staff and, more pragmatically, helps retain talent that otherwise might leave for London, Lagos or Beijing. Eight years later, Stevenson is jointly owned by 13 people, none of whom own more than 12.5%. The two newest members of the collective are Sinazo Chiya and Lanese Jaftha, who became partners in November.

You might know Sinazo from *9 More Weeks*, the mint-green volume we published in 2018, containing conversations with Zander Blom, Kemang Wa Lehulere and Bronwyn Katz, among other artists. She has become something of an in-house intellectual, reading – and writing – more than anyone else at the gallery. Sinazo's primary responsibility is maintaining Stevenson's relationships with critics and journalists, but the scope of her activities has grown. Earlier this year she was invited by the Mondriaan Fund to tour institutions in Belgium and the Netherlands, together with three other curators from our region. Around the same time, she started becoming actively involved in the day-to-day management of Mawande Ka Zenzile's career, and



Lanese Jaftha and Sinazo Chiya at Stevenson Cape Town PHOTO: MARIO TODESCHINI

is now his primary contact person at the gallery. In addition to French semiotics and Japanese fiction, Sinazo is a connoisseur of trashy British reality television.

Lanese is quiet and reserved by nature, but is not afraid to take a position or pick a fight when necessary. She steers the team that works on Zanele Muholi's myriad projects, which has taken her to Paris, New York and Venice in the last year alone. In addition, she works closely with Guy Tillim, Pieter Hugo, Jo Ractliffe and Viviane Sassen, and manages our artists' relationships with half a dozen different fine art printers on three

continents. Her Instagram profile describes her as a lover of wine, an anthropologist and a geek, and she has recently started Zulu classes.

We have noticed that people, particularly other gallerists, are always curious to hear about our strange, hybrid capitalist-socialist experiment. In January 2020, Joost Bosland will present our unusual structure at Talking Galleries, an annual gallery conference in Barcelona (see talkinggalleries.com for details). For now, we are deeply content to introduce Sinazo and Lanese as partners, and we are looking forward to what the future holds.

Calendar Dec-Feb

December

Moshekwa Langa's *Tropic of Capricorn* is on view at Stevenson Cape Town TO 18 JAN



3 December

The ICA Miami unveils a site-specific mural by Odili Donald Odita, *Mamba Negra*. Located in the main staircase, the mural spans the height of all three floors of the museum TO 30 NOV

3 December

Steven Cohen performs *Taste* at the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, Paris

Last week to see *The Way She Looks: A History of Female Gazes in African Portraiture* – photographs from the Walther Collection, including Zanele Muholi's *Beulahs* and *Miss D'vine* – at Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto ENDS 8 DEC

4-8 December

Art Basel Miami Beach takes place at the Miami Convention Center FIND US AT BOOTH H12

10 December

Last week to see *Meleko Mokgosi: Bread, Butter and Power* at the Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago ENDS 15 DEC

13 December

Stevenson Johannesburg closes for the holidays

14 December

Steven Cohen performs *put your heart under your feet ... and walk!* at Theater Juliusz-Slowacki, Cracow

16 December

Day of Reconciliation, South Africa

19 December

Laying bare: Studio process at the museum: Kemang Wa Lehulere moves into a live working space at Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, Cape Town TO 14 JUN

17 December

Last week to see Stevenson and Andrew Kreps Gallery's collaborative showing of Moshekwa Langa, Viviane Sassen and Portia Zvavahera at 55 Walker Street, Tribeca, New York ENDS 21 DEC

25-26 December, 1 January
Public holidays, Stevenson closed

1 January

Last week to see Zanele Muholi featured in *Implicit Tensions: Mapplethorpe Now* at the Guggenheim, New York ENDS 5 JAN

Last week to see Simphiwe Ndzube's installation at the 15th edition of the Lyon Biennale, *Where water comes together with other water* ENDS 5 JAN

Last week to see *Crossing Night: Regional Identities X Global Context* – with works by Edson Chagas, Nicholas Hlobo, Pieter Hugo, Moshekwa Langa, Zanele Muholi, Robin Rhode, Penny Siopis and

Guy Tillim – at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit ENDS 5 JAN

Last week to see Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi's mural, *Gymnasium*, at the Africa Center in Harlem, New York ENDS 5 JAN



6 January

Stevenson Johannesburg reopens with Steven Cohen's *There's glitter in my soup!* and Nelly Guambe's *Caras* (below) TO 24 JAN



7 January

Last days of *Risk*, 'a group exhibition about vulnerability and possibility', at A4 Arts Foundation, Cape Town, with works by Jane Alexander, Meschac Gaba, Pieter Hugo and Ernest Mancoba, among others ENDS 9 JAN

10 January

Pieter Hugo's *La Cucaracha* opens at Yossi Milo Gallery, New York TO 29 FEB

13 January

Last week to see *Objects of Desire: Surrealism and Design 1924 – Today*, with work by Viviane Sassen, at the Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein ENDS 19 JAN

22-23 January

Steven Cohen performs *put your heart under your feet ... and walk!* at Bonlieu Scène Nationale d'Annecy

23 January

A solo exhibition by Barthélémy Togo opens at Stevenson Cape Town 6-8PM; TO 7 MAR

25 January

Pieter Hugo's *Gadawan Kura – The Hyena Men* are included on *Five stories with a point of view*, an exhibition of works from the collection of MUSAC, Museum of Contemporary Art of Castilla y Leon, Spain, opening today

Last day to see *Portia Zvavahera and Gustav Klimt: A Dialogue* at artspace De 11 Lijnen, Oudenburg, Belgium 2-6PM; ENDS 25 JAN

27 January

Indian Ocean Current: Six Artistic Narratives – featuring Penny Siopis and Nicholas Hlobo – opens at the McMullen Museum of Art in Boston TO 31 MAY

31 January

Zanele Muholi's travelling exhibition *Somnyama Ngonyama, Hail the Dark Lioness*, curated by Renée Mussai, opens at the Cooper Gallery, Hutchins Center for African & African American Research, Harvard University, Cambridge TO 1 JUN



1 February

A solo exhibition by Dada Khanyisa opens at Stevenson Johannesburg 10AM – 1PM; TO 13 MAR



1 February

Last days to see prints by Pieter Hugo in *Civilization: The Way We Live Now* – looking at 'the phenomenal complexity of life in the 21st century' – at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Catch a guided tour on 1 Feb at 11.30am ENDS 2 FEB

4 February

Last week to see Robin Rhode's survey exhibition *Memory is the Weapon* at Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany. The exhibition travels to Kunsthalle Krems, Austria (15 March – 21 June) ENDS 9 FEB

7 February

Des marches, démarches (Walking: ways of thinking, ways of moving) – including prints from Guy Tillim's *Museum of the Revolution* – opens at Frac Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur in Marseilles TO 10 MAY

13-16 February

Cape Town Art Fair takes place at the Cape Town Convention Centre

14 February

Gallery night in Cape Town with extended opening hours

15 February

Beyond the Black Atlantic, including work by Kemang Wa Lehulere, opens at Kunstverein Hannover, Germany TO 26 APR

22 February

Last day to see Robin Rhode's *Jericho* at Stevenson's Amsterdam space

25 February

Last week to see Steven Cohen's early screenprinted chair exhibited alongside recent point-shoe sculptures on *The Cape Town Triennials: Then and Now* at the Rupert Museum, Stellenbosch ENDS 29 FEB

27 February

Meleko Mokgosi: Your Trip to Africa opens at the Perez Art Museum Miami. The exhibition includes a new large-scale work commissioned for the museum TO 30 MAY

Don't miss these ongoing shows

→ Until 8 March

Pieter Hugo features in *Unseen: 35 Years of Collecting Photographs* at the J Paul Getty Museum

→ Until 15 March

Penny Siopis and Zanele Muholi have works on *I Am ... Contemporary Women Artists of Africa* at the National Museum of African Art – Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC

→ Until 10 May

Viviane Sassen is included in *Body Performance* at the Helmut Newton Foundation in Berlin

→ Until Fall 2021

Pan-African Pulp, a commission by Meleko Mokgosi, is on view at the University of Michigan Museum of Art

'Great art goes beyond binaries'

Extracts from an interview with Portia Zvavahera by Hans Ulrich Obrist

HUO My favourite interview with you is in *BOMB Magazine*. There you talk about a cycle of producing work. You say that the work is all about life experiences, that it's often in cycles. You paint kind of painful moments and in that sense the painting is like a healing. I'm very interested because I'm from Switzerland and there's a Swiss painter, Emma Kunz, who is a magical healer and uses her painting to heal. So I wanted to ask you to tell us a little bit about this idea of the cycle, the painful experiences, and how the paintings can heal.

PZ I constantly have dreams that somebody is trying to take my daughter or my son away from me. I'm fighting that. So when I put it in the painting, I'm also putting a guardian angel to protect them. The moment I put a guardian angel, I feel like I have them, nobody will take them away. It brings a good feeling.

HUO That's like what my friend, the legendary Austrian writer Friederike Mayröcker, does. She calls it the protective spirit, a Schutzgeist. It's interesting because this painting is distressed but it's also celebratory so there seems to be like an oxymoron of joy and fear. Often great art is an oxymoron, it's not either/or – it goes beyond binaries. Can you talk a bit about that?

PZ Flowers – whenever someone dies, people go with flowers to beautify, to clear the energy. So this



The full conversation, which took place in Paris on 18 October, will be published in a forthcoming catalogue accompanying the exhibition *Portia Zvavahera and Gustav Klimt: A Dialogue* at De 11 Lijnen in Oudenburg, Belgium (see above), on view until 25 January.

is what I'm doing. I want to clear the energy with flowers.

HUO So in a way your paintings are like flowers?

PZ I'm inspired by nature. I received flowers from my husband before we were married. I had never received flowers in my life, it was my first time. I could smell them but it wasn't enough for me to just have them sit there, so I started drawing the flowers. That's also when I started doing the gowns. I felt like a bride so I took the flowers and put them together with the brides.

HUO Most of your characters are women.

PZ Yes.

HUO Can you tell me more?

PZ No, I can only talk about myself. It's my life, so mostly it's me in the pictures. I think everything in my work is all about me.

HUO The other thing which I thought was so interesting when I looked at your book, and also these recent paintings, was that it seems to involve rituals. And there is a lot of movement in it ... There seem to be life or death rituals. *The Good Fight* is a sort of a ritual, maybe also a form of dance. So what is the role of the ritual? It's not just the eye – it appeals to all the senses, you know. Are these memories also?

PZ In the way we live, there are certain things we do that we repeat more often. Like when I did the work for the Zimbabwean Pavilion at Venice, I was looking at apostles in the streets and in the villages. They put a piece of string, of cloth, around them when they are praying. In this way I also try to include what is happening around me.

HUO So it has a lot to do with what you see?

PZ What I see and what I experience as well.



Penny Siopis immersed in her temporary studio at the Maitland Institute, Cape Town, November 2019 PHOTO: MARIO TODESCHINI

'Treading lightly' in the studio

Penny Siopis gives new life to old surfaces

What does painting, in its particular materiality, offer in responding to the crisis of climate change? This is one of the questions occupying Penny Siopis as she momentarily re-inhabits the Maitland Institute, where she previously opened up her process of painting with glue and ink to the public. This time her starting point is to gather her old canvases and give them new life as elements of an immersive configuration. Assembled here in a specific way, they are envisaged as mobile – able to change form depending on site and context, like Siopis' object installations.

Siopis points to her canvases as individual entities with histories to their surfaces, and image associations that shift in relation to each other. She observes, 'People

may recognise some canvases from previous exhibitions ... They are like bits of a big organism that keeps regenerating.'

On one level she is looking literally at the ecological aspect of working, 'using what's to hand rather than buying more things'. This includes using up quantities of materials – oil paint and glue and ink, and fragments of text cut from newspaper headlines, some recycled from previous installations.

Underlying Siopis' use of glue and ink over the past decade has been her embrace of the 'life' and agency of her medium as both process and concept (expounded in depth in her 2018 book, *Material Acts*) – a position that extends beyond theory to locate itself in the social world. Writing in *Business Day* about Siopis' exhibition *Warm Water Imaginaries* (Stevenson Johannesburg, March 2019), Chris

Thurman noted that Siopis' approach to her materials 'becomes analogous to "treading lightly" upon the earth – whether that means (to extend the metaphor) minimising one's carbon footprint, or making other choices that acknowledge the urgency of responding to climate change.'

For *Warm Water Imaginaries*, Siopis treated earlier works on paper as found objects, allowing their glue-and-ink surfaces to 'offer a glimmer of something new'. A group of these *Warm Waters* – and Siopis' latest found footage film, *She Breathes Water*, in which a picture emerges of humankind's destructive relationship with the earth – form part of the exhibition *Indian Ocean Current* at the McMullen Museum of Art in Boston. Curated by Prasannan Parthasarathi and Salim Currimjee, the show runs from 27 January to 31 May 2020.

Reading matter

What we're reading

Sinazo Chiya on *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (Princeton University Press, 2015)

The premise of *The Mushroom at the End of the World* brings to mind the murkily attributed phrase, 'it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism'. Tsing uses the highly valued matsutake mushroom to look at the relationship between our monetary system and cataclysm, tracing the economy and ecology around this fungus as 'one of the strangest commodity chains of our times [in order] to explore the unexpected corners of capitalism.'

Tsing's language is accessible, lyrical and sonorous. Over what she calls a 'riot' of 20 brief chapters, her observations rove across topics including the transformative potential of smell, frontier romanticism, foraging as a

form of dance, science as a form of translation, the blind voraciousness of the contemporary marketplace, ruin as opportunity – and, connecting it all, the matsutake.

In 2009, the late Mark Fisher published a handbook called *Capitalist Realism*. In it he argued, 'Capitalism is what is left when beliefs have collapsed at the level of ritual or symbolic elaboration, and all that is left is the consumer-spectator, trudging through the ruins and the relics.' Tsing's meditation on the end of the world does not dispute the nature of our *trudging*; rather she offers the matsutake as a guide in learning forms of survival beyond what we can even currently think to imagine.



If it easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism, Tsing's text is a prompt to remember that our apocalypse is not merely happening during capitalism, but from it. And equally, that annihilation does not necessarily mean an ending. Among many lessons, without negating the place of reaction or rage, Tsing suggests the inevitable failure of our dominant organisational principle does not mean the end of life. Rather through an openness to *unexpected corners* and 'multi-species world-making', collaborative survival is possible and perhaps through it, some adventure.

The Mushroom at the End of the World is the title of a group show to be held at Stevenson Cape Town in May 2020

From the press

→ Tim Leibbrandt on Simon Gush's *Welcome to Frontier Country* at Stevenson Cape Town:

Formally, [Simon Gush's] videos are not particularly concerned with visual appeal, and there is no slow motion bokeh-laden eye candy to be found. Instead, there is a feeling of raw pragmatic honesty that is consistent with the aesthetics of Gush's practice as a whole. In the absence of excessive mediation, moments like land claimant Mongezi Madinda's piercing stare in *Working the Land* are simultaneously utterly heartbreaking and incendiary, putting the viewer on the back foot in a palpable moment of returned gaze. ... The video works in *Frontier Country* put a human face to a community that has been exploited, dehumanised and ultimately failed time and again. The trilogy forms a nuanced and insightful entry point into the seemingly insurmountable clusterfuck of land redistribution in South Africa and the ability to just survive. In this respect, it is a valuable contribution to the dialogue around land and oppression, one rooted in the lived reality of those suffering. Importantly, it is also not one devoid of optimism and hope, acknowledging a way forward to course-correct the untenable circumstances depicted in *Working the Land*.

'SaLem's Lot', *ArtThrob*, 18 November 2019. <https://artthrob.co.za/2019/11/18/saLem's-Lot-simon-gushs-welcome-to-frontier-country/>

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