

Mongezi Ncaphayi

November 23 – December 18, 2019



Mongezi Ncaphayi, *Metamorphosen III*, 2018, Indian ink, watercolor & acrylic on cotton paper, 70x70 cm

In collaboration with:

START
BY SERGE TIROCHE

Africa First Artist Residency

In 2017, START initiated Africa First, a by invitation residency program in Israel focused on contemporary African artists. Artists are selected by Serge Tiroche based on his research and contacts in the commercial and institutional art world.

Previous artists in the program have included: Cyrus Kabiru from Kenya; Robel Temesgen and Dawit Abebe from Ethiopia; Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, Wycliffe Mundopa, Helen Teede and Terrence Musekiwa from Zimbabwe; Mario Macilau from Mozambique, Isabelle Grobler from South Africa and Sadikou Oukpedjou from Togo and Ivory Coast.

Africa First also arranged a 3-month residency in Addis Ababa for Israeli/Ethiopian artist Nirit Takele, which was followed by an exhibition of her work at Addis Fine Art in London and the 1-54 art fair in New-York.

Africa First Art Prize (AFAP) at Investec Cape Town Art Fair (ICTAF) 2019

The AFAP includes a 1 month fully paid residency in Israel (including stipend) giving an artist the opportunity to extend their art practice and present a solo exhibition at ICTAF in 2020.

The AFAP 2019 winner was selected by an esteemed jury headed by Serge Tiroche. The jury includes the Norval Foundation's chief curator Owen Martin, chief auctioneer and Swiss collector Simon de Pury, Paris-based independent curator and consultant Marie-Ann Yemsi and Nigerian visual and performance artist Wura-Natasha Ogunji. The AFAP Jury is pleased to award **Mongezi Ncaphayi** as the 2019 winner by unanimous decision. Following a debate about the 5 highest ranking proposals, Ncaphayi quickly emerged as the most deserving of the opportunity for a fully funded 1-month residency in Israel.

Applications for the inaugural Africa First Art Prize came from artists with diverse approaches to contemporary artistic practice, both conceptual and material, and from a spectrum between emerging to established. In addition to artistic merit, a number of factors came into the decision, including how the prize could impact or grow an artist's practice and career, the proposal that they submitted (and its feasibility within the constraints of the residency), and the context of the residency itself. After a number of proposals were seriously debated, Mongezi Ncaphayi was unanimously chosen for his sophisticated approach to abstraction, evolving a visual language that isn't often associated with modern and contemporary South African art. In his original in based works on paper, and more rarely on canvas, Mongezi balances improvisation with a considered approach to art making that is based on his extensive print-making experience. Mongezi Ncaphayi is represented by SMAC Gallery in South Africa, who we've collaborated with earlier this year for the residency of Kenyan sculptor/photographer Cyrus Kabiru.

For Press Kit Images and Credits please email office@art-vantage.com



MONGEZI NCAPHAYI

b. 1983, Benoni, South Africa

Lives and works in Johannesburg

Artist Biography

We are thrilled to have the inaugural winner of the Investec Cape Town Art Fair Africa First Prize, Mongezi Ncaphayi, as our artist in residence from November 24 to December 18, 2019.

Following his graduation with a Diploma in Art and Design from the Ekurhuleni East College-Benoni in 2005, Ncaphayi completed a Professional Printmaking Course at Artist Proof Studio in 2008. In 2012, Ncaphayi obtained a Certificate in Advanced Studies from School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, USA. In 2013, Ncaphayi was the recipient of the prestigious Absa L'atelier Gerard Sekoto Award, earning him a three-month residency at the Cite Des Arts in Paris, France. In 2011, Ncaphayi received the Ampersand Foundation Fellowship in New York City, USA, while, in 2016, he was awarded a Prince Claus Fund grant in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Selected artist-in-residency programs include: The Atelier le Grand Village Residency in Angouleme, France, in 2014 and the Thami Manyele Foundation Residency in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 2016.

Ncaphayi has been selected as one of the artists to participate in the upcoming 2020 Stellenbosch Triennale titled *Tomorrow there will be more of us*, curated by Khanyisile Mbongwa; Bernard Akoi-Jackson and Nontobeko Ntombela.

In 2016, Ncaphayi presented his inaugural solo exhibition, *Spirit's Response*, as the 2013 Absa L'Atelier Gerard Sekoto Award-winner, which debuted at the ABSA Art Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa. The exhibition travelled to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU), Port Elizabeth, South Africa; Spin Street Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa; Alliance Française, Pretoria, South Africa; and the KwaZulu Natal Society of the Arts (KZNSA), Durban, South Africa. Ncaphayi has since presented three solo exhibitions with SMAC Gallery: *Journey to the One* in 2016 at SMAC Gallery in Johannesburg; and *Which Way is East?* in 2017 – a large scale exhibition that first showed at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town, and was recreated for an installation at The Vault exhibition space in The Silo District, Cape Town, South Africa.

In 2019, Ncaphayi presented his solo exhibition *Of the seeking or the finding*, at SMAC Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa. SMAC Gallery recently presented his new body of works at ART X Lagos in Lagos, Nigeria.

Selected group exhibitions include: *Filling in the Gaps*, at the Iziko South African National Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa; *The Ampersand Foundation Award 21 years celebration exhibition*, curated by Gordon Froud at the University of Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) in Johannesburg, South Africa; *Print Promises* and at the Iziko South African National Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa and SMAC Gallery's group presentation at the Investec Cape Town Art fair in 2019; *African Amicitiae* at the Arti et Amicitiae Society in association with the Thami Mnyele Foundation in Amsterdam, Netherlands; the 10th World Triennial of Printmaking in Chamalieres, France; and *A Change in the Narrative: ABSA L'Atelier Winners Exhibition*, Absa Art Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa, all in 2017; the 8th International Printmaking Biennale Douro at the Museu do Douro, Peso da Regua, Portugal; and *The Art of Humanity* at the Rubell and Norman Schafner Gallery, Pratt Institute, New York City, USA, both in 2016; *Map of the New Art* at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, Italy; *Back to the Future II: Abstract Art in South Africa – Past & Present* at SMAC Gallery in Stellenbosch, South Africa; and *Imago Mundi: The Art of Humanity* at the Museo Carlo Bilotti in Rome, Italy, all in 2015. Ncaphayi's work was included in *Trans-Atlantic Fun-O-Pack: Print Exchange* at the Edinburgh College of Arts in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 2012, as well as *Reclaiming Lives* at the Boston Arts Academy in Boston, USA, in 2009.

Ncaphayi's work is included in a number of important collections, including: Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington DC, USA; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA; Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), Manchester, USA; School of the Museum of Fine Arts (SMFA), Boston, USA; Thami Mnyele Foundation, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, France; The Ampersand Foundation (TAF), London, UK; ABSA Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa; Luciano Benetton Foundation, Treviso, Italy.

Works by Mongezi Ncaphayi in the Africa First Collection:



Mongezi Ncaphayi, *Memory and Desire I*, 2018, Indian ink, watercolor & acrylic on cotton paper, 76x56.5 cm

Mongezi Ncaphayi, *Memory and Desire II*, 2018, Indian ink, watercolor & acrylic on cotton paper, 76x56.5 cm



Mongezi Ncaphayi, *The Forgotten Ones Are Ahead*, 2016, Indian ink and watercolor on paper, 112x76 cm

Mongezi Ncaphayi, *Wayfaring Field I*, 2018, Indian ink and watercolor on cotton paper, 140x200 cm

Works by Mongezi Ncaphayi created during the Africa First Artist Residency:



Mongezi Ncaphayi, *Perpetual Optimism XVI*, 2019, Indian ink and watercolor on paper, 76x56 cm