

Sifiso Mkhabela to showcase latest body of work at Gallery Fanon

Sifiso Mkhabela will be showcasing his latest body of work, *The Mirror Has Many Faces: Reimagining the Cognitive Power of Culture*, will be on show at the Gallery Fanon in Johannesburg from 25 September to 25 October 2020.



The Mirror Has Many Faces: Reimagining the Cognitive Power of Culture is an ongoing exploration of figurative paintings, mixed media works and drawings that imitate and document the process of Ukugcatjwa – a traditional ceremony of mark-making through incisions and initiation. The narrative lends itself as an expression of the culture shock Mkhabela experienced as a result of having to participate in the rite of passage when he met his Mozambican family for the first time.

The ceremonial process of Ukugcatjwa is normally performed by a healer or a Sangoma, who makes two incisions on the skin with a razor blade laced with a black powdered mixture of medicine. Similarly, Mkhabela's drawings have a texture that is similar to the scars one receives as a result of the ceremonial practice. The markings are black as an expression of the culture shock and are used as a visual metaphor for the artist's experience of cultural displacement.



The female figures that Mkhabela incorporated in the works represent the 'unknown' and 'faceless' female healer that performed his ceremony. Movement conveyed in the figures and their relation to one another symbolise his journey and cultural initiation as a Mozambican located within South Africa.

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