

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum



Biography

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum's (b. 1980, Mochudi, Botswana) work alludes to mythology, geology and theories on the nature of the universe. Her work includes imagery that reflects the diverse genealogies of her experience living in different parts of Africa, Southeast Asia, and the U.S. as well as ongoing research in ethnography, ecology, and quantum physics. The artist's boundary-crossing practice centres Black female identity in the discourse of postcolonialism and neocolonialism, highlighting the contributions of overlooked historical figures while emphasising modes of knowledge and communication beyond the status quo.

In 2024, a major new solo exhibition opened at KM21 Den Haag, including a new large scale diptych painting within an installation that included items from the museum's furniture collection. Sunstrum also presented her first solo exhibition titled 'It Will End in Tears', at a major UK institution, the Barbican Centre's The Curve. Sunstrum took her life-size wood grain panoramas round the bend of the gallery, building a narrativised sequence with elements of film noir, crime fiction and pure drama.

Recent solo exhibitions include: *It Will End In Tears*, Barbican London, UK (2024); *You'll be sorry*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa (2023), *The Pavillion*, London Mithraeum, Bloomberg SPACE, London (2023); *All my seven faces*, Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati (2019); *Michaelis School for the Arts* at the University of Cape Town (2018); *Interlochen Centre for the Arts*, Interlochen (2016).

Group exhibitions and biennales include: *Born in Flames: Feminist Futures*, The Bronx Museum of the Arts NY, USA (2021); *WITNESS: Afro Perspectives from the Jorge M. Pérez Collection*, El Espacio 23, Miami, USA (2020).

Collections include: Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, Hessel Museum at Bard College, New York, A4 Arts Foundation, Cape Town; The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; University of Cape Town, Cape Town; Deutsche Bank Collection, Frankfurt; El Espacio 23, Miami; FRAC des Pays de la Loire Contemporary Collection, Carquefou; University of South Africa (UNISA) Art Collection.

Sunstrum lives and works in The Hague, Netherlands.

Solo Exhibitions

- 2023** *You'll be sorry*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2023** *The Pavilion*, London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE, UK
- 2021** *Panthea*, Goodman Gallery, East Hamptons, NY, USA
- 2020** *Batterycry*, Goodman Gallery, London, UK
- 2019** *All my seven faces*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH, USA
- 2019** *Diorama*, Tiwani Contemporary, London, UK
- 2018** *There are mechanisms in place*, curated by Nomusa Makhubu and Nkule Mabaso, Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town, South Africa
- 2018** *From No Fixed Place*, curated by Nontobeko Ntombela, ICTAF, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2016** *OMPHALOS*, Interlochen Center for the Arts, Interlochen, MI, USA
- 2016** *POLYHEDRA*, Tiwani Contemporary, London, UK
- 2015** *BEACON*, Visual Arts Network of South Africa (VANSA), Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2013** *ab initio*, Davidson College, Davidson, NC, USA
- 2010** *pamelaphatsimosunstrum*, Conduit Gallery, Dallas TX, USA
- 2009** *audax/viator*, Arlington Arts Centre, Arlington, VA, USA
- 2009** *see you again*, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA, USA
- 2009** *Soft Animal*, Minstallation Gallery, Baltimore, MD, USA

Group Exhibitions

- 2021** *Greater Toronto Art 2021*, Museum of Contemporary Art Toronto, Canada
- 2020** *Did you ever think there would come a time?*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, SA
- 2020** *Witness: Afro Perspectives from the Jorge M. Pérez Collection*, Miami, FL, USA
- 2020** *Born in Flames: Feminist Futures*, Bronx Museum, NY, USA
- 2020** *UBUNTU*, Five rooms from the Harry David Art Collection, National Museum of Contemporary Art Athens, EMST
- 2019** *Multiple Transmissions: Art in the Afropolitan Age*, curated by Sandrine Colard-de, Wiels Contemporary Art Center, Brussels, Belgium
- 2019** *History is His Story*, curated by Heske ten Cat, Nest, The Hague, Netherlands
- 2019** *Fly me to the moon*, curated by Christina Penetsdorfer, Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Kunsthaus Zürich

2018 *Women on Aeroplanes*, curated by The Otolith Group, Emily Pethick, and Elvira Dyangani Ose, The Showroom, London, UK
2018 *Earth and Everything* (contribution to the International Artist-in-Residence exhibition), curated by Jeffreen Hayes, Artpace, San Antonio, TX, USA
2018 *The World on Paper*, Deutsche Bank Collection, Palais Populaire, Berlin, Germany
2018 *Carry Over: New Voices from the Global African Diaspora*, curated by Kalia Brooks, Smack Mellon, New York, NY, USA
2018 *Drawing In / Drawing Out*, curated by Magnolia Laurie, Phillips Museum of Art, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA, USA
2017 *A Continent Beyond*, Gallery Momo, Cape Town, South Africa
2017 *What do they call me*, Gallery Momo, Johannesburg, South Africa
2017 *Dedication to Freedom*, Nirox Winter Sculpture Fair, curated by Same Mdluli, Johannesburg, South Africa
2016 *Afronaut(a) 4.0*, DVD Magazine, curated by Alisha Wormsley, premier at VIA at Kelly Strayhorn Theater
2016 *Cinamatek Brussels*, 'Seeing in the dark', curated by Anouk De Clercq, Art Brussels 2016, Belgium
2016 1:54 Film Programme, 1:54 Art Fair, Somerset House, London, UK
2016 *Surface/Subtext*, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2015 *Territories*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Commune 1 Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2015 *Fantastic*, curated by Nomusa Makhubu and Nkule Mabaso, Michaelis Galleries, University of Cape Town
2015 *Post African Futures*, curated by Tegan Bristow, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2015 *Mythopoeia*, Tiwani Gallery, London, UK
2015 *Venturing Out of the Heart of Darkness*, curated by Rehema Barber, Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts+Culture, USA
2014 *Survey*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Brundyn+Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
2014 *de-con-structure*, with Leanne Shakenovsky, In Toto Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2014 *Double Feature*, with Kim Anno, curated by Joshua Goode, Tarrant County College, Texas, USA
2013 *Before being asked by the machine*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Room Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2013 *Space Station All-Stars*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Ithuba Art Gallery, Braamfontein, Johannesburg, South Africa
2013 *Spectacular/Spectaculaire*, curated by Nontobeko Ntombela, FRAC De Pays de la Loire, Carquefou, France
2013 *Kauru Africa Day Exhibition 2*, curated by Melissa Goba and Euridice Kala, Pretoria Art Museum, South Africa
2013 *Youth Day Exhibition*, curated by Murray Turpin and Matthew Dean, Constitution Hill Women's Prison Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2013 *Kauru Africa Day Exhibition 1*, curated by Nontobeko, Sandton Art Space, Johannesburg, South Africa
2012 Havana Biennial, exhibition curated by Andrea Barnwell-Brownlee and Valerie Cassel-Oliver, Cuba, Havana
2011 *Feed your head: The African Origins of the Scientific Aesthetic*, curated by Kalia Brooks, Museum of Contemporary African Diaspora Art (MoCADA), Brooklyn, NY, USA
2011 *Paperwork*, curated by Nina Chanel Abney, Kravets-Wehby Gallery, New York, NY, USA
2011 *I know you're looking*, curated by Lowery Stokes-Sims, School 33 Gallery, Baltimore, MD, USA
2011 *Once upon a time*, curated by Laura Amussen, Silber Gallery, Goucher University, Towson, MD, USA
2011 *Glossolalia 5.0*, curated by Cauleen Smith, The Kitchen, New York, NY, USA
2010 *DeLineate: Invitational Drawing Exhibition*, University of South Carolina, SC, USA
2010 *Emva Kwe Sporo (Over the Railway)*, Becomo Arts Centre, Soweto, South Africa
2010 *Glassheart*, Point Blank Gallery, Drill Hall, Johannesburg, South Africa
2010 *Tactics of Desire*, Bag Factory Studios, Johannesburg, South Africa
2010 *First Person*, curated by Kalia Brooks, Sarah Lawrence College Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY, USA
2009 *astro.nautic*, with Torkwase Dyson, curated by Jed Dodds, Creative Alliance, Baltimore MD, USA
2009 *Losing Yourself*, curated by Cathy Byrd and Jillian Hernandez, Georgia State University, Atlanta GA, and Maryland Art Place, Baltimore MD, USA
2009 *Summer Guest House*, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
2009 *If I didn't Care*, curated by Rick Delaney, Park School of Baltimore, Baltimore, MD, USA
2009 *To the teeth*, Creative Alliance, Baltimore, MD, USA
2008 *Cinema Remixed and Reloaded: Black Women Artists and the Moving Image since 1970*, curated by Valerie Cassel Oliver and Andrea Barnwell-Brownlee, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX, and Spelman College Museum of Art (2007), Atlanta, GA, USA
2008 *Never has she ever*, curated by Latoya Frazier, Mason Gross School of the Arts, New Brunswick, NJ, USA
2008 *Peekskill Project*, Hudson Valley Centre for Contemporary Art, Peekskill, NY, USA
2008 *Off Color*, curated by Kalia Brooks and Hank Willis Thomas, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY, and Diaspora Vibe Gallery (2007), Miami, FL, USA
2008 *Sondheim Prize Semi-finalist Show*, Meyerhoff Gallery, MICA, Baltimore, MD, USA
2008 *Solid Gold*, Vox Populi Gallery, Philadelphia, PA, USA
2007 *Time-based media invitational*, curated by Lia Newman, ArtSpace, Raleigh, NC, USA
2007 *Hyphenation*, curated by Jackie Milad Union Gallery, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA
2007 *New InSight*, curated by Suzanne Ghez, Art Chicago 2007, Chicago, IL, USA
2007 *a spectacle and nothing strange*, Fox3 Gallery, MICA, Baltimore, MD, USA **2006** *pulp*, Fox4 Gallery, MICA, Baltimore, MD, USA
2006 "(which is kind of interesting)", Fox3 Gallery, MICA, Baltimore, MD, USA

Curated Exhibitions

2014 *COMPENDIUM*, co-curated with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Ithuba Arts Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2010 *Emva kwe sporo (Over the railway)*, Becomo Art Centre, Soweto, South Africa
2008 *PepperPot: Multi-media Installation, Meaning and the Medium in Contemporary African Diaspora Art*, Brown Gallery Museum at the Sonja Haynes Stone Centre for Black Culture and History, USA
2007 *Fantastic*, Spin Alternative Art Space, Elkridge, MD, USA

Teaching, Lectureships and Workshop

2019 *'To consent not to be a single being.'* Great Texts/Big Questions Lecture Series, Institute for Creative Arts, University of Cape Town, South Africa
2018 *An evening exploring African futurism, migration, images and words*, in collaboration with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, moderated by Marietta Kesting, Hopscotch Reading Room, Berlin, Germany
2018 *THE DISRUPTER X PROJECT*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, PALA Lab, Berlin, Germany
2015 *Leaping Out: Landscape, Becoming-Revolutionary and the Yet-To-Be*, presentation at African Futures Conference, Goethe Institute, Johannesburg
2014 *Imagining the Future is Radical: Activating the future in contemporary African performance and new media art*, presented at the VAD Future Africa Conference, Bayreuth, Germany
2013 *Contemporary Art Practices in South Africa*, Public Lecture Series, Wits Art Museum University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
2013 *Afro Sci Fi and Mythology in Studio Research*, Refiguring Women Series, Goethe Institute, Johannesburg, South Africa
2013 *Afro-mythology, African Futurism and the Politics of Imagining the Future*, Centre for the Creative Arts of Africa Seminar Series, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
2012 *"State of the Arts: Contemporary Arts Practices in Botswana and the African Diaspora"*, presented at the Office of the President, Gaborone, Botswana
2011 *"Feed Your Head: African Origins of the Scientific Aesthetic,"* panellist, Museum of Contemporary African Diaspora Artists, New York, USA

- 2011** *"Intersecting Arts"*, panellist, JHU Film Fest, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA
2010 *"Art and Reflection: New Narratives and Reinterpretations"*, panellist, Brandywine Workshop Arts Lecture Series, Philadelphia, USA
2010 *"Losing Yourself in the 21st Century,"* panellist, Maryland Art Place, Baltimore, USA
2007 *"Race, Representation and the Moving Image,"* panellist, "Cinema Remixed and Reloaded: Black Women Artists and the Moving Image Since 1970" Exhibition, Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, Atlanta, USA

Awards and Merits

- 2018** Canada Council for the Arts, International Residency Grant
2018 SSHRC Research Opportunity Grant, York University, Toronto, Canada
2018 SSHRC Minor Research Grant, York University, Toronto, Canada
2018 York University YUFA Travel Grant
2010 Brandywine Prints Workshop Young Artist Fellowship, Philadelphia, PA, USA
2010 Creative Alliance Multi Media Resources Project Grant, Baltimore, MD, USA
2010 Brenner Faculty Grant for Professional Development, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, USA
2009 Full Fellowship Recipient, Vermont Studio Centre, VT, USA
2007 Full Fellowship Recipient, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, ME, USA

Academic Record and Residencies

- 2007** Master of Fine Arts, Mount Royal School of Multidisciplinary Art, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore MD, USA
2004 BA International Studies with Highest Honours (concentration in Transnational Cultures), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill NC, USA
2019 Gallery Momo Artist Residency, Johannesburg, South Africa
2018 PALA Lab, Berlin, Germany
2018 ArtPace International Artist Residency, San Antonio, TX, USA
2016 Interlochen Center for the Arts, Interlochen, MI, USA
2014 Iwalewahaus, Mashup The Archive Artist Residency, Bayreuth, Germany
2013 FRAC International Residency, FRAC des Pays de la Loire, Carquefou, France
2012 Main Street Life Artist Exchange, Johannesburg, South Africa
2010 Brandywine Prints Workshop Residency, Philadelphia, PA, USA
2010 Becomo Arts Centre, Soweto, South Africa
2010 Bag Factory Studios, Johannesburg, South Africa
2009 Vermont Studio Centre, Johnson, VT, USA
2008 Creative Alliance (3-year live/work residency), Baltimore, MD, USA
2007 Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME, USA
2003 Taller Portobelo Artist's Colony, Portobelo, Panama

Collections

- Deutsche Bank Collection, Frankfurt, Germany
 FRAC des Pays de la Loire Contemporary Collection, Carquefou, France
 University of South Africa (UNISA) Art Collection, Pretoria, South Africa
 12 Decades Hotel Main Street Life Collection, Johannesburg, South Africa

Publications

- 2016** *Leaping Out: Landscape, Becoming-Revolutionary, and the Yet-to-Be: in AFRICAN FUTURES*, ed. Sean O'Toole, published by Goethe Institute Johannesburg and Kerber
2014 *'Disrupters, This is Disrupter X: Mashing up the archive,'* with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi in *Technoetic Arts*, Volume 12, Numbers 2-3, December 2014, pp. 293-307(15)
2013 *Afro-mythology and African Futurism: The politics of imagining the future and methodologies for contemporary creative research practices*. In *Paradoxa Journal*. Volume 24. 2013.
2008 *PepperPot: Multi-media Installation, Meaning and the Medium in Contemporary African Diasporic Art*; Contributor and Editor, exhibition catalogue; The Brown Gallery and Museum at the Sonja Haynes Stone Centre for Black Culture and History; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2005 *Como se cuenta el cuento: How the Story is Told*; Editor, exhibition catalogue; The Brown Gallery and Museum at the Sonja Haynes Stone Centre for Black Culture and History; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2005 *Letters from Home: The Work of Michael D. Harris*; Contributor and Editor, exhibition catalogue; The Brown Gallery and Museum at the Sonja Haynes Stone Centre for Black Culture and History; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Performances

- 2015** *NOTES FROM THE ANCIENTS: THE DISRUPTER X PROJECT*, in collaboration with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
2014 *DISRUPTERS, THIS IS DISRUPTER X*, in collaboration with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Iwalewahaus Archive, University of Bayreuth, Germany
2013 *IF YOU DO IT RIGHT*, in collaboration with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, L'etage Honolulu, Nantes, France
2010 *A Small(ish) Opera*, a solo performance at Creative Alliance, Baltimore MD, USA