

# Sam Nhlengethwa



## Biography

Sam Nhlengethwa (b. 1955, Payneville, Springs) part of a pioneering generation of late 20th century South African artists whose work reflects the sociopolitical history and everyday life of their country. Through his paintings, collages and prints Nhlengethwa has depicted the evolution of Johannesburg through street life, interiors, jazz musicians and fashion.

Nhlengethwa was born in the Black township community of Payneville near Springs (a satellite mining town east of Johannesburg), in 1955 and grew up in Ratanda location in nearby Heidelberg. In the 1980s, he moved to Johannesburg where he honed his practice at the renowned Johannesburg Art Foundation under its founder Bill Ainslie. Nhlengethwa is one of the founders of the legendary Bag Factory, in Newtown, in the heart of the Johannesburg CBD, where he used to share studio space with fellow greats of this pioneering generation of South African artists, such as David Koloane and Pat Mautloa.

In 2014, a major survey exhibition, titled *Life, Jazz and Lots of Other Things*, was hosted by SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah, Georgia, which was then co-hosted in Atlanta by SCAD and the Carter Center.

Nhlengethwa's practice features in important arts publications, such as Phaidon's *The 20th Century Art Book* (2001).

Other notable exhibitions and accolades in South Africa and around the world include: in 1994 – the year South Africa held its first democratic elections – Nhlengethwa was awarded the prestigious Standard Bank Young Artist of the Year award; in 1995, his work was included in the Whitechapel Gallery's *Seven Stories About Modern Art in Africa* in London; in 2000, he participated in a two-man show at Seippel Art Gallery in Cologne.

Group exhibitions include: *Constructions: Contemporary Art from South Africa*, Museu de Arte Contemporanea de Niteroi, Brazil (2011); *Beyond Borders: Global Africa*, University of Michigan Museum of Art, Michigan (2018).

Biennales include: 6th Beijing Biennale in (2015); 55th Venice Biennale, as part of the South African Pavilion, titled *Imaginary Fact: Contemporary South African Art and the Archive* (2013); 12th International Cairo Biennale (2010); 8th Havana Biennale (2003); *Southern African Stories: A Print Collection*, CCA (Caribbean Contemporary Arts), Trinidad (2002).

Collections include: Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Durban Art Gallery (DAG), Iziko South African National Art Gallery (ISANG), Standard Bank's Head Office, Absa, Botswana Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, amongst many in South Africa and abroad.

Nhlengethwa lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa.

## Solo Exhibitions

- 2023** *Art Meets Fashion*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2021** *Jazz and Blues at night*, Goodman Gallery, London, UK
- 2020** *Interiors continued*, Goodman Gallery, London, UK
- 2019** *Joburg Selected*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2018** *Waiting*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2019** *Leeto: Print retrospective*, Wits Art Museum, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2017** *IN FOCUS: SAM NHLENGETHWA*, The University of Michigan Museum, Michigan, USA
- 2016** *The Past and The Present ... Now is The Time*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2014** *Life, Jazz and Lots of Other Things*, Gallery 1600, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
- 2014** *Life, Jazz and Lots of Other Things*, SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia, USA
- 2014** *Life, Jazz and Lots of Other Things*, Trois Gallery, Atlanta, USA
- 2012** *Conversations*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2010** *Kind of Blue*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2008** *Tributes*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2006** *Townships Re-visited*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2005** *Sam Nhlengethwa*, Axis Gallery, New York, USA
- 2004** *Glimpses of the fifties and sixties*, Florence Lynch Gallery, Chelsea, New York, USA
- 2004** *Sam Nhlengethwa* Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2004** *Sam Nhlengethwa*, Joao Ferreira Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2002** *All that Jazz*, Kubatana Moderne Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
- 2001** *Jozi People*, Goodman Gallery, Hyde Park, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1998** *Interiors*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa

**1996** *Mine Trip*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1995** *Senegalese Images*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1994-1995** *Homage to Jazz*, Standard Bank Young Artist Award travelling show, South Africa  
**1993** *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, Market Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1993** *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, NSA Gallery, Durban, South Africa  
**1990** *Cassirer Fine Art* (with guest Daniel Phaladi), Johannesburg, South Africa

## Group Exhibitions

\*2024\*\_Translations: Afro-Asian Poetics, curated by Dr Zoe Whitley, The Institutuum, Singapore  
**2018** *TRANS*, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2018** *BEYOND BORDERS: GLOBAL AFRICA*, The University of Michigan Museum, Michigan, USA  
**2018** *Talking to Deaf Ears*, ABSA Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2018** *SEEING NOW*, 21c Museum Hotel, Nashville, USA  
**2018** *Afriques...*, *Artist of Yesterday and Today*, Clément Foundation, Martinique  
**2017** *A labour of Love*, Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2017** *South Africa: The Art of a Nation*, British Museum, London, United Kingdom  
**2016** *New Revolutions: Goodman Gallery at 50*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2014** *Contemporary Art / South Africa at Yale University Art Gallery*, Standard Bank Gallery, South Africa  
**2013** *My Joburg*, La Maison Rouge, Paris, France  
**2013** *Imaginary Fact: Contemporary South African Art and the Archive*, South African Pavilion, 55th la Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy  
**2011** *constructions Contemporary Art from South Africa*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Niterói, Brazil  
**2010** \_12th International Cairo Biennale, Cairo, Egypt  
**2009** *Strengths and Convictions: The lives and times of South Africa's Nobel Peace Prize laureates, Albert Luthuli, Desmond Tutu, F.W. de Klerk, Nelson Mandela*, Iziko SA National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2006** *Faces to Names*, Alliance Francaise, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2006** *Sam Nhlengethwa: Black Goats: Art on Paper*, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2006** *From Apartheid to Democracy: The Freedom Struggle in South Africa and the American South*, Jimmy Carter Presidential Museum, Atlanta, USA  
**2005** *Unity Series*, The World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland  
**2004** *New Identities – Contemporary South African Art*, Museum Bochum, Germany  
**2004** *POST – Contemporary South African photography*, Tama Art University Museum, Tokyo, Japan  
**2004** *In a City*, collaboration with Andrew Tshabangu, Bag Factory Artists Studios, Fordsburg, South Africa  
**2003** *Southern African Stories: A Print Collection*, Centre for Contemporary Art in the Fernandes Industrial Centre, Laventille, Trinidad and Tobago  
**2003** *Florence Lynch Gallery*, Chelsea, New York, USA  
**2003** \_8th Havana Bienale, Cuba  
**2002** *Towards new Cultures*, Trevi Exhibition Area, Bolzano, Italy.  
**2002** *South African Art from 1850 to 2002*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg South Africa  
**2002** *African & African American Shared Understanding Project*, Atlanta, Georgia, USA  
**2002** *Ubuntu*, Malaysia  
**2001** *The Art Salon*, Bay Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2001** *Sam meets Zwelethu*, collaboration with Zwelethu Mthethwa, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2000** *Artlook South Africa*, Gahlberg Gallery, College of DuPage, Chicago, USA  
**2000** *The Art Salon*, Bay Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2000** *Project Conflux*, touring exhibition started in Cape Town, South Africa  
**2000** *Two-man show with Zwelethu Mthethwa*, Seippel Art Gallery, Cologne, Germany  
**2000** *South African Trade Exhibition*, Mauritius  
**2000** *Artery*, Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2000** *The Art Salon*, Bay Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa  
**1999** *Fast Forward za*, Van Reekum Museum, Apeldoorn, Netherlands  
**1998** *Netherlands Architecture Institute*, Rotterdam, Netherlands  
**1998** *The Art Salon*, Bay Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa  
**1997** *Cross Over*, Johannesburg to Nantes, Nantes, France  
**1995** *Africa 95*, Whitechapel, London, UK  
**1990** *Thupelo Show*, FUBA Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1990** Goodman Gallery, Hyde Park, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1989** *Thupelo Show*, FUBA Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1989** *Two-man show with Gerard Sekoto*, Cassirer Fine Art, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1988** *Cassirer Fine Art*, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1987** *Thupelo Show*, The Art Foundation, South Africa  
**1987** *Two-man show with Madi Phala*, Fuba Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1986** *Thupelo Show*, FUBA Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1985** *Tributaries*, Africana Museum, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1984** *FUBA Gallery*, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1983** *Shell Gallery*, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**1981** *Civic Centre*, Kwa Thema, Springs, South Africa  
**1981** *Haenggi Gallery*, Johannesburg, South Africa

## Teaching, Lectureships and Workshop

**2001** *Lines of Connection*, an MTN Art Institute project – exhibiting and facilitating education workshops for students, Douala, Cameroon  
**2000** *College of DuPage*, lecturer and conducted workshops, Glen Ellyn, Chicago, USA  
**2000** *MTN Art Institute Community project*, Conducted art workshops, South Africa  
**1992** *FUBA*, part time teacher, Johannesburg, South Africa

## Professional Appointments and Consultation

**2004** *Triangle Workshop* with Sir Robert Loder, London, England  
**2003** *Matric Art Seminar project*, illustrated lectures to Art & Design students, PE  
**2003** *Technikon and Rhodes University*, Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown, South Africa

- 2002** *Johannesburg Art City exhibition, Wall Project* (part of the WSSD), Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2002** *MTN Art Institute art competition judging in schools*, South Africa
- 2001** *Gerard Sekoto Foundation project in partnership with Mamelodi Heritage Foundation*, De Beers and Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria, South Africa
- 2000** *Participant in filming of Afro-Cuban Connection documentary*, Havana, Cuba
- 2000** *Secure the Future*, a Bristol Myers Squibb art project to promote HIV/AIDS research, Johannesburg, South Africa

## Conference and Workshop Participation

- 2000** *Gerard Sekoto Foundation Community project*, Mural workshops, Northern Province and Sophiatown, South Africa
- 1994** *TENQ African Workshop – Senegal*, West Africa

## Awards and Merits

- 1996** *First National Bank Vita Awards Nominee*, First National Bank, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1994** *First National Bank Vita Awards nominee*, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1993** *Bertrams VO Art for Africa Finalist*, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1993** *Standard Bank Young Artist Award Winner for 1994*, Standard Bank, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1992** *Delfina Studio Trust Summer Award*, London, UK
- 1992** *AA Vita Awards Nominee*, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1991** *AA Vita Awards Nominee*, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1988** *AA Vita Awards Nominee*, Johannesburg, South Africa

## Academic Record and Residencies

- 2017** *Southern African Foundation for Contemporary Art (SAFFCA)*, Saint Emilion, France
- 1976-1977** *Johannesburg Art Foundation*, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1977-1978** *Diploma*, Rorkes Drift Art Centre, Natal, South Africa

## Collections

- Museum of Fine Arts Houston, USA
- World Bank, USA
- Botswana Art Museum, Botswana
- Mobil Court, Cape Town, South Africa
- Anglo American, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Sasol, Johannesburg, South Africa
- GENCOR, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Standard Bank Head Office, Johannesburg, South Africa
- BMW, Pretoria, South Africa
- Mercedes-Benz, Johannesburg, South Africa
- TELKOM, South Africa
- ABSA, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Nedcor, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Mandela Foundation, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Johannesburg Stock Exchange, Johannesburg, South Africa
- SA Broadcasting Corporation, Auckland Park, Johannesburg, South Africa
- DaimlerChrysler Headquarters, Pretoria, South Africa
- Millennium Consolidated Investment, Sandton
- Durban Art Gallery, Durban, South Africa
- Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Tatham Art Gallery, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa
- Private collections in South Africa and abroad

## Selected Articles and Reviews

- 2018** *Anstey, G, Sam Nhlengethwa's art looks to explore the 'light spent in limbo'*, Sunday Times, 4 November
- 2018** *Ndlovu, B, 'I think that I was ahead of my time' – Sam Nhlengethwa, Artist*, 702, 27 May
- 2013** *Brent Meersman, An Imperfect Past and Its Impact on the Present*, Mail & Guardian, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1999** *The Money Standard, Vol 1, Issue 4*, p26
- 1997** *Vuka SA, Volume 2, Issue 3*
- 1996** *Williams, M., Jazz Heritage. Vol 4., Oxford University Press. p16-17*
- 1988** *Younge, G, Leadership, 'The Next Million Years', Vol 7, Issue 5, NAIL, Johannesburg, p 58-65*