

2001.01.28

BREAST COVER (MID 1940s)

SOUTH AFRICA

894.952
20
Donation

SOUTH EAST AFRICAN BEADWORK

1850-1910

FROM ADORNMENT TO ARTEFACT TO ART



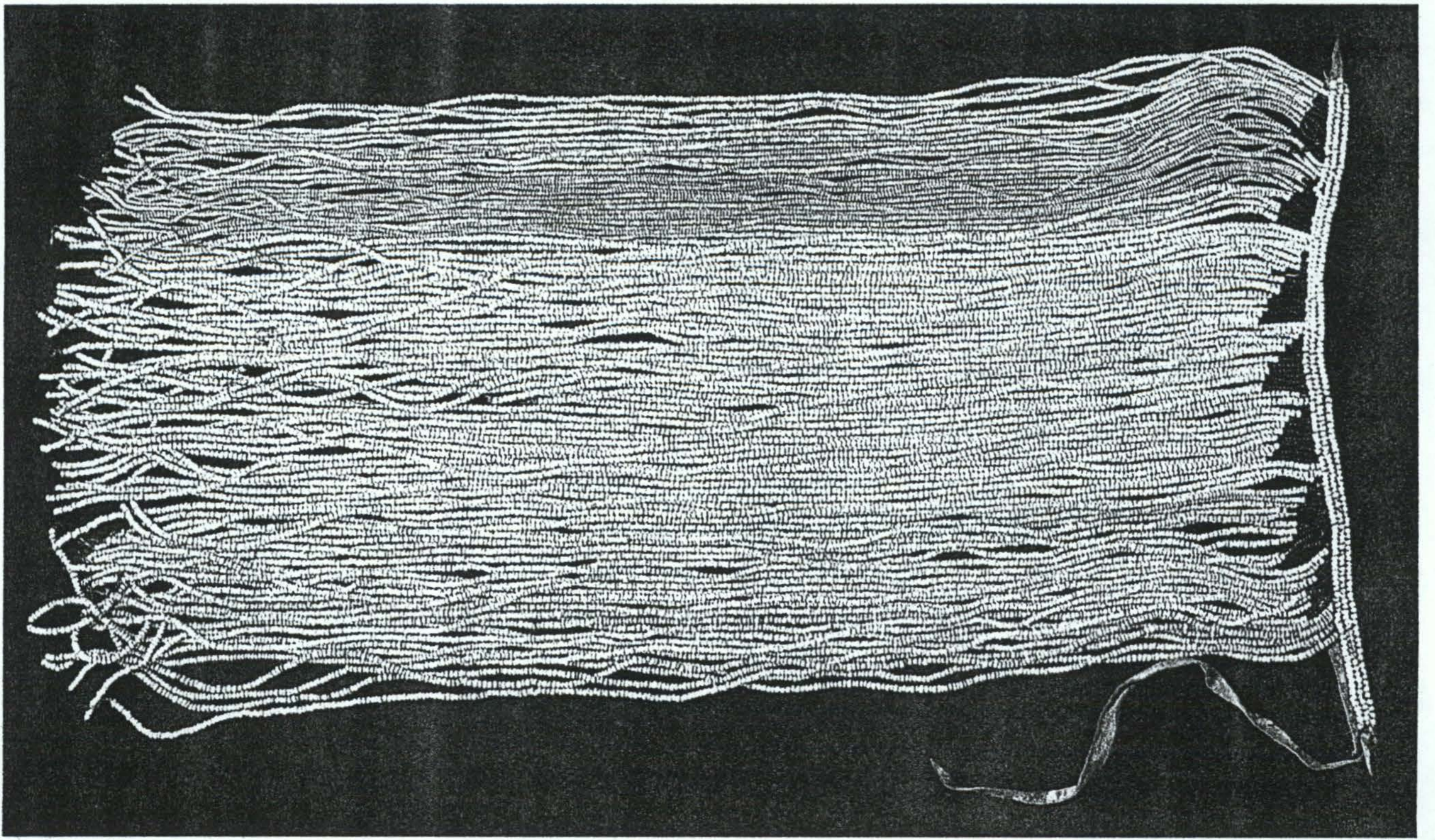
EDITED BY MICHAEL STEVENSON
AND MICHAEL GRAHAM-STEWART
WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY
BY SANDRA KLOPPER


FERNWOOD
PRESS



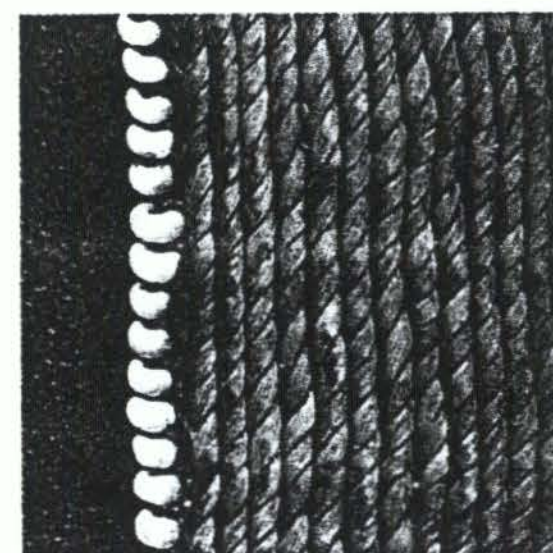
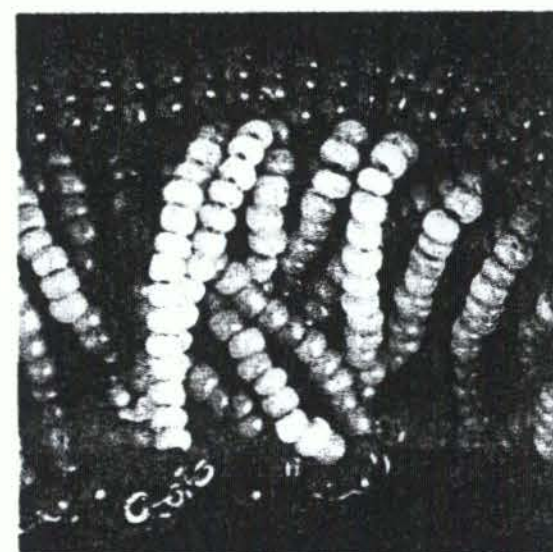
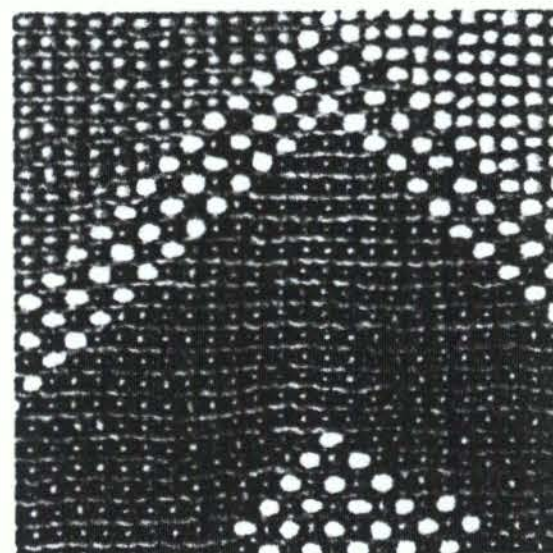
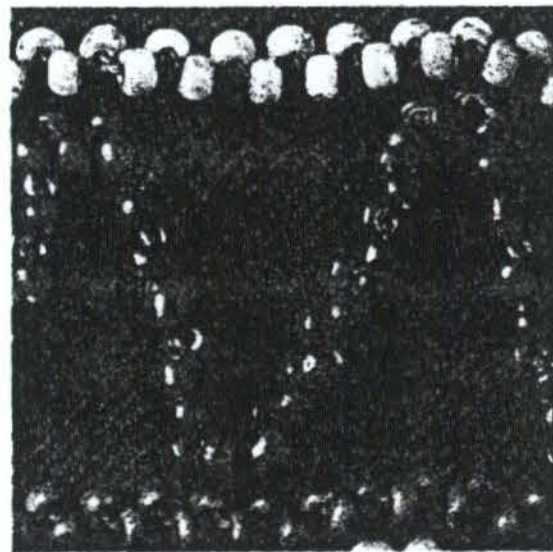
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2001-01-28



SOUTH-EAST AFRICAN BEADWORK 1850-1910

Use of terms



Specific group identities have been ascribed to individual beadwork items where these are known. In most cases, however, it is neither possible, nor is it appropriate, to resort to designations of this kind. Most of the beadwork pieces listed in the catalogue have therefore simply been labelled 'North Nguni' or 'South Nguni' and, in a few cases, 'Drakensberg region'. 'Nguni' is the generic term adopted by academics in the 1930s to describe the communities that historically had inhabited the region from Swaziland to the eastern Cape. In keeping with this classificatory system, 'North Nguni' is used here to refer to groups residing in Swaziland, the Zulu kingdom, and the Colony of Natal, while the term 'South Nguni' encompasses the Xhosa-speaking groups that settled further south. The designation 'Drakensberg region' has been adopted for some beadwork pieces in the interest of avoiding a false sense of certainty regarding interactions between the various communities that either settled permanently, or moved in and out of this region during the course of the 19th century.

The description of each piece is limited to form and function, where known. Because many pieces could have been worn by either a man or a woman, references to gender have in almost all instances been avoided.

The term 'late 19th century' is used to cover the period circa 1880-1910.

The dimensions of each piece are approximate because of their often irregular size. Height is given before width in all instances except waistbands and belts where length is given before width.

right:

1. South Nguni
Beaded breast-cover
mid 19th century
69 x 37cm

cf. M. Carey, *Beads and beadwork of Eastern South Africa*, 1986, p. 33; and E.M. Sha N.J. van Warmelo, 'Material culture of the Nguni', *Annals of the S.A. Museum*, vol. p. 535, pl. 80(6), and p. 605, pl. 96(2). See pl. no. 1 for late 19th-century photographs of women wearing similar breast-covers

GJMC: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
GJMC: COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

**METROPOLITAN SPORT, ART, CULTURE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
METROPOLITAN ARTS & CULTURE DEVELOPMENT & FACILITIES**

Strategic Thrust: Communications & Marketing

Nature of Report: Proposal for Implementation

DONATION OF WORKS OF ART 2001.01.26 —

PURPOSE OF REPORT 2001.01.48

To acknowledge a donation of works of art to the Johannesburg Art Gallery.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on 10 November 2000, the Art Gallery Committee recommended that the following works of art be accepted into the Gallery's permanent collection:

Donor: Anglo American Johannesburg Centenary Trust

Artist/Community	Title/Object	Medium
26 Langa, Moshekwa`	<i>Here to stay</i> , 2000	Mixed media on paper
27 Murray, Brett	Maquette for <i>Africa</i> , 1998 Edition: 5/15	Enamel on bronze
28 South Nguni ✓	Breast cover, mid 19thC	Beads, leather
29 Drakensburg ✓	Cloth, second half 19thC	Cloth, beads, thread
30 South Sotho ✓	Beaded bag, late 19thC	Leather, beads
31 South Sotho ✓	Waistband, late 19thC	Beads, ?leather
32 North Nguni ✓	Two-roll waistband and fringed apron panel, late 19thC	Beads, grass
33 North Nguni ✓	Five-roll waistband, late 19thC	Beads, grass
34 Hlubi ✓	Panel, early 20th century	Leather, beads
35 South Sotho ✓	Bag, late 19th century	Beads, thread
36 Northern Nguni ✓	Snuff container, late 19thC	Beads, chrysalis
37 Nguni ✓	Hairpin, late 19th century	Bone, hair, beads
38 Nguni ✓	Hairpin, late 19th century	Bone, hair, beads
39 Nguni ✓	Hairpin, late 19th century	Bone, hair, beads
40 Nguni ✓	Hairpin, late 19th century	Bone, hair, beads
41 Nguni ✓	Hairpin, late 19th century	Bone, hair, beads

/Mpondo...

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Artist/Community	Title/Object	Medium
42 Mpondo ✓	Fertility figure pendant, early 20thC	Beads, thread
43 Mpondo ✓	Fertility figure pendent, early 20thC	Beads, thread
44 Swazi ✓	Fertility figure, late 19th century	Beads, horsehair
45 Swazi ✓	Fertility figure, late 19th century	Beads, horsehair
46 North Nguni ✓	Skirt, late 19th century	Cloth, beads
47 North Nguni ✓	Waistband, late 19th century (4 roll)	Leather, beads, thread, brass bells
48 North Nguni ✓	Shoulder piece, late 19th century	Beads, thread

Moshekwa Langa (born 19 August 1975, Bakenberg, Potgietersrus) matriculated from the Max Stibbe Waldorf School Project, Pretoria in 1993. He participated at the Rijksakademie voor Beeldende Kunst, Amsterdam between 1997 and 1998. He has held numerous solo shows since 1995 and has participated in numerous group exhibitions in South Africa and abroad since 1995. This exhibition, *Another time, another place...* consists of a series of drawings with underpainted backgrounds, some bright and colourful and some sombre and dark. The overpainted texts (I am so sorry; Where were you; Here to stay) are the artist's reflections in state of dejection or self revulsion, alluding to his mental state, spectres of the past, the mapping of his experiences of life, his alienation and remoteness from his rural roots and previous life, his altered consciousness as he now lives and works in a European milieu, as an openly gay person, the dislocation of his life over the last few years. The paintings also allude to his feeling of alienation and loneliness in Amsterdam, with no roots, no family backing, his fear of AIDS and gay sex, of love and death caught up in a sameness which is part of his psyche. He talks of using mapping devices of erasure, annotation, immediate recording of impulse as a way to control and possess his own identity which is fleeting, which moves and transforms all the time. He refuses to be classified as a gay or black artist from Africa and these drawings are a way of making his audience set aside their preconceptions and to acknowledge the multiple influences on his and the work of other contemporary African artists.

/Brett...

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Brett Murray (b 22 December 1961) completed a MFA (Sculpture) at the University of Cape Town in 1989. He tutored, taught and lectured between 1983 and 1995. He has participated in many solo and group exhibitions since 1985 both locally and abroad. Murray uses a West African fetish figure on which bright yellow stylised heads of American cartoon anti-hero Bart Simpson grow. In 1999 Murray won the 2nd Cape Town Urban Arts Foundation Sculpture Competition with this maquette. The completed sculpture, *Africa*, stands in St George's Mall, Cape Town. The sculpture comments on the colonisation of contemporary Africa by America, or the positive cross-pollination which is taking place along the theme of multi-culturalism.

The collection of mid-19th century to early 20th century beadwork is undoubtedly one of the most superb collections the Gallery has been offered in recent years. Much of this material was removed from this country in the late 19th century by missionaries, travellers and explorers and ended up in European private collections and museums. Many items were also removed by British soldiers who fought in the Anglo-Zulu War (1879) and the South African Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). Some of this history is documented in the catalogue accompanying the collection.

The Art Gallery Committee and curators have made a selection of items which the Gallery wishes to acquire. The selection was based on acquiring the most important pieces from the collection on offer, filling gaps in and adding depth to the Gallery's collection. The Gallery's collection of beadwork consists mainly of 20th century pieces. While there are some fine and important pieces which the Gallery owns, items selected from the Stevenson/Graham-Stewart Collection will strengthen the 19th century collection and fill gaps in terms of making the collection more representative of all the indigenous people of this country.

The South Nguni beaded breast cover (1) will be the first example in the Gallery's collection. These are well documented in early photographs and will add an important dimension to the collection. The Drakensburg region beaded cloth (38) is one of the most important pieces offered. The beaded design is unusual and there is only one similar blanket in the Gallery's collection which is from the Eastern Cape region. The Gallery does not own a significant collection of South Sotho objects, therefore the beaded leather bag (39), the fringed waistband (49) and bag (63) are important in terms of filling gaps. The North Nguni bag (52) will enhance the existing small collection. The South Sotho bags will be interesting to study alongside the North Nguni bags in the collection and will be valuable additions. Although the Gallery has a number of belts, the design of the North Nguni belt (55) is very fine. The waistband with apron (52) is an unusual design and complements the belt (55).

/There....

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There is nothing in the collection identified as Hlubi and there is a need to address this area as they are one of the indigenous groups of people which need to be represented in the collection. Therefore, the acquisition of the beaded leather-backed panel (59) is important.

The Gallery has snuff containers but none made from a chrysalis (most are from gourds). This North Nguni one (94) is therefore very interesting - what is also interesting is that it was worn around the neck as a necklace.

The Gallery has a collection of hairpins but none are in such excellent condition as items 101 - 105. These are most beautifully decorated and will add depth and beauty to the collection. They are increasingly rare as they are not produced today and therefore not commonly found.

The Mpondo fertility figures are important to acquire as these are most unusual and rare. Also unusual and rare are the Swazi fertility figures (the Gallery acquired one from Graham-Stewart some years ago) which will add depth to the collection. The acquisition of the four fertility figures will enhance the Gallery's holdings, enable comparisons to be made, and is important for future research in terms of the form that these figures take. They are not easily found and it is strongly recommended that the Gallery acquire all four of these objects.

The Gallery has a number of Tsonga/Shangaan skirts, mainly worn by mature women. The North Nguni beaded skirt (120) will be the first such skirt in the collection and furthermore appears to be the skirt of a young girl, making it even more desirable in terms of adding this dimension to the collection.

The North Nguni four roll waistband with back and front aprons is most unusual in design and is of superb quality, as is the circular shoulder piece (187) which is most beautifully made and is an unusual shape. The Gallery has nothing like this in the collection.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial/legal implications.

CONCLUSION

These works of art would be valuable additions to the Gallery's collection.

/IT IS RECOMMENDED

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IT IS RECOMMENDED

That the donations detailed in the item be accepted into the Gallery's permanent collection and that the thanks of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council be conveyed to the donor.

(AG 56/2000)
(METROPOLITAN SPORT, ART, CULTURE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)
(METROPOLITAN ARTS & CULTURE DEVELOPMENT & FACILITIES)
(Chief Curator: Art Gallery)
(R Keene)
(Ext 6857)



ACTING EXECUTIVE OFFICER: METROPOLITAN ARTS & CULTURE DEVELOPMENT & FACILITIES

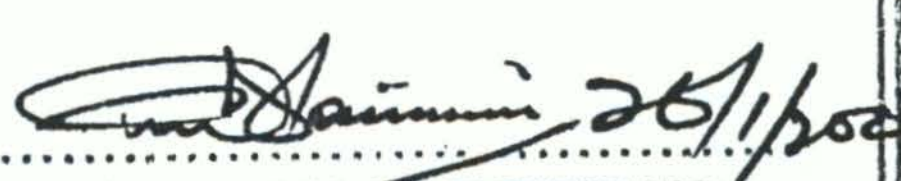


EXECUTIVE OFFICER: FINANCE: METROPOLITAN SPORT, ART, CULTURE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ACTING STRATEGIC EXECUTIVE: METROPOLITAN SPORT, ART, CULTURE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LAW ADVISER: METROPOLITAN CORPORATE SERVICES

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	GOEDKEUR NAMENS DIE UITVOERENDE KOMITEE
	
ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/ WAARNEMENDE HOOF UITVOERENDE BEAMPTTE	

object type: <i>BEAST COVER</i>	acc. no: <i>2001-01-28</i>	
vernacular:	contact prints	
object subtype:		
community: <i>South Nguni</i>		
subgroup:	location: [REDACTED]	
	shelf: [REDACTED]	
geographical location:	b/w:	c/t: c/s:
date and place collected:	dimensions:	
date executed: <i>mid 19th C</i>	h: <i>70cm</i>	diam:
artist name, sex:	w: <i>40cm</i>	mounted:
use:	d:	
	medium: <i>glass, processed hide string</i> <i>BEADS, LEATHER</i>	
purchase/ donation/ bequest:		
price paid: <i>57,750.00</i>	physical description: Pattern:	
insurance value:		
authority:		
original collection number:		
object type translation:		
catalogues: <i>South East Africa</i> <i>Beethwick #1</i>	condition: <i>GOOD</i>	
stock take record:		
date	authority	administration changes
2.001	african art curator	

MICHAEL STEVENSON

Trading as Michael Stevenson Fine Art CC (Registration number CK96/62483/23)

Members: M.J. Stevenson

1 Palmboom Road Newlands 7700 P. O. Box 45066 Claremont 7735

South Africa

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14 November 2000

Johanneburg Art Gallery
P O Box 23561
JOUBERT PARK
2044

TAX INVOICE 1038

(Vat no: 4770162941)

To purchase of :

Book #	Stock #	Description	Price GBP	Price SA Rand @ 10.5
1	188	breast-cover	5,500	57,750.00
38	279	cloth	12,000	126,000.00
39	231	bag	1,800	18,900.00
49	167	waistband	1,500	15,750.00
52	313	waistband	3,200	33,600.00
55	275	waistband	1,500	15,750.00
59	324	panel	1,250	13,125.00
63	15	bag	1,500	15,750.00
94	334	beaded chrysalis	1,500	15,750.00
101	248	hairpin	500	5,250.00
102	125	hairpin	800	8,400.00
103	249	hairpin	400	4,200.00
104	247	hairpin	600	6,300.00
105	126	hairpin	300	3,150.00
111	170	pendants	850	8,925.00
112	169	pendants	850	8,925.00
118	98	fertility figure	4,000	42,000.00

Book #	Stock #	Description	Price GBP	Price SA Rand @ 10.5
119	99	fertility figure	3,000	31,500.00
120	206	cloth skirt	2,500	26,250.00
162	319	waistband	3,500	36,750.00
187	40	bandolier	7,500	78,750.00
				<u>572,775.00</u>
	Less:	Discount		<u>-221,897.81</u>
				350,877.19
	Plus:	14% VAT		<u>49,122.81</u>
				<u>R 400,000.00</u>

Banking details:

Name Michael Stevenson Fine Art cc
Bank Nedbank, Claremont
Branch Code 10 46 09 01
Account # 1046 393 707