



SPace: Currencies in Contemporary African Art

Curatorial Concept

The concept SPace embodies two notions, space and pace, which signify sites/contexts and tempos/energies that are part of societal make up. Space is wherein ideas are negotiated and meaning produced through various human activities and social practices, while pace is speed, the rate at which change or advancement of such activities and practices take place in society.

Our preoccupation is with ideas, experiences and practices of contemporary African artists, curators and intellectuals. We are interested in their creative and intellectual ways in which they engage and reflect on a variety of personal, social, cultural and political matters prevalent in postcolonial worlds. Another interest is in artistic productions that are apace with changes influenced by global politics and economics in contemporary society.

We take *space* as a phenomenon constituted by and constitutive of human, cultural, social, political and economic relations. It is a product of and acquires meaning through such relations of which art is an integral practice. Art is *space* in itself. It is a site and force through and with which artists negotiate ideas and produce meaning



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in their engagement with today's world. Yet, art occupies various spaces that range from the privacy of the artist's mind and studio to public exhibition sites and chambers of collectors. In these spaces, art, as a force or currency oscillates between and across discourses that wrestle with constructing its irreducible meaning.

Exhibition spaces are however imperative as they provide the public-audience with the opportunity to dialogue with art, to appreciate and reflect on social issues and human experiences that are irreducible to ideology and instruments of bondage and misery.

Art also provides moments for engaging with profound human qualities such as intimacy, beauty and pleasure.

The exhibition SPace proposes to bring together works of contemporary Artists of Africa to Museum Africa in Johannesburg, a host cosmopolitan city to the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup. SPace anticipates to being a dialogue of artworks by contemporary African artists living in different parts of Africa and the Diaspora. Themes for SPace are neither prescriptive nor restrictive. Rather, they are guided by the curators' choice of artists and artworks that will bring about a dialogue on matters personal to individuals while reflective of broader social politics.



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