

FONSECA & MOKGATA PRESENT

AGAIN SHE REIGNS



A SERIES OF PAINTINGS

99LOOP GALLERY PRESENTS



SICINGA NGAWA QHAWEKAZI

SIPHILA NAME QHAWEKAZI

AN EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY FONSECA&MOKGATA

AGAIN SHE REIGNS

OPEN TO PUBLIC

01/08 - 29/08

99 LOOP ST, CAPE TOWN



F&M



FONSECA & MOKGATA

MEET THE ARTISTS

Artist statement of the collaborative practice.

AGAIN SHE REIGNS

Series of paintings. Portraits that explore the battle for the right to write (or rewrite) history/herstory and how to write history/herstory.

ERROR 404

Series of paintings. A meditation on the limits of new technology in redressing lost and obscured heritage.

WORDS FROM THE ARTISTS

Nthato Mokgata and Carla Fonseca open up.



Cover: Fonseca&Mokgata, *Hypatia*, 2019, oil painting (1m x 1m)

From top: Fonseca&Mokgata, *Error 404*, 2019, oil painting, (70cmx40cm) ; Carla Fonseca, *Other*, 2016, 120min performance. photographed by Malibongwe Tyilo; Fonseca&Mokgata, *Reina Makeda*, 2019, oil painting, (1mx1m) ; Lunga Ntila, *F&M portrait*, 2019, print





Lunga Ntla, Untitled, 2019, print
Fonseca&Mokgata portrait

Fonseca&Mokgata is the collaborative artistic practice of Carla Fonseca and Nthato Mokgata, based on experimentation with various mediums to describe societal trauma and the elusive fantasy of freedom. F&M Studio has developed an interest in describing both violence as a language as well as the "violence of language" in the context of post colonial/apartheid Africa. Fonseca & Mokgata create works combining digital design with various sculpture, moulding and painting techniques resulting in intricate, vivid, hand crafted works.

Carla Fonseca (b. 1989) received a BA degree in Theatre and Performance from the University of Cape Town. Her artistic practice has produced numerous performance, video art, as well as theatre pieces focused on South Africa's historical and current societal traumas for over a decade.

Nthato Mokgata (b. 1985) has his formal education is in graphic and multimedia design. He has spent the past 15 years as an active graphic and sound designer, visual artist, musician, and filmmaker. His artistic practice has focussed on challenging notions of reconciliation, history, self-determination, nationhood, identity, and pan-Africanism.



Rainha Makeda, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mkgata,
oil paint on canvas, (1m x 1m)

AGAIN SHE REIGNS

Again She Reigns is a series of painted portraits that explore the battle for the right to write (or rewrite) history/herstory and *how* to write history/herstory.

The works excavate issues of power, representation, and historical truth/veracity in the face of the global legacy of white supremacy. The works look to the writings of Afrocentrist historians such as Cheikh Anta Diop, Dr Yosef Ben-Jochannan and John Henrik Clarke, and question whether the best reaction to the white washing and distortion of African History is **counter-revisionism** (acknowledging much of orthodox history to be riddled with *problematic* text or sentiments that betray an anti-African agenda and responding to that).

In addition, much of orthodox history tells narratives and accounts of Africa's past from a male perspective, or relative to a "central male character", and mostly offers dismissive accounts of African female warriors, priestesses, and queens as footnotes or in passing, but rarely are African women's stories told with the fullness they so deserve.

As much as the 8 portraits question positions of power in representation, they are also tender celebrations of legendary women in African history, whose various stories continue to inspire and give insight to the present moment as well as long gone eras which existed within very different cultural, gender and racial frameworks. Many of the women portrayed have previously had their narratives used and distorted for a range of misogynistic agendas. In response, we offer the intervention of Again She Reigns, a call for great women to take their rightful positions in history - on their own terms.



Dahomey Ahosi

A Fon all-female military regiment of the Kingdom of Dahomey in the present-day Republic of Benin which lasted until the end of the 19th century. While European narratives refer to the women soldiers as "Amazons", they were locally referred to as Ahosi (king's wives) or Mino (our mothers). The women soldiers were rigorously trained and given uniforms. By the mid-19th century, they numbered between 1,000 and 6,000 women, about a third of the entire Dahomey army, according to reports. **BENIN**



Fezekile 'Khwezi' Khuzwayo

A martyr of our failed state, Fezekile Khuzwayo, spent most of her childhood in the north Durban township before her family went into exile in Swaziland. As much as she was as an educator and an AIDS activist, she was most widely known as the woman that accused former South African president, Jacob Zuma of rape. At that time, Kuzwayo faced a lot of criticism and even death threats for accusing Zuma, to the extent that she had to use a different name and later leave the country in fear for her life. **SOUTH AFRICA**



Hypatia of Alexandria

Hypatia was a philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician, living as a "pagan" in the Christian city of Alexandria, Egypt. Accounts tell us that she was killed for "not believing", but it seems she was rather killed for being too brilliant. She is one of those controversial figures from antiquity whose tragic death in March 415 AD inspired a legend in which few facts are known. As a pagan martyr, she is a symbol in the continuing struggle between science and revealed religion. Her name has been a feminist symbol down the centuries. Questions of her race, expose the extent to which our current definitions and semantics around racial and cultural categorisations are relatively recent constructs. **EGYPT**

AGAIN SHE REIGNS

AGAIN SHE REIGNS



Josina Mutemba Machel

Josina Mutemba Machel was a revolutionary Mozambican fighter for FRELIMO who became a key figure in the Mozambican struggle for independence, promoted the emancipation of African women, and married the man who would become the country's first president (Samora Machel). Her inspirational life is perhaps representative of the thousands of female combatants who joined not only the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) after it was formed in June 1962, but also Mkhonto weSizwe (MK), the Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA), or the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African Political Union (ZAPU) and many other liberation movements. **MOZAMBIQUE**



Muthoni wa Kirima

Muthoni wa Kirima is a Kenyan living legend, having served as part of the KLFA (Kenya Land and Freedom Army), becoming the only female Field Marshal after spending seven years in the forest during Kenya's fight for independence against the British colonial forces. She started her liberation fight as a spy, responsible for providing supplies and intelligence to the guerillas, until she was accepted as a combatant. This fight was not without personal sacrifices. Muthoni was not only wounded twice in battle, she also had a miscarriage that left her unable to have children. Muthoni is quite vocal about her disappointment with the post-colonial Kenyan governments and has vowed never to chop off her dreadlocks until she sees the benefits of independence. At 89, she currently holds Kenya's medal for distinguished service and a Head of State Commendation. **KENYA**



Perpetua & Felicity

These two young African Christian women, were thrown to wild animals and killed for their faith in ancient Carthage (Modern Tunisia) in the year 203CE who. St. Perpetua, a new mother, and her pregnant maid-servant, St. Felicity, were first arrested during the Roman persecution of Christians. Both women had to leave their families because they refused to worship Roman gods. St. Perpetua's account of their harsh treatment in prison is considered one of the earliest and most dramatic documents of Christian martyrdom. Saint Felicity gave birth to a daughter just three days before she and Saint Perpetua were ultimately beheaded for their faith. **TUNISIA**



Negeste Saba Makeda (ነገሰት ሳባ ማክዳ)

The tale of the Negeste has been told and retold in many lands for nearly 3,000 years. She is an internationally recognised, giant figure in African history, an exemplar of the "ancient African queen"; in Ethiopia, Mek'da (ማክዳ; ነገሥት ሳባ) is held in high esteem as being central to the genesis of the nation and its ancient kingdom, as well as key in staking her claim as part of a Solomonic dynasty. She has been immortalised in the world's great religious works, among them the Tora, Bible and the Muslim Koran. She also appears in Turkish and Persian painting, in Kabbalistic treatises, and in medieval Christian mystical works, where she is viewed as the embodiment of Divine Wisdom and a foreteller of the cult of the Holy Cross. **ETHIOPIA**



Sibongile Promise Khumalo

Promise Khumalo is a South African military veteran who was a part of the military wings of both the ANC and the PAC. At 14, she was the youngest of a group of 12 who skipped the country, eventually ending up in a camp in Mozambique where, she says, "there were many, many amputees ... It was very traumatic to see that." At 15 years old, she was sent on to Tanzania for military training under the Azanian People's Liberation Army, the military wing of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). She was then, as she rightfully says, "still a baby". Yet it was not long before she came face to face with the ultimate physical violation from senior men within the organisation. She was raped and humiliated within a movement that she had sacrificed so much of her young life for. She left the PAC, joined the ANC and underwent military training in Tripoli, Libya. For many years she was a broadcaster for Radio Freedom - then the voice of the ANC and MK in different parts of the continent. **SOUTH AFRICA**

AGAIN SHE REIGNS



Perpurtua and Felicity, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, (1m x 1m)



Hypatia's Theory, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, (1m x 1m)



Sibongile "Promise" Khumalo, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, (1m x 1m)



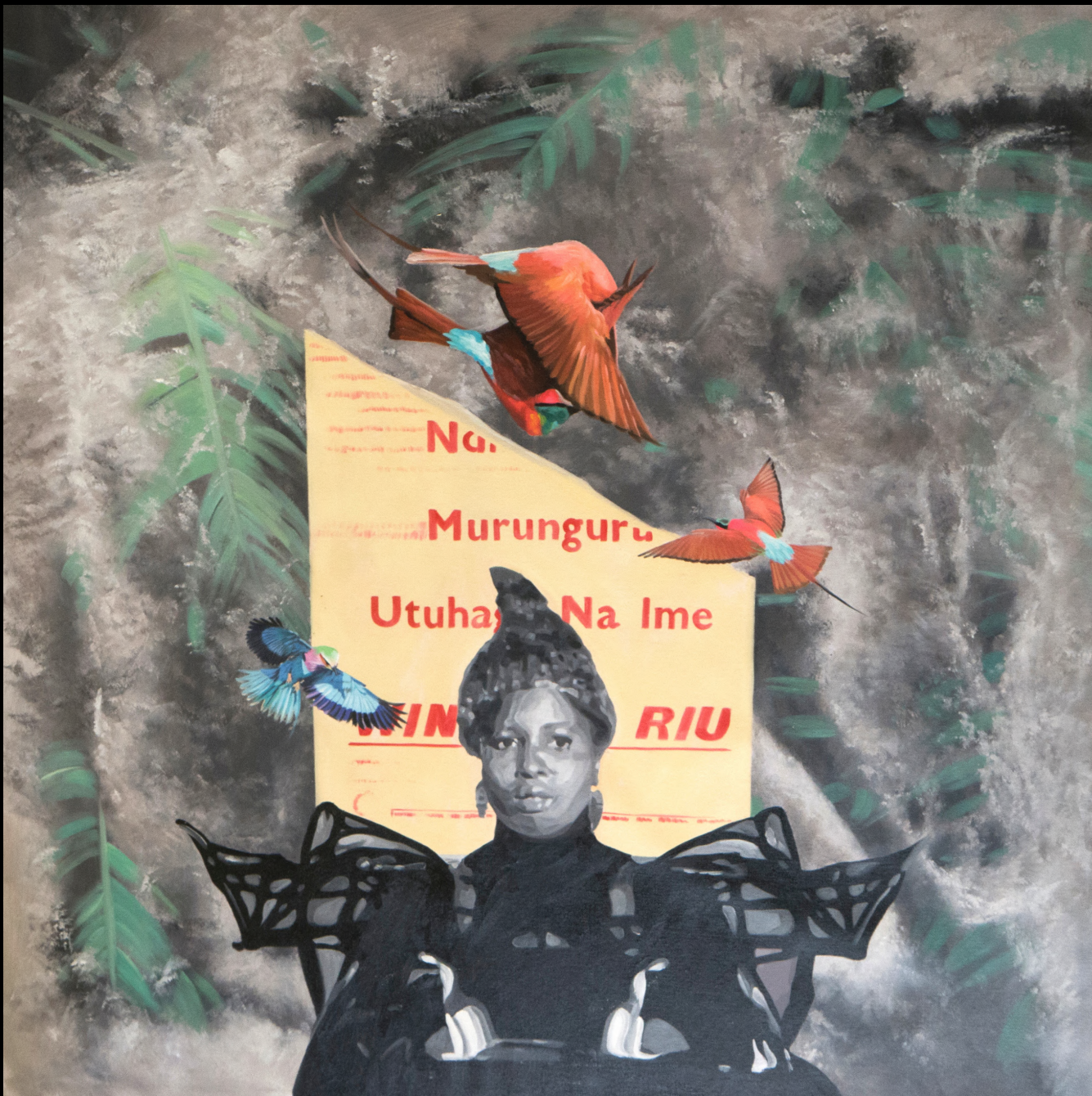
Fezekile "Khwezi" Kuzwayo, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, (1m x 1m)



Josina Machel, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, (1m x 1m)



Dahomey Ahosi - Our Mothers, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, (1m x 1m)



Muthoni wa Kirima, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, (1m x 1m)

ERROR404

IMAGE NOT FOUND INYANI AYIKHO

A MEDITATION ON THE LIMITS OF NEW TECHNOLOGY IN REDRESSING LOST AND OBSCURED HERITAGE

OIL PAINTINGS ON CANVAS

Error404: Inyani Ayikho is a meditation on the limits of new technology in redressing lost and obscured heritage. The series of paintings deconstruct and distort iconic "ethnographic" photographs by Alfred Martin Duggan-Cronin (1874-1954) ("The Bantu Tribes of South Africa" (1928-1954)).

Error404: Inyani Ayikho is a personal critique on our own over reliance on European sources for historical evidence/material/ research on Africa (as a continent/concept/collection of cultures), and the inherent paradoxes, inherited biases and complex quagmires that come from over reliance on such sources.

We know this time to be "The Information Age", and yet misinformation, miseducation, ignorance and political trickery have turned this supposedly euphoric "world of knowledge at your fingertips" into a bitter dystopia of twitter beef; fake news; short attention spans; fast forgotten outrage; threats; click bait; #datamustfall and empty public libraries (full of books but not enough readers).

It is in this very same 4k technosphere that the dispossessed must search for clues of their heritage, it is here that they must discern falsification from fact.

The obscuring of various people's history (through a historic and systemic process of misinformation) is inextricably linked to the question of historical land rights. Without the support of the historical establishment (much of which was established in the colonial and Apartheid context to uphold those very power structures), it is hard for people's land claims/rights to be verified and taken seriously.

Histories were not just lost passively through the passing of time, but were systematically erased and destroyed.

Much of the images that we have researched to be the first photographic images of Southern African Bantu people, were taken between the years 1900-1920 (a hundred years ago). These relatively recent, yet extremely rare images, offer insight into many lost and forgotten customs, cultures and ways of living. For many of us born at the end of the 20th century these portraits, offer us rare insight into our personal heritage, despite them being problematic. We desperately cling to these almost ghostly images, for academic and historical verification as well as personal sentimental satisfaction. We come up short.

Error404: Inyani Ayikho



Error404 - Ancestor 1, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, 45.5cm x 37.5 cm



Error404 - Ancestor 2, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, 50cm x 37.5 cm



Error404 - Ancestor 3, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, 42 x 37.5 cm



Error404 - Ancestor 4, 2019 (c) Fonseca & Mokgata,
oil paint on canvas, 45.5 x 38 cm



BATUK- MUTUMIA NGATHA SINGLE AVAILABLE ON ALL STREAMING PLATFORMS



BATUK- DAHOMEY WARRIOR SINGLE AVAILABLE ON ALL STREAMING PLATFORMS



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I KNOW YOU'LL BE FINE... NOT BECAUSE I AM, BUT BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO BE FINE BECAUSE ALL EXITS TO THIS DILEMMA WE CALL LIFE ARE SEALED WITH DEAD-ENDS AND THE ANOMALIES OF VOLUNTARY DEATH VIS A VIS INVOLUNTARY SURVIVAL. I WANTED TO SAY THAT I'M PROUD OF YOU, BUT I CHOOSE NOT TO SEE YOU AS AN EXTENSION OF MY EGO. YOU ARE NOT A PART OF ME. I AM A PART OF YOU. A PART THAT'S AS DISPOSABLE AS YOUR TONSILS AND PAINFUL WISDOM TEETH AND SIMILARLY AS TOXIC TO YOUR WELLBEING IF YOU CHOOSE TO UPHOLD THE MADNESS FOR THE SAKE OF NOSTALGIA. I WAS TOO LAZY TO LIVE AND TOO FEARFUL TO DIE. I SAID SO MUCH AND MEANT NONE OF IT. I WAS A FRAUD: SELLING COUNTERFEIT PROPHECIES TO THE IDEOLOGICALLY DESPERATE AND CASHING IN ON THEIR MISPLACED FAITH IN ME. ALLOWING THEM TO USE ME AS AN INACCURATE COMPASS TO THEIR PROMISED LAND BUT I IMPROVISED THE MAP AS WE



Carla Fonseca, Other, 2016, 120 min performance.
Print 29.7 x 42.0cm

CARLA FONSECA

I walk into a bar, and already my idea of having fun is clashing heavily with the volume of the music, and the fact that no one can hear anything anyone else is saying. I order a drink, and a strange man behind me hovers over me. His beer breath on my neck, his body against my back. Instantly triggered, instantly time to go home. On my drive home all I think about are memories of those few seconds of discomfort, they have the quality of a time-lapse video, where moments speed by quickly and feel slightly disconnected.

When I get home, the only thing that makes me feel better is writing, drawing, sketching, anything to make sense of what I felt. I immediately morph my discomfort and PTSD into art.

By contesting the division between the realm of trauma and the realm of experience, I absorb the tradition of healing art into my daily practice.

This personal journey and revival of a past pain is important as an act of healing and meditation. I am a storyteller and I tell stories through any medium that works for me at the time. My artwork takes a critical view of social, political and cultural issues. I've recently had the courage to explore with mixed media; paintings, sculptures in addition to my theatre and performance art work. Although each piece stands alone as independent works, the progress remains the same. All connected by a diverse network of recurring political, sexual, discursive and cultural references, such as the rejection of justice, the way power shapes our healing/recovery, and the proposal of a constantly evolving body dealing with PTSD.

Art is here to heal us.

The representation of Trauma in Contemporary Arts is a part of the research that I have been doing for more than ten years in my career as an artist. In this sense, this research is merely not only a text based research rather it is a visual, emotional and practical based research. I admit that my artworks and theatre works sometimes radiate a cold and latent violence or pain. However, I try to make sure that there is always an inherent visual beauty and seduction that forms the shell of my works.

Processing and forgetting is a very important process of our psychology. If we didn't forget, our brains would become cluttered. So, it's as important as the process of accumulating information. So, the ability to forget is a powerful part of our recovery, particularly from trauma.

I create works inspired by the love, light and healing that art gives me.



N T H A T O M O K G A T A

W H Y

"We are neither present, nor absent, neither dead nor alive. We are not the future, we live in the moment in our energetic celebration of freedom, more than a desperate mourning of a culture and heritage hollowed by colonialism, industrialisation, capitalism, slavery and apartheid.

I make sure that ghostly images can commune with ancestral spirits to attain knowledge long lost to "western civilisation". Mine is the work of trauma intervention. It is a laxative for a constipated nation stuck in the purgatory of a post Apartheid non-liberation, where violence and theft are two of the 13 official languages, and the all-out civil war that never came plays itself out in micro and macro aggressions every day. In our inverted reality, we have cried our tear ducts dry and now only know how to howl and dance; a cathartic dance which aids both transcendence and time travel.

It is in response that I assault and elude attempts at conventional categorisation."

D O Y O U

viva



qhawekazi