

NKULULEKO - FREEDOM
BY ALEX MSIBI



Alex Msibi is the 2016 winner of the Thami Mnyele Mentorship Prize. Msibi's solo project, Nkululeko – Freedom is an extension of the artwork, Dessicated In State Of Tranquility that he won the Thami Mnyele Painting Prize with. Msibi was mentored by Jaco van Schalkwyk over the last six months.

Alex Msibi's solo project, Nkululeko – Freedom is an extension of the artwork, Dessicated In State Of Tranquility he won the Thami Mnyele Painting Prize with in 2016. What appears to be in contrast with the title, his imagery mostly deals with concepts of suffocation, pain, survival or death. Together with a performative film, his paintings mostly capture suffocating figures inside plastic bags. Some of these scenes are set in his hometown, Newcastle Madadeni, In Kwazulu Natal. The artist metaphorically portrays the angst and fear of dying or entrapment in an abusive relationship. One might feel uneasy with the intensity and horror of the scenes, but at the same time strangely comforted by the skilled painting and harmonious colour pallet. These morbid scenes might appear to be tranquil and even romantic. It is as if Msibi wants to lull the viewer into knowing that death is not necessarily an end but could in fact be a new beginning.

After all, it was his near-death experience that inspired a career in the Arts and his zest for life.

“Creative U- turns are always born from fear- fear of success or fear of failure. It doesn't really matter which. The net result is the same. Such is artist Alex Msibi's experience, not only did he survive an abusive childhood but also escaped certain death. One might argue that this had a direct impact in changing his perspectives, when he got a second chance at life and living his dream.”

- Jaco van Schalkwyk, 2017





Desiccated in state of tranquillity. 2016. Oil on canvas, 67 x 101.5 cm | R 10 000.00



Nkululeko: Study IV
2017, Oil on canvas
40.5 x 40.5 cm
R 4 800.00



Nkululeko: Study II
2017, Oil on canvas
40.5 x 40.5 cm
R 4 800.00



Last exhaled breath. 2016. Oil on canvas, 101.5 x 67 cm | R 10 000.00



Nkululeko: Study V
2017, Oil on canvas
40.5 x 40.5 cm
R 4 800.00



Nkululeko: Study I
2017, Oil on canvas
40.5 x 40.5 cm
R 4 800.00



Nkululeko: Study III
2017, Oil on canvas
40.5 x 40.5 cm
R 4 800.00



Stoic. 2017. Oil on canvas, 106.5 x 152.5 cm | R 15 000.00



Unheard Voice. 2017. Oil on canvas, 121.5 x 91 cm | R 12 000.00

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