

EVERARD READ

VELAPHI MZIMBA

(b. 1959 - d. 2021 Soweto, South Africa)

Velaphi Mzimba was known for his larger-than-life portraits and still lifes. He developed a technique that is entirely his own and instantly recognizable. His large canvases on textured surfaces are full of expressiveness and humanity. His subjects gaze at you in such a particular way that afterwards you feel as if you have encountered the person depicted. He has focused on portraits of children and women, as well as *zama zama* (illegal) miners. He is also known for more eclectic images featuring portraits and objects all in one composition, and has made numerous sculptures, graphic works and paintings on found objects.

Born in Soweto in September, 1959, Velaphi Mzimba's colourful paintings reflect the vibrancy and rapidly evolving environment of contemporary South Africa. Although he was deeply involved in the struggle for liberation against apartheid, his work is infused with optimism and humanity. At the age of nine, Mzimba discovered his love of drawing and was encouraged by his father. At the age of sixteen he joined Mofolo Arts Centre in Soweto where he learned drawing, oil painting and pastels with Dan Rakgoathe. Due to the 1976 uprising, the school was closed. Mzimba became involved in the protests. Two years later he won a bursary to study at the Art Foundation under the late Bill Ainslie. In 1981, Mzimba had his first solo exhibition at the Carlton Hotel – in a gallery that was run by the South African Association of Arts. Mzimba's work graces many public, corporate and private collections worldwide. He died in 2021.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 Winter, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2020 Staring Straight to the Future, online exhibition, Everard Read, South Africa & UK
The Portrait Show, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
Winter, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2019 Winter, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2017 Reality Check, group show, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2016 Opening exhibition, group show, Everard Read, London, UK
Bronze, Steel & Stone, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2014 Solo, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
People and Places, group exhibition, Imibala Gallery in association with Everard Read, South Africa
Benetton Small Canvas Exhibition touring group show, throughout Europe and the US,
including the UN Headquarters in New York
- 2013 100, group show, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Possessed, group show, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa

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- 2012 Winter Exhibition, group show, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
2010 Khumalo, Mzimba, Dyaloyi, three-man exhibition, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Solo, Everard Read Johannesburg, South Africa
View from the South, group show, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
2006 Solo, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Solo, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
Recent Works, solo in London, Rebecca Hossack Gallery, South Africa
2005 Solo, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
2004 Solo, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
2002 Solo, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
2000 ArtLondon, Duke of York's Headquarters, Kings Road, London, UK
1999 ArtLondon Fair, Chelsea Barracks, London, UK
Solo, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
1995 African Spirits, group show, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
Solo, LFK Gallery, Hong Kong
1994 Unity from Diversity, solo, Natalie Knight Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
Group Show, Knight Galleries International at the World Trade Centre, Toronto, "Windows on the New South Africa". Sponsored by SAA
1993 The Spirit of Africa, solo, Natalie Knight Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
Cultural diversity, group show, Natalie Knight Gallery Johannesburg, South Africa
South African Art, group show, World Trade Centre in Toronto curated by the Knight Galleries International
1992 Group show, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
1990 African Encounters, Knight Galleries, International in Toronto, Canada
1987 Solo, Windhoek, Namibia
1984 Solo, Groomsport, Northern Ireland, UK
1981 Solo, South African Association of Art, Carlton Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa

COLLECTIONS

Fort Hare University, African Museum Sanlam, Sancorp, EMI, Anglo American, Hunt Lascaris South Africa, Merrill Lynch South Africa, J.C.I. S. Africa, Alexander Forbes, The Dallas Museum, USA