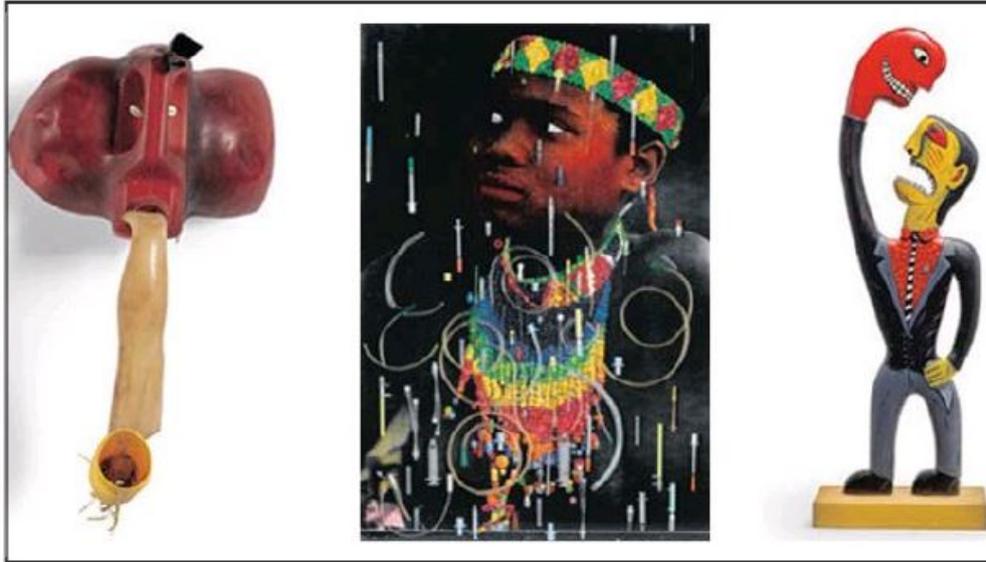


David Bowie's collection of contemporary African art to go on auction

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PANORAMA: Lots 278 to 294 includes Romuald Hazoumè's *Le Saxophoniste* (The Saxophonist), Penelope Siopis' *South African Postcard* and Norman Catherine's *Back Chat II*.

David Bowie's collection of contemporary African art is set to be unveiled in London in an exhibition from November 1 to 10, and an auction on November 11. Bowie first visited SA in 1995. South Africa had suffered from decades of international economic and cultural boycotts, and contemporary South African artists had grown up with a sense of dislocation, cut off from developments in the art world in Europe and America, and with no wider stimulus from Africa.

The first *Johannesburg Biennale* in 1995, attempted to reconnect SA with Africa and the international art community. Visitors came from around the world to witness the largest exhibition ever held in Africa, and it was within this context that Bowie made the trip south to research a piece for *Modern Painters*. Here, Bowie was introduced to the work of many of the African artists represented in this collection, meeting several of the artists in person, and acquiring works for his collection, many of which are represented in this sale.

He described his experience of the *Biennale* "as mind-jarringly moving as any major art-thing I've seen, East, West or Middle, in any year."

As a direct result of his visit, Bowie campaigned for his friend Bernard Jacobson to hold an exhibition of contemporary South African art to coincide with the *africa95 festival of African Arts* held in the UK.

Bowie wrote: 'Since (the) late 1970s, I have been mesmerised by the spontaneous and ever changing panorama of this continent's artistic experiments. Africa95... will, hopefully,

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challenge our preconceptions of ‘otherness’ and establish African art as being some of the most tantalising and provocative work to be seen. It should be nurtured and presented respectfully. If we continue to categorise art that is outside our cultural experience as somehow ‘low art’, curio or merely artefact, we will be dealing these artists a serious injustice and we ourselves will be far poorer for it’.

See online (lots 278-294) to discover all the contemporary African works in Bowie’s collection, including works by Angolan artist António Ole, Beninese artist Romuald Hazoumè, Norman Catherine, and two of SA’s most important resistance artists, David Koloane and Willie Bester. “The very idea of the African artist spins mind into mush. The reality is almost as kaleidoscopic as one could ever imagine... there is only one common thread: an unquenching thirst for national- and self-understanding”, Bowie said. - Staff writer

www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2016/bowie-collector-part-ii-modern-contemporary-art-day-auction-116148/lot.278.html

<http://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/david-bowies-collection-of-contemporary-african-art-to-go-on-auction-2085473>