

Should Contemporary Art Last: A Panel Discussion, 16th July, 1pm,

Venue: Iziko South African National Gallery

Pannel: Mawande Ka Zenzile, Artist, (represented by Stevenson, Cape Town & Johannesburg.)

Julia Kabat, Interim Registrar, Zeitz Mocaa

Same Mduli, Manager and Curator of Standard Bank Gallery

Brett Scott, Manager, Sheryn Art Collection

Contemporary art challenges collection practices on many levels. A straightforward object can be relatively easy to collect: a singular artwork made by a sole creator, to be purchased and displayed by the legal owner. Yet every aspect of this scenario is challenged by the current production methods, shifting societal values and the very definition of an artwork. Consider an artwork which exhibits rapid and visible change: it is possible to collect this responsibly and should this change be acknowledged, slowed, or celebrated? As boundaries are pushed, will some artworks simply be uncollectable?

Our panel will explore some of these topics:

Can we collect artworks with an expiry date? Should there be boundaries for the acquisition of contemporary art in a Public Museum?

- Can donations challenge this? What is the role of the collector, artist or Gallery in this context?
- Restrictions and artist rights – can we collect work with conditions (for display, association, interpretation or presentation)? This could be as simple as choosing a new frame for a painting or as complex as allowing another artist to re-present an artwork as part of a new installation.
- Is change OK? What happens if it isn't?
- Is contemporary art a good investment? What are the trends in the current art market? How do you forecast which artist to choose when collecting?
- How do commercial galleries choose some artists up over others?
- What strategies should be used for collecting contemporary art?
- What is the role of documentation and preservation?

Each panelist will introduce themselves, give a brief introduction to the topic (if possible show an example or two!), and start in with some questions. Will we open up the floor to questions from the audience.

Moderator: Patricia Smithen, Assistant Professor, Painting Conservation

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