

## Mhlonishwa Zulu | Where do I sit and where am I seated?

When visual narration marries distinctive artistry, what quickly follows is a compelling body of work. Mhlonishwa Zulu's debut solo explores the spaces unknown. Intriguing landscapes mark the collection leaving us riddled asking, *Where Do I Sit And Where Am I Seated?*

This catalogue invites audiences to interpret a meaning that speaks to their own narratives, histories and experiences. As the artist himself has stated:

"I'm sharing something that already exists but has yet to be found. I'm discovering along with all who engage in the work." The artist sees each painting as a signpost, a marker in the journey that we've been on all along, even if we only recognise it now.

Zulu has created a language that captures disjointedness through fragmented designs, collaging figures, floating symbols and a mystical composition. Architecturally, the body of work aims to interrupt one's sense of linear navigation through symbolism. Time is a concept that stands out in this offering. The work demands a stillness of the viewer, a moment that feels ancient but familiar once revisited.

With this exhibition, Zulu roots the concept of livelihood in time, ambiguity, familiarity and the spiritual realm. Paintings such as *High Noon At Midnight*, *Shadow of the Abstract*, and *What is sought may never seek: Memorial*, are images that haunt us with their use of space. Waiting becomes a conceptual motif in this collection, with symbols of rest longing for bodily presence across vast terrains, inviting one to a long awaited pause.

*Where Do I Sit And Where Am I Seated?* serves us with a moment to sit, and a moment to reflect in dream-like scenery. A place we come across on our journeys, where stillness and time sit beside us, becoming our friends, even for a moment.

- Nirel Sithole

# 99 LOOP

Where Heaven kisses the earth, discovered in the study of wisdom  
That High tower of rubble  
ushers the cobblestone's roar

The prized possession, untethered  
How far could the eye see  
For the weak lamented strength

Seldom, who could not

The far cry *is* but an arms reach away  
it's neither here nor then  
isolated plea  
shattered, glass through the broken eye  
It's light breeze blown past the wind

Where do I sit and where am I seated?



MHLONISHWA ZULU  
*Shadow of the abstract*, 2025  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
184 x 171.5 cm / 187.5 x 174.5 x 5 cm framed  
ZAR 32,000

# 99 LOOP



MHLONISHWA ZULU  
*Road to 2002, 2025*  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
84 x 119 cm / 87 x 121.5 x 5 cm framed  
ZAR 18,000





MHLONISHWA ZULU  
*Till the Herald cries, 2025*  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
90 x 60 cm / 93.5 x 62.5 x 5 cm framed  
ZAR 15,000





MHLONISHWA ZULU  
*Past Age sycamore*, 2025  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
40 x 40 cm / 43.5 x 43.5 x 5 cm framed  
ZAR 7,000



MHLONISHWA ZULU

*What is sought may never seek: Memorial*, 2025

Oil and acrylic on canvas

64 x 137 cm / 67.5 x 139 x 5 cm framed

ZAR 18,000



# 99 LOOP



MHLONISHWA ZULU  
*Eleison*, 2025  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
51.3 x 52.7 x 0.5 cm  
ZAR 6,000





MHLONISHWA ZULU  
*The fruits thereof*, 2025  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
60 x 90 cm / 62.5 x 93.5 x 5 cm framed  
ZAR 15,000



MHLONISHWA ZULU

*For the weak lamented strength: storm of saints, 2025*

Oil and acrylic on canvas

90 x 60 cm / 93.5 x 62.5 x 5 cm framed

ZAR 15,000





MHLONISHWA ZULU  
*High noon at midnight, 2025*  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
60 x 90 cm / 62.5 x 93 x 5 cm framed  
ZAR 15,000



(Image by Arron Nathan)

Mhlonishwa Zulu is a contemporary South African artist, born in 2002. Storytelling has been a steadfast companion in the artist's life since childhood, ignited by the captivating narratives woven by their uncles and cousin. Their tales —imbued with intricate details of distant lands and enigmatic figures—transported the artist beyond the boundaries of their KwaZulu-Natal environment, inviting them to explore the richness of imagination and the potential for transformation. This early exposure shaped the artist's understanding of identity and place, inspiring an ongoing exploration of what it means to create new narratives from lived experiences.

The artist's work seeks to explore the liminal spaces between thought and action, challenge perceptions, and invite viewers to reflect on their own internal dialogues.

Through Christian religious sentiments and symbolic reconciliation, they aspire to create a visual lexicon that speaks to shared experiences, illuminating the moments in between where potential resides, and where stories are waiting to be told. Through this continuous journey of artistic exploration, the artist invites others to join in pondering the profound questions of existence, identity, and interconnectedness that emerge in the spaces we occupy.