



Nompumelelo wears a shirt-dress, R6 800 and a skirt, R3 500, both Marianne Fassler. Shoes and earrings, both Nompumelelo's own

BEAUTIFUL & POWERFUL AT ANY AGE

Photographer: Jurie Potgieter. Styling: Asanda Sizani



Four inspiring artists recount their journeys into the creative space while showcasing local, art-inspired designs

NOMPUMELELO NGOMA (33), VISUAL ARTIST

Tell us about your journey into the arts. In 2004, I enrolled for a fine arts course at the South-West Gauteng College in Soweto, where I studied basic art mediums. Two years later, I enrolled at the Artist Proof Studio to do a print-making course and graduated in 2008. I was then awarded a bursary by Linda Givon, founder of the Goodman Gallery, to study at the University of Johannesburg, from which I graduated in 2009 with a BTech and a distinction in painting.

What have been your career highlights? Winning the Cassirer Weltz Award in 2016 through the Bag Factory studio and Strauss & Co art auctioneers. The award included a three-month residency at the Bag Factory, culminating in an exhibition at Circa Gallery in Rosebank, Johannesburg, in February this year. That was a great honour for me, as it was my first solo show – the dream of any emerging artist.

Many garments today are art-inspired in their print or

design. How important is craftsmanship to you in clothing?

My outfits exude elegance and class, yet they truly epitomise who I am because they're colourful – like all my artwork. I'm tall, with a strong bone structure, which also helps me express elegance.

What are your preferred mediums? Painting and drawing, with a strong focus on what it means to be a woman in present-day SA.

How is the South African art scene evolving? It's really opened itself up more to young black female artists. As a result, we're claiming our places in it and are expressing who we've been, who we are and who we're becoming. This promises a more diverse and dynamic future for the art fraternity in the country.

What makes you beautiful and powerful? The ability to be who I am and draw on my strengths. Laughter is my secret for remaining beautiful inside and outside.



Krasiv, photograph, 420 x 594mm

**OLEFA YALO(30), PHOTOGRAPHER,
GRAPHIC DESIGNER AND CO-FOUNDER
OF SHE.CLIX**

Tell us about your journey into the arts. I was born in exile, in Bulgaria. When our freedom fighters were released from jail, my family returned to SA. I obtained my diploma in fashion design and multimedia. Art remained my true passion, though, so I developed myself in painting and drawing. During that period I also developed a passion for graphic design and photography.

What have been your career highlights? Launching my company, She.Clix, which is a platform for women photographers with my business partner, Stella Muthee. The journey's had its high and lows in terms of breaks and exposure as an artist, but overall, it's been one of survival. She.Clix has been operating for over a year. We've exhibited works by SA's best female photographers and

made the expo the biggest one for photography and film on the continent.

What are your preferred mediums? Portraiture photography and graphic manipulation, with a focus on people with albinism.

How is the local art scene evolving? SA's more mature and fierce. We're still dealing with our demons, but we aren't afraid to show our pain and explore it through art, which I think is a healing process. We're also more aware of our surroundings and more creative youngsters are pushing boundaries.

What makes you beautiful and powerful? As part of today's society, I'm unable to create any picture without it being an expression of my own beliefs and understanding. My beauty lies in my ability to turn ideas into images and pursue what I want. My power lies in making my own happiness and having the courage to take chances. I'm Olefa Yalo and there's no-one else like me. My passion defines me more than my looks do.



Olefa wears a dress, R5 800, Marianne Fassler. Shoes, R1 399, Steve Madden



Lebohang wears a top, R3 200 and a skirt, R750, both MmusoMaxwell. Shoes, R1 299, Aldo



All in My Head, synthetic hair on paper

LEBOHANG MOTAUNG (24), VISUAL ARTIST: PRINTMAKING AND MIXED MEDIA

Tell us about your journey into the arts. Growing up, I always liked drawing and experimenting with different materials. I never studied art in high school, but after matriculating, I enrolled for a fine arts course at Vaal University. I then went to the Artist Proof Studio, where I obtained a Certificate of Excellence in print-making. I never really had much support from my family and friends, as they didn't believe art was a profitable career, but I was passionate and persevered. Since 2014, I've exhibited at the FNB Johannesburg Art Fair and the Turbine Art Fair, as well as the Absa and Henry George galleries, and in a few travelling exhibitions.

What have been your career highlights? Being in a residency in Boston, USA, where I learnt a lot. It was a great experience walking around the streets of cities like New York and seeing the different art scenes, galleries and museums. Another highlight was finishing in the top 100 of the Absa l'Atelier Art Competition in both 2014 and 2016.

What are your preferred mediums? Fine art and hairstyling. Plaiting hair has always been part of my life: I'm fascinated

by the colour and texture of black women's hair. In my art-work, I use a wide range of mediums, from linocuts, etching and paper-making to synthetic hair on paper. My etchings depict the laborious process women go through in order to maintain their beauty. In my recent work, I've done portraits using human and synthetic hair because it symbolises identity and can determine the way a person's seen. Synthetic hair is also sometimes seen as a sign of self-hatred in women, even though it's longer and offers more styling possibilities. I'm mostly influenced by the conversations I had with clients when I was still a full-time hairstylist.

How is the South African art scene evolving? Artists are putting a new spin on traditional art forms. Mediums such as videos, performance and installation are now starting to take over. We've also seen artists exploring issues that are affecting the country and there are now also many more competitions and galleries willing to showcase new work.

What makes you beautiful and powerful? What makes me beautiful are my heart and the courage to pursue my dream. What makes me powerful is seeing my work inspiring other women.



Gratitude, acrylic and pastel, 1500 x 1500mm

ANELLE STEYN (33), ARTIST

Tell us about your journey into the arts. As a child, I could generally be found in my room drawing, so my passion was there from a young age. When the time came to decide what to study, fine arts wasn't really an option – I was already stretching the boundaries by considering graphic design. After completing my degree in visual communication design and gaining some experience, I started my own design agency. It's taken me years to build up the courage to exchange my computer for an easel and go back to my first love.

What have been your career highlights? Each time someone buys one of my paintings and makes it part of their everyday life, that's a highlight.

What do think of the art-inspired outfit which was selected for you? I love the way designer Suzaan Heyns played around with texture, shape and colour in this unique dress. There are many forms of art and the craftsmanship of clothing is one you can appreciate on a daily basis.

What are your preferred mediums? I'm happiest doing charcoal and acrylic paintings.

How is the local art scene evolving? It's wonderful to see an increase in the appreciation of local art, which is evident in the number of new galleries popping up around the country. I'm not yet sure what my place in the contemporary art scene is, but I look forward to finding it.

What makes you beautiful and powerful? Being independent and having a career which gives me the freedom to express myself and have a lot of fun. **D**

For artwork, contact Leigh Rein at leighrein@global.co.za

STOCKISTS: • Aldo, 011 884 4141, www.aldoshoes.com • Marianne Fassler, 011 646 8387, www.leopardfrock.co.za • MmusoMaxwell, 071 584 7794 • Steve Madden, 011 748 0406, www.stevemadden.com • Suzaan Heyns, 011 782 9895, www.suzaanheyns.com • Topshop, 011 685 7070, www.topshop.com

Hair: Bomzi Lekgoro. Make-up: Renate Willems. Fashion assistant: Sitha Kentane. Fashion intern: Katlego Phethe



Anelle wears a dress, R15 960, Suzaan Heyns. Shoes, R850, Topshop. Ring, Anelle's own