

Peter Clarke: Wind Blowing on the Cape Flats

Exhibition

16 January – 9 March 2013

Press view

Tuesday 15 January 2013, 10am – 12 noon, talk at 11am

Iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts) in partnership with the South African National Gallery (Iziko Museums of South Africa) presents a major retrospective and first substantial exhibition in the UK of the internationally acclaimed artist, Peter Clarke. *Wind Blowing on the Cape Flats* honours Clarke's life, work and contribution to art over sixty years and tells the story of an artist who is part of a lost generation, a voice that has been largely unheard in Europe.

One of the most accomplished and versatile visual South African artists, Peter Clarke was born in 1929. In his early twenties he declared that he would make his living as an artist, which was a highly unusual ambition for a young black South African at the time. Over the last sixty years, Clarke has reflected on his country's social and political history and is often referred to as the 'quiet chronicler'. His work constitutes a subtle critique of apartheid and its social consequences as well as more recently, aspects of the 'new' South Africa.

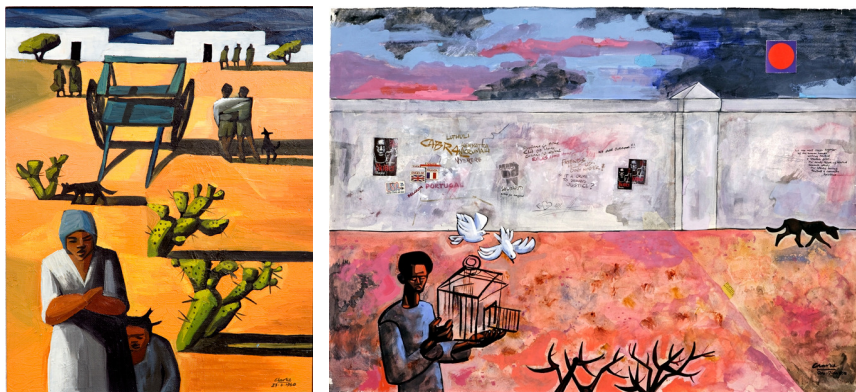
Although largely self-taught, Clarke was encouraged by taking informal art classes and studying European masters that he saw reproduced in books - including Picasso, and the South African modernist Gerard Sekoto (the first black artist to be represented in a South African public collection). Witty, sharp, poignant, aesthetically memorable, Clarke's work provides an extraordinary context for discussion of his country as it prepares to celebrate 20 years since the momentous elections that brought Nelson Mandela to President.

Peter Clarke's art is about people, and in his reflection of humanity and in the contribution he has made to his country's cultural development, he has become an inspiration to many other artists. *Wind Blowing on the Cape Flats* charts his development as an artist, his prolific creativity as a painter, printmaker and an internationally acclaimed writer and poet through over 80 works including paintings, drawings, prints, woodcuts, collages, sketchbooks as well as artist books.

Describing why it is important to show Peter Clarke's art in London, Tessa Jackson, Chief Executive of Iniva and co-curator of *Wind Blowing on the Cape Flats* said, '*Peter Clarke combines his belonging to Africa with an understanding of Western art history; this makes his work memorable in both subject matter and aesthetics.*'

Wind Blowing on the Cape Flats is curated by Tessa Jackson and Riason Naidoo, Director: Art Collections (South African National Gallery & Old Town House), Iziko Museums of South Africa. The exhibition continues Iniva's work to promote culturally diverse artists, curators, writers and thinkers ignored by mainstream institutions. A series of related events are programmed as

part of this exhibition including Hans Ulrich Obrist in conversation with Peter Clarke. Full details will be announced on www.iniva.org.



Left to right: *Coming and going*, oil, 1960, copyright the artist, courtesy of private collection; *Afrika which way?* gouache and collage, 1978, copyright the artist, courtesy of William Humphreys Art Gallery

Editor's Notes

Artist and curator biographies:

Peter Clarke (b.1929 in Simon's Town, South Africa) is a highly accomplished and versatile visual South African artist, working across a broad spectrum of media. But he also has a literary side as an internationally acclaimed writer and poet. Working from his home in Ocean View, Cape Town, Clarke has won six international awards for art and writing (Italy, USA and Taiwan), including an Honorary Life Membership of the Museum of African American Art, Los Angeles (1984). His six South African awards for writing and art, include three since 2000, not least the Order of Ikhamanga (Silver) by President Mbeki in 2005 and a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010.

The first major retrospective of Clarke's work, *Listening to Distant Thunder: The Art of Peter Clarke*, was hosted at the Iziko South African National Gallery during 2011. The exhibition curated by Professor Elizabeth Rankin and Philippa Hobbs tracked the story of a man's journey from obscurity to celebrated artist. A subsequent showing of Clarke's work, curated by Riason Naidoo, was exposed at Dak'art 2012 in Senegal – Clarke's first ever showing at a biennale.

Peter Clarke is represented by the Stellenbosch Modern and Contemporary (SMAC) Art Gallery www.smacgallery.com

Tessa Jackson OBE is Chief Executive of Iniva and has over 25 years' experience within the visual arts as a gallery director, curator and consultant on cultural policy and strategic planning. Founding Artistic Director of Artes Mundi, Wales' International Visual Art Exhibition and Prize from 2002-2010, Jackson was Director of the Scottish Arts Council (1999-2001) and Director of the Arnolfini (1991-99).

Riason Naidoo is Director of the South African National Gallery and the Old Town House, part of Iziko Museums of South Africa. He has previously been Director of the *South Africa-Mali Project: Timbuktu Manuscripts*; has coordinated artistic projects at the French Institute of South Africa (IFAS) in Johannesburg; taught drawing, painting and art history at the University of Witwatersrand; and worked as Education Officer at the Durban Art Gallery.

Further information

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Exhibition listings information

Exhibition: Peter Clarke
Dates: 16 January – 9 March, 2013
Venue: Rivington Place, London, EC2A 3BA
Rivington Place public opening hours:
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 11am – 6pm
Late Thursdays: 11am – 9pm (last admission 8.30pm)
Saturday: 12noon– 6pm
Admission: free
info@rivingtonplace.org
www.rivingtonplace.org
Tubes: Old Street/Liverpool Street/Shoreditch High St
Rivington Place is fully accessible, for parking & wheelchair facilities call +44 (0)20 7749 1240

Iniva engages with new ideas and emerging debates in the contemporary visual arts, reflecting in particular the diversity of contemporary society. We work with artists, curators, creative producers, writers and the public to explore the vitality of visual culture. Iniva is supported by Arts Council England www.iniva.org

Iziko Museums operates 11 national museums, the Planetarium, the Social History Centre and 3 collection specific libraries in Cape Town. The museums that make up Iziko have their own history and character, presenting extensive art, social and natural history collections which reflect our diverse African heritage. Iziko is a public entity and non-profit organization which brings together these museums under a single governance and leadership structure. www.iziko.org.za

Rivington Place opened in 2007 and is home to Iniva and Autograph ABP. Designed by architect David Adjaye OBE, this award winning building is dedicated to the display, debate and reflection of global diversity issues in the contemporary visual arts. An ongoing programme of exhibitions and events is presented by Iniva in the 2 project spaces and Iniva's Learning Space. It is also home to the Stuart Hall Library, Iniva's unique research library with specialist resources and collections about contemporary international visual art. www.rivingtonplace.org