



Xhosa Woman, Intombi II

R 79,380.00



Unframed 146 x 97 x 0.1 cm

Framed 150 x 100 x 5 cm

Not signed by artist.

IXHOSA WOMAN – INTOMBI I & II: In the words of the renowned African American author, poet, and social critic, James Baldwin, 'not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced'. Like Baldwin, Tony Gum believes that only when we examine such pervasive constructs like identity, race, gender, and so on, can we create opportunities for better understanding and growth. She fundamentally believes in the importance of approaching life from a position of knowledge, facing the 'truths' of who, what, and why we are, and this ultimately means that we are also free to evolve as beings.

We become more liberated, whole, and balanced individuals in the world. It is precisely this perspective that has informed the freedom and growth we continue to experience in Gum's art. This series sees her returning 'home' to unearth what it means to be a Xhosa girl and woman. To do this, she immerses herself in core 'rites of passage', she sits with elders who welcome Gum with open arms, celebrating her genuine interest as a young daughter, granddaughter, sister, and female representative of Xhosa culture and people.

The pieces entitled 'Intombi I and 'Intombi II' depict 'Intonjane', the process of transitioning from a girl to a woman. Certain physiological practices like the exposure of the breasts among 'girls' – 'Amatombazana' a symbolic point of differentiation from 'abafazi' or 'woman', 'umfazi' who will generally wear Xhosa attire from the bosom down. Perhaps the more intimate and personal of her works to date, here Gum recognises, accepts, and celebrates the contrasting dimensions and narratives of life. In this series, Gum portrays the extent to which culture ultimately evolves. Integrating the range of human norms, practices, and experiences; culture is essentially a fluid and non-static evolutionary process; the idea is that we can take these contemporary and very commercial elements and fuse them with what is traditional so that it is relatable to all people. Also, trying to see the everyday young girl, how would she be in this context of the 21st century, we are always on our phones, self-indulged and also, self-aware. This is also meant to be fun and playful. Whilst she is busy with her self-phone, she is still busy with her chores. She has now come from the river (bucket on the head), she is working but is also now busy with the phone. But I like how although she is busy with her phone, she catches someone looking at her at the same time, that awkward moment when you are doing something on your phone and you catch someone looking at you.... I displayed the Apple symbol openly, to make a statement about gentrification and the impact of contemporary lifestyle, Apple being such a major corporate brand, based on personal experience, I realise how, like my cultural norms and traditions, the Apple brand also has its traditions, norms and practices, despite adapting different functionalities here and there'.

Frame	None
Edition Size	10
Medium	Photography, Premium Satin Giclee Dibond mounted
Location	Christopher Moller Gallery
Height	150.00 cm
Width	100.00 cm
Artist	Tony Gum
Year	2019

