

Thinking with African Guernica by Dumile Feni Curatorial (Madrid, 25 Mar 26)

Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid, Spain), Mar 25, 2026

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Thinking with African Guernica by Dumile Feni Curatorial, historical, museological and psychoanalytic perspectives.

Curator Tamar Garb brings together a panel of specialists from different disciplines, ranging from Art and Social Anthropology to African Studies and the History of violence, on the occasion of the first edition of the series "History Doesn't Repeat Itself, but It Does Rhyme", starring African Guernica (1967) by Dumile Feni (Worcester, South Africa, 1942 – New York, 1991). The aim of this meeting is to collectively reflect on the points of convergence between the works of both Pablo Picasso and the South African artist.

African Guernica is the monumental drawing created by Dumile Feni in the 1960s. The piece is being shown for the first time outside South Africa, in dialogue with Picasso's Guernica (1937). This provocative physical encounter invites us to consider both artworks as anti-war and anti-totalitarian manifestos, albeit relating to different places and moments.

These events, which form part of the core strands of the Public Programmes department, aim to provide deeper insight into and broaden public engagement with the Museum's Collections and temporary exhibitions.

PROGRAMME

7.00 pm Introduction

7.05 pm Speakers' presentations

- Siyabonga Njica presents the artistic and cultural context of 1960's Johannesburg, contemporary to Feni's work.
- Thozama April analyses the artist's corpus in relation to archival practices and conservation.
- Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela addresses the trauma of apartheid from both aesthetic and oneiric perspectives.
- Elvira Dyangani Ose offers a reading of African Guernica through the lens of Pan-African modernity and the collapse of the centre-periphery duality.

7.45 pm Discussion

8.05 pm Questions and Answers

8.25 pm Closing remarks

PARTICIPANTS

- Siyabonga Njicais a lecturer at the University of Cambridge and a researcher on the role of the African continent in twentieth-century global politics, from imperialism to decolonisation.- Pumla Gobodo-Madikizelais a Professor at Stellenbosch University and a specialist in violence, transgenerational trauma and transformation.

- Thozama Aprilis the Chief Curator at the National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHEC-S) at the University of Fort Hare and a specialist in the South African political activist Charlotte Maxeke.

- Elvira Dyangani Oseis the Director of the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA). Her research focuses on the relationship between global art practices and postcolonial and museum studies, with particular emphasis on modern and contemporary African art.

- Tamar Garbis Professor at University College London and a specialist in Contemporary African Art and South African Photography, among other fields. She is the curator of the exhibition History Doesn't Repeat Itself, but It Does Rhyme. Dumile Feni: African Guernica.

Reference:

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