

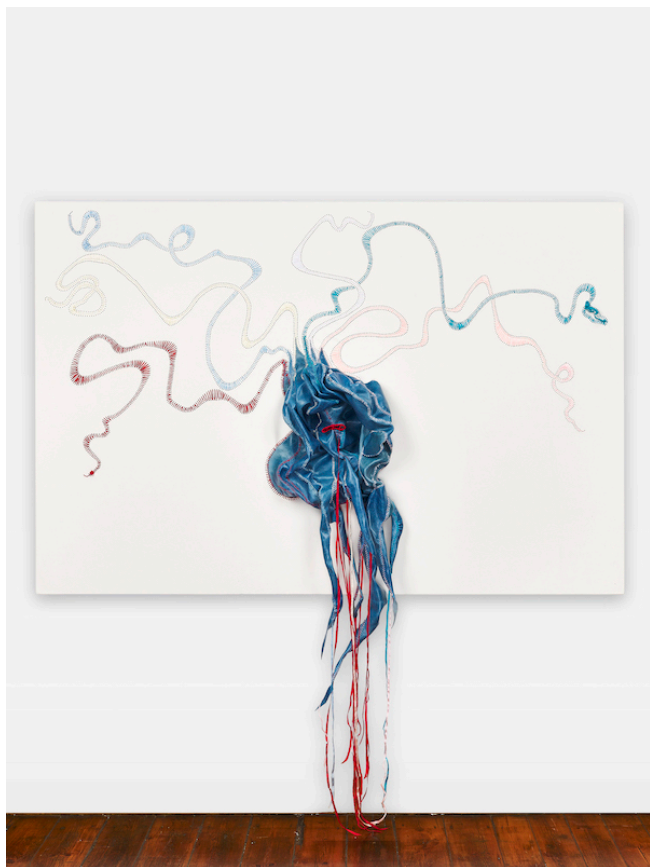
Nicholas Hlobo

March 21 – May 18, 2019

74-18, Yulgok-ro 3-gil, Seoul

@lehmannmaupin | #nicholashlobo

Opening Reception: Thursday, March 21, 5-7 PM



Ibuthathaka, 2019, ribbon and leather on canvas, 47.24 x 70.87 inches, 120 x 180 cm.
Courtesy the artist and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, and Seoul.

New York, March 6, 2019—Lehmann Maupin is pleased to announce South African artist Nicholas Hlobo’s first exhibition in Seoul. The show will feature new and recent paintings by Hlobo, who has garnered acclaim for his works composed with his signature materials of ribbon, leather, wood, and rubber, employed with conceptual specificity to address complex issues of identity. Also included in the show is a new sculpture, *Dyumpu* (2019), made from copper piping—a new addition to his material repertoire—which is prominently featured in his current exhibition at SCAD Museum of Art in the United States. The gallery will host an opening reception with the artist in attendance on Thursday, March 21, at 74-18, Yulgok-ro 3-gil, from 5 to 7 PM.

At the core of Hlobo’s practice is the exploration of his own identity, as he attempts to ascertain qualities that exist outside of codifying labels associated with gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. In order to challenge the restrictive terminology typically used surrounding identity, Hlobo incorporates visual tropes that relate to his ethnic and cultural background, while also questioning the shifting and subjective nature inherent in these signifiers. Language and narrative specifically play both a formal and conceptual role in Hlobo’s work. As a descendent of one of South Africa’s largest indigenous communities, the Xhosa, Hlobo always titles his work in the Xhosa language, imbuing the piece with a subtle personal narrative about his experience of creating, which he often references in his titles. Hlobo titles his work in Xhosa as a way to challenge the generic term of “South African” from being used to describe his work, and also to assert the potency of his cultural identity. Moreover, this is a strategy to engage his audience in the act of cultural translation, which initiates the excavation of the works’ layered meanings.

Often, Hlobo leverages the associations weighted in specific materials—ribbons representing the feminine, leather the masculine—merging the two in his paintings like *Isingxobo* (2018) to pull apart this binary assimilation and present a more holistic and multifaceted approach. The elegant arcs and arabesques of the ribbon stitching are mimicked in large sculptures of molded bronze, copper, and brass instruments. In both the paintings and sculptures, the act of transforming specific materials is integral to the work. The transformation of these raw materials into a larger aesthetic form serves as a metaphor for the constructed and fluid nature of identity as well as the very act of reinvention itself. A pattern can be seen throughout Hlobo’s career that reveals his concerns with the cycle of birth, life, and death that he has consistently explored in various manners where the life cycle can be visually translated into a present object.

About the Artist

Nicholas Hlobo (b. 1975, Cape Town, South Africa; lives and works in Johannesburg) received a fine art degree from Johannesburg’s Technikon Witwatersrand in 2002. Solo exhibitions of his work have been organized at SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA (2019); Uppsala Art Museum, Sweden (2017); Museum Beelden aan Zee, The Hague, Netherlands (2016); Locust Projects, Miami (2013); National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo (2011); Savannah College of Art and Design, Lacoste, France (2010); Tate Modern, London (2008); Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2008); and SCAD Museum of Art, GA (2007). Select group exhibitions featuring his work include *Art/Afrique*, le nouvel atelier, Fondation Louis Vuitton (2017); *Energy and Process*, Tate Modern, London (2016); *The Divine Comedy: Heaven, Purgatory and Hell Revisited by Contemporary African Artists*, Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, traveled to SCAD Museum of Art, GA (2014); and Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C. (2015); *A History (art architecture design, from the 80s to now)*, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2015); *Intense Proximity*, La Triennale 2012, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012); and *Flow*, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2008). Hlobo has participated in multiple biennials, including the 18th Biennale of Sydney, Australia (2012); the 54th Venice Biennale (2011); the 6th Liverpool Biennial (2010); and the 3rd Guangzhou Triennial, China (2008). His work is included in numerous international public and private collections, including the Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; South African National Art Gallery, Cape Town; and the Tate Modern, London.

Hlobo has received numerous honors and distinctions, such as the Rolex Visual Arts Protégé (2010-11), the Standard Bank Young Artist Award (2009), and the Tollman Award for Visual Art (2006).

About Lehmann Maupin

Rachel Lehmann and David Maupin founded Lehmann Maupin in 1996. In addition to its diverse American artists, Lehmann Maupin represents artists and estates from across Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, and has been instrumental in introducing numerous artists from around the world in their first New York exhibitions. Known for championing artists who create

groundbreaking and challenging forms of visual expression, the gallery prioritizes personal investigations and individual narratives. Lehmann Maupin prizes the distinct conceptual approaches that its artists offer on the essential matters that shape international culture today, including gender, class, religion, history, politics, and globalism. In 2013, with two locations in New York, significant interest in its artists abroad, and with the dynamic opportunities of new markets evident, Lehmann Maupin opened its doors in Hong Kong, followed by Seoul in 2017.

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

Gilbert & George, *THE BEARD PICTURES*, Through March 15, Pedder Building, HONG KONG & 74-18, Yulgok-ro 3-gil, SEOUL

Jennifer Steinkamp, *Impeach*, Through April 13, 536 West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

Angel Otero, *Milagros*, March 7—April 20, 501 West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

Erwin Wurm, March 25—May 11, Pedder Building, HONG KONG

Tim Rollins and K.O.S., Curated by Ian Berry, April 18—June 15, 536 West 22nd Street, NEW YORK

Heidi Bucher, April 29—June 15, 501 West 24th Street, NEW YORK

For more information on Nicholas Hlobo or other Lehmann Maupin artists, please contact Kathryn McKinney at +1 212 255 2923.

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