



CONSTITUTIONHILL



# FREEDOM and RESPONSIBILITY

RICHARD 'SPECS' NDIMANDE

*The Constitutional Court Trust, custodian of the Constitutional Court Art Collection (CCAC), together with Constitution Hill are presenting a solo exhibition by Richard 'Specs' Ndimande.*

*Opening: 16 June, Youth Day*

*Closing: 30 September, Heritage Month*

## Artist bio

Richard 'Specs' Ndimande (b. 1994) studied at the University of Johannesburg, where he obtained a Degree in Fine Arts in 2017. His practice includes sculpture, drawing, painting, photography and mixed media. His artworks speak to social ills committed in South Africa and worldwide. He currently works and lives in Johannesburg.

## Exhibition statement

In this exhibition, the artist questions the meaning of freedom. Throughout history, human beings have fought for liberation, and in South Africa, people of colour who were oppressed from the onset of colonialism fought against the apartheid regime. Those born in 1994 were called the 'born-frees', the year South Africa officially held its first democratic elections as part of the country's transformation into a constitutional democracy. Ndimande, a 'born-free', grapples with the idea that the youth have been released from the shackles of the past. He also highlights current-day issues of rampant corruption and the lack of accountability from the leaders who brought along this very freedom.

In this body of work dating from 2017 to 2022, the exhibition responds to pertinent socio-political issues, including violence, racial tensions, ongoing oppression and the lack of change in the new South Africa.

Ndimande's father was imprisoned during apartheid in the notorious Number Four prison section, established in 1902 to house Black male prisoners as part of the Old Fort prison, formerly the Johannesburg Jail, that had been in operation since 1893.

This exhibition, titled *Freedom and Responsibility*, is located in a group cell of the old Number Four prison, part of the living museum site Constitution Hill. The artist thus exhibits his work where his father was incarcerated. In addition, three drawings he donated to the Constitutional Court Art Collection (CCAC) in 2020, thereby becoming the youngest artist represented in the CCAC, are currently on view in the public gallery of the Constitutional Court. The drawings are installed facing Number Four and enter into conversation with the themes and locality of the exhibition. This prison remains a deeply symbolic reminder of the ills of the apartheid regime and the extent to which it can harm a family unit. At the same time, the Constitutional Court stands as a continuous promise to address South Africa's troubled past and its ongoing consequences.

In a conversation about being imprisoned in Number Four, Ndimande's father mentioned that freedom from prison is only in part a physical longing to be outside of those walls. However, psychologically one often remains imprisoned by the trauma experienced when incarcerated under

cruel conditions. The scars of violence and brutality created by other inmates and officers of the law remain etched in one's memory far beyond the healing of the visible wound, Ndimande senior said.

Influenced by such emotive conversations with his father about South Africa's past, Ndimande's second solo exhibition is a vivid examination of how the progression of history coerces its younger generation into carrying the sins of their forebears. The artist set out to investigate what freedom requires from those who seek it. He guards against a modified continuation of society with a heavily conditioned mind, carrying the burden of deep-seated trauma. How does a people heal to avoid conforming to old patterns? It is this sense of responsibility that the artist seeks to evoke.

## Artworks

### Drawings



*Disorder and Confusion* (2022)  
Ink and pen on paper, 66 x 95 cm



*Jackie* (2020)  
Ink and pencil on paper, 28 x 20 cm



*Cher* (2020)  
Ink and pencil on paper, 28 x 20 cm

### Paintings



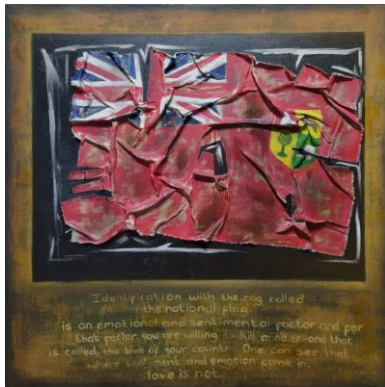
*History* (2022)  
Oil on canvas, 152,5 x 162,5 cm



*The Wounded Bull (Triptych) (2019)*  
Oil on canvas, Right and left: 91 x 61 cm,  
centre: 91 x 122 cm



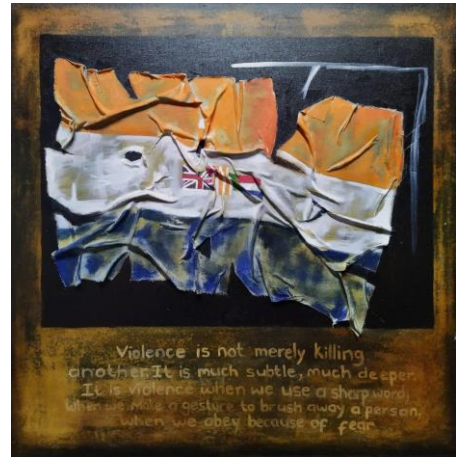
*In-between (2020)*  
Oil on canvas with carved and painted wood  
block, 61 x 91 cm



*The South African Red Ensign 1910-1928 (2020)*  
Oil on canvas, 91 x 91 cm



*The South African Blue Ensign 1910-1928 (2020)*  
Oil on canvas, 91 by 91 cm



*The OBB 1928-1994 (2020)*  
Oil on canvas, 91 by 91 cm



*Unknown Police (2019)*  
Oil on canvas, 50,5 by 40,5 cm



*Unknown Soldier (2019)*  
Oil on canvas, 50,5 x 40,5 cm



*The World is Moving* (2022)  
Mixed media with oil on canvas, 91 x 122 cm

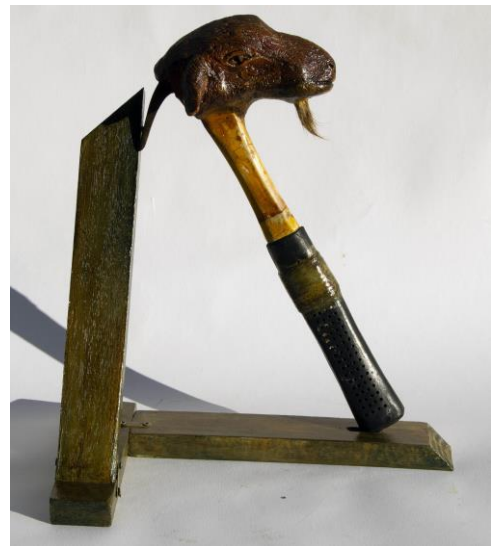


*Ingolovane* (2020)  
Mixed media with found objects, 107 x 75 x 120 cm

### Sculptures



*Senatla* (2017)  
Sheep head, plaster and oil, 73 x 52 x 72 cm



*Goat head* (2020)  
Mixed media with found object,  
37 x 24 x 12 cm



*South African Buffalo* (2017)  
Plaster and oil on wooden base, 70 x 56 x 27  
cm



*Game* (2019)  
Mixed media with goat skull, 18 x 21 x 21 cm



*Mokoko* (2020)  
Mixed media on found object,  
33,5 x 15,5 x 9 cm



*Molotov Cocktail* (2021)  
Mixed media with found object,  
32 x 21 x 15 cm



*School Boy* (2022)  
Mixed media, 120 x 70 x 30 cm



*Nkabi* (2018-2022)  
Mixed media, 130 x 47 x 70 cm



*Mgokgo* (2022)  
Mixed media, 130 x 45 x 113 cm

Photography



*Senatla Portrait I, II, III (2017)*  
Photographic print, 60 x 42 cm each