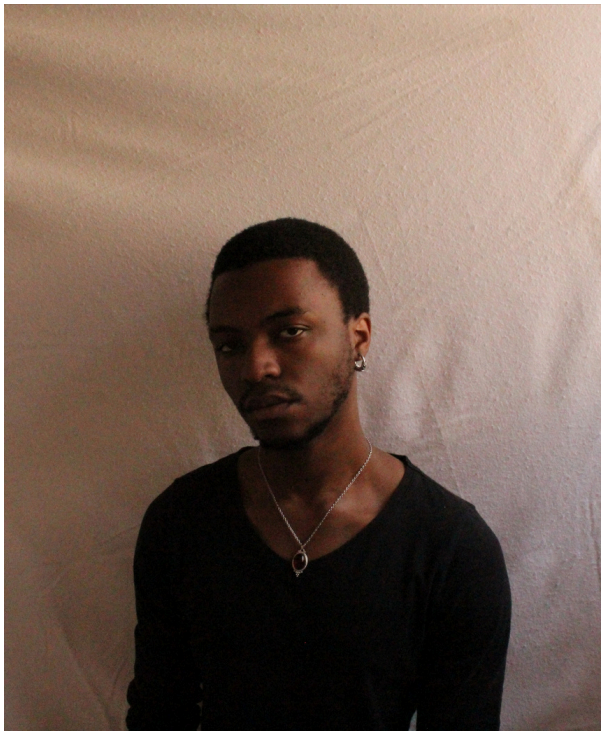
About Masindi Nafisa Mbolekwa

Masindi Nafisa Mbolekwa (b. 2002) is a Johannesburg based artist who predominantly works with soil and oil paint. His practice explores Black identity, spirituality, memory, and the complexities of representing the Black experience through the body and its relationship to space.

Mbolekwa's practice becomes a form of ritual, exploring the body as an anchor through which the self moves across physical and metaphysical space, memory, and time. Drawing on Xhosa cosmology, Black theory, and his connection to his ancestral home in Macacuma in the Eastern Cape, the artist considers the complexities of identity, belonging, spirituality, masculinity, and the historical conditions of postcolonial Black life. Through the use of satellite imagery, soil, limestone, and the interplay between naturalistic and abstract representations of the body, his paintings bring together ancestral traditions and fragmented memories to negotiate his position as a Xhosa man living in Johannesburg. The work acknowledges the limitations of representation in capturing the political realities and interior experiences of Black being, transforming this tension into a practice of self-affirmation, ancestral connection, and existential hope.

Mbolekwa holds an Honours in Fine Art from the University of The Witwatersrand (2023) and is currently enrolled for a Masters in the Arts in Fine Arts. In his work, Mbolekwa considers his rendering of Blackness unsuccessful in its failure to merge the 'doubly-conscious' schema of the black being as both suffused with the politics inherent to a visibly black body, and the richness of the inaccessible interior.

He has participated in various group exhibitions including 'Crossroads: Tsila Tse Pedi' (2024) at the Viewing Room Gallery, 'Figurative Frontiers' (2024) at RMB Latitudes with Origin Art, Tswela Pele' (2025) with Kalashnikovv Gallery, 'Symptom: Invisible Forces' (2025) with Bode Gallery, and 'Things Have Not Been Whole For Some Time' (2026) with Ebony/Curated. Notable collections that feature his work include the Nando's UK Art Collection, Spier's Art Trust, and Moleskine Foundation Collection. In 2024 Mbolekwa was featured in Wanted Magazine's annual 'Young and Vital' artists list and was the recipient of a senior residency at Blvck Block. Currently in November, he is participating in a group exhibition titled Of Such A Kind. To Paint is to Attempt at the THK Gallery.



Masindi Nafisa Mbolekwa



Masindi Nafisa Mbolekwa, Untitled (Vanitas for the memory of song), 2026

CV

Education

2023
B.A. Honours, University of The Witwatersrand

2022
B.A. Fine Arts, University of the Witwatersrand

Solo Exhibition

2025
Feast of Flesh and Prayer, Ellis House Art Gallery, Johannesburg

Group Exhibitions

2026
Of Such A Kind. To Paint is to Attempt, THK Gallery, Cape Town
A Secret Third Thing, Goethe-Institut, Johannesburg
I Left Somethin For You on the Table, Melrose Gallery, Johannesburg
Nothing Has Been Whole For Some Time, Ebony/Curated, Cape Town
Investec Art Fair, Bode Gallery, Cape Town

2025
Investec Art Fair, Bode Gallery, Cape Town
Symtom: Invisible Forces, Bode@TheStudio, Johannesburg
Oneness, Latitudes Online
Wonder in Sonder: Take a Walk with Me, Latitudes Online
Feast of Flesh and Prayer, The Viewing Room Gallery, Pretoria
Tswela Pele, Latitudes Centre for the Arts, Johannesburg
Cassirer Welz Finalist Exhibition, Strauss & Co., Johannesburg

2024
Figurative Frontiers, RMB Latitudes, Johannesburg
Crossroads: Tsila tse Pedi, Saint Lorient Gallery, Pretoria
The Kids These Days, Keyes Art Mile, Johannesburg

2023
Newwork 23', Wits Art Museum, Johannesburg
Siyabuka, Asisebenze Art Atelier, Johannesburg

2022
What Comes First?, Contsitutional Hill, Johannesburg
Screen-in-Time, The Point of Order, Johannesburg

Awards and Recognition

2024
“Young & Vital Artists 2024", Wanted Magazine
Cassirer Welz Award Shortlist
Blvck Block - Residency recipient

2021-2023
Induction to Golden Key Society - Academic Excellence

Talks

2026
Ground(ed) Elsewhere, Ebony/Curated
For the Love of Art, Centre of Phenomenology, Johannesburg