

# Esther Nostokana Nagiyana Nikwambi Mahlangu

Born in 1935

## Group exhibitions

- 1989** Les Magiciens de la Terre, Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris, France
- 1990** Les arts au Soleil: La Caravane des Caravanes, France
- 1991** BMW Art Cars Tour, Johannesburg; Durban; Cape Town, SA  
Ny Afrikansk Billedkunst, Rundetårn, Copenhagen, Denmark  
Africa Hoy, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain
- 1992** Out of Africa, Saatchi Gallery, London, UK  
BMW Art Cars Collection at Documenta IX, Kassel, Germany  
Africa Hoy, Groninger Museum, Groningen, Netherlands; Cultural Centre of Contemporary Art, Mexico City, Mexico
- 1993** La Grande Vérité, Les Astres Africains, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nantes, Nantes, France  
European Inventive Business Travel Meetings Exhibition, Lisbon, Portugal  
Geneva International Exhibition, Geneva, Switzerland
- 1995** BMW Art Cars and Paintings Exhibition, Sydney, Australia  
Africus, 1st Johannesburg Biennale, Johannesburg, South Africa  
Eight From South Africa, Yerba Buena Centre for the Arts, San Francisco, USA
- 1996** Esther Mahlangu: South African Muralist, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference Washington D.C., USA  
Armour J. Blackburn Centre, Howard University, Washington D.C., USA  
World bank, Washington D.C, USA
- 1997** Ndebele Images - Then and Now, National Arts Club, New York, USA  
Oog op Zuidelijke Afrika, Het Afrika Museum, Berg en Dal, Netherlands  
African Immigrant Folklife Festival, Washington D.C., USA
- 1998** Africa Africa: Vibrant New Art from a Dynamic Continent, Tobu Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan  
Art of the Ndebele - Evolution of a Cultural Identity, Atlanta International Museum, Georgia, USA
- 1999** <<Rewind>>Fast Forward.ZA, Van Reekum Museum, Apeldoorn, Netherlands
- 2000** Partage d'Exotismes: 5th Biennale of Contemporary Art, Halle Tony Garnier, Lyons, France  
Dialogue of Cultures, EXPO 2000, Hanover, Germany
- 2001** Arte Africana Contemporanea, Galleria d'arte Spazia, Bologna, Italy  
Festafrika, Galleria Cavellini, Brescia, Italy  
South Africa Today, The Helsinki Fair Centre, Helsinki, Finland
- 2002** Passport to South Africa, Centro Culturale Trevi, Bolzano, Italy  
The Art of Colour, Knysna Fine Art Gallery, Knysna, SA
- 2003** Dentro e Fuori le Mura, Fabbrica Eos, Milano, Italy
- 2004** New Identities: Contemporary Art from South Africa, Kunstmuseum Bochum, Bochum, Germany  
South African Freedom and Congo Square Stage, New Orleans Jazz Festival, New Orleans, USA  
A Decade of Democracy: South African Art 1994-2004, Iziko: South African National Gallery, Cape Town, SA
- 2005** New Identities: Contemporary Art from South Africa, Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria; Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, SA  
African Art Now: Masterpieces from the Jean Pigozzi Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; The Smithsonian Institution: National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C., USA  
I Walk with Ndebele, A Visual Journey with Women, Transformed and Self-Defined in Post Apartheid South Africa, Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria, SA  
South Africa-USA Native American Exchange Project, Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, USA
- 2006** 100% African, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain  
Memory Innovation Tradition, 34LONG, Cape Town, SA  
Beyond Lilith: The Sacred Feminine, Scuderie Aldobrandini Frascati, Roma, Italy

- 1st Malindi Biennale, FN centre, Malindi, Kenya  
 Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA
- 2007** Signs, Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum, Bratislava, Slovakia  
 Why Africa?, Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli, Turin, Italy  
 The Winter Show, AfroNova Gallery, Johannesburg, SA  
 Esther Mahlangu and Speelman Mahlangu, 34Long, Cape Town, SA  
 Heritage Arts Awards Festival, Durban Art Gallery, Durban, SA  
 Orlando Museum of Art, Orlando, USA  
 Tacoma Museum of Art, Tacoma, Washington, USA
- 2008** The Speed of Art Museum, Louisville, Kentucky, USA
- 2009** Against Exclusion, 3rd Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia  
 Africa? Una Nuova Storia, Complesso del Vittoriano, Rome, Italy  
 A-friche, Galleria Monteleone, Palermo, Italy  
 Sante Fe International Folk Art Market, New Mexico, USA
- 2010** Twenty: South African Sculpture of the Last Two Decades, Nirox Sculpture Park, Cradle of Humankind, SA  
 ATASA Trust Southern Africa Handcraft & Ndebele Art Exhibition, Worker's Library, Johannesburg, SA  
 The Global Africa Project, Museum of Arts and Design, New York, USA  
 Toronto International Art Fair, Toronto, Canada
- 2011** ArtMonaco'11 , Grimaldi Forum, Monaco  
 Africa. Objetos y Sujetos, Teatro Fernan Gomez Centro de Arte, Madrid, Spain  
 Durban Tourism Indaba, Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre (Durban ICC), Durban, SA  
 Ensemble, 34FineArt, Cape Town, SA
- 2012** Blend, 34FineArt, Cape Town, SA  
 Art Drive! The BMW Art Car Collection 1975-2010, London, UK
- 2013** FourWalls, 34FineArt, Cape Town, SA  
 Africana, Fondazione Mudima, Milan, Italy  
 Urban Interpretation, Graffik Gallery, London, UK  
 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair, London, UK  
 Les Trésors de l'Art Modeste, Musée International des Arts Modestes, Sète, France
- 2014** Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town, SA  
 Les Magiciens de la Terre (Revisited), Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France  
 Look Mickey!, 34FineArt, Cape Town, SA  
 Traditional African Murals, Museum of African Art, Belgrade, Serbia
- 2015** Imibala Gallery, Somerset West, SA,  
 40 years of BMW Art Cars, BMW Museum, Munich, Germany
- 2016** Celebrating Contemporary African Art, Amref Health Africa Artball, New York, USA  
 South Africa: The Art of a Nation, The British Museum, London, UK  
 Regarding Africa: Contemporary Art and Afro-Futurism, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, Israel  
 BMW Lounge, Frieze Art Fair, London, UK
- 2017** Amref Health Africa: Benefit Auction 2017, Amref Health Africa Artball, New York, USA  
 Colours, Imibala Gallery, Somerset West, SA  
 A Tribute to Nelson Mandela, The Melrose Gallery, Johannesburg, SA  
 Concours South Africa, Sun City, SA  
 FNB Art Fair, Johannesburg, SA
- 2018** Not A Single Story, Nirox Foundation Sculpture Park, Cradle of Humankind, SA  
 African Passions, Cadaval Palace, Évora, Portugal  
 BMW Art Cars Collection, Museum der Bildenden Künste Leipzig, Leipzig, Germany
- 2019** Conflict Resolution Art, Serafio Space, Athens, Greece  
 Expressions d'Afrique : Inside Jean Pigozzi's Collection, Galerie Gmurzynska, Zürich, Switzerland
- 2020** Courage is as Contagious as Fear, Selected Works from the Hoosein Mahomed Collection, Norval Foundation, Cape Town, SA
- 2021** House Party, THEFOURTH, Cape Town, SA  
 Cosmogonies Zinsou: An African Collection, MO.CO. Hôtel des Collections, Montpellier,

- France  
 Africa Staged, LIS10 Gallery, Arezzo, Italy  
 A Force For Change, Agora Gallery, New York, USA  
 POP- The Melrose Gallery Collection, Sandton City, Johannesburg, SA  
 Breaking Down the Walls, Iziko: South African National Gallery, Cape Town, SA  
**2022** When Rain Clouds Gather- Black South African Women Artists, 1940 – 2000, Norval Foundation, Cape Town, SA  
 Bande-Annonce, La Collection Pigozzi à Cannes, Gare Maritime de Cannes, Cannes, France  
 SculptX 2022, The Melrose Gallery, Johannesburg, SA  
 Also Known As Africa (AKAA), The Melrose Gallery Collection, Carreau du Temple, Paris, France  
 1-54 Contemporary Art Fair, Albertz Benda in London, UK  
**2023** Artmonte-Carlo, Almine Rech at Grimaldi Forum, Monaco  
 Femme F(r)iction, New York, USA  
 Frontline, Swivel Gallery, New York, USA  
 In Dialogue: Abstraction & Figuration, Visioner, New York, USA  
 Geometric Abstraction, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA  
 The Female Emperor, 137 Gallery, New York, USA  
 Unique Works: Paintings, Works on Paper and Board, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA  
 Works By or About Black artists, Alpha 137 Gallery, New York, USA  
 To Weave the Sky: Textile Abstractions- Jorge M. Pérez Collection, EL Espacio 23, Miami, USA  
 Archipelago Hervé Di Rosa, Museu de Arte Arquitetura e Tecnologia (MAAT), Lisbon, Portugal  
 Africa Fashion, Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, USA  
 Africa Supernova, Carla & Pieter Schulting Collection, Kunsthal KAdE, Amersfoort, Netherlands  
 1-54 Contemporary Art Fair London, Albertz Benda,  
 Heritage Exhibition, 20<sup>th</sup> Africa Growth and Opportunity Act Forum, Johannesburg, SA  
 Icons of Contemporary Art, Bellagio Fine Art Gallery, Las Vegas, USA  
**2024** Giants, the collection of Alicia Keys and Swizz Beatz, Brooklyn Museum  
 60<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition 'Stranieri Ovunque' Foreigners Everywhere, Venice Biennale Main Pavilion.  
 What's Mine, What's Yours. Galeria La Cometa. Miami, USA

## Murals

- 1989** Indoor mural, Musée des Beaux-Arts d'Angoulême, Angoulême, France  
**1990** Rosebank Shopping Centre, Johannesburg, SA  
 School, Johannesburg, SA  
 Foyer mural of Student Hostel, Sisters of Saint Joseph of Cluny, Bordeaux, France  
**1991** L'Émile Roux School, Angoulême, France  
**1992** Fire Screen, Civic Theatre, Johannesburg, SA  
**1994** Full building facade mural at National Museum of Woman in the Arts, Washington D.C., USA  
 Ndebele College of Education, KwaNdebele, Mpumalanga, SA  
 Stage backdrop for Lisboa94, African Festival, Lisbon, Portugal  
 South African Tourist Board mural, European Inventive Business Travel Meetings Exhibition, Geneva, Switzerland  
**1996** Alexandra Township Stadium, Johannesburg, SA  
**1997** Courtyard mural, Spoleto Festival, Charleston, South Carolina, USA  
**2000** Maison de la Culture d'Amiens, Amiens, France  
 U'gwala, Partage d'Exotismes : 5th Biennale of Contemporary Art, Halle Tony Garnier, Lyons, France  
**2004** New Identities: Contemporary Art from South Africa, Kunstmuseum Bochum, Bochum, Germany  
**2005** Project Row Houses: Round 22, Houston, Texas, USA  
 Arts of Africa, Grimaldi Forum, Monaco  
**2009** Villacaccia di Lestizza, Udine, Italy  
**2010** Mandela Forum, Florence, Italy

- 2018** The Market Theatre foyer, The Market Square, Johannesburg, SA  
 Esther Mahlangu Boardroom, Windybrow Arts Center, Johannesburg, SA  
 Nirox Foundation Sculpture Park, Cradle of Humankind, SA  
 Cadaval Palace, Évora, Portugal
- 2020** Indoor mural, Southgate Mall, Johannesburg, SA
- 2022** Casa Farida x Esther Mahlangu, Carvalhal, Portugal
- 2023** Chalet Africa, Gstaad, Switzerland

## Solo exhibitions

- 1994** Esther Mahlangu, South African Muralist: The BMW Art Car and Related Works, National Museum of Woman in the Arts, Washington D.C., USA
- 1995** United States Tour in Tribute to Esther Mahlangu, South African Muralist, USA.
- 1996** Recent Oil paintings: Esther Mahlangu, Parish Gallery, Georgetown, USA
- 1997** Esther Mahlangu and the Art of the Ndebele, York College, Pennsylvania, USA
- 1998** Esther Mahlangu, Musée des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie, Paris, France
- 2003** Esther Mahlangu 2003, Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, SA
- 2005** Esther Mahlangu, 34LONG, Cape Town, SA
- 2008** Esther Mahlangu: Reacquiring, The Kyle Kauffman Gallery, New York, USA
- 2009** Esther Mahlangu, La regina d'Africa (The African Queen), Artetivù Exhibition Center, Marcon, Italy  
 Esther Mahlangu, Un Artiste Ndebele Ai Colonos, Villacaccia di Lestizza, Udine, Italy
- 2010** L'Africa Nei Loro Occhi, Vitarte, Viterbo, Italy  
 I Colori Della Mia Tribu, Centro Espositivo St.Art, Calenzano, Italy  
 Esther Mahlangu - La Regina d'Africa, Palazzo Samone, Cuneo, Italy  
 Esther Mahlangu – La Regina d'Africa / African Dreams, Villa Genovese, Messina, Italy  
 Esther Mahlangu – La Regina d'Africa, Museo Magi '900, Bologna, Italy  
 Regina d'Africa, Galleria Franco Riccardo Artivisive, Naples, Italy
- 2012** Overlay, 34FineArt, Cape Town, SA
- 2014** Esther Mahlangu: An Artistic Residency, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Virginia, USA
- 2015** Esther Mahlangu 80, UCT Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, SA
- 2016** Esther Mahlangu: Ex Africa Semper Aliquid Novi, Kyo Noir Studio, Viterbo, Italy
- 2019** Timeless - Between Matter and Spirit by The Melrose Gallery, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, SA  
 Timeless - Between Matter and Spirit by The Melrose Gallery, Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town, SA  
 Esther Mahlangu, Arena Studio d'Arte, Verona, Italy
- 2020** Esther Mahlangu 85, The Melrose Gallery, Johannesburg, SA  
 Abstractions of a Culture: Towards a Retrospective, Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Past Modern Section, The Melrose Gallery, SA  
 Disrupting Patterns, The Melrose Gallery at the One&Only, Cape Town, SA
- 2021** Dr. Esther Mahlangu, Almine Rech, Paris, France
- 2023** Dr. Esther Mahlangu: The Breath of Calligraphy, Galerie Enrico Navarra, Paris, France  
 Dr. Esther Mahlangu: Where Two Rivers Meet, Almine Rech, London, UK; Paris, France
- 2024** Then I Knew I Was Good at Painting: Esther Mahlangu, A Retrospective, Iziko South African National Gallery, SA  
 1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair, The Melrose Gallery, New York, USA

## Awards

- 1988** Radio Ndebele Award, Mpumalanga, SA
- 1991** 1st prize Certificate of achievement for Traditional Painting, KwaNdebele National Show, Mpumalanga, SA
- 1991** Honorary Citizen, Civic Authorities, Angoulême, France
- 1996** Mpumalanga Sport Premier's Culture Award, Mpumalanga, SA
- 1997** Incorporated Village of Hempstead Citation, Hempstead, New York, USA
- 1997** Nassau County Commendation, New York, USA
- 1997** Award from the Ministry of Culture and Communication, Centre de la Villette, France
- 1999** Mpumalanga Arts and Culture Award, Mpumalanga, SA
- 2001** Arts and Culture Award for Art Promotion, SA
- 2001** Pan African Broadcasting, Heritage and Achievement Award (PABHA), Nigeria
- 2001** Radio Ndebele Award, Mpumalanga, SA
- 2006** The Order of Ikhamanga (Silver), Government of South Africa, SA
- 2006** Lifetime Achievement Award, National Arts and Culture Trust, SA
- 2007** The Heritage Award for Preservation and Promotion of South African Heritage and Culture, Durban, SA
- 2010** Increasing Access to the Arts Award, 13th annual BASA Awards, Johannesburg, SA
- 2011** Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality Lifetime Achievement award, Mpumalanga, South Africa
- 2012** 1st Mbokodo Awards for South African Women in the Arts, Soweto, SA
- 2013** 2nd Mbokodo Awards for South African Women in the Arts, Midrand, SA
- 2015** The Lilizela Tourism Award, Roots and Culture, SA
- 2015** Lifetime Achievement Award, South African Traditional Music Achievement Awards, SA
- 2016** Minister's Award, Provincial Lilizela Tourism Awards, Mpumalanga, SA
- 2016** Discourse Honorary Award, CAAMMPPS, South African Women Identity & Heritage Life Lessons, SA
- 2017** Arts and Culture Veteran Award, Ubuntu Awards, Cape Town, SA
- 2018** Honorary Doctorate, University of Johannesburg, SA
- 2018** Honorary Doctorate in Visual and Performing Arts, Durban University of Technology, SA
- 2019** First United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) South Africa NGO and Multi Stakeholder Award
- 2019** Officier de L'Ordre Arts et Lettres (Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters), French Embassy, Pretoria, SA
- 2021** Lifetime Achievement Award, South African Traditional Music Achievement Awards, SA
- 2022** Honorary Doctorate, Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Pretoria, SA
- 2023** Metro FM Lifetime Achievement Award, Mbombela, SA
- 2024** Honorary Doctorate, University of South Africa (UNISA), South African Creative Arts Lifetime Achievement Award

## Special projects, productions & collaborations

- 1989** Star of the video documentary *Esther se Wêreld* which premiered on TV1 in South Africa.
- 1991** Invited to take part in the Quartiers-Lumières initiative in Angoulême, France.
- 1991** *BMW 525i Art Car*, 12<sup>th</sup> Art Car commission, issued to Mahlangu from BMW headquarters in Munich, Germany.
- 1991** Comme des Garçons boutiques installation for the show *Ndebele* which toured Tokyo,

- Japan; New York, USA & Paris, France.
- 1991** Fashion magazine campaign with supermodel Iman at Botshabelo in Mpumalanga, South Africa.
- 1992** Decorated one of the 100 make-up vases (No. 52) for Alessandro Mendini's 100% Make-up project.
- 1999** *The Spirit House Project* for the Three Rivers Art Festival in Pittsburgh, USA.
- 2003** Design for the poster of The South African Society for Surgery of the Hand 34<sup>th</sup> Congress in Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2005** Painted Jean Pigozzi's *Volkswagen Type 181* for his collection in Geneva, Switzerland.
- 2007** Painted the New Fiat 500 for the Giovanni and Marella Agnelli collection in Italy.
- 2009** Painted limited edition Ultragirl pumps in collaboration with shoe company Melissa for their São Paulo Fashion Week program in Brazil.
- 2010** Commissioned as the FIFA Official Artist for South Africa in Italy.
- 2015** Sneaker design with Swedish company Eytys for Paris Fashion Week in Paris, France.
- 2016** New design for the Belvedere (RED) bottle and HIV/AIDs campaign tour across the USA.
- 2016** Collaborated with BMW again for the *BMW 7 Series Individual* with painted interior panels by Mahlangu.
- 2017** Painted a 1995 *BMW Isetta* for Concours, South Africa.
- 2018** Decorated a motorcycle for the Africa Passions exhibition in Évora, Portugal.
- 2018** Collaboration with tea company Freshpak for the *Freshpak x Esther Mahlangu Tin*, South Africa.
- 2018** Tiger Brands Heritage Day special edition Tastic rice and Albany bread packaging, South Africa.
- 2020** Carol Bouwer Bag Collection Collaboration at The Melrose Gallery in South Africa.
- 2020** Unveiling of the Rolls-Royce *Mahlangu Phantom* in Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2021** Air Jordan 1 sneakers decorated by Mahlangu used for the South African Pavilion of the Expo 2020 Dubai.
- 2023** *The Electric AI canvas* in association with BMW group for Art Basel, Switzerland; Frieze Seoul, South Korea & Contemporary, Turkey.
- 2024** 'Nostokana' a new car featuring BMW's latest colour change technology. Frieze Los Angeles.

## Collections

Meulensteen Art Museum, Bratislava, Slovakia  
 The Jean Pigozzi African Collection, Geneva, Switzerland  
 Sovereign Art Foundation, Switzerland  
 Kunstmuseum Bochum, Bochum, Germany  
 BMW Art Cars Collection, Germany  
 Kunstmuseum Den Haag, The Hague, Netherlands  
 BROKER Art Collection, Belgium  
 Musée International des Arts Modestes, Sète, France  
 Musée des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie, Paris, France  
 Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris, France  
 Musée d'Angoulême, Angoulême, France  
 Centre national d'art et de culture Georges-Pompidou, Paris, France  
 Museum of Modern Art, Equatorial Guinea  
 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Virginia, USA  
 National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C., USA  
 Pérez Art Museum, Miami, USA  
 Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, USA  
 Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C., USA  
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles, USA  
 Johnnic Communications Management services Collection, Johannesburg, SA  
 South African National Gallery, Iziko Museums, Cape Town, SA  
 BOE Bank, Cape Town, SA  
 Botshabelo Museum, Botshabelo, SA  
 BHP Billiton Collection, Johannesburg, SA

Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria, SA  
RE:CM Collection, Cape Town, SA  
Rupert Art Collection, Stellenbosch, SA  
University of Cape Town Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, SA  
Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, SA  
William Humphrey Art Gallery, Kimberley, SA  
Wits Art Museum Collection, Johannesburg, SA  
The Melrose Gallery, Johannesburg; Cape Town, SA  
The Gorgeous George Collection, Cape Town, SA