

Spier press release – Paul Emmanuel exhibition
21 January 2010

Exhibition exposes a love-affair with concept and surface

On Saturday, 27 February 2010, the official opening of Paul Emmanuel's TRANSITIONS exhibition will take place at the Spier Old Wine Cellar Gallery near Stellenbosch at 15h00. The exhibition, comprising a series of drawings and a film will be shown at Spier until 31 March, thereafter it travels to the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art in Washington and then on to the Kunst raum Sylt Quelle Foundation in Germany in November.

Emmanuel's technically meticulous approach to his art making, combined with his very focused attention to the sites in which he chooses to locate his works, means that audiences only see a new body of work from him every few years. However the fact that TRANSITIONS has taken Emmanuel over four years to research and create translates into an intimately poignant and contemplative experience for the viewer.

At first, the works on exhibition appear as a sequence of what seems to be five 'photographic' images. When examined more closely, they are revealed as drawings and expose a love-affair with concept and surface.

Drawing with a fine steel blade into the black exposed and processed emulsion of photographic paper, Emmanuel captures portentous events in the shifting identity of a white South African male from youth to old age. These photo-realist renderings stimulate thoughts on patriarchy and pose questions around our perceptions of masculinity and the passage of time.

Emmanuel's interpretive short film 3SAI: A RITE OF PASSAGE forms part of the show. This evocative, cinematic film was shown on a number of international film festivals and in 2009 was unanimously selected the winner by an international jury on the Africa in Motion Film Festival, Edinburgh.

The Spier Old Wine Cellar Gallery – thought to be the oldest dated wine cellar in country – is an engaging space in which to view the suspended works, which hang down the length of the building. Aside from hosting the exhibition, Spier has played a significant role in its manifestation through the ongoing support of Emmanuel while he created these works. TRANSITIONS now forms a part of the Spier Collection, one of the largest collections of contemporary South African art in the country.

The TRANSITIONS exhibition is a project of Art Source South Africa and is managed by Les Cohn.

Emmanuel is currently working on a suite of maniere noire hand coloured lithographs which will be launched at the end of 2010.

Ends



Spier Old Wine Cellar Gallery
Spier Estate, Baden Powell Drive, Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa
Gallery hours: Tuesday to Saturday 9 am to 5 pm
Tel: +27 (0)21 809 1100