

Watterson, L. (editorial). THE LOST MEN OF FRANCE, in Classicfeel, DeskLink Media, Johannesburg, South Africa, August.

The third phase of Paul Emmanuel's series of unique, transient, site-specific outdoor installations of *The Lost Men* is an official event of the World War One centenary and is currently installed in France, adjacent to the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme.

The viewer of *The Lost Men* encounters an installation, engaging concepts of memorial and public grief – a personal expression in a selected public arena. The names of men who have died in conflicts from a site are pressed onto Emmanuel's body, which is then photographed before the bruising fades. These photographs of his marked body and skin are then printed onto silk sheets, hung outdoors and left to the wind ...

Phase one of Paul Emmanuel's series of unique, ephemeral, outdoor installations, *The Lost Men Grahamstown*, was launched on the Grahamstown National Arts Festival main visual arts programme in July 2004 on the tenth anniversary of South Africa's democracy. Sourced from public archives, the names and military ranks of men who had died in the 1820-1850s Xhosa Wars fought in the Grahamstown area were embossed onto the artist's body. Xhosa names, however, could only be sourced from the journals of European soldiers and were recorded as a single name only.

Emmanuel chose for the second phase of his public memorial installation, *The Lost Men Mozambique*, which was intended to depict the names of Mozambican and South African combatants who had died in the Mozambican Civil War between the Frelimo and Renamo political movements. However, in 2007, Mozambican authorities placed a moratorium on releasing any names to the public and consequently, Emmanuel's skin was embossed with the words "Unknown Soldier" repeated in Shangaan and Portuguese.

Phase three, *The Lost Men France* is currently being installed adjacent to the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, France in 2014 as an intervention in the Somme Circuit of Remembrance and is an official event of the First World War Centenary.

An anti-monument, it does not glorify war, but rather asks questions about masculinity and vulnerability. It questions the exclusion of certain people in traditional memorials – black South African servicemen in particular. Silk banners bearing the names of French, German, South African and Allied servicemen who fell on the Western Front line a 600 metre stretch of road. The names were photographed after being pressed into the artist's body, without reference to rank, nationality or ethnicity.

While he was in France recently, Emmanuel reported back from the installation, stating, 'in my opinion the quality of the workmanship of the silk banner production by Brochiere Soeries, Lyon is exquisite. Brien ETC, Thiepval and De Cuyper Bernard, Albert have delivered with precision and attention to detail. As an obsessive worker, these are things that resonate strongly with me and it is a privilege to work with this team. I had included this

test run in the production schedule to give us a chance to solve any unforeseen technical problems, but, as far as I can tell, there aren't any!

These banners are hung in the landscape and left to the wind. CF