



SOUTH AFRICA

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For: *Transitions*, an artist's project by Paul Emmanuel.
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***Transitions* – an artist's project by Paul Emmanuel launches at The Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, Free State, South Africa.**

The second exhibition of the *Transitions* project opens at The Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, Free State on the 5th February 2009.

Transitions is an exhibition and film project that explores liminality and moments of shifting white male identity, and has taken the artist four years to create.

It will be Emmanuel's second major project and his sixth solo show. In previous and concurrent works, namely *The Lost Men Project* and *after-image*, the artist produced installations and a major drawing engaged with public and private loss, memory and constructions of male identity. His interest in the 'documentary' nature of photography and the printmaking concept of leaving impressions, have informed new works over the past five years.

The artist cites a quote by Susan Sontag as the point of departure that defined the major tool of exploration for the works on exhibition: "A photograph is only a fragment, and with the passage of time its moorings become unstuck. It drifts away into a soft abstract past-ness, open to any kind of reading."

Transitions comprises a series of five ostensibly 'photographic' works which, when examined closely, are revealed as sensitively hand-drawn, photo-realist sequences of images.

According to Emmanuel "These film-like progressions obsessively capture liminal moments of five transitory stages in life."

A sixth work titled *3SAI A Rite of Passage* – a twelve minute film produced by the artist – documents the head shaving of new recruits at the Third South African Infantry Battalion (3SAI) in Kimberley. This is one of two remaining South African military training camps, which still perform the obligatory hair shaving of army recruits when they join the South African National Defense Force.

Film is a new medium for the artist and this project has posed some interesting opportunities. Shot and presented as a high-definition, cinematic quality work, this film will also exist outside the context of the exhibition, and will be considered for various film festivals and other opportunities as a stand-alone work.

Transitions piqued interest during its incubation due to an innovative financing model that was developed as a way to resource the project.

"In light of the challenging arts funding environment, we had to get smart about finding the money to realize the artist's vision for *Transitions*," Says Les Cohn of Art Source South Africa, Project

Manager for **Transitions**, “We developed a plan which allowed investors to purchase future works from this project at the artist’s current market value.”

Once the first phase of **Transitions** is launched, the artist will begin work on a series of lithographs which will take 2 years to complete. During this time the exhibition will travel first to major museums around South Africa. It is planned to then travel the project internationally to various museum venues around the world.

“Through this project, and his burgeoning career as a highly regarded artist, the artist’s provenance grows. By the time the investors receive their work, they will have increased in value, based on the artist’s projected market value at that time.” States Cohn. “These works are the *stock certificates* if you will and options to these works are what current investors are buying. “

“To our knowledge, this is a first in the South African arts industry.” Says Cohn

A significant South African patron and past supporter of Emmanuel’s work, responded to this proposal by not only participating in the investment option, but by purchasing the entire exhibition and film prior to the production of either, and thus secured the production of the full scope of the artists plans for the film element.

The broader project has a pool of investors but there is still scope for more interested parties to come on board as the exhibition increases in provenance.

Transitions will run at The Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein from 5th February – 8th April 2009.

Please join us at 19h00 on the 5th February for the opening.

Ends

For further information and images:

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Oliewenhuis Art Museum

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Museum hours

Mondays – Fridays 08h00 – 17h00

Saturdays 10h00 – 17h00 Sundays & Public Holidays 13h00 – 17h00

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