

SIMON STONE

smac

Artist Room

24 . 07 . 20

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Text by Gabriel Crouse

Simon Stone is on the move again. Cardboard, whether in its soft corrugated or hard compressed form, is the wrapping we put around objects to lift them, stack them, and shift them from place to place. In his latest series Stone lifts off one side of the cardboard container, nails it down and paints over it, paints objects onto it worth saving in time's irresistible great move forward.

Stone's work has been solidified over a lifetime by a sensitivity to the real, practical things whose utility and banality conceal their aesthetic quality for people in a hurry. The kind of thing you could pack without a second glance, that you might miss but not miss to behold. Life's furniture, the stuff we sometimes sit on or lug, but overlook. Stone slows one down to look again.

In the early 2010's he wrapped this theme around itself in a series of *Still Lifes of Boxes*, empty things, ready to be filled once more, in anticipation of another disruptive move. *Patina*, the aesthetic sign of aging, is often savoured in oxidized metals and long-weathered walls but Stone found the handy good

old cardboard box to be a subject of colourful, textured patination too, as sticky-tape, paint, labels and frayed edges accumulate records of transit.

For all that when Stone turns the cardboard box from subject to canvas there is nothing boxed-in about the paintings that emerge. The box becomes a window from here to there, from emptiness to the promise of desires fulfilled, or unfulfilled.

At times this is seductive, as in *Floral Top*, which renders a woman in lipstick, black fringe masking one eye, black stockings thigh-high, and the eponymous top, prone on a mattress that could be mangy, another three-D object that bears the marks of time and use. Above her are portals that give out onto fresh blue-sky vistas in different spaces. There is a plain gold ring on her finger, is this forbidden love?

Stone pulls off the lover's trick of shrinking the entire world down to a bedroom chamber for a moment by keeping the irony alive – there is always an outside, always a context, something

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missing – no matter how still in poise the lover is always on the move, now closer, now further away.

Stone picks up on a different kind of exposed relation in *4 W*, four women bathing in a play on the 19th century post-impressionist motif. The irony here is a lack of water(!), but there they are rinsing hair, scrubbing armpits, smiling in the daylight anyway. One seems to be masked with a white daub, giving the impression of that latent permission to move, but not too close now, as we get on with routines of physical and social ablution in a time of physical and social distancing. It is a jolly thing to look at, parsimonious portraiture that comes off rich and light.

Every piece deserves its own reckoning, but this critic will finish with a look at *Grey Landscape*, a painting within a painting on an old distressed box. The image suggests an abandoned flat, the wall now strewn with graffiti, after a hasty mover forgot this

landscape amid tumult. There it stands still now, opening onto a distant horizon as bleak and cold as the desperate marks around it.

Here Stone not only recycles the box, but also the old idiom of gloomy landscape painting and the newer one of acid wall doodles, finding all three play a chord to that obverse inclination – not so much to move *towards* something but simply just to get away. And yet we cannot always move, the eye is fixed, attracted, drawn in by the desperate and the inhospitable. Stone reminds one that we do not just carry the shiny and sweet along, we use near-weightless materials to carry heavy stuff too.

Stone's series of oils on cardboard are at once beguiling and frank, little and hefty. He gives sense to the old thought that a painting is just a flat, handy thing you can carry off so long as you're prepared to take a world with you.





Simon Stone
In the Air
2020
Oil on Cardboard
28 x 28 cm



Simon Stone
Holiday
2020
Oil on Cardboard
34 x 33 cm





Simon Stone
Nude Suspended
2020
Oil on Cardboard
25 x 25 cm



Simon Stone
4 W
2020
Oil on Cardboard
20 x 16.5 cm



Simon Stone
Landscape Dress
2020
Oil on Cardboard
30 x 21 cm





Simon Stone
N.Y.
2020
Oil on Cardboard
29 x 28.5 cm



Simon Stone
Arm
2020
Oil on Cardboard
32.5 x 30.5 cm



Simon Stone
N.Y. (Detail)
2020
Oil on Cardboard
29 x 28.5 cm



Simon Stone
Floral Top
2020
Oil on Cardboard
32 x 29.5 cm





Simon Stone
Branch Room
2020
Oil on Cardboard
28 x 28 cm



Simon Stone
The Rap
2020
Oil on Cardboard
33 x 31 cm



Simon Stone
The Rap (Detail)
2020
Oil on Cardboard
33 x 31 cm



Simon Stone
Four Nudes in Studio
2020
Oil on Cardboard
25 x 21 cm





Simon Stone
Aberdeen Landscape
2020
Oil on Cardboard
21 x 37 cm



Simon Stone
Arms Akimbo
2020
Oil on Cardboard
23 x 20 cm



Simon Stone
Two Men + a Ship
2020
Oil on Cardboard
31 x 32 cm



Simon Stone
Two Men + a Ship (Detail)
2020
Oil on Cardboard
31 x 32 cm



Simon Stone
From Rome to N.Y.
2020
Oil on Cardboard
34 x 34 cm





Simon Stone
Aberdeen Bank
2020
Oil on Cardboard
25 x 21 cm



Simon Stone
Grey Landscape
2020
Oil on Cardboard
33 x 20 cm



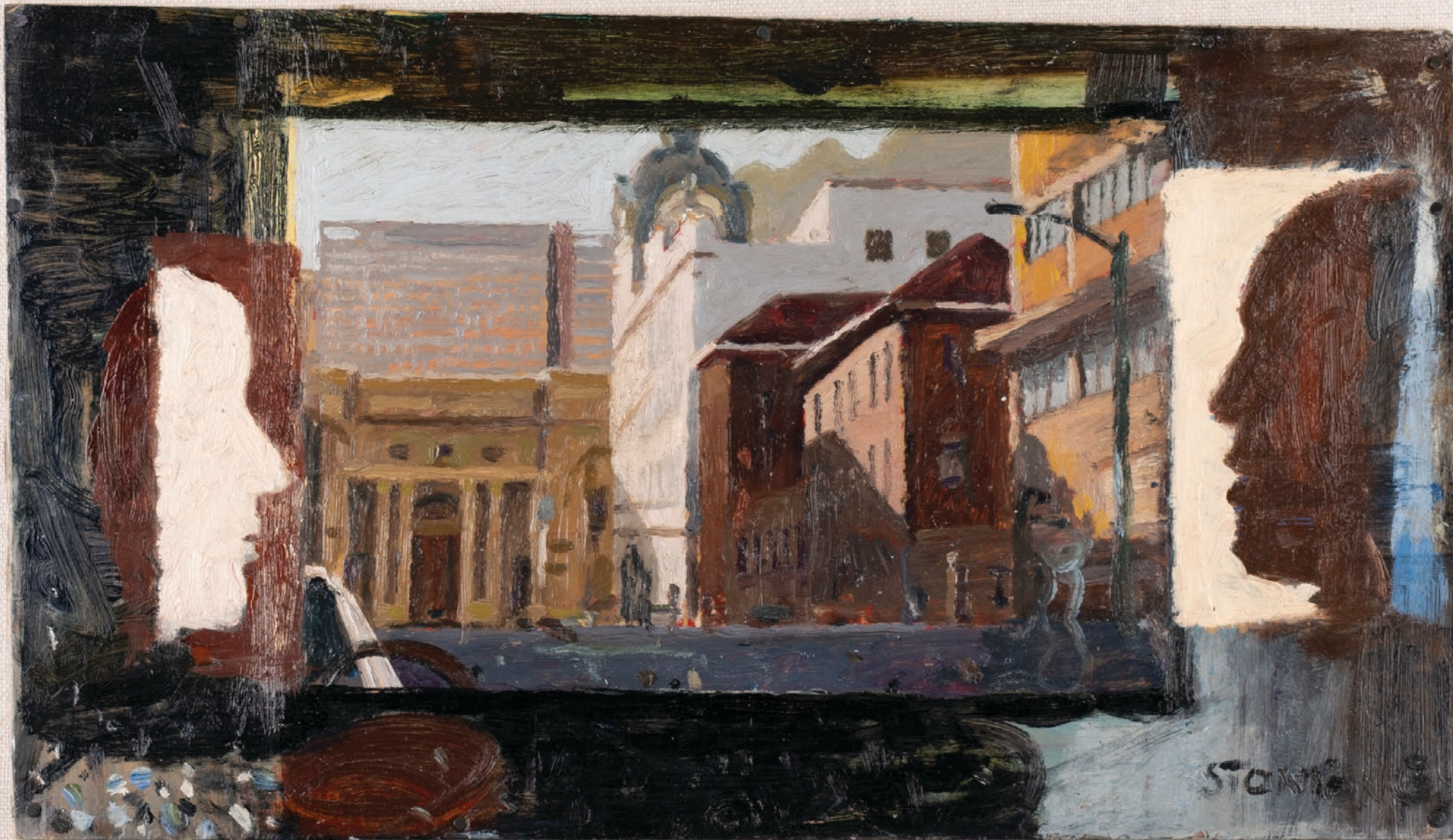
Simon Stone
Still Life with Nail + Tin Foil
2020
Oil on Cardboard
31 x 31 cm



Simon Stone
Cactus
2020
Oil on Cardboard
32 x 32 cm



Simon Stone
Die Hoff
2020
Oil on Cardboard
23 x 39.5 cm



Simon Stone
Die Hoff (Detail)
2020
Oil on Cardboard
23 x 39.5 cm





Simon Stone
Landscape with Tree
2020
Oil on Cardboard
12 x 22 cm



Simon Stone
Refuge
2020
Oil on Cardboard
24.5 x 28.5 cm



Simon Stone
Refuge (Detail)
2020
Oil on Cardboard
24.5 x 28.5 cm



Simon Stone
Man Washing His Hands
2020
Oil on Cardboard
27 x 23 cm



Simon Stone
Floating Landscape
2020
Oil on Cardboard
31 x 28 cm



Simon Stone | Artist Room | 2020 | Installation View

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Simon Stone was born in 1952 in Lady Grey, South Africa. Stone currently lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa. Having graduated from Michaelis School of Fine Art in 1976, Stone later continued his education in Italy. Since 1978, he has exhibited widely, both locally and abroad. Considered the “poet” of inner-city Johannesburg, Stone was an important influence on, and part of a generation of, painters during the halcyon era of South African art during the eighties and nineties. Stone was the recipient of the New York City Award at the Ampersand Foundation in New York, USA in 1997. Prior to this, Stone was awarded a Lifetime Merit Award from the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1993.

Recently, Stone inspired a documentary, titled *Imagining Stone*, featuring his work and life, produced by ArtMeetsTV. In 2020, his work was included in SMAC Gallery's presentation at Investec Cape Town Art Fair, and *A Show of Solidarity*, a group exhibition at SMAC Gallery, both in Cape Town, South Africa. Stone's work was included in the *Ampersand Foundation Award 21 years celebration exhibition* curated by Gordon Froud at the University of Johannesburg Art Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa as well as SMAC Gallery's group presentation at FNB Art Joburg at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2019. Stone presented *Cogs of Mercy*, a solo exhibition at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town. Most recent group shows include *Suitcase Show*, a collaborative group exhibition with Galleria Massimo Minini at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town in 2019; FNB Joburg Art Fair; *Wish You Were Here* at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town and the Investec Cape Town Art Fair all in 2018. Stone's works will be included in SMAC Gallery's group presentation at Artissima at the OVAL, Lingotto Fiere in Turin Italy later this year.

Prior to this, Stone's solo exhibitions at SMAC Gallery include *New Paintings* in Johannesburg, 2016; *Both*

Sides of Now in Stellenbosch at the end of 2014; and *Thrown Together: Works from 2011* in Cape Town, 2011. SMAC Gallery presented a major retrospective exhibition of highly acclaimed South African painter Simon Stone at the Standard Bank Gallery in Johannesburg in 2013, and produced a seminal publication on the artist and his works. *Simon Stone: Collected Works* was written by Lloyd Pollak.

Previous group exhibitions with SMAC Gallery include: the FNB Joburg Art Fair in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015; the Investec Cape Town Art Fair in 2014 and 2015; *Upstart/Startup* in 2016; *Back to the Future II* in 2015; *Viewing Room #01 Typography* in 2014; *Paperwork: an exhibition of Contemporary South African works on paper* in 2014; *miart* in 2014; *The Xmas Show* in 2014; *Back to the Future: Abstract Work in South Africa Past and Present* in 2013; *PAINT I: Contemporary South African painting 2002 – 2012* in 2013; *COLLECTION 17: Modern and Contemporary South African Art 1952 – 2012* in 2012; and *Divisions: Aspects of South African Art 1948 – 2010* in 2010.

Stone's work has been acquired for the Smithsonian National Museum for African Art Collection, Washington DC, USA. Other notable collections include: Alexander Forbes in Cape Town, South Africa; Anglo American Collection in Johannesburg, South Africa and London, UK; Gencor Industries Collection in Orlando, USA; Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) in Johannesburg, South Africa; Pendock Wine Gallery Collection in Cape Town, South Africa; South African Broadcasting Agency (SABC) in Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa; Sanlam Art Collection in Cape Town, South Africa; Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa; the University of South Africa (UNISA) Art Collection, in Pretoria, South Africa; the University of The Witwatersrand (WITS) Art Collection, Johannesburg, South Africa; and the Mobil Oil collection in Irving, USA.



SIMON STONE

CURRICULUM VITAE

smac

BIOGRAPHY

Born 1952, Lady Grey, South Africa.
Lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa.

EDUCATION

- 1976** Advanced Diploma: Fine Art (AdvDip), Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 1975** Certificate of Accomplishment: Fine Art, Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa.

AWARDS

- 1997** *New York City Award*, Ampersand Foundation, New York City, USA.
- 1993** *Lifetime Merit Award*, IGI Life Vita Art Now, Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1986** *Merit Award*, Volkskas Atelier, Absa Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1976** *Irma Stern Art Scholarship Award*, University of Cape Town (UCT) Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, South Africa.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2018** *Cogs of Mercy*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2016** *New Paintings*, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2014** *Simon Stone: Both Sides of Now*, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- 2013** *Simon Stone: A Retrospective Exhibition*, in collaboration with SMAC Gallery, Standard Bank Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2011** *Thrown Together*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2010** *Glance – Nailed Down*, Myerson Fine Art, London, UK.
Recent Works, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2007** *Small Works*, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna, South Africa.
- 2006** *Simon Stone- Recent Works*, in association with Knysna Fine Art, University of Cape Town (UCT) Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2004** *Recent Oil Paintings*, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2002** *Recent Oil Paintings*, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna, South Africa.
- 2001** *Some Recent Oil Paintings & 29,000 Works on Paper*, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna, South Africa.
- 2000** *Small Works*, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 1996** *Painting from Under the Skin*, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1993** *Simon Stone- Recent Works on Paper*, Everard Read Contemporary, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1992** *Simon Stone*, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1989** *Simon Stone*, Cassirer Fine Art, Johannesburg, South Africa.

- 1987** *Open Court Paintings*, Karen McKerron Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1985** *Simon Stone- Recent Works*, Karen McKerron Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1983** *Simon Stone Paintings and Graphics*, The Market Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1978** *Paintings by Simon Stone*, Fabian Fine Art, Cape Town, South Africa.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2020** *A Show of Solidarity*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Investec Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2019** *Artissima* (SMAC Gallery), Oval Lingotto Fiere, Turin, Italy.
Ampersand Foundation Award 21 years Celebration Exhibition, curated by Gordon Froud, University of Johannesburg Art Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa.
FNB Art Joburg (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
The Suitcase Show, in collaboration with Galleria Massimo Minini, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Investec Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2018** *Wish You Were Here*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Investec Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2017** *X : Part III*, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
X : Part I, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2016** *UPSTART/STARTUP*, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Studio- Celebrating the Lives and Work of South African Artists, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
Summer Show '16, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.

- 2015** Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), The Avenue – V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa.
Back to the Future II - Abstract Art in South Africa: Past & Present, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
 FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2014** *Paperwork: An Exhibition of Contemporary South African Works on Paper*, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
Viewing Room #01 Typography, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
 FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), The Pavillion - V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2013** *The Xmas Show*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Back to the Future: Abstract Art in South Africa Past and Present, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
 Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), The Lookout - V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa.
Autumn Group Show, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Critic's Choice / Ebb Tide / Playing House, Association for Visual Arts (AVA) Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Vanitas, curated by Clare Menck, D-Street Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
 FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2012** *PAINT I: Contemporary South African Painting 2002 - 2012*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
 FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Collection 17 Modern and Contemporary South African Art: 1952 - 2012, Aardklop National Arts Festival (SMAC Gallery), Potchefstroom, South Africa.
Collection 16, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2011** *Collection 15*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Contemporary South African Painters: Kate Gottgens, Simon Stone, Giovanna Bialo-Stone & John Murray, Kalk Bay Modern, Kalk Bay, South Africa.
Collection 14, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
 FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Collection 13, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2010** *The Eleven Football and Art Exhibition - South Africa 2010 x Brazil 2014*, Commerzbank, Johannesburg, South Africa.
View from the South, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Divisions: Aspects of South African Art 1948 – 2010, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- 2009** *Art for Africa: British and South African Contemporary Art*, Sotheby's, London, UK.
Sex, Power, Money, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2008** *Modern and Contemporary Art, Then Now and Beyond*, Polokwane Museum, Polokwane, South Africa.
Intimate Distance, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2004** *10 Years Democracy*, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 Art for AIDS Orphans Auction, Stephan Welz & Co in association with Sotheby's, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2003** *The Ampersand Foundation, 1997 to 2003*, Warren Siebrits Contemporary Art, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2002** Art for AIDS Orphans Auction, Grand West Casino, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 1999** *Unplugged IV*, Rembrandt van Rijn Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1998** *CYST: Works in Paint*, [Travelling Exhibition], curated by Johann Louw & Clare Menck, Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town; Civic Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Unplugged III, Rembrandt van Rijn Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
GAROB: The Dry Land, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna, South Africa.
- 1997** Opening Exhibition, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna, South Africa.
Unplugged II, Rembrandt van Rijn Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1996** *Common and Uncommon Ground: South African Art to Atlanta*, City Gallery East, Atlanta, USA.
- 1995** *Panoramas of Passage: Changing Landscapes of South Africa*, Meridian International Centre, Washington DC, USA.
- 1994** *State of the Art*, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Displacements: South African Works on Paper 1984 to 1994, Northwestern Block Museum of Art, Evanston, USA.
- 1993** *IGI Life Vita Art Now*, Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1992** Group Exhibition, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1991** Cape Town Triennial, Rembrandt van Rijn Art Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 1990** *Vita Art Now 1989*, Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1988** Cape Town Triennial, Rembrandt van Rijn Art Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
DPSC Exhibition, Market Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 Braam Kruger & Simon Stone, South African Association of Arts, Pretoria, South Africa.
 Simon Stone and William Kentridge, Gallery International, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 1987** *Alternative Art*, Amsterdam, Netherlands.
The Portrait, University of South Africa (UNISA) Gallery, Pretoria, South Africa.

SIMON STONE

CV

Simon Stone and Margaret Vorster, Kwazulu Natal Society of the Arts (KZNSA) Gallery, Durban, South Africa.

- 1986** Zululand Arts Festival, University of Zululand, Richards Bay, South Africa.
Portraits, Johannesburg Art Foundation, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Volkskas Atelier Award Exhibition, South African Association of Arts, Pretoria, South Africa.
- 1985** Cape Town Triennial, Cape Town, South Africa.
Opening of Gallery, Johannesburg Art Foundation, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1983** The Wits Lecturers Exhibition, Tatham Art Gallery, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.
- 1980** *South African Art*, Gaborone, Botswana.
Olivetti Art Opening, Johannesburg, South Africa.

PUBLICATIONS

- 2018** Stone, S. | 2018, *Simon Stone: Sketchbooks 1-100*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2013** Pollack, L. | 2013, *Simon Stone: Collected Works*, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.

COLLECTIONS

- Mobil Oil, Irving, USA.
Alexander Forbes, Cape Town, South Africa.
Anglo American Collection, Johannesburg, South Africa; London, UK.
Gencor Industries Collection, Orlando, USA.
Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Johannesburg, South Africa.
Pendock Wine Gallery Collection, Cape Town, South Africa.
South African Broadcasting Cooperation (SABC), Johannesburg, Cape Town, South Africa.
Sanlam Art Collection Cape Town, South Africa.
Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
University of South Africa (UNISA) Art Collection, Pretoria, South Africa.
University of The Witwatersrand (WITS) Art Collection, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Smithsonian National Museum for African Art Collection, Washington DC, USA.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact SMAC Gallery for more information or any other queries.

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