



CHRISTOPHER MOLLER

GALLERY

TONY GUM



## XHOSA WOMAN - INTOMBI I & II

In the words of the renowned African American author, poet, and social critic, James Baldwin, 'not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced'. Like Baldwin, Tony Gum believes that only when we examine such pervasive constructs like identity, race, gender, and so on, can we create opportunities for better understanding and growth. She fundamentally believes in the importance of approaching life from a position of knowledge, facing the 'truths' of who, what, and why we are, and this ultimately means that we are also free to evolve as beings. We become more liberated, whole, and balanced individuals in the world. It is precisely this perspective that has informed the freedom and growth we continue to experience in Gum's art. This series sees her returning 'home' to unearth what it means to be a Xhosa girl and woman. To do this, she immerses herself in core 'rites of passage', she sits with elders who welcome Gum with open arms, celebrating her genuine interest as a young daughter, granddaughter, sister, and female representative of Xhosa culture and people.

The pieces entitled 'Intombi I and 'Intombi II' depict 'Intonjane', the process of transitioning from a girl to a woman. Certain physiological practices like the exposure of the breasts among 'girls' – 'Amatombazana' a symbolic point of differentiation from 'abafazi' or 'woman', 'umfazi' who will generally wear Xhosa attire from the bosom down. Perhaps the more intimate and personal of her works to date, here Gum recognises, accepts, and celebrates the contrasting dimensions and narratives of life. In this series, Gum portrays the extent to which culture ultimately evolves. Integrating the range of human norms, practices, and experiences; culture is essentially a fluid and non-static evolutionary process; the idea is that we can take these contemporary and very commercial elements and fuse them with what is traditional so that it is relatable to all people.

Also, trying to see the everyday young girl, how would she be in this context of the 21st century, we are always on our phones, self indulged and also self-aware. This is also meant to be fun and playful. Whilst she is busy with her self-phone, she is still busy with her chores. She has now come from the river (bucket on head), she is working but is also now busy with the phone. But I like how although she is busy with her phone, she catches someone looking at her at the same time, that awkward moment when you are doing something on your phone and you catch someone looking at you....I displayed the Apple symbol openly, to make a statement about about gentrification and the impact of contemporary lifestyle, Apple being such a major corporate brand, based on personal experience, I realise how, like my cultural norms and traditions, the Apple brand also has its traditions, norms and practices, despite adapting different functionalities here and there'.



G A L L E R Y



XHOSA WOMAN — INTOMBI I (2017)

Photography, Premium Satin Giclee Dibond mounted  
Limited Edition of 10  
Framed 150 x 100cm (60 x 40 inches)  
USD 4 200 excl. 15% SA VAT

XHOSA WOMAN — INTOMBI II (2017)

Photography, Premium Satin Giclee Dibond mounted  
Limited Edition of 10  
Framed 150 x 100cm (60 x 40 inches)  
USD 4 200 excl. 15% SA VAT





## ROCK, CAUSE, ANALYSIS

The 'Rock Cause Analysis' series is deeply rooted in the concept of 'root cause analysis', which aims to identify the underlying reasons why certain things happen repeatedly. By replacing the word 'root' with 'rock', Gum draws attention to the solid and foundational nature of women in society, emphasising their significance as the bedrock of sociocultural systems. The use of rock-like textures in the sculptures further reinforces this symbolism.

Gum's work serves as a platform to address fundamental pre-colonial and gender injustices while staying true to her self-portrait trademark style. Through her artistic talent and social activism, Gum brings African heritage, culture, and belief systems to the forefront of 21st-century discourse. In the 'Rock Cause Analysis' series, Gum creates unprecedented sculptures representing Xhosa tribes and the roles played by women within these tribes.

Using her face and body as moulds, Gum meticulously designs and creates the sculptures, capturing the unique essence and power of each tribeswoman. The sculptures are dressed in traditional attire, adorned with beadwork that reflects their class, stature, and cultural responsibilities. Gum draws inspiration from neoclassical sculpture to juxtapose different artistic worlds and highlight the diversity of African traditions.

The limbless sculptures in the series symbolise the resilience and persistence of women in their quest for recognition and equal representation. The dislodged arms featured in the photographic iterations represent the misuse and undervaluing of women's contributions. While women play crucial roles in building society and nurturing communities, their achievements are often overlooked and under appreciated.

Gum's 'Rock Cause Analysis' seeks to unearth the inherent strength and stoicism of Xhosa tribeswomen, who have historically been unsung heroines and matriarchs. The falling arms in the sculptures symbolize the extent to which the human arm, a symbol of productivity and capability, can be misused. Despite their productive contributions to society, women are often not adequately celebrated.

In this body of work, Gum goes beyond glorifying women's roles and delves into their authentic selves, free from the layers and burdens of politics, class, and patriarchy. The chosen Xhosa tribeswomen embody the distinctive women of Gum's heritage and indigenous culture. Each sculpture represents a specific tribal role or archetype, balancing and carrying objects that symbolise their responsibilities within the tribe.

Overall, the 'Rock Cause Analysis' series is a powerful exploration of the significance and sustained recognition of women in society. Gum's artistic vision challenges societal norms and seeks to create a more inclusive and equitable representation of women's contributions. Through her thought-provoking sculptures and photographs, Gum invites viewers to reflect on the complex layers of gender inequality and advocate for change.



G A L L E R Y



AMAMPONDOMISE (2019)

Photography, Premium Satin Giclee Dibond mounted  
Limited Edition of 10  
Framed 150 x 100cm (60 x 40 inches)  
USD 4 200 excl. 15% SA VAT



AMAMFENGU (2019)

Photography, Premium Satin Giclee Dibond mounted  
Limited Edition of 10  
Framed 150 x 100cm (60 x 40 inches)  
USD 4 200 excl. 15% SA VAT





Gum posing with the South African Consulate General at her solo exhibition in Milan.



G A L L E R Y

## ODE TO SHE

In her captivating 'Ode to She' series, Tony Gum builds upon the narrative established in her previous 'Milked in Africa' series in 2016. In 'Ode to She' Gum introduces two additional artworks: 'Land of Milk and Honey' and 'Milk The Bok'.

In 'Land of Milk and Honey', Gum explores the profound connection between her archetype, Africa, and the concept of the motherland. The vibrant green colour symbolises the land, while the figure's striking red lips subtly allude to the sacrifices made by women and the bloodshed of oppression. Unlike her earlier 'Milked in Africa' series, the parted lips of the figure signify her readiness to speak out and share her burdens. Inspired by Exodus 3:17 in the Bible, which speaks of a promised land flowing with milk and honey, Gum delves into the intricate relationship between religion, colonialism, and the hope for liberation from oppression. The depiction of milk on the Bible represents the nurturing qualities of sacred words, offering a beacon of hope. The stature of the woman suggests her adherence to societal expectations, while the milk now depicted on the 'Book' emphasises the healing and nurturing resources within her.

In 'Milk The Bok', Gum explores the indomitable resilience of African people in the face of adversity. This artwork draws a parallel between the adaptability and survival instincts of the Springbok, South Africa's national animal associated with rugby, and the experiences of African individuals. Despite relentless attempts to erase their spirit, African people remain steadfast, exuding strength and joy. The presence of the feminine figure alongside the Bok serves as a powerful reminder of the shared qualities between the two species, emphasising their inherent strength. The white cloth adorning her head represents respect and power, symbolising the resources she creates and empowers herself with. It serves as a poignant reminder of the significance of self-respect and humility.

Through the exploration of 'Land of Milk and Honey' and 'Milk The Bok', Tony Gum delves deeper into the intricacies of African identity, resilience, and the transformative power of self-expression. Her thought-provoking artworks challenge societal norms, inviting contemplation, while simultaneously celebrating the beauty and strength of African women.



G A L L E R Y



LAND OF MILK AND HONEY (2017)

Photography, Premium Satin Giclee Dibond mounted  
Limited Edition of 10  
Framed 150 x 100cm (60 x 40 inches)  
USD 4 200 excl. 15% SA VAT

MILK THE BOK (2017)

Photography, Premium Satin Giclee Dibond mounted  
Limited Edition of 10  
Framed 150 x 100cm (60 x 40 inches)  
USD 4 200 excl. 15% SA VAT





## BIOGRAPHY

Tony Gum is a highly acclaimed and award-winning artist known for her grace, depth of expression, and self-reflective truth in her artistry. Her work transcends the confines of a singular narrative, allowing her to create a profound impact through various artistic modalities. Gum's artistry seamlessly blends her entire being, with her body, mind, and soul serving as canvases for her expression. In essence, Tony Gum is art, and art is Tony.

Gum's distinctive style and youthful effervescence have garnered global interest in African artists. Her dynamic storytelling ability breaks down barriers of class, culture, race, and gender, making her work accessible to a wide audience. She skilfully combines digital film, graphic design, painting, and still life composition, creating a multidimensional experience that brings to life the poignant and subtle realities of our shared human experience. Drawing inspiration from her South African Xhosa heritage, Gum's art captures life stories in unexpected and refreshing ways.

As a creative director on set, Gum takes on the role of shaping and directing the visual narrative of her work. Her innate wisdom, discipline, and rigor shine through in her bold, iterative, and fluid artistic creations that extend beyond the traditional confines of gallery walls. Gum's artistic vision is not limited to static images but encompasses a dynamic and immersive experience that invites viewers to engage with her art on a deeper level.

Tony Gum's artistry represents a fusion of tradition and innovation, combining her cultural heritage with contemporary artistic techniques. Her work challenges societal norms, celebrates diversity, and promotes inclusivity. Through her art, Gum seeks to spark conversations, provoke thought, and inspire change. Her unique perspective and artistic prowess have established her as a leading figure in the global art scene, and her contributions continue to shape and redefine the boundaries of contemporary art.

## EXHIBITION HISTORY

### 2024

Mother Tongues, a group show. 24 February - 27 April. Southern Guild, Los Angeles, U.S.A.

### 2023

INVESTEC CAPE TOWN ART FAIR, Christopher Moller Gallery, Cape Town. Solo installation.

### 2022

Museum Show, Tony Gum, Milked In Africa. Fotografiska New York. U.S.A

### 2020

The Fourth Gallery, Cape Town, 'The Spectacle' – group exhibition 2020

### 2019

Photo London Fair, 'Kat'emnyama' – solo exhibition 2019 Christopher Moller Gallery, Cape Town, 'A Portion' – solo exhibition 2019

### 2018

C-Gallery, Milan, 'Rock Cause Analysis' – solo exhibition 2018

### 2017

CAPE TOWN ART FAIR– solo and group exhibition.  
Johannesburg Art Fair – solo and group exhibition  
'Ode To She' , Christopher Moller Gallery, Cape Town – solo exhibition  
Pulse Miami and New York Contemporary Art Fair – solo and group exhibition

## COLLECTIONS

Perez Art Museum, Miami, United States  
Pigozzi Collection, Switzerland



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# CHRISTOPHER MOLLER

## GALLERY

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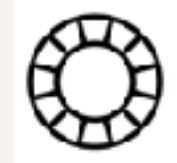
[www.christophermollerart.co.za](http://www.christophermollerart.co.za)

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### TO PURCHASE

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[info@christophermollerart.co.za](mailto:info@christophermollerart.co.za)



### ACQUISITION PROCESS

- Once you have chosen your favourite piece, please contact our team at [info@christophermollerart.co.za](mailto:info@christophermollerart.co.za) to confirm your request and advise on your shipping address.
- Please note, your requested piece and invoice will be valid for 7 calendar days. Once payment has been processed and received, ownership of the piece will be transferred.
- Art pieces will be released to the waiting list after 7 days.
- Shipment date will be confirmed per purchase. Kindly note, artwork will only leave the Gallery post exhibition.
- Kindly note all ZAR prices are excluding 15% SA VAT.
- Kindly note, shipping cost excludes any destination taxes & import charges

### CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS ACCEPTED.

Our bank (Nedbank) has given us the option to do the credit card transaction via e-payment solution for credit cards. This is a secure product that enables the Gallery to send you a link with the amount pre-populated. It requires you to complete your credit card details. This protects you, in that you don't have to give out your credit card details to a third party, while you complete it online. Unfortunately, this system does not accept American Express or Diners Club credit cards.

Please inform your bank of the transaction in advance and provide them with our Merchant code: 2738375 should your bank reject the request from a foreign country.

This is how it works; You will receive an email with the link from the Christopher Moller Gallery. This will include a PDF copy of the invoice. Please click on the link and complete the transaction by completing your credit card details. Kindly note each link has an expiry date and is valid for 2 days. Once the transaction has been authorised, you will receive a notification that the payment has been successful.

### ENQUIRIES | How can we assist?

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### VIEWINGS BY APPOINTMENT

Please contact us to view in person.

Tuesday - Friday · 10h00 - 16h00

Monday & Saturday · Viewings by Appointment Sunday · Closed

# CHRISTOPHER MOLLER

## GALLERY

### VISIT US

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Please contact our team should you wish to be added to the preview list of your desired exhibition.  
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