

Andrew Ntshabele

Artist, Andrew Ntshabele, born 1986, lives and works in the inner city of Johannesburg, and his art is informed by his environment. His mixed-media paintings – a fusion of collage and acrylic – depict what he sees and lives with every day.

Andrew was born in the small rural town of Moruleng in the North West Province but moved with his family to the city at a young age. He studied Art at the University of Johannesburg and was awarded his BTech degree, majoring in painting, in 2013.

“I have lived in Johannesburg since the age of four and have witnessed its physical, socio-economic and political changes post-Apartheid,” he explains. “I still live in the inner city where I’m confronted by poverty, pollution and urban decay every day. I’m interested in the people who live in this environment, in the negative effects of rapid urbanisation and how they put a strain on the people I encounter and interact with daily.”

Andrew’s work investigates the social predicament of the city to understand the root causes of the current inner-city decay. “My work is a social commentary on the socio-economic challenges that the majority of Black South Africans face in a post-colonial South Africa. My focal subject matter is often the pollution and rubbish amongst which the inner-city residents live, which is why my paintings incorporate more than one medium. They’re a fusion of collage and acrylic paint, and are produced from photographs I take on my daily travels around the inner city and its outskirts.”