

MUSA N. NXUMALO

16 Shots

@smac_gallery

#smacgallery

#smacjhb

#musannxumalo

#16shots

06 . 04 . 17

29 . 04 . 17

smac

JOHANNESBURG
1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

info@smacgallery.com
www.smacgallery.com



MUSA N. NXUMALO

16 Shots

SMAC Gallery is proud to present *16 Shots*, Musa N. Nxumalo's second solo exhibition with the gallery. This new body of work comprises sixteen photographic prints that continue the themes and focus of Nxumalo's ongoing project, *The Anthology of Youth*.

This focus is marked by a convergence of twin concerns that Nxumalo has been exploring over the recent years as a photographer. These revolve around photography as a tool of both reportage and as a creative medium. Nxumalo has been steadily developing a unique visual vocabulary that delicately balances his interest in social documentary and fine art photography. To this end, he manages to employ an astute use of the black and white 'film' construct in images that courageously consider and capture the appearances and experiences of contemporary black South African youth. This results in a photographic oeuvre that oscillates between great empathetic intimacy and journalistic distance with unmissable humanity.

The Soweto-born and raised photographer has turned his camera lens onto his peers as subjects. Hence the *16 Shots* on show represent a reflection on the changing contexts and concerns that confront this contemporary generation of South African 'youths' – a generation whose meaning Nxumalo is also the co-architect of.

16 Shots also includes shots taken on the scene at the recent *#feesmustfall* protests. Nxumalo's work is, on one level, a photographic testament and witness to the protest movement. However, the appearances of the events' moments of performed protest are interspersed with those culled from parties and clubs in Johannesburg.

This registers an interplay of defiant joy and performative public dissent as a creative attempt to displace the essentialising tendency of narratives about young South Africans today; often pegged as 'frivolous, purposeless youth' or 'socially engaged youth activists.' Nxumalo's work proposes an overlapping of these personas. The pictures posit the fun party as a site of political organisation and protest rally as a joyous party too.

Nxumalo's ongoing series, *The Anthology of Youth*, is more than just a collection of impressions and appearances. They are a call to the viewer to look for messages, clues or opportunities that enable them to see something beyond their first assumption. These are photographs that bear witness to the mighty impulses that enabled Nxumalo to give us a closer view of life's vital forces.

The exhibited collection combines a series of snapshots of bodies in movement, portraiture and still life. It is a body of images that respectively considers the violent, student-led protests of the *#feesmustfall* movement and the ecstatic dance scenes of urban nightlife parties and musical performances as equally humanising endeavours – they all share this revealingly palpable trait.

The intrinsically human vitality of bodies in willed movement, whether quickened by terrified passion or jolted to gesture by joyful ecstasy, is a key to reading the ongoing moment caught by the camera's lens. This touch of life in Nxumalo's pictures projects a collectivity onto the singular subjects of his portraits that presents them as one among many. Never alone. Theirs is a shared generational narrative.

Alternatively, the presented images of inanimate objects turn the art of still life on its head. "Still life is a sedentary art, connected with the activity of keeping house. A home may be tidy or informal but there is always a certain welcoming order to it," as John Berger observed. Nxumalo, however, takes us out of the confines of the private home and into other places where his pictured youth make their contingent habitat. The unpeopled corner in a bar, the light glare of the disco ball, a bird cage containing a plastic pig's head and rubber penis, a television set on a velvet covered tray table; these images are respectively touched by an emptiness and a marked lack of the "welcoming order" that Berger observed.

Here, we are called to consider the mundane objects that decorate the lives of Nxumalo's anthologised youth as equally central ingredients of both the historical and negligible moments.

The title of his exhibition – *16 Shots* – also references the title of a song by the Chicago-born rapper, Vic Mensa; a tune that foregrounds the recent police brutality debate in the United States, and also highlights the gunning down of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald in Chicago in 2014. Nxumalo uses cut-outs from the song as a sound installation for the exhibition – thematically drawing links between the struggles of young people in the USA with those of his South African peers in the *#feesmustfall* movement's confrontation with police.

In *The Anthology of Youth*, the incorporation of a layered methodology around the viewer's reception of the work in a way that creates an immersive experience is significant to documenting experiences that are greatly personal and perhaps even private. This kind of subjectivity further complicates notions of documentary prevalent in Nxumalo's work. His photographic records mediate the audience's access to spaces and individuals they might never encounter.

Beyond this gallery presentation of *16 Shots*, Nxumalo has turned *The Anthology of Youth* into an online multimedia archive on contemporary youth culture. This functions to further disrupt and blur the often untested lines and distinctions that divide what we think of documentary and fine art photography. This will be executed through the incorporation of images, motion picture and sound into a multimedia presentation, thus creating a layered experience for the viewer. One can follow the ongoing depictions of Nxumalo's subjects online:

www.anthologyofyouth.com

by Percy Mabandu

Musa N. Nxumalo

Are the fees gonna fall or nah?

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

The Po Po

2017

Gicleé Print on Hanhemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

Water

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

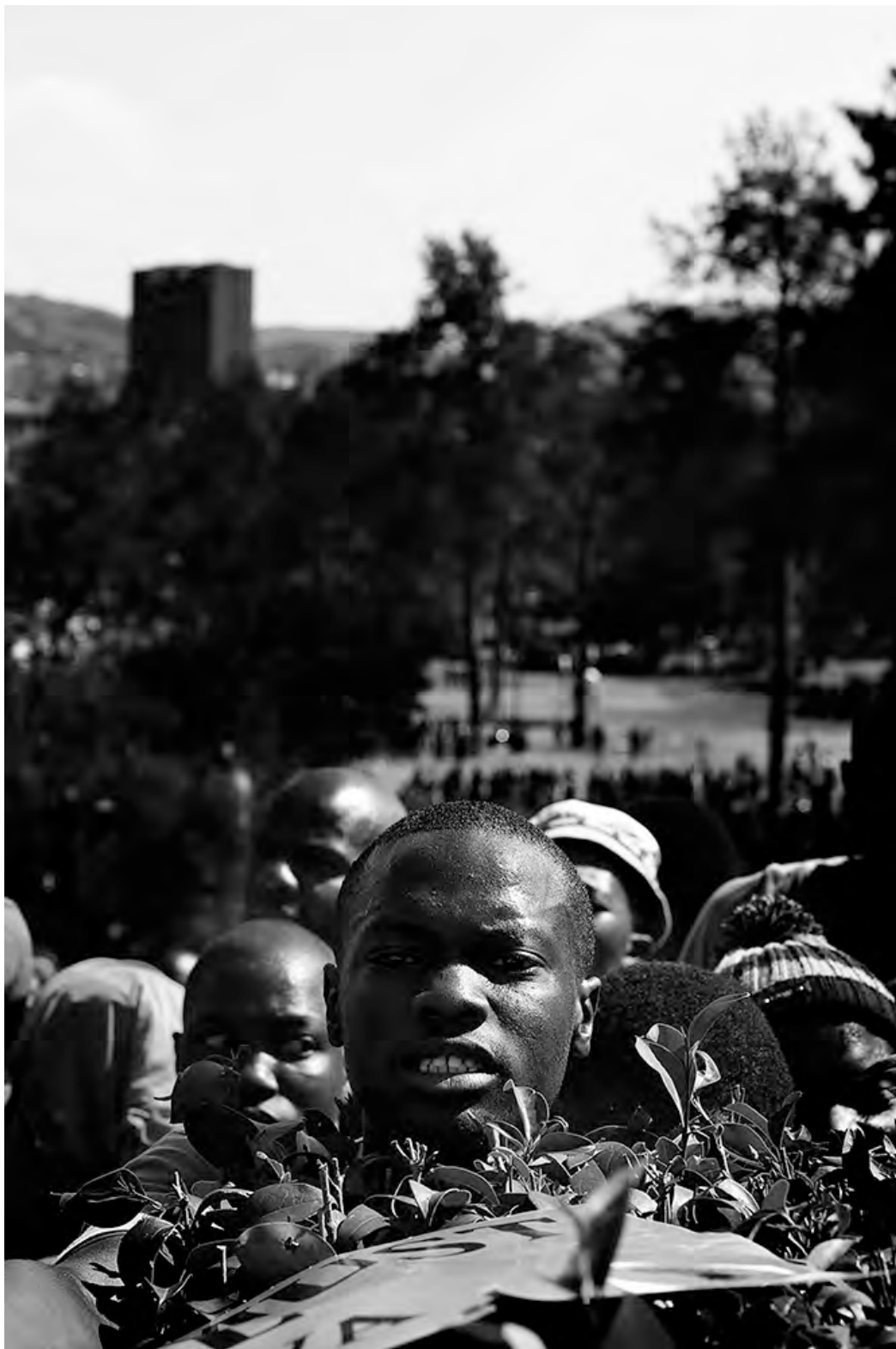
Union Buildings, Pretoria

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

84 x 56 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

The promise.

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

Ghost I

2017

Gicleé Print on Hanhnmühle Photo Rag

56 x 84

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

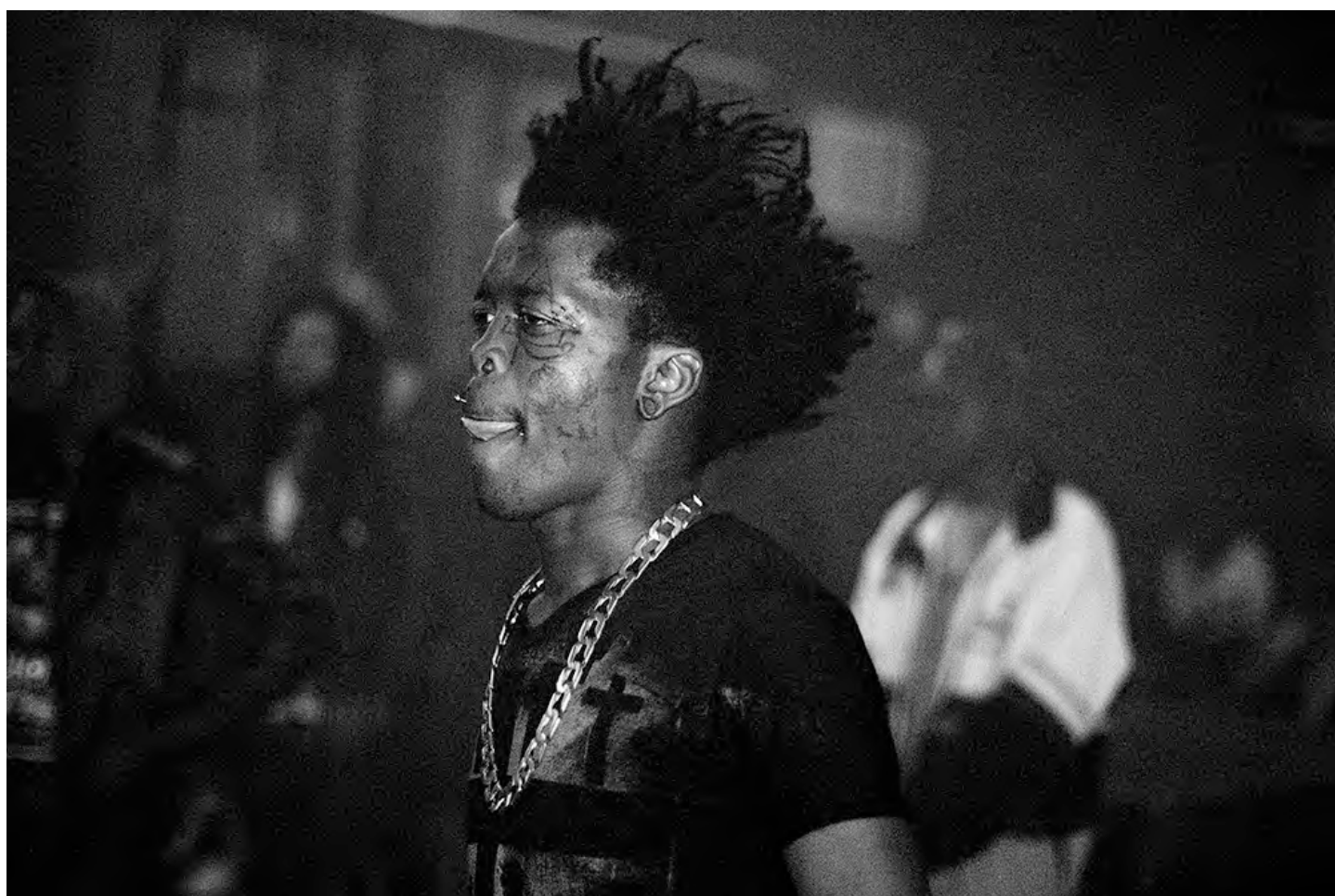
Ghost II

2017

Gicleé Print on hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

Fight! Fight! Fight!

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

This is how you start a party!

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

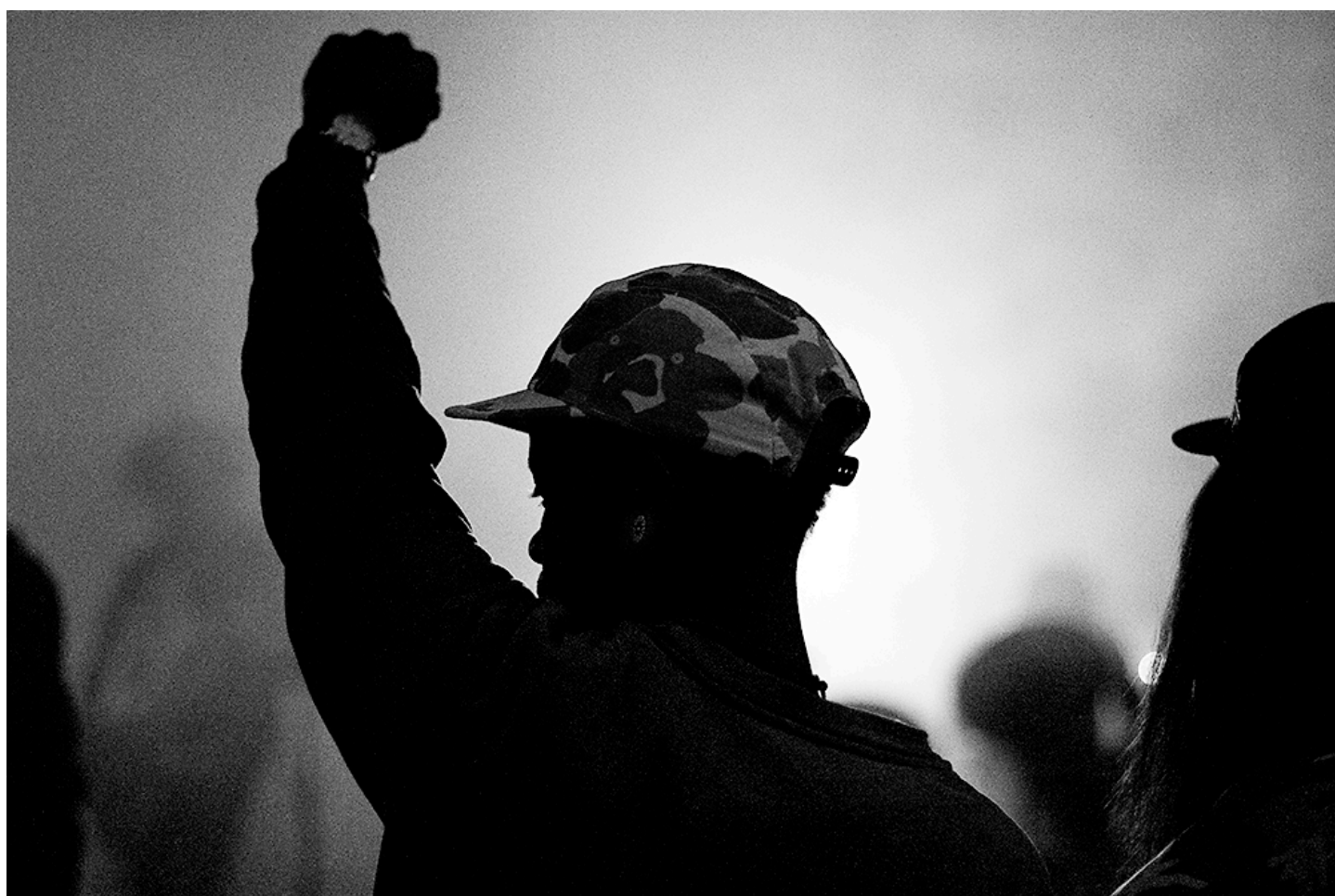
Isigxagxa I

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

Wake up, kick ass and repeat!

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

Untitled

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

The major key!

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

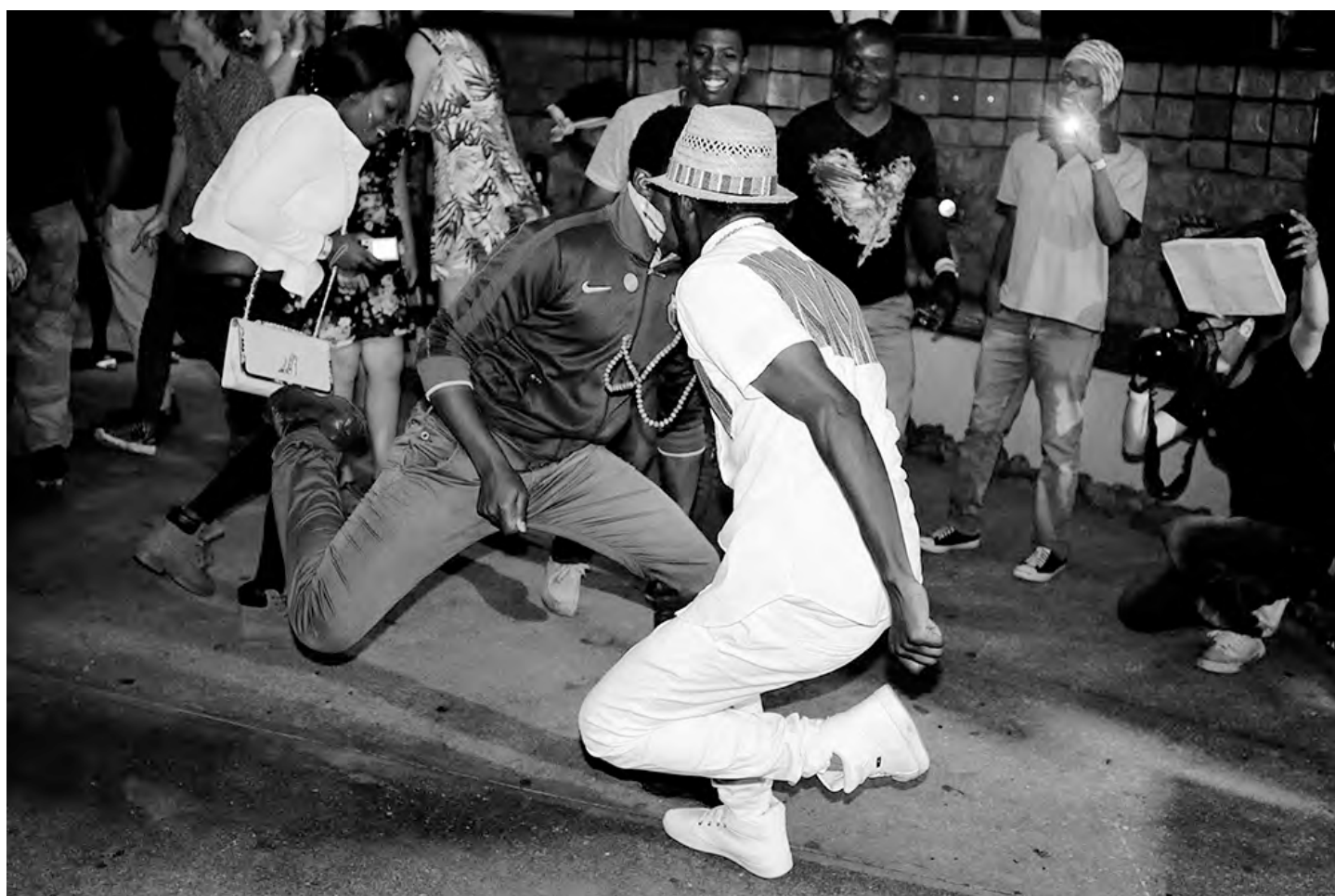
JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

Toi Toi
2017
Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag
56 x 84
STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH
1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN
1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG
1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

The death of the revolution

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

Fatigue

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

Umhlaba

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com

Musa N. Nxumalo

#transform

2017

Gicleé Print on Hahnemühle Photo Rag

56 x 84 cm

STD 1/6



STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock, 7925
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

JOHANNESBURG

1st Floor, The Trumpet
19 Keyes Avenue
Rosebank, 2196
T +27 (0)10 594 5400

www.smacgallery.com
info@smacgallery.com