



Untitled

Malangatana

On display

Title/Description: Untitled

Artist/Maker: Malangatana

Born: 1991

Object Type: Drawing

Measurements: Height (framed) 460mm x Width (framed) 370mm x Depth (framed) 19mm

Accession Number: 50813

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Credit Line: Donated by Jill Gerrish

Malangatana Valente Ngwenya (1936 - 2011) was a Mozambican painter known simply as Malangatana. He was a prominent figure in Mozambique and also played an important role in imagining a broader Africanist aesthetic in Europe and America. His work was often associated with socio-political concerns of Mozambique and the struggle for independence (gained in 1975) or later during the civil war (1977-92).

Malangatana was awarded a grant from the Lisbon-based Gulbenkian Foundation to study printmaking and ceramics in Portugal. During this time he continued to depict the tragic consequences of war - violence, hunger and death - and was prolific in his output, holding numerous exhibitions in Mozambique and accepting commissions to paint large-scale murals. His work is represented in the Tate and Smithsonian National Gallery of African Art collections.

The drawing is a lovely work in Malangatana's signature style, merging the influence of European art with traditional styles of representation associated with Mozambique. It was the first acquisition by a contemporary African artist - indeed, one of Africa's leading contemporary artists - and explores the fluidity between Africa and European art.

This work was offered as a planned bequest from Jill Gerrish, a journalist who worked in Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. The work was purchased directly from the artist, whom she met during her time in Mozambique, between 1984 and 2002.

Calvin Winner, February 2023
