

Dineo Seshee Bopape, Kudzanai Chiurai, Georgina Gratrix,
Andrew Gilbert, Kiluanji Kia Henda, Gerald Machona, Gerhard
Marx, Meleko Mokgosi, Athi-Patra Ruga
The Beautiful Ones

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In 1968 the Ghanaian author Ayi Kwei Armah published a brutal and visceral novel of (then) contemporary, post-Independent Ghana, titled “The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born”. Armah recounts an unnamed man’s struggle in a society rotten to the core, a result of the aftermath of colonialism, and the failures of the new regime. A dream deferred...

The exhibition *The Beautiful Ones* takes as its starting point Armah’s utopian lament for a better Africa, and the ongoing problematics of the representation of the continent, especially in the popular European imagination. Africa is often perceived as a monolithic entity, whilst the complexity of its multiple realities, histories, narratives and voices are often lost.

For *The Beautiful Ones*, South African curator Storm Janse van Rensburg has brought together nine young international artists: Dineo Seshee Bopape, Kudzanai Chiurai, Georgina Gratrix, Andrew Gilbert, Kiluanji Kia Henda, Gerald Machona, Gerhard Marx, Meleko Mokgosi and Athi-Patri Ruga. Originating from Angola, Botswana, Scotland, South Africa and Zimbabwe, they are now operating, working and living between many places, but with a common thread linking them and aspects of their practice to Southern Africa. Exemplary of a generation of contemporary artists that are mobile, and whose practices resists easy classification, the exhibition includes a selection of works that connects to the artists’ social and political realities, entangled with their personal lived experiences.

On the one hand, the exhibition might suggest that these are ‘The Beautiful Ones’ yearned for by Armah, whilst on the other hand some artists perhaps presents ideas and realities that questions, if indeed, the dream is not deferred once again.