

# Sue Williamson BIOGRAPHY

Sue Williamson (b. 1941, Lichfield, UK) emigrated with her family to South Africa in 1948. Trained as a printmaker, Williamson also works in installation, photography and video. In the 1970s, she started to make work which addressed social change during apartheid and by the 1980s Williamson was well known for her series of portraits of women involved in the country's political struggle.

Referring to her practice, Williamson says: "I am interested in objects, often very humble ones, and the stories behind them. I am interested in the media, in the subtext that runs behind newspaper reports, and in books which may seem mundane like a tourist guidebook. But most of all I am interested in people, in their stories, and in the exact words they use to describe their memories, experiences and expectations'.

Williamson has avoided the rut of being caught in an apartheid-era aesthetic, constantly re-assessing changing situations, and finding new artistic languages to work out her ideas.

In 2018, Williamson was Goodman Gallery's featured artist at the FNB Joburg Art Fair, where she exhibited her work *Messages from the Atlantic* 

Passage, a large- scale installation of shackled, suspended glass bottles engraved with details taken from 19th century slave trade documents. This installation was also exhibited the previous year at Art Basel in Switzerland and at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale in India in 2018.

Williamson's works feature in numerous public collections across the globe, including those at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA, Tate Modern, London, UK, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK, National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., USA, Wifredo Lam Centre, Havana, Cuba, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa, and Johannesburg Art Gallery, South Africa.

Williamson has received various awards and fellowships such as the Bellagio Creative Arts Fellowship 2011, Italy, Rockefeller Foundation, the Visual Artist Research Award Fellowship 2007, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., USA and the Lucas Artists Residency Fellowship 2005, Montalvo Art Center, California, USA.

Sue Williamson lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa.

# Sue Williamson

### CV

Born Lichfield, England. Family emigrated to South Africa in 1948. Lives and works in Cape Town.

### **Art Education**

- 1966-9 Life drawing, painting, printmaking, Art Students League of New York.
- 1983 Advanced diploma in Fine Art, Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town

## **Upcoming Events**

- 2021 Testimony, solo show, Goodman Gallery, London, February 27
- 2021 Biennale of Casablanca, Morocco. (postponed from 2020)
- 2022 Other Cities, Other Voices, Centro Atlantica de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas, Gran Canaria (postponed from 2020)
- 2023 Two person show (Untitled), Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia

### **Current Events**

- 2020 The Sum of All Parts, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 2020 Allied with Power: African and African Diaspora Art from the Jorge M. Pérez Collection,
  - Perez Art Museum, Miami
- 2020 Time for Change: Art and Social Unrest, Espacio 23, Miami
- 2020 Global (e) Resistance, Pompidou Centre, Paris. July 2020 January 2021
- 2020 Push the Limits, Fondazione Merz, Turin, Italy. September 7 2020 March 11 2021

# Solo Exhibitions

- 2020 Pages from the South, Galerie Dominique Fiat, Paris
- 2019 That particular morning, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg
- 2018 Other Voices, Other Cities, Shrine Empire Gallery, New Delhi
- 2017 Can't Remember, Can't Forget, George Bizos Gallery, Apartheid Museum, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2017 Other Voices, Other Cities, SCAD Art Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia, USA
- 2016 No More Fairy Tales, Johannes Stegmann Art Gallery, Bloemfontein, South Africa
- 2015 Other Voices, Other Cities, SCAD Museum, Savannah, Georgia, USA
- 2015 The Past Lies Ahead, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2014 Sue Williamson, Goodman Gallery stand, Frieze Masters, London\*
- 2014 There's something I must tell you, Iziko Slave Lodge, Cape Town
- 2013 All Our Mothers, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg and Cape Town\*
- 2012 The Mothers: a 31 Year Chronicle, Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town\*
- 2011 Voices, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town
- 2009 Other Voices, Other Cities, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg
- 2009 The Truth is on the Walls, Wilfredo Lam Centre, 10th Havana Biennale, Havana, Cuba\*
- 2007 Hotels and Better Lives, Wertz Gallery, Atlanta, USA
- 2005 Hotels and Better Lives, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg
- 2004 Messages from the Moat, Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town
- 2003 Sue Williamson: Selected Work, Centre d'Art Contemporain, Brussels, Belgium\*
- 2002 From the Inside, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg
- 2002 The Last Supper Revisited, National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C, USA
- 2001 Can't forget, can't remember, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town

- 2000 Messages from the Moat, Archive Building, Den Haag, Netherlands
- 1999 Truth Games, Dakawa Art Centre, Grahamstown
- 1998 Truth Games, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg\*
- 1994 Out of the Ashes, Fortaleza de la Cabana, 5th Havana Biennale, Cuba\*
- 1994 For Thirty Years Next to his Heart, North Dakota Museum of Art, Grand Forks, USA
- 1993 The Last Supper Revisited, Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, South Africa
- 1993 Sue Williamson at the Goodman Gallery, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg
- 1987-9 A Few South Africans, Canadian and US tour (Visual Art Resources)\*
- 1985 A Few South Africans, Market Gallery, Johannesburg
- 1985 A Few South Africans, University of Oregon, Eugene, USA
- 1985 A Few South Africans, On the Wall Gallery, Medford, Oregon, USA
- 1984 A Few South Africans, Gallery International, Cape Town
- 1981 The Last Supper, Gowlett Gallery, Cape Town
- 979 Sue Williamson: Etchings, Nedart, Sea Point, Cape Town

### **Group Exhibitions**

- 2019-20 I AM: Contemporary Women Artists of Africa, NMAFA, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, DC
- 2019-20 Heroes: Principles of African Greatness NMAFA, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, DC
- 2019 United in AIDS: Loss, Remembrance, Activism and Art in Response to HIV/AIDS, Migros Museum, Zurich
- 2019 Incarnations: African Art as Philosophy, Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
- 2019 The Way She Looks: A History of Female Gazes in African Portraiture, Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto
- 2018 Biennale of Kochi-Muziris, Kerala, India
- 2018 Great Movements of Feeling, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, Australia
- 2018 Summer of Photography, Bozar, Brussels
- 2018 The Road to Justice, Maxxi, Rome
- 2018 Woman House, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington DC
- 2017 Woman House, La Monnaie de Paris, Paris
- 2017 Art Unlimited Art Basel, Switzerland
- 2017 Tous Des Sang-Mêlés, MAC VAL (Musee d'art contemporain du Val de Marne), Paris
- 2017 Being There: South Africa, a Contemporary Scene, Foundation Louis Vuitton, Paris
- 2017 A Short History of South African Photography, Chiostri San Pietro, Italy
- 2017 *Citizens Artist and Society*, Tate Modern, London
- 2017 Lucy's Iris, Contemporary African Women Artists, El Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno (CAAM)
- 2017 Third Space: Shifting Conversations about Contemporary Art, Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama.
- 2016 L'Autre Continent, Artistes, Femmes, Africaines, Museum du Havre, France
- 2016 Senses of Time: Video and Film-based Works of Africa, National Museum of African Art, Washington DC
- 2016 Senses of Time: Video and Film-based Works of Africa, Wellin Museum, Clinton NY
- 2016 Lucy's Iris, Contemporary African Women Artists, MDAC, Rochechouart, France
- 2015 Album de Familia (Family Album), Centro de Arte Hélio Octicica, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 2015 Fireflies in the Night, Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre, Athens, Greece
- 2015 Positive Living: Art and AIDS in South Africa, Peltz Gallery, University of London
- 2014 Ngezinwayo: Migrant Journeys, Wits Art Museum, Johannesburg\*
- 2014 Striking Resemblance: the Changing Art of Portraiture, Zimmerli Museum, Rutgers University, New Jersey
- 2014 Artevida (Politica), Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil\*
- 2014 Contemporary Art/South Africa, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, USA
- 2013 Distance and Desire: Encounters with the African Archive, Walther Collection, Ulm, Germany\*
- 2013 Imaginary Fact: South African Contemporary Art and the Archive, South African Pavilion, 55th Venice
  - Biennale

- 2013 *My Johannesburg*, Maison Rouge, Paris, France\*
- The Rise and Fall of Apartheid: Photography and the Bureaucracy of Everyday Life, Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany\*
- 2012 The Rise and Fall of Apartheid: Photography and the Bureaucracy of Everyday Life, ICP, New York, USA\*
- 2011 Untitled (Passport), Untitled, 12th Istanbul Biennial, Turkey\*
- 2011 Impressions from South Africa: 1965 to Now, Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA\*
- 2011 Artefacts, The Project Space, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA
- 2011 Darkroom, Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama, USA\*
- 2010 Darkroom, Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond, Virginia, USA\*
- 2010 OK/Biennale Cuvee 10, O.K Center for Contemporary Art, Linz, Austria\*
- 2010 *Ampersand*, Daimler Gallery, Berlin, Germany
- 2010 Pierneef to Gugulective 1910-2010, IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town
- 2009 Unbounded: New Art for a New Century, Newark Museum, New Jersey, USA\*
- 2009 *Nation State*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa2008 Africa: Personal Poetics, Guangzhou Triennale, Guangdong Museum of Art, China\*
- 2008 The Poetics of Cloth, Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York, USA \*
- 2008 Signs of Change, Social Movement Cultures 1960s to Now, Exit Gallery, New York, USA
- 2007 Lift Off!, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2007 *Inscribing Meaning*, National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C. & Fowler Museum, Los Angeles, USA\*
- 2007 The Loaded Lens, Goodman Gallery Cape, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2007 The Sneeze 80x80, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa\*
- 2007 Apartheid: The South African Mirror, Center for Contemporary Culture, Barcelona, Spain\*
- 2007 Sasol Wax Awards, Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg & Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa\*
- 2007 Spier Contemporary Art Awards, Spier Wine Estate, Cape Town & Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa\*
- 2007 *Tapping Currents: Contemporary African Art and the Diaspora*, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri, USA2007 Désiréalités, Espace 1789, Paris, France
- 2006 Body of Evidence, National Museum of African Art, Washington DC, USA
- 2006 Trienal de Luanda, Angola
- 2006 Dynamics of Urban Culture, 9th Bienal de Havana, Cuba\*
- 2006 Off the Record, Shiibuya Station, Tokyo, Japan
- 2005 *Imagining the Book II*, Library of Alexandria, Egypt
- 2004 A Decade of Democracy, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa\*
- 2004 Insights, National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C., USA
- 2004 Democracy X, Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town, South Africa\*
- 2004 Visions of Paradise, João Ferreira Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2004 The Performative in African Photography, Michael Stevenson Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2004 Dak'Art, Biennale de Dakar, Senegal\*
- 2004 The Sneeze 80x80, Gallery Gazon Rouge, Athens, Greece
- 2004 New Identities: Contemporary South African Art, Museum Bochum, Germany\*
- 2004 Boustashy 01, El Max, Alexandria, Egypt
- 2004 Brett Kebble Art Awards, International Convention Centre, Cape Town, South Africa\*
- 2004 AIDS in the Age of Globalization, The National Museum of World Cultures, Gothenburg, Sweden
- 2003 Transferts, Palais de Beaux Arts, Brussels, Belgium\*
- 2003 *Co-existence: Contemporary Cultural Production in South Africa*, Rose Museum, Brandeis University, Boston, USA\*

- 2003 Sexuality and Death: Aids in Contemporary African Art, Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum, Cologne, Germany\*
- 2002-4 *History/Now*, Liljevachs Konsthalll, Stockholm; Museum of Work, Norrköping; Linköpings Art Centre; Dunkers Culture Centre, Helsingborg; Sörlandets Art Museum, Kristiansand, Norway; Midlanda Art Centre, Timrå/Sundsvall; Ronneby Art Centre, Sweden\*
- 2002 Africa Apart, New Society for the Visual Arts, Berlin, Germany\*
- 2002 Rencontres Video Arts Plastiques, Herouville Saint Clair, Normandy, France
- 2002 International Media Art Festival, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2002 Head North: Work from the permanent collection of the South African National Gallery, Bildmuseet, Umea, Sweden
- 2001-2 *The Short Century: Independence and Liberation Movements in Africa 1954-1994*, Villa Stuck Museum, Munich, Germany, Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago, USA and P.S.1, New York City.\*
- 2001-3 Dis/locations, Circulo de Bella Artes, PhotoEspana, Madrid, Spain,
- 2001 World Wide Video Festival, Baby Lounge, Amsterdam, Netherlands\*
- 2000 Mostra Africana de Arte Contemporaneo; Videobrasil, Sao Paolo, Brazil\*
- 2000 Archive 09.06\_02.07, Quartair, The Hague, Netherlands
- 2000 Johannesburg, Johannesburg, Openspace, Milan, Italy
- 2000 Emotional Geographies: re-imaging the past in post-apartheid narrative, Las Palmas Building, Rhine Harbour, Foto Biennale Rotterdam, Netherlands\*
- 2000 The New Republics, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, Australia
- 2000 Secure the Future, Exhibition Centre, Durban, South Africa and Harvard University, Boston, USA\*
- 1999 Artery, Joao Ferreira Fine Art, Cape Town, South Africa
- 1999 << Rewind>> Fast Forward.za, Van Reekum Museum, Apeldoorn, Netherlands\*
- 1999-2002 *Liberated Voices: Contemporary Art from South Africa*, Museum for African Art, New York, Museum of Art,\*
- 1999 Fotofest, Five South African Artists, Houston, USA\*
- 1998 Les Arts de la Resistance: Exposition de Plasticiens d'Afrique du Sud, Galerie Michael Luneau, Nantes, France
- 1998-9 Drome och Mollnar, Kulturhuset, Stockholm and Museum of Fine Art, Goteborg, Sweden\*
- 1997 Thirty Minutes, The Robben Island Visitors Block, Cape Town, South Africa\*
- 1997 The District Six Outdoor Sculpture Project, Cape Town, South Africa\*
- 1997 Alternating Currents, 2nd Johannesburg Biennale Electric Workshop, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1996 Colours, Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany\*
- 1996 Simunye, Adelson Gallery, New York, USA
- 1996 Insight: Four Artists from South Africa, Wright Gallery, New York, USA
- 1996 Panoramas of Passage, Meridien International Centre, Washington DC, USA\*
- 1995 *Ku(n)stlijn*, Hoorn, Netherlands\*
- 1995 Objects of Defiance, Spaces of Contemplation, 1st Johannesburg Biennale, MuseumAfrica, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 1995 Kunst Heimat Kunst, Kunstlerhaus, Steirischer Herbst Festival of Contemporary Art, Graz. Austria\*
- 1994 Vita Art Now Awards, Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa\*
- 1994 *Trackings*, Art First, London, UK
- 1994 Un Art Contemporain d'Afrique du Sud, AFAA, Paris, France\*
- 1993 *Incroci del Su*d, Fondazione Levi, Venice, XLV Venice Biennale, Sala Uno, Rome, Italy and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands\*
- 1993 The Art of Protest, Benton Gallery, Southampton, N.Y., USA
- 1992 9th Biennale of Sydney, Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia\*
- 1992 4th Havana Biennale, National Museum of Art, Havana, Cuba\*

1991	Art and the Media, Gertrude Posel Gallery, Wits University, Johannesburg, South Africa*
1990	South African Mail: Messages from Inside, Soho Gallery, New York, USA*
1989	Art/Images in Southern Africa, Kulturhuset, Stockholm, Sweden, and Nordic tour*
1988	100 Artists Protest Detention Without Trial, Market Theatre Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
1986	Commitment to Vision, Museum of Art, University of Oregon, USA*
1986	About Time: Images of South Africa Ping Pong Palace, Michaelis School of Fine Art, Cape Town,
	South Africa
1985	Women Artists Collect, Gallery 25, Fresno, California
1985	Tributaries, MuseumAfrica, Johannesburg, South Africa*
1985	29 Women Exhibit, Michaelis Gallery, University of Cape Town
1985	Art for Peace, End Conscription Campaign, Baxter Theatre, Cape Town
1982	Art Towards Social Development, Culture and Resistance Festival, National Museum and Art
	Gallery, Gaborone, Botswana
1979	Crossroads Art Statement, Baxter Theatre, Cape Town
1978	New Cape Art '78, Gallery 21, Johannesburg, and NSA, Durban
* Exhibition catalogue available	

Africa en America, Bayona Vigo and Santiago de Compostela, Spain

# Public Collections

#### International:

The Tate Modern, London Victoria & Albert Museum. London

Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

Jochen Zeitz Collection, Germany

Daimler Collection. BerlinWalther Collection.

Ulm\_Museum of Modern Art, New York

Hammer Museum, Los Angeles

Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego

National Museum of African Art,

Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C

.The Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond, Virginia

The Museum of the 21st Century, Louisville, Kentucky

Kadist Art Foundation, San Francisco

Newark Museum, New Jersey

Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama,

Sir Elton John Photography Collection, Atlanta,

North Dakota Museum of Art, Grand Forks,

Wellesley College, Massachusetts

Wheaton College, Norton, MA

PAMM, Pérez Art Museum, Miami

Jorge M. Pérez Collection, Miami

Wifredo Lam Centre, Havana,

Sindika Dokolo African Collection of Contemporary Art, Luanda, Angola

### South Africa:

Apartheid Museum, Johannesburg Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town Houses of Parliament, Cape Town

Constitutional Court of South Africa, Johannesburg

Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg

Brenthurst Library, Johannesburg

Cape Provincial Library, Cape Town

Durban Art Gallery, Durban

South African Broadcasting Corporation, Johannesburg

United States Embassy, Cape Town

United States Embassy, Johannesburg

Gauteng Legislature, Johannesburg

King George VI Art Gallery, Port Elizabeth

MTN Art Institute, Johannesburg

Standard Bank, Johannesburg

Museum of Art, Pretoria,

MuseuMAfricA, Johannesburg

University of Cape Town, Cape Town

University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch

University of the Western Cape, Cape Town

University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa

Natal Technicon, Durban

Sasol, Johannesburg

ETV, Johannesburg

Spier Wine Estate, Cape Town Tatham Gallery, Pietermaritzburg

District Six Museum, Cape Town

Art Trust Fund, Cape Town

Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town

### Curatorial

2011 Guest curator Paul Klee Sommerakademie, Paul Klee Sentrum, Bern

2005 Guest curator with Lorenzo Fusi, ZA: Young art from South Africa, Palazzo delle Papesse, Sienna 1990 South African Mail: Messages from Inside, Soho Gallery

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Martin, Marilyn. 2019. 'Between Dreams and Realities: A history of the South African National Gallery, 1871-2017'. Cape Town, South Africa. Print Matters Heritage. 315

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Williamson, Sue 2013 'All our Mothers'. Cape Town, South Africa: Goodman Gallery.

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Roper, Chris 2010 'Shock of recognition: Sue Williamson and South African identity' in Peter Anders (ed) & Matthew Krouse (ed). Positions - Contemporary Artists in South Africa. Germany: Jacana Media, 250-261.

Schonhagen, Astrid Silvia 2010 'Sue Williamson' in A dialogue between contemporary art from South Africa & The Daimler art collection. Berlin, Germany: Daimler AG, 127-128.

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Robinson, Mary 1987 'Art for People's Sake'. Fair Lady Magazine. 13 May. 94-97.

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Claflin, Terrie 1985 'South African art exhibited at On The Wall'. The Mail Tribune. Review. 8 September, 50.

Katz, Marcelle 1985 'The Art of Activism - interview with Sue Williamson'. Vula! 2. 20-21.

O'Sullivan, Sherry 1985 'Images of Life'. KSOR Guide to the Arts. September. 20-23,43.

Korber, Rose 1984 'Tribute to brave women'. The Argus. 6 December.

Vergnani, Linda 1984 'Portraits of courage'. Weekend Argus. 21 April. 5.

## Selected Conference and Workshop Participation

- 2019 Black Portraitures V: Memory and the Archive Cooper Union, NYU, New York
- 2019 Residues and Fragments: Stories of Apartheid National Museum of African Art, Washington DC
- 2017 Art Basel Conversations: Social Practice Changes, Basel, Switzerland
- 2016 Black Portraiture[s] III: Reinventions: Strains of Histories and Cultures, Johannesburg
- 2014 On Time: African Art and the Question of Temporality Clark Institute, Williamstown
- 2014 Resistance Art in South Africa, University College of London
- 2011 Conversation amongst Friends, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- The Essential Art of African Textiles: Design Without End, Panelist, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York USA
- 2007 Inscribing Meaning, Panelist, Fowler Museum, Los Angeles, USA
- 2005 Imagining the Book Biennale, Panelist, Library of Alexandria, Egypt
- 2002 Who defines the Contemporary Biennials and the Global Art World?, Panelist. Sackler Museum, Smithsonian International Art Museums.
- 2002 Beyond the Gallery: Art in Public Spaces, Conference director, Cape Technikon, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2002 Workshop on Cultural Management for Artists, Guest speaker, Hotel Paz, Lujan, Argentina
- 2001 Fact and Fiction in Post Authoritarian Societies, Guest speaker, University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA
- 2001 The Short Century: Artists Talks Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, USA
- 2000 State of the Visual Arts in Africa and the African Diaspora: An Agenda for

the 21st Century, Panelist, Ecole de Beaux Arts, Paris, France

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