

Edinburgh International Fashion Festival at Gayfield Creative Spaces



When my aunt used to visit us from South Africa, her idea of fashion consisted of the white gloves and hats that she wore to her bridge parties. This year, Cape Town has been named **World Design Capital** – a distinction awarded to cities which recognise design as a tool for social, cultural and economic development: a new pop-up exhibition and shop at Gayfield Creative Spaces, staged as part of this year's **Edinburgh International Fashion Festival**, shows us just how much times have changed. It is accompanied by new exhibitions of photography by **David McLean** and of **modern South African art**.

SAM

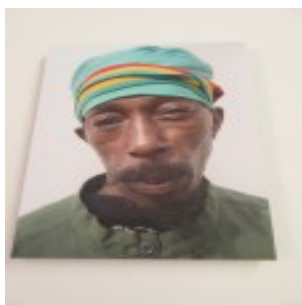
SAM (South African Market) in **Cape Town** is a major venue for South African design; festival directors **Anna and Jonathan Freemantle** have invited some of its key players to set up a pop-up version at Gayfield's main studio, G1. Beautiful white fold dresses by **TakeCare Clothing**, brightly patterned shirts by **Rez Levy** and quirky socks by **FEAT** are just some of the pieces on sale. Complementing them are some stylish accessories, including jewellery by **Pichulik**, stunning displays of bags by **Sam of Cape Town** and **Missibaba**, and colourful cushions. Prices start at £30-£40 for a dress and £8 for socks. All of the makers welcome this opportunity for South African designers to bring their brands to the world.

This is Happening Now

An exhibition of contemporary South African painting, photography and print is shown in G2. Jonathan Freemantle was

born in South Africa and this collection, entitled *This is Happening Now*, is his personal choice of pieces that most moved him when he went returned to his homeland.

Nico Krijno's fascinating photographs of re-imagined everyday objects, *Composition with Oil Can* and *Composition with Dark Room Equipment*, challenge the viewer to think again about the familiar and mundane. *Khali Bhati Eyes*, **Jody Paulsen**'s felt hanging, seems at first to recall traditional African art – many eyes watch us silently, perhaps from the jungle; on further examination however, the soft pink and blue background gives a more contemporary feel and suggests perhaps the omnipresent 'watching' of modern society. We are watched by others as we constantly watch them, each of us increasingly obsessed with superficial appearances. Paulsen is a rising star of the Cape Town art and fashion scene; he likes the loud and vibrant colours offered by synthetic felt which he hand cuts into patterns, shapes and words, then puts together to make collages or 'felt posters.'





In *The Temptation of Christ* by **Conrad Botes** we see a head full of strange images and snatches of text. Botes has been called 'the torchbearer of the Post-Pop movement in South Africa' (Alet Voster, AOP Gallery); his reversed glass work, of which this is an example, grew from his expertise in creating comics – he is the co-founder of the subversive *Bittercomix*. Having grown up in an Afrikaans home, Botes seeks to explore traditional Afrikaans concepts of male identity and machismo and how they are being challenged in a rapidly changing society.

Photopia

David McLean refers to his work as 'street portraiture'; he

does not take 'candid camera' shots, always asking his subjects' permission before he photographs them to create a 'spontaneous, collaborative portrait session.' He looks for interesting people, be they British eccentrics (one his his early subjects was Vivienne Westwood, whom he saw in an Edinburgh cafe), geeks or attractive boys and girls, and says that photography allows him to chat to people. **Photopia** in G3 shows a diverse selection of his portraits, from *Mick*, a dapper elderly man with black beret and red cravat, to *Taylor*, with his stunning turquoise, orange and blue hat.

Drinks at the opening night were provided by **Caorunn Gin**, who handcraft their gin at Balmenach Distillery on Speyside.

Photopia, This is Happening Now and SAM are all open 10am-6pm daily until 25th July 2014 at [Gayfield Creative Spaces](#), 11 Gayfield Square.