

LEBOHANG KGANYE

In Search for Memory, 2020, Photography, Installation.



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The stranger stood before a monstrosity, 2020
Inkjet print on cotton rag paper, 64 x 90 cm
Edition of 5 + 2AP

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This body of work is inspired by Malawian writer Muthi Nhlema's science fiction novella *TA O'REVA*. Nhlema presents an alternative history of a post-apocalyptic South Africa through multiple timelines. The photographic work *In Search for Memory* (work in progress) articulates Nhlema's travel between realities through the construct of time in *TA O'REVA*. It reflects on photography's and theatre's relationship to time and performance. In *In Search for Memory*, time travel is staged through photographic and theatrical articulations.

Photography as a stage for life becomes an active negotiation with time through these echoes of the past that in-

terrupt the future. The work is preoccupied with the act of remembering and the construction of memories through photography. It considers the materiality of memory and memories as a field of invention. *In Search for Memory* interrogates the notion of the "original memory" by looking at the structure of recollection; memory as not chronological, the difficulty of remembering and gaps in the memory, memory deterioration, suppressed memories, multiple memories of the same thing, collective memories, imagined memories, and dreams that we store as memories or vice versa. With time memories become untraceable and we fill in those gaps and reconstruct our memories.

In *TA O'REVA*, 2015, Nhlema imagines the return of Nelson Mandela to a future South Africa that is gloomy and apocalyptic. The novel's multiple timelines – pre-apartheid, post-apartheid and dystopian future – greatly inspired this work. The created scenes follow a protagonist who travels between different realities. Each scene is based on the artist's interpretation of the script composed of small,

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It stood lifeless and triumphant, 2020
Inkjet print on cotton rag paper, 64 x 90 cm
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delicate cardboard cut-outs of photos taken during successive trips to old industrial areas between Pretoria and Johannesburg, of the domestic furniture in her grandmother's house, as well as of silhouettes taken from old family albums, set into white boxes. The first three scenes depict the apocalyptic future described in Nhlema's novel, the moment when the main protagonist discovers what the country has become. The next three scenes refer to the years leading to the end of apartheid, and the underlying violence. I will soon produce six more sets to illustrate the post-apartheid period, the 'now', the moment when the novel was written.

In the artist's practice, photography is used as a way to recreate moments that she never experienced. Similar to figures and objects in a dollhouse, each element in *In Search for Memory* creates the illusion of an entire world. Individual elements look like they could be moved, changed or shifted. The work illuminates the fabricated nature of history and memory and how the visualisation of an event always induces an element of creation, experimentation, error, and an ongoing construction. *In Search for Memory* creates a space for the artist to make historical adjustments by placing her family members at the centre of a national stage.

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This is not what I wanted for any of you, 2020
Inkjet print on cotton rag paper, 64 x 90 cm
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He could hear the voices of his ancestors, 2020
Inkjet print on cotton rag paper, 64 x 90 cm
Edition of 5 + 2AP



Well into the night, 2020
Inkjet print on cotton rag paper, 64 x 90 cm
Edition of 5 + 2AP



Coalesced with the night's dew, 2020
Inkjet print on cotton rag paper, 64 x 90 cm
Edition of 5 + 2AP



Messages from the Memory Palace, 2020
Inkjet print on cotton rag paper, 42.6 x 60 cm
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