

# Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum



## Biography

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum's (b. 1980, Mochudi, Botswana) work alludes to mythology, geology and theories on the nature of the universe. Her work includes imagery that reflects the diverse genealogies of her experience living in different parts of Africa, Southeast Asia, and the U.S. as well as ongoing research in ethnography, ecology, and quantum physics. The artist's boundary-crossing practice centres Black female identity in the discourse of postcolonialism and neocolonialism, highlighting the contributions of overlooked historical figures while emphasising modes of knowledge and communication beyond the status quo.

In 2024, a major new solo exhibition opened at KM21 Den Haag, including a new large scale diptych painting within an installation that included items from the museum's furniture collection. Sunstrum also presented her first solo exhibition titled 'It Will End in Tears', at a major UK institution, the Barbican Centre's The Curve. Sunstrum took her life-size wood grain panoramas round the bend of the gallery, building a narrativised sequence with elements of film noir, crime fiction and pure drama.

Recent solo exhibitions include: *It Will End In Tears*, Barbican London, UK (2024); *You'll be sorry*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa (2023), *The Pavilion*, London Mithraeum, Bloomberg SPACE, London (2023); *All my seven faces*, Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati (2019); *Michaelis School for the Arts* at the University of Cape Town (2018); *Interlochen Centre for the Arts*, Interlochen (2016).

Group exhibitions and biennales include: *Born in Flames: Feminist Futures*, The Bronx Museum of the Arts NY, USA (2021); *WITNESS: Afro Perspectives* from the Jorge M. Pérez Collection, El Espacio 23, Miami, USA (2020).

Collections include: Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, Hessel Museum at Bard College, New York, A4 Arts Foundation, Cape Town; The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; University of Cape Town, Cape Town; Deutsche Bank Collection, Frankfurt; El Espacio 23, Miami; FRAC des Pays de la Loire Contemporary Collection, Carquefou; University of South Africa (UNISA) Art Collection.

Sunstrum lives and works in The Hague, Netherlands.

## Solo Exhibitions

- 2023** *You'll be sorry*, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2023** *The Pavilion*, London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE, UK
- 2021** *Panthea*, Goodman Gallery, East Hamptons. NY, USA
- 2020** *Batterycry*, Goodman Gallery, London, UK
- 2019** *All my seven faces*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH, USA
- 2019** *Diorama*, Tiwani Contemporary, London, UK
- 2018** *There are mechanisms in place*, curated by Nomusa Makhubu and Nkule Mabaso, Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town, South Africa
- 2018** *From No Fixed Place*, curated by Nontobeko Ntombela, ICTAF, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2016** *OMPHALOS*, Interlochen Center for the Arts, Interlochen, MI, USA
- 2016** *POLYHEDRA*, Tiwani Contemporary, London, UK
- 2015** *BEACON*, Visual Arts Network of South Africa (VANSA), Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2013** *ab initio*, Davidson College, Davidson, NC, USA
- 2010** *pamelaphatsimosunstrum*, Conduit Gallery, Dallas TX, USA
- 2009** *audax/viator*, Arlington Arts Centre, Arlington, VA, USA
- 2009** *see you again*, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA, USA
- 2009** *Soft Animal*, Minstallation Gallery, Baltimore, MD, USA

## Group Exhibitions

- 2021** *Greater Toronto Art 2021*, Museum of Contemporary Art Toronto, Canada
- 2020** *Did you ever think there would come a time?*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, SA
- 2020** *Witness: Afro Perspectives from the Jorge M. Pérez Collection*, Miami, FL, USA
- 2020** *Born in Flames: Feminist Futures*, Bronx Museum, NY, USA
- 2020** *UBUNTU*, Five rooms from the Harry David Art Collection, National Museum of Contemporary Art Athens, EMST
- 2019** *Multiple Transmissions: Art in the Afropolitan Age*, curated by Sandrine Colard-de, Wiels Contemporary Art Center, Brussels, Belgium
- 2019** *History is His Story*, curated by Heske ten Cat, Nest, The Hague, Netherlands
- 2019** *Fly me to the moon*, curated by Christina Penetsdorfer, Museum der Moderne Salzburg, Kunsthaus Zürich

**2018** *Women on Aeroplanes*, curated by The Otolith Group, Emily Pethick, and Elvira Dyangani Ose, The Showroom, London, UK  
**2018** *Earth and Everything* (contribution to the International Artist-in-Residence exhibition), curated by Jeffreen Hayes, Artpace, San Antonio, TX, USA  
**2018** *The World on Paper*, Deutsche Bank Collection, Palais Populaire, Berlin, Germany  
**2018** *Carry Over: New Voices from the Global African Diaspora*, curated by Kalia Brooks, Smack Mellon, New York, NY, USA  
**2018** *Drawing In / Drawing Out*, curated by Magnolia Laurie, Phillips Museum of Art, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA, USA  
**2017** *A Continent Beyond*, Gallery Momo, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2017** *What do they call me*, Gallery Momo, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2017** *Dedication to Freedom*, Nirox Winter Sculpture Fair, curated by Same Mdluli, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2016** *Afronaut(a) 4.0*, DVD Magazine, curated by Alisha Wormsley, premier at VIA at Kelly Strayhorn Theater  
**2016** *Cinematek Brussels*, 'Seeing in the dark', curated by Anouk De Clercq, Art Brussels 2016, Belgium  
**2016** 1:54 Film Programme, 1:54 Art Fair, Somerset House, London, UK  
**2016** *Surface/Subtext*, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2015** *Territories*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Commune 1 Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2015** *Fantastic*, curated by Nomusa Makhubu and Nkule Mabaso, Michaelis Galleries, University of Cape Town  
**2015** *Post African Futures*, curated by Tegan Bristow, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2015** *Mythopoeia*, Tiwani Gallery, London, UK  
**2015** *Venturing Out of the Heart of Darkness*, curated by Rehema Barber, Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts+Culture, USA  
**2014** *Survey*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Brundyn+Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa  
**2014** *de-con-structure*, with Leanne Shakenovsky, In Toto Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2014** *Double Feature*, with Kim Anno, curated by Joshua Goode, Tarrant County College, Texas, USA  
**2013** *Before being asked by the machine*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Room Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2013** *Space Station All-Stars*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Ithuba Art Gallery, Braamfontein, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2013** *Spectacular/Spectaculaire*, curated by Nontobeko Ntombela, FRAC De Pays de la Loire, Carquefou, France  
**2013** *Kauru Africa Day Exhibition 2*, curated by Melissa Goba and Euridice Kala, Pretoria Art Museum, South Africa  
**2013** *Youth Day Exhibition*, curated by Murray Turpin and Matthew Dean, Constitution Hill Women's Prison Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2012** *Kauru Africa Day Exhibition 1*, curated by Nontobeko, Sandton Art Space, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2012** Havana Biennial, exhibition curated by Andrea Barnwell-Brownlee and Valerie Cassel-Oliver, Cuba, Havana  
**2011** *Feed your head: The African Origins of the Scientific Aesthetic*, curated by Kalia Brooks, Museum of Contemporary African Diaspora Art (MoCADA), Brooklyn, NY, USA  
**2011** *Paperwork*, curated by Nina Chanel Abney, Kravets-Wehby Gallery, New York, NY, USA  
**2011** *I know you're looking*, curated by Lowery Stokes-Sims, School 33 Gallery, Baltimore, MD, USA  
**2011** *Once upon a time*, curated by Laura Amussen, Silber Gallery, Goucher University, Towson, MD, USA  
**2011** *Glossolalia 5.0*, curated by Cauleen Smith, The Kitchen, New York, NY, USA  
**2010** *DeLineate: Invitational Drawing Exhibition*, University of South Carolina, SC, USA  
**2010** *Emva Kwe Sporo (Over the Railway)*, Becomo Arts Centre, Soweto, South Africa  
**2010** *Glassheart*, Point Blank Gallery, Drill Hall, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2010** *Tactics of Desire*, Bag Factory Studios, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2010** *First Person*, curated by Kalia Brooks, Sarah Lawrence College Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY, USA  
**2009** *astro.nautic*, with Torkwase Dyson, curated by Jed Dodds, Creative Alliance, Baltimore MD, USA  
**2009** *Losing Yourself*, curated by Cathy Byrd and Jillian Hernandez, Georgia State University, Atlanta GA, and Maryland Art Place, Baltimore MD, USA  
**2009** *Summer Guest House*, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA  
**2009** *If I didn't Care*, curated by Rick Delaney, Park School of Baltimore, Baltimore, MD, USA  
**2009** *To the teeth*, Creative Alliance, Baltimore, MD, USA  
**2008** *Cinema Remixed and Reloaded: Black Women Artists and the Moving Image since 1970*, curated by Valerie Cassel Oliver and Andrea Barnwell-Brownlee, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX, and Spelman College Museum of Art (2007), Atlanta, GA, USA  
**2008** *Never has she ever*, curated by Latoya Frazier, Mason Gross School of the Arts, New Brunswick, NJ, USA  
**2008** *Peekskill Project*, Hudson Valley Centre for Contemporary Art, Peekskill, NY, USA  
**2008** *Off Color*, curated by Kalia Brooks and Hank Willis Thomas, Rush Arts Gallery, New York, NY, and Diaspora Vibe Gallery (2007), Miami, FL, USA  
**2008** *Sondheim Prize Semi-finalist Show*, Meyerhoff Gallery, MICA, Baltimore, MD, USA  
**2008** *Solid Gold*, Vox Populi Gallery, Philadelphia, PA, USA  
**2007** *Time-based media invitational*, curated by Lia Newman, ArtSpace, Raleigh, NC, USA  
**2007** *Hyphenation*, curated by Jackie Milad Union Gallery, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA  
**2007** *New InSight*, curated by Suzanne Ghez, Art Chicago 2007, Chicago, IL, USA  
**2007** *a spectacle and nothing strange*, Fox3 Gallery, MICA, Baltimore, MD, USA **2006** *pulp*, Fox4 Gallery, MICA, Baltimore, MD, USA  
**2006** "(which is kind of interesting)", Fox3 Gallery, MICA, Baltimore, MD, USA

## Curated Exhibitions

**2014** *COMPENDIUM*, co-curated with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Ithuba Arts Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2010** *Emva kwe sporo (Over the railway)*, Becomo Art Centre, Soweto, South Africa  
**2008** *PepperPot: Multi-media Installation, Meaning and the Medium in Contemporary African Diaspora Art*, Brown Gallery Museum at the Sonja Haynes Stone Centre for Black Culture and History, USA  
**2007** *Fantastic*, Spin Alternative Art Space, Elkridge, MD, USA

## Teaching, Lectureships and Workshop

**2019** *'To consent not to be a single being.'* Great Texts/Big Questions Lecture Series, Institute for Creative Arts, University of Cape Town, South Africa  
**2018** *An evening exploring African futurism, migration, images and words*, in collaboration with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, moderated by Marietta Kesting, Hopscotch Reading Room, Berlin, Germany  
**2018** *THE DISRUPTER X PROJECT*, with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, PALA Lab, Berlin, Germany  
**2015** *Leaping Out: Landscape, Becoming-Revolutionary and the Yet-To-Be*, presentation at African Futures Conference, Goethe Institute, Johannesburg  
**2014** *Imagining the Future is Radical: Activating the future in contemporary African performance and new media art*, presented at the VAD Future Africa Conference, Bayreuth, Germany  
**2013** *Contemporary Art Practices in South Africa*, Public Lecture Series, Wits Art Museum University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2013** *Afro Sci Fi and Mythology in Studio Research*, Refiguring Women Series, Goethe Institute, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2013** *Afro-mythology, African Futurism and the Politics of Imagining the Future*, Centre for the Creative Arts of Africa Seminar Series, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2012** *"State of the Arts: Contemporary Arts Practices in Botswana and the African Diaspora"*, presented at the Office of the President, Gaborone, Botswana  
**2011** *"Feed Your Head: African Origins of the Scientific Aesthetic,"* panellist, Museum of Contemporary African Diaspora Artists, New York, USA

**2011** *"Intersecting Arts"*, panellist, JHU Film Fest, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA  
**2010** *"Art and Reflection: New Narratives and Reinterpretations"*, panellist, Brandywine Workshop Arts Lecture Series, Philadelphia, USA  
**2010** *"Losing Yourself in the 21st Century,"* panellist, Maryland Art Place, Baltimore, USA  
**2007** *"Race, Representation and the Moving Image,"* panellist, "Cinema Remixed and Reloaded: Black Women Artists and the Moving Image Since 1970" Exhibition, Spelman College Museum of Fine Art, Atlanta, USA

## Awards and Merits

**2018** Canada Council for the Arts, International Residency Grant  
**2018** SSHRC Research Opportunity Grant, York University, Toronto, Canada  
**2018** SSHRC Minor Research Grant, York University, Toronto, Canada  
**2018** York University YUFA Travel Grant  
**2010** Brandywine Prints Workshop Young Artist Fellowship, Philadelphia, PA, USA  
**2010** Creative Alliance Multi Media Resources Project Grant, Baltimore, MD, USA  
**2010** Brenner Faculty Grant for Professional Development, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, USA  
**2009** Full Fellowship Recipient, Vermont Studio Centre, VT, USA  
**2007** Full Fellowship Recipient, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, ME, USA

## Academic Record and Residencies

**2007** Master of Fine Arts, Mount Royal School of Multidisciplinary Art, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore MD, USA  
**2004** BA International Studies with Highest Honours (concentration in Transnational Cultures), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill NC, USA  
**2019** Gallery Momo Artist Residency, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2018** PALA Lab, Berlin, Germany  
**2018** ArtPace International Artist Residency, San Antonio, TX, USA  
**2016** Interlochen Center for the Arts, Interlochen, MI, USA  
**2014** Iwalewaha, Mashup The Archive Artist Residency, Bayreuth, Germany  
**2013** FRAC International Residency, FRAC des Pays de la Loire, Carquefou, France  
**2012** Main Street Life Artist Exchange, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2010** Brandywine Prints Workshop Residency, Philadelphia, PA, USA  
**2010** Becomo Arts Centre, Soweto, South Africa  
**2010** Bag Factory Studios, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2009** Vermont Studio Centre, Johnson, VT, USA  
**2008** Creative Alliance (3-year live/work residency), Baltimore, MD, USA  
**2007** Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, Skowhegan, ME, USA  
**2003** Taller Portobelo Artist's Colony, Portobelo, Panama

## Collections

Deutsche Bank Collection, Frankfurt, Germany  
FRAC des Pays de la Loire Contemporary Collection, Carquefou, France  
University of South Africa (UNISA) Art Collection, Pretoria, South Africa  
12 Decades Hotel Main Street Life Collection, Johannesburg, South Africa

## Publications

**2016** *Leaping Out: Landscape, Becoming-Revolutionary, and the Yet-to-Be: in AFRICAN FUTURES*, ed. Sean O'Toole, published by Goethe Institute Johannesburg and Kerber  
**2014** *'Disrupters, This is Disrupter X: Mashing up the archive,' with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi in Technoetic Arts*, Volume 12, Numbers 2-3, December 2014, pp. 293-307(15)  
**2013** *Afro-mythology and African Futurism: The politics of imagining the future and methodologies for contemporary creative research practices*. In Paradoxa Journal. Volume 24. 2013.  
**2008** *PepperPot: Multi-media Installation, Meaning and the Medium in Contemporary African Diasporic Art*; Contributor and Editor, exhibition catalogue; The Brown Gallery and Museum at the Sonja Haynes Stone Centre for Black Culture and History; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
**2005** *Como se cuenta el cuento: How the Story is Told*; Editor, exhibition catalogue; The Brown Gallery and Museum at the Sonja Haynes Stone Centre for Black Culture and History; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
**2005** *Letters from Home: The Work of Michael D. Harris*; Contributor and Editor, exhibition catalogue; The Brown Gallery and Museum at the Sonja Haynes Stone Centre for Black Culture and History; University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

## Performances

**2015** *NOTES FROM THE ANCIENTS: THE DISRUPTER X PROJECT*, in collaboration with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
**2014** *DISRUPTERS, THIS IS DISRUPTER X*, in collaboration with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, Iwalewaha Archive, University of Bayreuth, Germany  
**2013** *IF YOU DO IT RIGHT*, in collaboration with Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi, L'etage Honolulu, Nantes, France  
**2010** *A Small(ish) Opera*, a solo performance at Creative Alliance, Baltimore MD, USA