

JUDITH MASON

Biography

Judith Mason was born in Pretoria, in 1938. She attended the University of Witwatersrand from 1957 and obtained a BA Degree in Fine Art in 1960. Her first solo show was in 1964.

Today, with a career that spans 45 years, Judith Mason is one of South Africa's most distinguished artists, working in traditional media: oil painting, pencil drawing, print-making and mixed media. Mason is a technically disciplined artist, her technique, which does not rely on exterior processes, is sometimes mistaken for photographic tromp l'oeil effect.

In the 1970's and 80's, for more than a decade, while represented by the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa, Mason was highly visible in the South African art world at a time when the country was isolated both politically and culturally from the rest of the world. Even so, she was chosen to represent South Africa at the Venice Biennale, Art Basel and other international art fairs. She taught drawing and History of Art at Witwatersrand University from 1963 until 1978

In the early 1990's, South Africa became a democracy, and Judith returned from living and teaching in Florence, Italy. At this time, her work became part of the National South African School and University curricula and she also taught drawing and painting at Michaelis School of Art in Cape Town for a short time. She chose rather to produce work as an outsider and to exhibit less frequently, occasionally showing with the Karen McKerron Gallery in Johannesburg and the Chelsea Gallery in Cape Town.

Still prolific well into the 21st century, Mason has exhibited selectively with Art On Paper in Johannesburg, the Pretoria Arts Association, and East End Gallery, East Hampton, New York and at Art Basel Miami Beach, Florida, USA.

Her work is represented in all the major South African National art collections and museums and internationally represented in both private and public collections in Europe, The United States of America and Australia including Yale University, and The Bodleian Library, Oxford.

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Public commissions include tapestries in collaboration with Marguerite Stephens for The Royal Hotel in Durban, stained-glass window designs for the Great Park Synagogue in Johannesburg and the noted: "The man who sang, and the woman who kept silent" at the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg.

Major private commissions include "Walking with and away from Dante".

Mason has also published a number of special artist's editions, publications include "A Dante Bestiary", various Limited Edition mixed-media artist's editions; lithographs for "Selected Poems" by Patrick Cullinan, and numerous print editions with The Artists' Press.

Publications include: "Dante in South Africa" Edited by Patrick Cullinan and Stephen Watson, which is the first book of it's kind worldwide, "Nag Journaal" by Phil Du Plessis, "Talking Pictures" and numerous essays, book covers and illustrations.

She continues to live and work in South Africa, and has a studio in the United States of America. Mason occasionally works on commissions and gives lectures and workshops.