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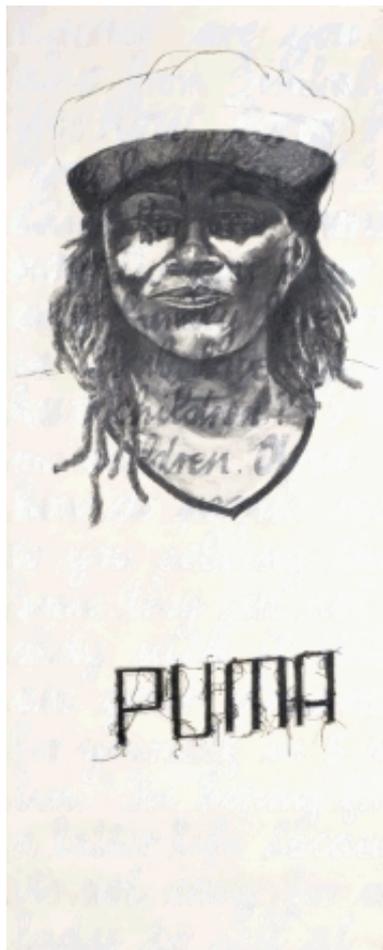
Lifestyle

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Mixed textures and beautiful, thought-provoking artwork. A must-see, writes BOITUMELO TLHOAELE



THE “Sharlene Khan and Other Stories” exhibition at Gallery Momo in Parktown North makes you question your own beliefs and prejudices.

Khan’s show is a series of beautiful and emotive paintings that offer a reflective view of the informal trading sector, which she has spent more than 11 years observing.

She uses mixed media on raw canvas – charcoal, thread and hand sewn off-cuts of material to convey her message about “considering the people we deal with in our country”.

“I used to ignore the people selling on street corners and at traffic lights. I’m so guilty of that. We’re not just dealing with numbers but human beings,” she says

passionately.

“Many people come to South Africa from countries like Zimbabwe and Malawi wanting to better their lives – and what’s more interesting is that some of these people are qualified nurses, doctors and educated people with doctorates, but they’re working as parking attendants.”

In one of her paintings, Guard II, the painful history of a middle-aged man can be seen in his face.

A traffic light as well as roads, stitched in black thread, are superimposed over the left side of his face, expressing his daily routine as a car guard.

Words are embroidered on his stitched, dark green hat, which ask the question: “Where do you see yourself in five years time?”

Khan certainly achieves her objective with this one – and with the collection as a whole. One can’t help but be stirred by the poignant message and her fascinating combination of textures which tell a story of its own.

Catch Sharlene Khan and Other Stories at Gallery Momo, 52 7th Avenue, Parktown North, until April 30.

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