

His art reflects the everyday life struggles of people

Patience Bambalele

PAINTER Michael Selekane is fast making a name for himself with his provocative and creative art pieces.

The Pretoria-based artist caused mixed feelings at the Grahamstown Arts Festival recently.

Born at Uitvlag village in Mpumalanga in 1986, Selekane recently had a solo exhibition at the Grahamstown Arts Festival.

The exhibition caused a lot of mixed feelings among art lovers.

His art reflects a visual take of people's everyday struggles as seen through his eyes. His works were

criticised by buyers for contrasting each other.

"I am inspired by social issues, especially politics. I also look at my personal life and find it fascinating to paint about it," Selekane said.

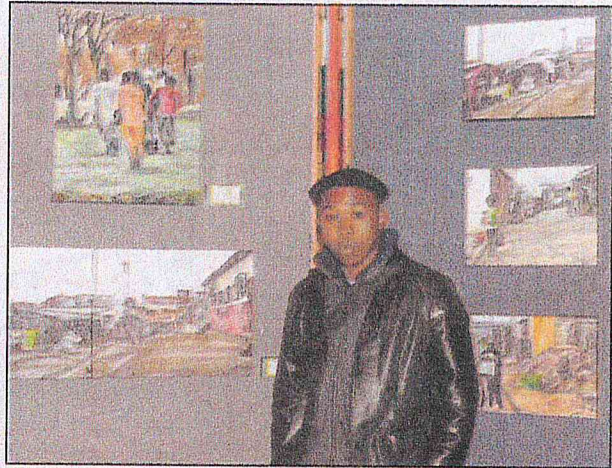
One of his works is titled *Julius Malema Train*.

In defining the art-work, he says: "As you can see the train is overflowing with people.

"Everyone is fighting to get on the train. Malema is always using propaganda to get more people to support him. Youths who do not understand politics join the ANC youth league because they know they will get top positions."

He says he used the train as a metaphor because it is unreliable.

"A train is never on time, and it cannot be trusted. Just like politi-



ARTISTIC FLAIR: Painter Michael Selekane during his recent exhibition at the Grahamstown Arts Festival.

cians. They speak about this today and tomorrow they are singing a different tune."

Selekane works in oil and enhances it with bright, natural colours. In an attempt to preserve the natural environment, he also creates works of art by mixing recyclable newspapers.

His influences includes post-modernist and impressionists such as Gerard Sekoto, Dumile Feni and

Michael Mmutle.

His achievements in the art world include a first prize in oral history awarded by Ifa Lethu Foundation at their art-works in 2007.

His passion for art started at a young age. While in Grade 6, he was chosen as one of the top artists in an art competition. It was this competition that fuelled his passion for art.