

In *Spectacles*, the artist brings together a new body of work that extends his thinking across cut-outs, drawings, sculptures and videos.

The exhibition title holds a double meaning. On the one hand, the word refers to the charged appearance of something extraordinary like a staged event or an image that seizes the gaze. But on the other hand, spectacles frame, distort, and direct vision, functioning as optical tools.

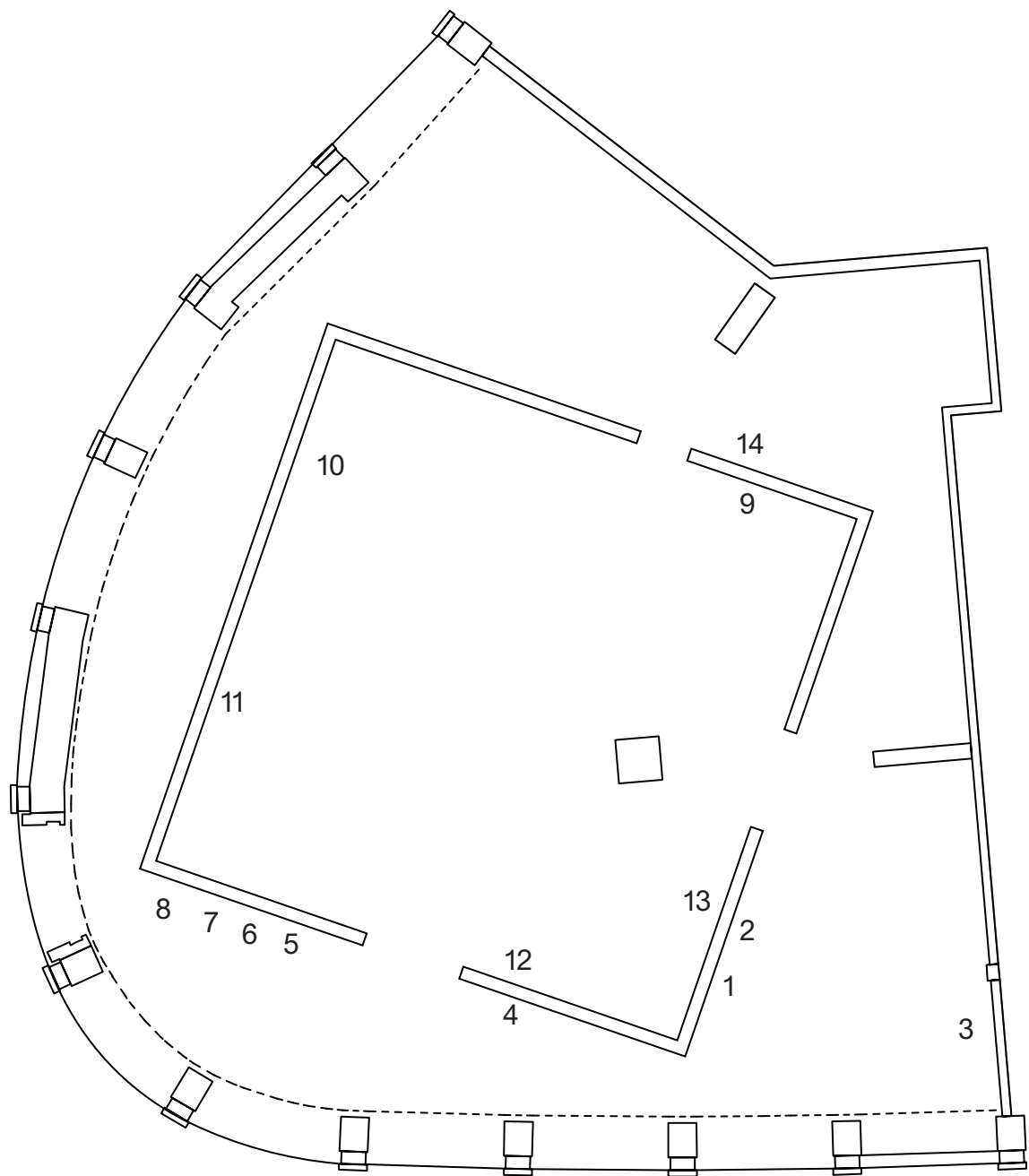
What we see in the exhibition is deliberately restrained: white walls and sparse marks form a choreography of interruptions. In this environment, Motsi's works operate as gestures and fragments that point towards moments where perception is partial, embodied and often structured by an external force. Installed in the interior space are five white masks, set flush into the wall's surface. In certain cases, the eyes (or pupils) are removed entirely. By arranging the scene and casting the public as peeping toms, Motsi lures viewers into a kind of spectator sport. We lean into certain masks for the chance to catch views that alternate between the public and private spheres. Other masks deny us that prospect and instead protrude outward from the wall. Two works embed fragmented videos, offering partial views into the source material. Together, these works mark a new series in the artist's practice that develops around themes of spectatorship, power, and the circulation of images.

Outside the cube hangs a group of drawings that are demarcated by holes. On a few, a cast of characters from a 19th century cartoon titled *Les Curieux en extase ou les Cordons de souliers* appear in the margin or near a hole that leads into another hole or holes that meet the wall. The cartoon satirises the reactions of the French public to the figure widely known as 'Sara Baartman' (also referred to as "Hottentot Venus") public

display in the early 1810s. The expressions range from "ah, how funny nature is" to "what strange beauty" and to a reference to roast beef. In Motsi's drawing series, Baartman herself is omitted.

As the exhibition unfolds, it becomes a stage where visibility is constructed, recalling spaces of viewing that range from the panopticon and the anatomical theatre to the peep show and to the white cube. Across the exhibition, the body is both a subject and an instrument of perception. Drawing, mapping, and abstraction are tools the artist employs to this end, interweaving fragments of image and form into a tale of historical entanglement. Ultimately, the political dimension of spectatorship is at the root of Motsi's conceptual concerns.

Shaun Motsi (b. 1989, Harare) is a visual artist currently based in Brussels and Berlin. In his artistic practice, he considers the way that cultural narratives are constructed, inherited and appropriated over time and across geographies. Working across painting, video and installation, Motsi organises his motifs across jokes and precepts that have symbolic importance. Shaun Motsi's work has been presented at MMK, Frankfurt am Main (2025), Deichtorhallen, Hamburg (2024), Auto Italia, London (2023); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2023), Freiburg Biennial, Freiburg (2023), Goethe Institut Paris (2022); Shedhalle, Zürich (2020); Portikus, Frankfurt am Main (2020); 3HD Festival, Berlin (2019), among others. He is a graduate of the HfBK Städelschule, Frankfurt am Main (2020), and is an alumni of the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam (2023-2025). In 2020 Motsi won the Sammlung Pohl Graduate Prize in 2020 as well as the Städelschule's Colliers International Rundgang Prize. In 2023 Shaun Motsi received the ars viva prize. Motsi has recently completed his residency at WIELS, Brussels (2025).



- 1 *Untitled (Spectacles)*, 2025,  
Ink on Hahnemühle watercolour paper,  
76.5 x 57.5 cm
- 2 *Untitled (Spectacles)*, 2025,  
Hahnemühle watercolour paper,  
76.5 x 57.5 cm
- 3 *Untitled (Spectacles)*, 2025,  
Hahnemühle watercolour paper,  
76.5 x 57.5 cm
- 4 *Spectacle (I)*, 2025,  
Hole, drill, 3 x 30 cm
- 5 *Untitled (Spectacles)*, 2025,  
Hahnemühle watercolour paper,  
76.5 x 57.5 cm
- 6 *Untitled (Spectacles)*, 2025,  
Hahnemühle watercolour paper,  
76.5 x 57.5 cm
- 7 *Untitled (Spectacles)*, 2025,  
Hahnemühle watercolour paper,  
76.5 x 57.5 cm
- 8 *Untitled (Spectacles)*, 2025,  
Hahnemühle watercolour paper,  
76.5 x 57.5 cm
- 9 *Untitled (White Mask)*, 2025,  
Acrylic on primed PLA plastic,  
27 x 17.2 x 7 cm

- 10 *Untitled (White Mask)*, 2025  
Acrylic on primed PLA plastic, looped  
video, 27 x 17.2 x 10 cm
- 11 *Untitled (White Mask)*, 2025  
Acrylic on primed PLA plastic, looped  
video, 27 x 17.2 x 10 cm
- 12 *Untitled (White Mask)*, 2025  
Acrylic on primed PLA plastic,  
27 x 17.2 x 7 cm
- 13 *Untitled (White Mask)*, 2025  
Acrylic on primed PLA plastic,  
38 x 17.2 x 28 cm
- 14 *Spectacle (IV)*, 2025,  
Acrylic on primed PLA plastic,  
17 x 27 x 18.5 cm