

William Kentridge

About the artist:

- Born in 1955 in Johannesburg, South Africa. His parents were lawyers who defended victims of apartheid.
- Graduated from the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg with a BA degree in Politics and African Studies which have greatly influenced the context of his work.
- Studied theater and mime in Paris for a year. Around this time he gave up his initial ambition to become an actor, instead working as an art director for television films/series throughout the 1980s.
- In 2016, he became the first artist to have a catalogue raisonné (scholarly praised) devoted to his juvenilia (young artist work.)

Media:

- Prints, drawings, and film/performance.
- Heavy use of ink and charcoal. His style is very rough and expressive.

Themes and Technique:

- His work is a commentary on the socio-political condition and history of South Africa, often critiquing the guilt and consequences of apartheid.
 - Largely interpreted as little content is revealed
- Resembles palimpsest-like process
 - Leaving visible traces of earlier work or emphasizing a scraped/washed-off effect.
 - “A manuscript or piece of writing material on which the original writing has been effaced to make room for later writing but of which traces remain”
- Expressionistic style...He relies on distortion/subjective perspective, not reality, to convey his ideas and emotions.
- Combination of his image, text, and theatre

Links:

-Process Video: https://youtu.be/5_UphwAfjkh

- Automatic Writing: <https://youtu.be/OmvK7A84dlk>

- Felix in Exile: <https://vimeo.com/66485044> - 2nd Hand Reading: <https://youtu.be/IEfUjg5viGk>

Work Examples:

Untitled (Kwame Nkrumah) Indian Ink on found pages







