

# Craft 2026

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Exhibitions and events run from **29<sup>th</sup> May – 19<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

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## ***Rooted Balance***

Aphiwe Dladla

Drawing inspiration from nature, I use glass to reimagine elements like rocks, grass and water. These elements fused together speak to the unity of my culture and the oneness, as they go from a set of different pieces into one. Layering them on each to create a beautiful standing composition, which at the top of the sculpture is a single horizontal rod that symbolizes stability and represents the balance found in nature and in culture. My artwork is not all about exploring natural texture and colours but the beauty of home, belonging and unity.

## **Artist Bio**

Aphiwe Phumlani Dladla is a multi-media artist who specializes in glass and ceramics, currently based in Pretoria, South Africa. Raised in a town called Umlazi in KwaZulu-Natal, as a third born of 8 siblings, Aphiwe was surrounded by inspiration and encouragement to pursue art in a family of creatives.

Starting at a young age, he studied art from primary school to high school where he learnt the fundamentals and grew his passion for arts, which led him to enroll for Fine and Applied Arts at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) to further explore his visual language.

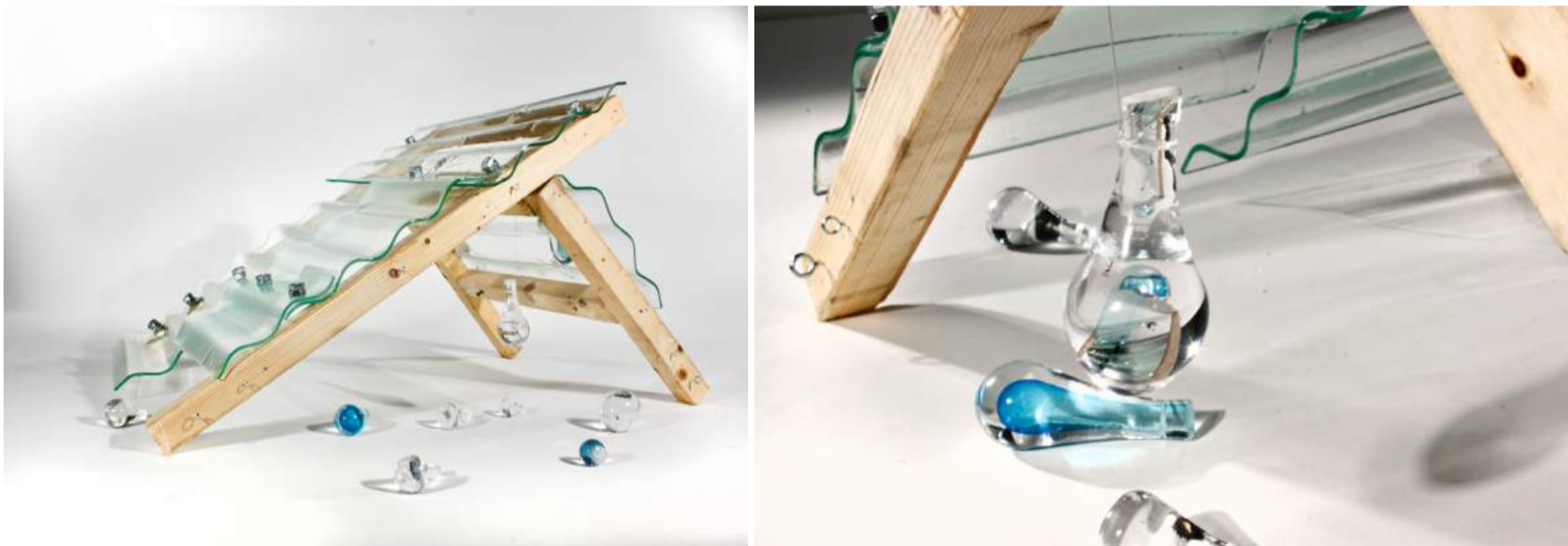
His practice deeply rooted in cultural history. Aphiwe explores the spiritual connection between land and culture, the sacred connection between his heritage (Zulu) and ancestral grounds. Using elements that visually speak to his cultural identity.

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## ***Rain on Zinc***

Banele Mabena

My work is about the things that shape you without you realising it. I took the form of a zinc roof and rebuilt it using corrugated glass bolted onto wooden planks. The shape is the same but glass does something zinc doesn't. It lets light through and catches it in a way that feels alive. I added glass droplets hanging from the structure and small glass puddles sitting on top, because rain has always meant something to me. Not just as weather but as a feeling. Growing up, the sound of rain hitting a zinc roof was one of those sounds that made you feel settled, like everything was okay. This piece is really just about that. The small, ordinary things you live with every day that quietly become part of who you are.

## **Artist Bio**

Banele Mabena is a third year Glass student at Tshwane University of Technology. His work is mostly about everyday things and the meaning they carry. He is interested in how the objects and spaces we grow up around end up shaping who we become, often without us even noticing. Working with glass, he explores identity and memory by drawing from his own life and experiences. Part of this collaboration between Tshwane University of Technology and De Montfort University focuses on the zinc roof as something personal, something he has lived with his whole life. He wants his work to make people think about the ordinary things in their own lives and the quiet role those things play in making them who they are.

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## *Traces of Us*

Kabelo Motsamai

My artworks are inspired by issues such as environmental harm, climate change, and the alteration of natural spaces. I use form, texture, and contrast to communicate a sense of urgency while encouraging viewers to reflect on these issues. I am especially interested in how human influence alters ecosystems, leaving lasting marks on the planet.

Through my work, I aim to engage the viewer in thinking about their connection to the environment. By contrasting beauty with damage, I hope to raise awareness, inspire conversation, and promote a greater sense of responsibility for the Earth.

## **Artist Bio**

Kabelo Motsamai is a 21-year-old aspiring artist from Mabopane, Pretoria, South Africa currently in his third year of study at the Tshwane University of Technology, where he specialises in Glass and Sculpture. He developed an interest in art at a young age, which has grown into a strong commitment to sculptural practice and creative expression.

His work is inspired by the theme of human impact on Earth, focusing on how human behaviour and activities influence the environment. Through glass and sculpture, he communicates ideas about environmental change, sustainability, and the connection between humans and nature, encouraging reflection on ecological responsibility.

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## ***Unmuted***

Mohaladitwe Halle Gumede

This project is a collaboration between Tshwane University of Technology and De Montfort University, exploring ideas of mixed identities. Working with my partner Izzy Mitchell, we focus on voice and silence. We use a vuvuzela and a vessel as symbols to talk about identity and self-expression. The vuvuzela represents a loud, confident voice that refuses to be ignored (the word BUA in the middle of the vuvuzela, which means SPEAK is a clear depiction of this), while the vessel represents silence, holding, and hidden feelings. Together, they show the tension between being quiet and speaking out. This work is about taking back control of one's voice and identity, and expressing yourself freely, loudly, and without apology.

## Artist Bio

Mohaladitwe Gumede is a contemporary artist who works with glass and ceramics. Her work explores memory, emotions, and the lasting presence of the inner child. Through her use of different materials and textures, she reconnects with feelings of wonder, play, and innocence, and invites others to reflect on these experiences too.

She grew up noticing the quiet beauty of everyday objects, which sparked her interest in how materials can hold memories. This led her to study Glass and Ceramics at Tshwane University of Technology (where she graduated cum laude), where she developed a strong understanding of both materials. Glass, which is fragile and delicate, represents short and fleeting childhood moments, while clay, which is strong and grounded, represents lasting memories.

Her work often sits between abstract and realistic forms, reflecting how childhood can feel like a mix of imagination and reality. Each piece she creates becomes a space for reflection, combining playful elements with deeper emotions.

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## ***Rooted***

Lebogang Khalo

Khalo's work explores themes of identity, transformation, resilience, and cultural influence. Working primarily with glass, he uses its fragility and reflective qualities to express hidden emotions and personal experiences. His sculptures often incorporate masks and abstraction to represent vulnerability and inner strength.

My theme is inspired by where I come from, Limpopo. As a village boy, I grew up in a resilient community with a supportive family and a strong connection to nature. However, I also witnessed people around me living in a community that lacked growth, with few role models. Many were held back by their own

thoughts and the environment in which they lived. My work questions how my origin influences my behaviour across a variety of space and how society shapes how I perceive and act in the world.

## **Artist Bio**

Lebogang Khalo is a South African glass artist born and raised in Limpopo, currently based in Pretoria. He is studying Fine and Applied Arts at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), majoring in Sculpture and Glass. Growing up in a rural village shaped his artistic vision, as he was surrounded by a strong sense of community, nature, and the realities of limited growth and opportunity.

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## ***Celebration in Light***

Nkosinathi Mdluli

My work is a vibrant tribute to Black joy and celebration. By combining the transparency of glass with the richness of painting, I explore the warmth of childhood memories and the beauty of our shared heritage.

I focus on capturing the energy of growing up, turning simple objects into beautiful glowing glass art. These pieces act as tributes to the small, precious moments that define a happy childhood. In my paintings, I use a vibrant, warm colour palette and realistic textures to bring these memories to life, making the feeling of joy feel tangible and modern.

For me, art is more than just technique, it is a way to preserve the glow of our culture. By using bright colours and light-catching materials, I aim to create a space where Black joy is centered, honored, and celebrated as something permanent and extraordinary.

## **Artist Bio**

My name is Nkosinathi Mdluli I am a visual artist from Mpumalanga, South Africa. My work focuses on glass and painting, and I love exploring how these different materials can tell my personal stories. I am interested in themes like identity, using the clear and delicate nature of glass along with the bold feelings of paint.

Currently, I am a student at Tshwane University of Technology. Here, I am working hard to improve my skills and find new ways to make art. I enjoy mixing traditional techniques with modern ideas to create pieces that truly mean something to the people who see them.

My art is driven by a curiosity about how materials can show emotion. I want to keep growing by working with other artists, joining exhibitions, and finding new creative paths. My goal is to keep refining my style while finding fresh ways to express my ideas through both glass and painting.

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## ***Becoming Elsewhere***

Reabetswe Malete

Rea is interested in what we carry when no one is watching, and her collaboration with Aleksandra became a dialogue where both speak around boundaries from different perspectives.

Her experience of moving between cities has influenced her work, shaping her interest in transition, belonging and psychological states of shift. Working across glass and ceramics, her practice explores boundaries and the gradual movement towards independence and emotional release. Her work reflects

the weight of unexpressed emotions and the unseen pressures we carry in everyday life.

Through material and form, she explores how internal states can be held, contained, and reshaped over time. Rather than fixed narratives, she draws from lived experience to create forms that are symbolic and invites reflection and open interpretation.

### **Artist Bio**

Reabetswe Malete is an artist born in Pretoria and raised in Cape Town, South Africa, currently completing her third year towards a Diploma in Fine and Applied Arts at Tshwane University of Technology.

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## ***REDDefined***

Faith (Redd) Ntimane

Exploring identity through my name- REDD, I decided to give acronyms to the abbreviated name, which are: Resilience, Empowerment, Dynamic & Divine. In the process, I discovered the negative connotations a certain society has towards my new identity, and I want to explore them too, giving them the same letters in the acronym. These negative connotations are Rebellion, Disrespectful, and Demonic. I aim to express the hardships, strength, and hidden scars experienced through life's trials, with the use of texture, and the colours Red and Black.

The colours symbolize dominance, vibrancy, frustration, boldness, depth, power, and warmth. I believe the colours working together will convey more meaning and grab the viewer's attention.

Throughout my artist journey, I aim to inspire others with my unique approach to express their identity and embrace all flaws with passion.

## **Artist Bio**

I am REDD, a Visual Artist majoring in Glass and Fibre Arts. I mainly use Red, along with the use of detailed texture in my artworks, as a symbol for my character and identity.

I study Fine & Applied Arts at the Tshwane University of Technology in Pretoria, South Africa. I am influenced by the authentic and powerful messages conveyed by a Musical Artist- Kendrick Lamar, to explore the themes of Self- Expression and Identity.

I am focused on expanding my brand- Think.REDD, creating it to be a broad platform where many creatives can find inspiration to express and embrace themselves.

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## ***Colour as Voice***

Siphesihle Sindana

I am an artist who works in painting and figurative graphite where my work is part of my experiences I came across in life and personal expression. My inspiration comes from what surrounds me in my everyday life and personal experience.

I see painting not only as medium but as way for me to express myself to the world and people, hence it is a what my mind feels, it more of the language of the mind. Through painting bold and vibrant colours, I aim to please and ease the state of mind of whomever to observe the artwork, this makes it easy to connect with people hence lines may be understood by a few while colour speaks to everyone.

As a painter and pencil artist I want people to feel the comfort, joy and delightfulness when they see my work. I want to inspire people emotionally as they see the usage of vibrant colours in the paintings, so they connect easy with my work.

## **Artist Bio**

My name is Siphesihle Sindana, and I am still an emerging undergraduate artist who explores the themes of personal and collective memory concerning spirituality, ancestry, and cultural identity. Primarily, the medium in which I am working is glass. Through the use of bold colours and symbolic forms, I hope to achieve a relationship between the material used and the meaning that the final piece will convey. The patterns are inspired by Ndebele cultural motifs.

Through glass, I investigate resilience and its state of being very fragile. Glass allows me to manipulate it into different forms to express how memory can be layered within the spiritual realm of the ancestors. My work focuses on the connection between the past and present and those who came before me.

Through this craft, I aim to invite and teach viewers about my world and how ancestors serve as guides and protectors of one's life. I explore how personal and collective memory can shape the future and past of a person.

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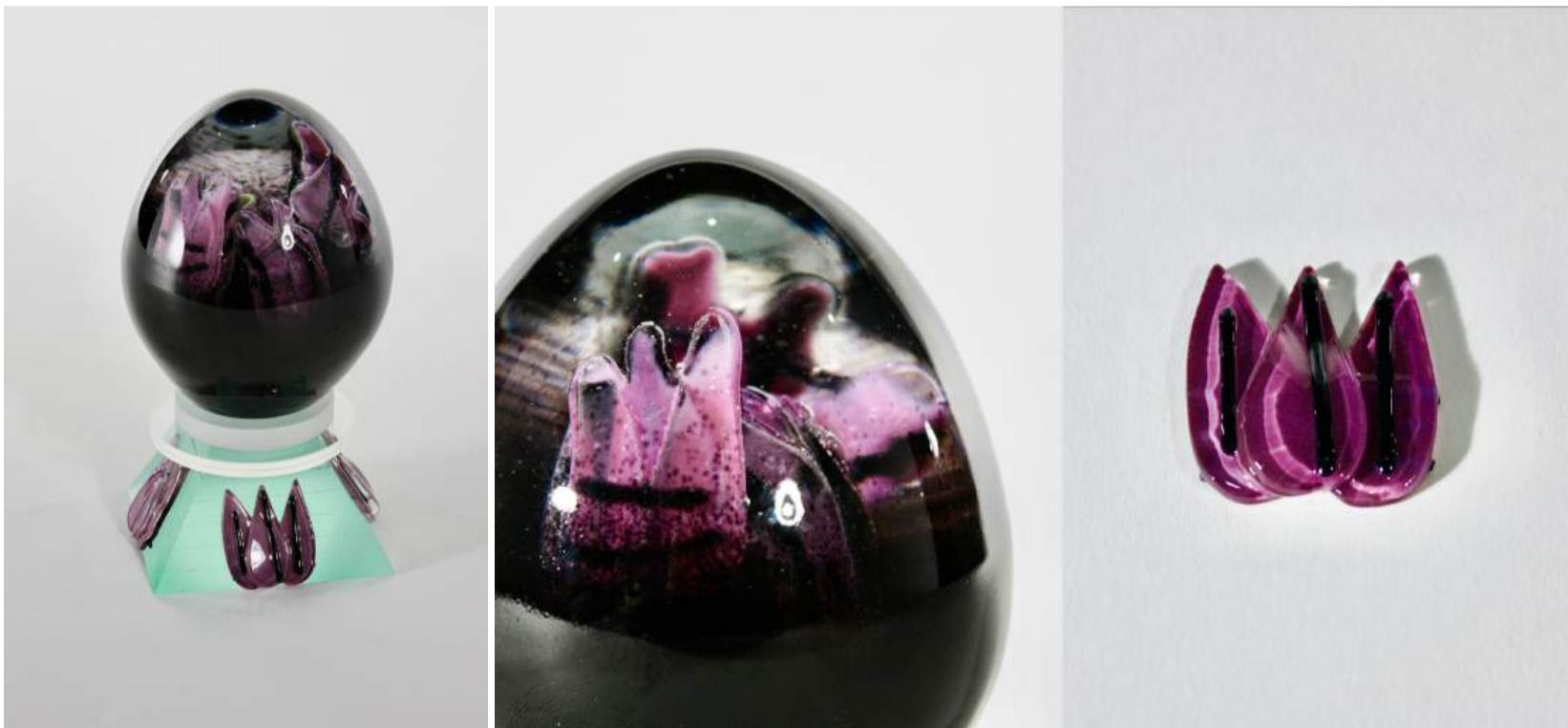
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## ***Fusion***

Thandoluhle Tembe

My work in glass focuses on exploring how colour, form, and texture interact and complement one another within a composition, enabling me to create pieces that are both visually engaging and conceptually driven. I enjoy experimenting with different techniques to better understand how materials behave and how they can be manipulated to communicate meaning.

## **Artist Bio**

My name is Thandoluhle Tembe, and I am currently pursuing a diploma in Fine and Studio Arts at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). I am in my third

year of study, majoring in both glass and printmaking, which has allowed me to develop a strong foundation in both sculptural and surface-based practices. I am passionate about growing as an artist, continuously learning, and contributing meaningfully to creative space, so an opportunity to work with another student from abroad and I have gained myself a little bit of experience and it has helped me broaden my creative perspective. I am usually a quite person who is not used to sharing and however with this joint project I got pushed out of my comfort zone. If I think of think it, it was a good thing for me to improve on my communication skills as this was all about teamwork and sharing Ideas and trying to find what works best for the team.

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## ***Where Identity Meets***

Tshilani Tyrone Mudzanani

This body of work explores themes of cultural identity, memories and tribalism, drawing from my experiences as a young Venda man who grew up in a rural environment shaped largely by Tsonga culture. Living in a space where Venda traditions often felt overshadowed made me deeply aware of the labels that emerge from tribal differences. One of these was Njiya Vavhexa, a Tsonga term meaning “grasshopper,” sometimes used in a mocking or derogatory way to describe Venda people.

I have chosen to reclaim Njiya Vavhexa and transform it into a symbol of pride and empowerment. It represents my journey toward self-acceptance and cultural affirmation. I now identify with the figure of the grasshopper that was

once used to diminish my culture, and I reshape it into an emblem that strengthens me as a young Venda man who is proud of his heritage.

As a multidisciplinary artist, the grasshopper also becomes a metaphor for the fragile and shifting nature of identity within a divided society. Through drawing and material experimentation, I explore the pain of exclusion and the vulnerability of moving between cultural spaces from one tribe to another by experiences that can both expose and give birth to tribalism. Through my research on both my cultures (Venda and Tsonga), I now choose to celebrate them equally by deconstructing the grasshopper and transforming it into forms made from existing objects. By transforming these objects, I give birth to new meanings and perspectives, while also shaping my evolving identity.

## **Artist Bio**

Tshilani Tyrone Mudzanani (b. 2003) was born in the rural township of Giyani, South Africa and is currently based in Pretoria. His artistic journey began at the age of twelve when he discovered the work of renowned local artist Philemon Hlungwani. Hlungwani's poetic depictions of village life and landscapes ignited i Mudzanani's imagination, shaping the foundation of his creative vision. From that moment, art became more than a passion; it grew into a language through which he explored memory, culture, and identity.

Mudzanani is currently completing his Advanced Diploma in Fine and Applied Art at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), where he continues to refine and expand his multidisciplinary practice. His work is rooted primarily in glass and sculpture, mediums through which he investigates the delicate tensions between fragility and strength, tradition and transformation. Through each piece, he seeks to honor the stories of his upbringing while pushing the boundaries of material and form.

In this collaboration project I've learnt that working with a partner is much easier and more enjoyable than working independently, and that communication creates a way of understanding each other better, even when you're coming from different backgrounds. Our common thread in this collaboration project is the idea of expressing our identities and cultures and

searching for similarities in our cultural art and craft. Through our online meetings twice a week, we managed to come up with this brilliant art form that we found in both African and European craft.

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## ***Nature's Whispers***

Welcome Shiba

My work is inspired by nature and the quiet way it communicates through shapes, textures, and patterns. I focus on forms like leaves, flowers, and natural landscapes.

In my glass work, I explore how light moves through the material to show beauty and fragility

My theme, Nature's Whispers, reflects my interest in how nature speaks without words. I try to create artworks that make people slow down and notice small details in the environment.

Through my work, I want to share a sense of calm and connection to nature and remind people of its importance in our daily lives.

## **Artist Bio**

Welcome Shiba is a third-year Fine Art student at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), specialising in glass and ceramics.

His work is inspired by nature, focusing on organic forms such as leaves, flowers, and landscapes. He uses glass to explore light, texture, and fragility, while also creating forms that reflect natural beauty.

Welcome has assisted in the glass studio, gaining practical knowledge and hands-on experience. He is passionate about improving his skills and learning new techniques in glass art.

His goal is to grow as an artist and create meaningful work that connects people with nature in a simple and thoughtful way.