

For Immediate Release

**Simon Frost: Recent Works
Ukhamba: Zulu Vessels from the early 20th Century
May 25 – September 14, 2002**

Simon Frost: Recent Works

This is the second one-person show at the Peter Blum Gallery of the British born artist Simon Frost. Frost has lived in New York since the early 1980's.

Created painstakingly over long periods of time, these drawings are concerned with rigorous structure and minute detail, but in the intense repetition of line and shape there also comes a breakthrough into the ethereal. Frost, in experimenting with a more compressed gestation period, weeks instead of months, is also producing a more direct quality in recent works.

The current group of works form a continuum from the previous show at Peter Blum in 2000. Mostly using ink and graphite, these pieces range from smaller tondos which radiate outwards like finger prints to larger horizontal grid constructs of color and light. Rounding out the show are more loosely structured pieces that create a formal commentary.

Ukhamba: Zulu Vessels from the early 20th Century

In the early 1900's in sub-Saharan Africa, domestic pottery vessels were often sacred, produced for ritual use. This was the case for the "ukhamba" the name given to the vessels that fermented and stored their precious "utshwala" or beer. These vessels were exclusively produced by women. In Zulu culture the brewing and drinking of beer occurs as part of ritual observances associated with life cycle milestones and for the communication with ancestors who would be attracted to the scent of the beer brewing and to the sounds of celebration.

Because the ever-present ancestors would be more attracted to recognizable or familiar objects, the ritual context of Zulu art demanded conformity to relatively stereotyped shapes and patterns of decoration. The decorations were made by scraping or scratching relief patterns of flowers, the sun, half moons, circles, or facing triangles onto the surface with a sharp instrument, or by adding groups of clay pellets, "amasumpa", in defined groups of squares or circles or in continuous bands. The "amasumpa" decorate other forms of Zulu art and are considered significant, referred to as the "Royal" tradition. It has been suggested that they represent herds of cattle or an aerial view of the village huts or even the old practice of tattoo. This group of hand built, beautifully burnished, clay vessels represents the culmination of the potters' skills.

For additional information and photographic material please contact Peter Blum or Diana Erdos
The Gallery is located at 99 Wooster Street, New York, NY 10012
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Hours: Tuesday-Friday 10-6, Saturday 11-6, and Monday by appointment