

/ Lionel Smit

9.9.2016- 29.1.2017

Lionel Smit – Faces of Identity

Lionel Smit (born in Pretoria in 1982) is considered one of South Africa's most talented artists, best known for his contemporary portraiture executed through monumental canvases and sculptures. With this exhibition Smit's work will be shown in Finland for the first time.



Images: *Singular formation #2* (left), *Origin Broken Fragments*, close-up (right)

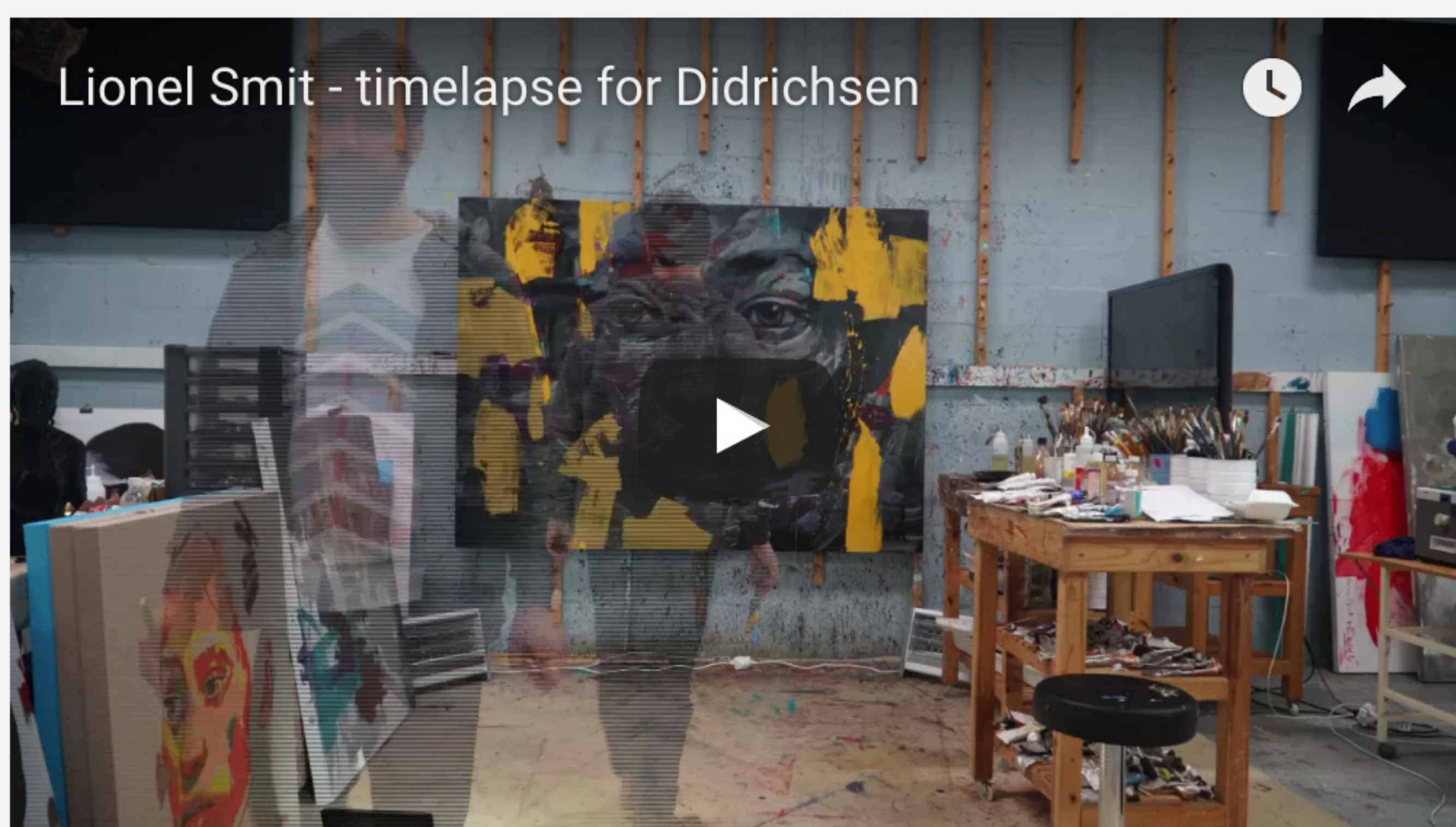
After settling in Cape Town the artist became internationally recognised and his exhibitions in Great Britain, Holland, the USA and Hong Kong have been exceptionally popular among the art public and collectors.

His monumental paintings and sculptures glow with colour. His distinctive use of colour is comparable to classical representational painting, and the expression in his sculptures is encapsulated in fragments.



In his art, Smit studies the identity of South Africa's continuously changing population. Its formation and preservation in a multi-cultural society and a globalised world is a major challenge. He is fascinated by what defines and characterises individuals and groups, their origins and transformation. These are manifested most strongly in human faces, the artist's most prominent subject.

Most of Smit's anonymous models come from the Cape Malay community, a unique ethnic mixture of Europe, Africa and Asia. For him, the Cape Malay woman epitomises hybrid identity within a South African context.



Faces continues the Didrichsen Art Museum's series of exhibitions presenting the art and culture of different nations. The exhibition also includes two paintings by South African artist Benjamin Macala (1938-1997) given personally by President Nelson Mandela to President Martti Ahtisaari and his wife Eeva Ahtisaari. In addition, it includes a number of African *objets d'art* from the Museum's own collections.

Photo bank:

<http://holvi.artstudio.fi/didrichsen/LoginPressi.php> (username: didrichsen, password: pressi)

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Tickets

Normal ticket 13 €
Reduced price 10 € (pensioners, students, teachers, artists, unemployed, Helsinki Card)
Free entrance for seniors over 75 years, children under 7 years and with the Museum Card

Opening hours

Lionel Smit – Faces of Identity
9.9.2016-29.1.2017
Tue–Sun 11–18