

As previously stated Dumile's art is a serious and meaningful commentary on the life of the Black man in South Africa. Township life is a very real experience for many African artists. They feel concern about its hardships, they want to portray it as a reflection of the life of their people and they want to protest against it. Dumile can be justly regarded as one of the founders of the so-called school of township art, one of the few really indigenous art movements to have come out of South Africa.

However, the greatness of Dumile's art lies in his ability to also transcend his immediate environment into a universal reflection of human existence and suffering; it becomes a visual narrative of life and its ramifications. As such it explodes through all barriers of time and place. It comments upon the human social order, the human dilemma -- our inability to live with ourselves and our fellowman. This manifests Dumile's awareness of the link between art and life, beauty and violence, love and sorrow. Dumile's art clearly grapples with human rather than aesthetic problems. His art has a deep and sincere purpose, requiring one to think, reflect, search, feel and then know. Ultimately it is a statement of truth, the most noble purpose of all art. As such his art has a compelling quality which draws the viewer back, again and again. The instrict of Dumile's art is apparent and he communicates his emotions and feelings in an intelligible visual language.

Dumile's art is entirely original, both in concept and execution. He has a style very much his own. His style seems to be influenced, almost determined, by three main factors, namely, that these drawings and sculptures are conceived in moments of intense emotion, that they are executed with passion and conviction and that he is able to draw a spontaneous vitality from what appears to the viewer to be his subconscious mind.

Dumile has numerous one-man exhibitions to his credit. He has exhibited at the Republic Art Festival, 1966; the Transvaal Academy, 1967; the Grosvenor Gallery, London, 1968; the Contemporary Africa Art Exhibition, London, 1969; and numerous others. In 1967 he represented South Africa at the Sao Paulo Bienalle. In 1971 he took first prize with a bronze sculpture in the art competition of the African Studies Center, University of California, Los Angeles. Dumile's work has been acquired by many important local public collections including the South African National Gallery in Cape Town, the Durban Art Gallery and Pretoria Art Museum, as well as many private collections. Dumile is also represented in collections in the USA, Britain, Belgium, Sweden, Israel, and other overseas countries.