



Umrhubhe — The Bow Instrument

Acrylic, Oil Pastel on Canvas
175cm x 130cm

“Umrhubhe” is a visual echo of the distinctive Southern African musical bow, whose single vibrating string mirrors the precarious balance of internal and external worlds. The painting pulses with rhythmic tension, like a note held just before release. An homage to the great Dr. Latozi Madosini Mpahleni, this work honours Indigenous Southern African sonic tradition while situating it within a contemporary abstract vocabulary. This tension embodies a central paradox: preserving cultural heritage while allowing it to evolve. Heraclitus would recognise in this piece the principle that the same string that produces sound also contains the potential for rupture. Identity too carries this fragility and resilience — especially for hybrid individuals navigating Western and African epistemologies. The painting’s activism lies in its insistence that Indigenous instruments and knowledges are not relics, but living technologies of perception, equally valid and essential in shaping global futures.

Livia Dualis