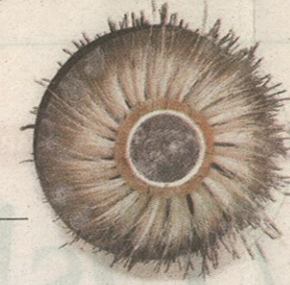


# CitiVibe

Insect obsession

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## TONIGHT'S TV TITBITS

**19:00 30 Rock PG13 (M-Net):**

Liz can't scheme her way out of jury duty.

**22:30 Without A Trace (SABC2):**

Jack and the team must determine if a missing nanny is a kidnapping victim or a suspect when she and an infant disappear.

# Pavement special

## ONE MAN'S TRASH IS ANOTHER MAN'S TREASURE

**SIBUSISO MKWANAZI**

**REDUCE. Re-use. Recycle.** Mbongeni Buthelezi is not synonymous with these three words, but he does exactly that, in a unique way.

"Recycling was never my original intention, it just came with the territory. It adds an extra element to my art. I create pieces and save the planet," says Buthelezi as he toils on one of his creations.

Clad in a brown jersey, jeans and industrial boots, he is the cleanest garbage collector you will ever come across.

"People don't realise that the first process is to physically collect the litter from the streets. I gather the correct colours, textures and amount that I will need for a particular piece," he explains.

"Then I melt three layers of plastic to make the canvas and mount it on a stretcher, which is a Masonite frame board. I use a heat-gun to melt the plastic onto the canvas," Buthelezi says.

"When producing an image of a person, which I do a lot of, I always start with the left eye. I have become accustomed to this, I don't really know why. The left eye becomes a focal point."

So what was Buthelezi's original intention?

"I planned to inspire people through art but could not afford the equipment. I decided to use what was easily accessible," he says. "I have a teaching background so I have always wanted to transfer my love for art to others."

Mbongeni Buthelezi attributes his international success to Ralph Seippel who, in 1999, began publicising his work in Dusseldorf, Germany. Buthelezi's studio is also situated in the Seippel Gallery, Johannesburg.

**Snip**

Buthelezi points out that his art is more important than him.

"That is why I don't always sign my work and I do not look straight into any camera. I divert attention to my talent. Internationally, there are artists that surpass me but are down to earth. It is more about art and less about the artist," he says.

Asked whether his technique

excludes traditional purists who have an affinity for paintbrush strokes and pastel, Buthelezi says this is not the case.

A matter of different strokes for different folks, perhaps?

"Conventional art is predictable. The very same purists are the ones who are interested in my undertakings," says Buthelezi.

"My creations appeal to different people in different ways. Older enthusiasts see an investment opportunity and the younger crowd draws inspiration from it."

There are a number of people who are interested in art but do not know where to start. Buthelezi's exhibitions would be the perfect introduction.

"I would like to think my

impressions are not intimidating. I use a medium that every single person is familiar with," he says.

"It might also be the fact that I use most artistic elements which include drawing, sculpturing, moulding and painting.

"I also started off not knowing anything about art and have gradually progressed. My success can hopefully spark someone's dream out there," he adds.

Mbongeni Buthelezi has a confident yet approachable demeanour about him. Even a question about being put out of business, in part by *The Citizen*, as a result of the "Pitch in and we will Pikitup" campaign does not seem to faze him.

"Luckily for me, we will always live in a plastic world," he laughs.

