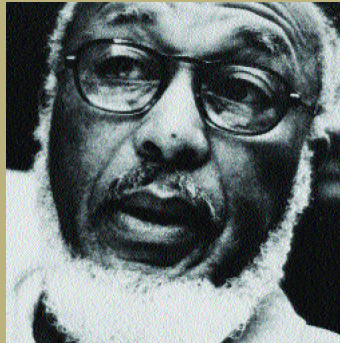


Gerard Sekoto (1913 – 1993)

THE ORDER OF IKHAMANGA IN GOLD (POSTHUMOUS)



**AWARDED TO
GERARD SEKOTO
FOR EXCEPTIONAL
ACHIEVEMENT IN THE
FIELD OF ARTS AND
CONTRIBUTION TO THE
STRUGGLE AGAINST
APARTHEID**

Gerard Sekoto was born in Botshabelo, Middleburg in 1913. After attending the Botshabelo Training institute, Sekoto studied to become a teacher at the Diocesan Training College near Pietersburg (Polokwane). During this time he entered an art competition organised by Fort Hare University, for which he was awarded second prize. He subsequently left teaching in order to concentrate on his art.

Sekoto lived in various places including Sophiatown in Johannesburg, District Six in Cape Town and Eastwood in Pretoria. He drew his inspiration from his surroundings and depicted a wide range of subjects such as working people and washday scenes, themes which he maintained through his 50 year self-imposed exile in Paris, France.

His early work is particularly remarkable in that they constitute a documentary record of urban places later obliterated by the apartheid regime, and they portray human conditions in a manner which shows the artist's empathy for human suffering as well as human resilience.

Although he obtained a measure of recognition as an artist through exhibitions in Paris, Stockholm, Venice, Washington and Senegal, and an honorary doctorate from the University of the Witwatersrand in 1989, Gerard Sekoto's life was one of a struggle to survive.