

South African art on display

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In one picture, a South African woman in an empty bedroom is embracing her son while a dress shirt and jeans neatly lie on a blanket on the floor.

The two are expressing sorrow over the death of their husband and father in their own way. In their culture, the room of the deceased is cleared of its furnishings. An outfit from the wardrobe is laid out on the floor to symbolize the passing of the deceased.

This is one of many expressions of South African culture on display at the Barbara Gillman Gallery in Miami Beach. The exhibition opened Saturday as South African artists featured in the gallery explained their culture during an opening reception.

Called "Crosscurrents," the exhibition is a collection of paintings, sculpture, objects and jewelry representing South Africa.

"Crosscurrents" derives its name from the cross-over appeal of South African art in other countries, said Sue Lipchitz, exhibition curator.

"It's the crossing between South Africa and the world," she said. "We also feel that Africa is the center of creativity of the world at the moment. We have serious artists because South african is usually protest art."

The artists in the show include Mthethwa Lobola, who uses a variety of bright pastel colors in his paintings.

The exhibition will run until Oct. 5.