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South African architect and artist Lorenzo Nassimbeni's oeuvre is known for its fusion and consolidation of elegant architecture and fine art, bringing the two disciplines together. One of his recent projects, a sculptural bas-relief moulded out of concrete and titled *Landmark*, encapsulates this unity.

Landmark was completed in June 2018 for ABLAND Property Developers at a site called Loftus Park in Pretoria – now known as the City of Tshwane. The project was curated by Parts & Labour and fabricated by Wolkberg Casting Studio.



The site-specific artwork was created for the entrance of a hotel, which was designed by Studio 3 Architects (<http://studio3designhouse.co.za>). The sculpture represents prominent urban elements in Tshwane – particularly those immediately around Loftus Park – that are of historical significance. The suburb of Clydesdale, various distinguished schools in the area, and the Loftus Versfeld stadium are specifically represented in the artwork. Moreover, from an architectural point of view, the style of the sculpture directly references the Brutalism of Loftus Versfeld and pays homage to the Brutalist era of architecture in South Africa.



Tshwane is unequivocally the muse for Nassimbeni's piece. Sculpted from high-performance concrete, the piece is comprised of blocks and tiles that vary in form, scale and position relative to the urban elements they represent. The three-dimensional dynamic of the blocks reflects the physical landscape of the area, an area where the terrain and built environment contribute so greatly to an individual's experience of the national capital.

Every element of *Landmark* is deliberately steeped in symbolism, from the size of the blocks to the typography selected. The spatial relationships between the blocks are particularly crucial to the piece, as they express the historical significance of the urban elements, as well as their distance from one another, and the viewer.



Landmark additionally offers a wayfinding, directional role for hotel guests, staff and visitors, as its relative scales guide people in and out of the hotel and its surrounds. The blocks representing the stadium are placed closest to the stadium itself, and they direct visitors to the smaller blocks that represent schools, which then direct visitors to the very smallest blocks of all. These blocks represent Clydesdale and portray its close proximity to the hotel. By grouping the suburb with the schools and stadium, Nassimbeni pays homage to the residential area's historical significance.



Some of the blocks that represent the houses within Clydesdale have a particular hue that is derived from celebrated local artist Jacob Hendrik Pierneef's painting, *Jacaranda Tree*, Swaziland. As well as being a tribute to one of the greatest contributors to the South African art scene, this colour choice is symbolic of the Jacaranda Tree as a whole. Jacaranda Trees, with their famed soft purple blooms, are a key cultural element in the representation of Tshwane.

Furthermore, the typology of Nassimbeni's wall-mounted sculpture is an ode to the era of façade articulation, a form of artmaking that was once prominent in South African public art.

Credits: Images and information were kindly provided by Lorenzo Nassimbeni, Parts & Labour, Wolkberg Casting Studio and photographer Markus Jordaan.