



Mild colonial boy

THE MYSTICS

The Cat Street Gallery

Scraps of fabric, masks, old frames, and plastic flowers are just some of the quirky items that are strewn across Marc Standing's Chai Wan studio.

"It is my creative environment so I've always surrounded myself with bits and pieces I collect on my

travels and objects that inspire me," says the 38-year-old.

But what influences his work more than these trinkets are his global roots. The artist, who graduated in fine arts from Cape Town University, South Africa, in 1999, was born and raised in Zimbabwe. He now divides his time between Hong Kong and Sydney.

Standing says his experience in these three places – which each have their own British colonial past – has had a great impact on his career over the past 14 years.

"Themes concerning displacement, identity and our mortality run through a lot of my work. Having moved around in my life, I have always been interested in how we identify ourselves within a heightened age of globalisation," says Standing.

This theme is present in his first solo exhibition in Hong Kong.

"The title of the show came about through some collage portraits I did some time ago, which had this very primitive and shamanic feel to them," says Standing. "There is a questioning of identity and a feel of the old world to

it. These figures seem to appear in the work like enlightened apparitions from another time and place."

Although the artist mainly produces oil-on-canvas paintings, the 21 pieces in the show include his lesser-seen collage works and sculptures.

It also serves as a retrospective of his evolution in the past six years. For instance, his *Terra Australis Incognita II* – which looks at identity within the colonial context of Australian history – was part of his 2009 namesake exhibition in Sydney. Another important work is *The Fractured Colony*.

"As it is one of my most recent works it really shows the trajectory of my art," Standing says. "Among the organic subject matters are shards of geometric structures that I think in a subconscious way have been influenced by the very visual geometric cityscape of Hong Kong."

The Cat Street Gallery, 222 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan, Monday-Friday, 11am-7pm, Saturday, 11am-5pm. February 12-March 1. Inquiries: 2291 0006

Clockwise from left: *The Duchess of Avon*, *The Fractured Colony*, and *Reverence* are all part of the exhibition.

