

## NORTH/SOUTH

# In the teeth of an artist's anger

*Ydun.*  
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NOT surprisingly, the pictures of the Mozambican artist, Malangatana, are intense, filled with a certain anger. Art that fails to express the anxieties and aspirations of the people, he says, is without significance. The still unsatisfactorily explained death of President Samora Machel filled Mozambique, and Malangatana's art, to overflowing with anxiety when it happened a year ago.

On Monday, to mark the first anniversary of Samora's death, Malangatana was outside the South African Embassy in London with fellow protesters.

An interesting preoccupation of Malangatana's is teeth, and, as critics have noted, he repeatedly uses them as symbols

of savagery. This interest in teeth is thought by some to have come from his mother who was the village specialist in teeth sharpening.

The grimaces of some of his faces are carrying, inevitably, a political message. So, too, do the elaborate titles that he has chosen for some of his pictures.

"The mouth of society," says one of them, "has sharpened teeth. The only way to destroy a monster is to destroy his teeth."



Detail from Malangatana's *The Sacred Well*