## Beauty captured in bold strokes

## **VALENCIA GOVINDASAMY**

EMONSTRATING beautiful art, the Blue Caterpillar has two exciting exhibitions that run until the end of the month.

The artists featured are Shirley McDaniel and Christiane Varney Jamar, both of whom have a deep passion for art which is reflected in their works.

**Tonight** chatted to McDaniel and Varney about their exhibitions and what people can expect to see.

"This exhibition is untitled, but on my website (currently under construction), I've titled my body of work *Pigments of My Imagination*. My five paintings on exhibition are part of a large body of work I have created steadily over the past years.

"My work represents for me a form of communication between people, largely depicted in the form of women. My ongoing theme being the interaction of women, girls, women complete in themselves

I use colours to try to convey the joy of a beautiful day, the joy of just being alive or in groups or pairs; mothering women with children or pregnant women; or women as integral parts of a whole, a family, a group.

"I could partially explain the images of women depicted in my work as symbolising connectedness. Womankind seemed a natural theme that evolved. Being a woman, depicting women in some of their many forms, supporting each other and others, their interconnectedness."

McDaniel says her ideas, themes and creative processes are cumulative: "They are parts of my past and present, my imagination laced with everyday surroundings. I am eclectic... a hunter-gatherer. I use imagery in a free-flowing way, unhindered and unlimited by restrictions, seeking creative freedom, synthesising, always trying to find my painted voice in this acrylic language, painting things and themes significant, meaningful and/or aesthetically pleasing or harmonious to me."

Originally from Belgium, Jamar says drawing and painting at school was always more interesting than learning about "wars of dead people and other boring subjects".

She is inspired by the luminosity of landscapes: "Those majestic mountains of the Drakensberg.
Our glorious sand beaches... I have

no words to describe my feelings about this paradise we live in. I can only paint bits and pieces of it and invite you to join me, and take the time to appreciate what I see in it.

"If you look at my landscape and I tell you where it is, chances are you've probably passed that area many times, but did not look. You did not see the beauty of it.

"I use colours to try to convey the joy of a beautiful day, the joy of just being alive.

"For me, Africa has something no one can describe. To appreciate it you need to be torn from it, be forced to live away from it. Only then can you understand what I try to convey in my paintings.

"My ideas usually are spur of the moment; my stimulation comes from places I visit, my surroundings, from people, and sometimes events. Bright and joyful scenes inspire me.

"I'll take many photographs on a trip anywhere. From there I can produce a painting not realistic, but one that conveys the mood of the moment, the joy of nature and the pleasure it gave me."

● Both exhibitions run until January 31 at the Blue Caterpillar Gallery, 37 Willowton Road, Pietermaritzburg. Call 033 387 1356.



**ODE TO MOTHER NATURE: Arum by Christiane Jamar** 

PICTURES: SUPPLIED



