

CATALOGUE

# Elfriede Dreyer, *Composite* (2025)



Elfriede Dreyer, *Mirror, mirror* (2024)-2025. Mixed media on canvas, 760x910mm. Framed. R25000

This work is accompanied by sound composed by the artist. View/listen at <https://www.elfriededreyer.com/composite#mirror>



Elfriede Dreyer, *Presto* (2024). Mixed media on canvas, 760x910mm. Framed. Sold  
Sound: Beethoven Moonlight Sonata, III, Presto Agitato, played by Valentina Lisitsa, permission of the Russian-American (born in  
Ukraine) pianist. View/listen at <https://www.elfriededreyer.com/composite#presto>

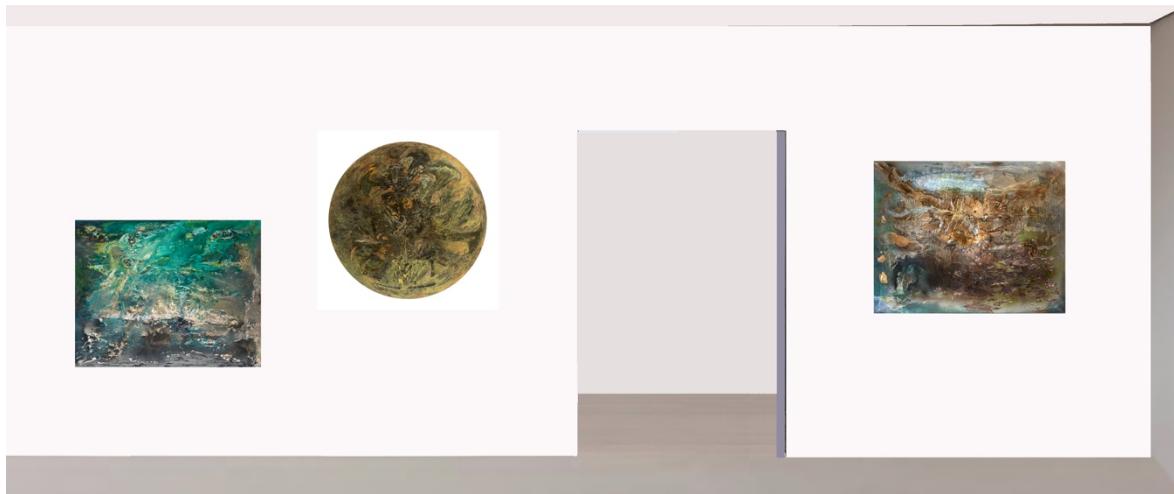
## Artist statement

Each day, I register more acutely the shifting dynamics of the natural world. Floods, fires, and erratic weather patterns have become a new evolutionary constant. Spring begins earlier each year, midsummer is disrupted by cold fronts, and droughts give way to sudden floods. In 2017, I lost my home to uncontrolled wildfires in the Southern Cape—an event that underscored the shared vulnerability of human and non-human systems. Although nature continues its cycles, these cycles are now inflected by the impact of human industry, emissions, and digital infrastructure. The environment has become a site of crisis, altering our sense of embodiment and reminding us that we are inseparable from its processes. While humankind explores the possibility of colonising other planets, the urgency of our relationship with Earth persists.

Situated within the discourse of the Anthropocene, my *Composite* (2025) series engages the four elements—fire, earth, sky, and water—to address themes of evolution, destruction, and renewal. The angel trumpet flower functions as a central motif, emblematic of ecological precarity as its survival is threatened by overharvesting for medicinal purposes. Deafness and sign language recur in some works as both formal devices and

conceptual metaphors, foregrounding humanity's general reluctance to engage with environmental warning signs.

More broadly, my practice investigates the concept of worldmaking—whether natural, virtual, or personal. I am interested in how humans inhabit and construct worlds, and in the layered nature of these worlds as repositories of history, memory, emotion, and experience. My work frequently examines the tension between utopian imaginings and their counterpoints: dystopia and heterotopia. I am recognised for producing textured, layered palimpsests that address questions of place, temporality, and memory. My approach is interdisciplinary and intermedial, incorporating painting, ink, mixed media, collage, digital print, video, and sound. Colour operates as a conceptual device: emerald green signifies idealised spaces (both natural and virtual), while red invokes the body, fire, and transformation. Additional chromatic references—ash grey, sky blue, stone black, sulphur yellow, smoky white, silver, and gold—speak to alchemical cycles of renewal and processes of transmutation. Works are often organised as sets, triptychs, or mirrored compositions, reinforcing notions of recurrence and transformation.



Installation View

## Short bio

Elfriede Dreyer is a South African conceptual and intermedial artist, curator, and mentor. She has exhibited widely in South Africa, France, and beyond, with work held in public and private collections including UP, Unisa, Telkom, DBSA, and FNB. After 25 years of teaching at UP and Unisa, she was appointed Extraordinary Professor of Art at Unisa in 2015 and founded the CAP Institute for Contemporary Art Practice. She is Vice-President of the South African National Association for Visual Arts, a

postgraduate examiner, and a regular adjudicator of national competitions. Active as a curator since 1995, her projects include major South African institutions and international venues such as the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (Antwerp) and Latuvu Gallery (France). Her academic publications have appeared in local and international journals and books, supporting her NRF researcher rating.  [www.elfriededreyer.com](http://www.elfriededreyer.com)



Elfriede Dreyer, *Accelerando* (2025). Mixed media on canvas, 900mm diameter. Sold



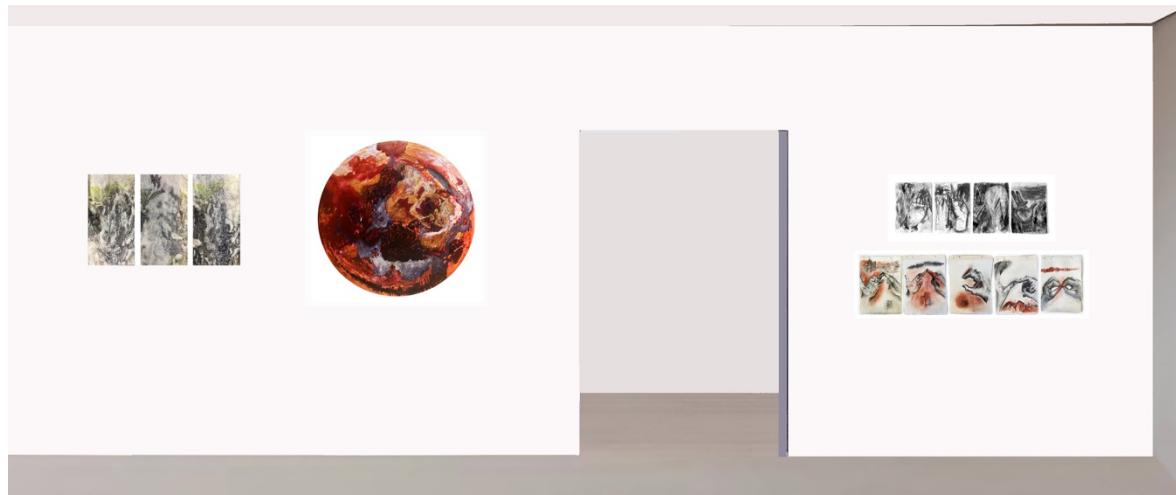
Elfriede Dreyer, *Crescendo* (2025). Mixed media on canvas, 900mm diameter. R25000



Elfriede Dreyer, *O I C A B* (2025). Archival Photorag, 350x1200mm. Ed 2/5.  
Box framed in white. R20000



Elfriede Dreyer, *Listen listen listen - Hear me!* (2025). Archival Photorag, 360x900mm. Edition 2/5.  
Box framed in white. R18000



Installation View



Elfriede Dreyer, *Danse macabre* (2024). Archival print on 310gsm True Rag paper, 300x800mm. Edition 1/3. Box framed in white. R18000. Sold (Ed 1)



Elfriede Dreyer, *Anthropocene 1-3*, 2023. Ink on aluminium, 609x305mm. R18000



Elfriede Dreyer, *Ontogenesis 2* 2024. Oil on canvas,  
400x400mm. Box framed in black. R12000.



Elfriede Dreyer, *Ontogenesis 2* 2024. Oil on canvas,  
400x400mm. Box framed in black. R12000.



Elfriede Dreyer, *Ontogenesis 3*, 2024. Oil on canvas,  
400x400mm. Box framed in black. Sold

These 4 works are accompanied by sound composed by the artist. View/listen at <https://www.elfriededreyer.com/the-piano#ontogenesis>



Elfriede Dreyer, *Ontogenesis 4* 2024. Oil on canvas,  
400x400mm. Box framed in black. Sold

