

FRIED

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games people play

Sakie Seoka

Diane Victor

Angus Taylor

Derek Zietsman

Jan van der Merwe

Sybrand Wiechers

Johan Thom

Lucas Thobejane

Fabian Wargau

Johan Conradie

17 June -18July

Gallery hours: Fri 10h00 - 18h00 Sat 10h00 - 14h00 Sun 15h00 - 18h00

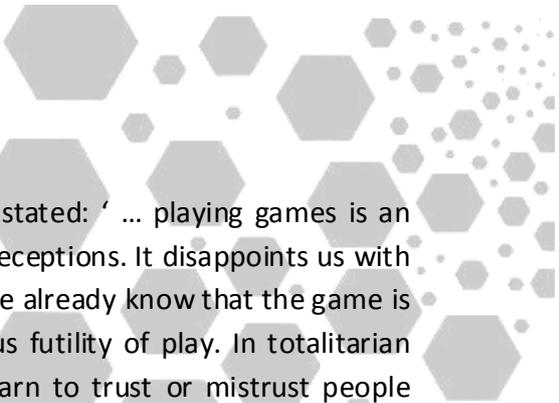
Exhibition Essay



June 2010, the ears are numbed by the cacophony of vuvuzelas in the crowded South African soccer stadiums. What's happening on the field is what does justice to the idea of GAME. Yet, such formalised games are often only a mild version of the kind of games that are played out in the human arena of political, social, personal and business games, agendas and encounters. These games are ongoing; there's plenty at stake and much tug of war.

During the 1960s, game theory became a popular study of the way in which human beings operate and compete especially in the fields of computer science, politics, agriculture and economics. Game theory has proven instrumental in understanding how and why decisions are made. *Games People Play* (1964), a groundbreaking pop psychology book by Eric Berne, introduced the notion of such human gaming based on Freud's psychodynamic model, particularly the ego states, as a psychology of human interactions called "transactional analysis". According to Berne, games are ritualistic transactions or behaviour patterns between individuals that can indicate hidden feelings or emotions. In a general sense it can be argued that human encounters involve mind games in which people interact through a patterned and predictable series of "transactions" that are superficially conceivable, but sometimes could mask hidden agendas. Berne (Butler-Bowden 2007) came to the view that within each person were three selves or "ego states" which often contradicted each other. They were characterized by the attitudes and thinking of a parental figure (Parent); the adult-like rationality, objectivity and acceptance of the truth (Adult); and the stances and fixations of a child (Child). The three selves correspond loosely to Freud's superego (Parent), ego (Adult) and id (Child). Berne (Butler-Bowden 2007) further argued that we teach our children all the pastimes, rituals and procedures they need to adapt to the culture and get by in life, and spend a lot of time choosing their schools and activities, yet we don't teach them about games, an unfortunate but realistic feature of the dynamics of every family and institution. The book spawned a well-known song by the same title written, composed and performed in 1968 by singer/song-writer Joe South.

During the eighteenth century, a game called "stag hunt" was developed by philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. This game, also known as the assurance game, involves making a choice between individual safety and risky cooperation and involves the idea that two hunters who must decide whether to hunt a hare alone or a stag together. 'Arguably, the stag hunt describes the ethical dilemma of the scientists who built the atomic bomb. Roughly: The world would be better off without the bomb, but we have to try to build it because our enemy will. Better we have the bomb than our enemy; better both sides have the bomb than just our enemy' (Poundstone [s.a.]).



In an interview with Arthur Holmberg, Milan Kundera (1985) stated: ' ... playing games is an important source of pleasure. Real life is linked to a series of deceptions. It disappoints us with its futility. But when we consciously play games, as on stage, we already know that the game is not serious. Thus, the tragic futility of life becomes the joyous futility of play. In totalitarian regimes one quickly learns the importance of humor. You learn to trust or mistrust people because of the way they laugh. The modern world frightens me because it's rapidly losing its sense of the playfulness of play.' The playing of games can provide various satisfactions: aggressive and masochistic; expectant readiness with contempt of danger and consequent mastering of situations; repeated endurance of symbolic castration with resurrection of potency when one wins (Stokes 1956).

Accordingly, the "games" people play form the core of the subject matter in the works on display in *Games people play*. The artworks on exhibition comment on the playing of games through a patterned and often predictable series of "transactions" that might not be superficially conceivable, but mask secret motives, feelings or emotions. Similarly, there are many word games, echoed in the game of the "language" of the artwork that is open-ended and often cloaked in metonymy. The philosopher Wittgenstein maintained that words have a "family" of usages and resemblances: the word "game", for example, could indicate board games, card games, virtual gaming or soccer games. Such games do not hold a single critical mutual attribute, but rather possess common characteristics and similarities.

Elfriede Dreyer

Sources quoted

Butler-Bowden, T. 2007. *50 Psychology Classics: Who We Are, How We Think, What We Do: Insight and inspiration from 50 key books*. Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2007 . [O] Available: <http://knol.google.com/k/games-people-play#>. Accessed 14 June 2010.

Poundstone, W [s.a.]. Excerpts from *Prisoner's Dilemma*. [O] Available: <http://www.heretical.com/pound/staghunt.html>. Accessed 14 June 2010.

Stokes, A. 1956. Psychoanalytic Reflections on the Development of Ball Games, Particularly Cricket. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*. XXXVII:185-192.

Kundera, M. 1985. Interview with Arthur Holmberg. *Performing arts journal*, Volume 9, 1:25-27.

Artists



Diane Victor

Angus Taylor

Fabian Wargau

Derek Zietsman

Lucas Thobejane

Jan van der Merwe

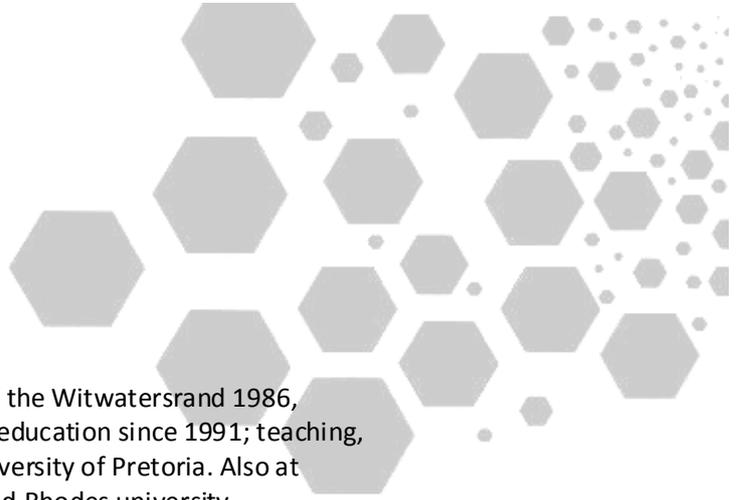
Sybrand Wiechers

Johan Conradie

Johan Thom

Sakie Seoka

Diane Victor



Biography

Born in Witbank, 1964 – received BA(FA), University of the Witwatersrand 1986, majoring in Printmaking. Worked part-time in tertiary education since 1991; teaching, drawing and printmaking, most consistently at the University of Pretoria. Also at Wits Technikon, Pretoria Technikon, Wits university and Rhodes university Exhibited widely in South Africa and abroad. Shows include 7 solo shows at the Goodman gallery. Work included in the Art Contemporain D’Afrique du Sud, group show Paris in 1994; included in Contemporary South African Art, Oslo National Museum of Contemporary Art in 1996; and a two-person show at the Akademie der Bildende Kunst Schillerplatz, Vienna, in 1998. Personal Effects contemporary images from South Africa, Museum of African art, Queens and Cathedral of St John the Divine, Manhattan, New York, in 2004. Was the 2008 Festival artist at Aardklop Art Festival in South Africa.

Selected awards and residencies

1986 Martienssen prize University of Witwatersrand
1986 New Signatures Award
1988 Absa Atelier award
1997 Received a fellowship to the Ampersand foundation in New York
1998 UNESCO residency in Vienna in 1998
2000 Finalist at Windsor & Newton Millennium competition
2002 Finalist SASOL Wax Award winner
2005 Received the Gold Medal Award for visual art from the SA Academy of Arts and Sciences
2006 Finalist of the SASOL wax in Art Award
2006 Received a statutory award from MTG in the Krakow Print Triennial, Krakow, Poland.

Selected collections

Numerous public and private collections including IZIKO- South African National Gallery; Johannesburg Art Gallery; Bundeskanzlampt, Vienna, Austria; Museum of Modern Art, New York; SABC; Spier; MTN; SASOL; Reserve Bank of South Africa.

PUBLICATIONS

Taxi Book 13, 2008. Diane Victor. David Krut Publications, S.A.

Artist Statement

I have always been interested in sports photography shown in newspapers, specifically those action shots of rugby and soccer matches. Male players often perceived by society as excessively macho and prime specimens of their species, caught in contact shots in positions, were it not for the convenient guise of their sport could be perceived in quite a different light.

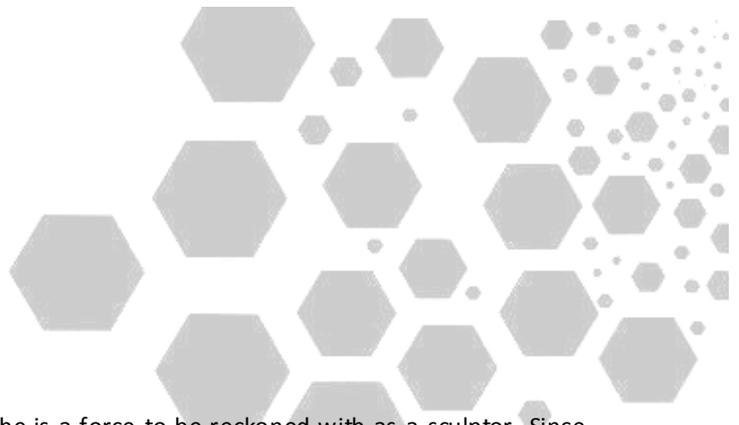


Diane Victor
CONTACT SPORT I
2010
CHARCOAL ASH
150cm x 120cm



Diane Victor
CONTACT SPORT II
2010
CHARCOAL ASH
150cm x120cm

Angus Taylor



Biography

Now in his fortieth year, Angus Taylor demonstrates that he is a force to be reckoned with as a sculptor. Since graduating from the University of Pretoria, Taylor has plotted a trajectory that has seen him rise to the top of his game within the local and international art scene. As a student, Taylor took over the reins of a bronze-casting foundry in Pretoria. This brought him into contact with established artists, furthered his knowledge of bronze and other metal casting processes and taught him about the rigours of running a growing business. In a short space of time, he was able, with the help of the previous owners, to establish his own foundry, Dionysus Sculpture Works (DSW). He honed his skills as a manager of people as well as his moulding and casting proficiencies until he became a master craftsman.

(He even developed an up-scaling device made of lasers that enabled him to accurately enlarge forms to gigantic proportions. This was a great asset to his studio when monumental commissions such as the statue of Chief Tshwane came his way.)

Taylor's skill at modelling, mould-making and casting made DSW a much sought-after foundry and he cast for many well-established artists including Norman Catherine, Tienie Pritchard and the late Kevin Roberts. During the past few years, however, he has been kept so busy with commissions and exhibitions that there has been little time to cast for others, and DSW primarily works on Taylor's work. This, once again, shows his growth as a respected artist who is able to make a comfortable living for himself and the army of workers that he employs, trains and nurtures. His ambitious nature has him tackling materials and scale that most sculptors would prefer to avoid. This has resulted in gigantic slate figures set into landscapes in various prestigious collections such as the Apple Mac headquarters in Sandton, in the Karoo and in private collections in Canada and Belgium. His 3,5m high figures called *Sit en Staar* were the highlight of the opening of the first Johannesburg Art Fair held at the Sandton Convention Centre in 2008, where three were sold on opening night. The majestic figure towered imposingly over the throngs of other artworks and gallery stalls, leaving visitors aghast with wonder at how he was able to transport and build such a huge piece.

His choice of materials is constantly being reappraised and, even when he chooses traditional materials like granite or bronze, they are used in a unique way, whether by imprinting texts into the surfaces of bronze or eschewing the carvability of granite in favour of its blocklike potential to construct form that alludes to human form without describing it (as much stone sculpture does). Contrasted with these materials are forms made of stacked grass, compacted earth, charcoal briquettes and stacked slate. The inventiveness with which he tackles materials locates Taylor as a post-modern artist making reference to traditional crafting techniques but using them in a contemporary manner and style. It is for the multiplicity of approaches and for the uses of diverse and sometimes alternative materials that Taylor has gathered much praise and recognition.

His works can be found in many private and public collections including Sasol, Rand Merchant Bank, Pretoria Art Museum, University of Pretoria, University of the Free State, Ellerman House, Spier and Olievenhuis Museum. He has been the recipient of numerous awards including Best Sculpture student at the University of Pretoria, first prize – PPC young Sculptors' Award and the prestigious University of Pretoria Alumni Laureate in 2005. Taylor has also been selected as the Festival Artist for the Aardklop Art Festival in 2010. Angus Taylor shows all the mettle, fortitude, ambition and mastery that he promised as an undergraduate while at the University of Pretoria under the guidance of Guy du Toit and myself as lecturers in sculpture, and he will undoubtedly grow from strength to even greater strength in years to come under the banner of the Everard Read Gallery.

Gordon Froud(adapted)

Artist Statement

In *Disproportion of Inflation* (2010) the artist presents us with a series of three bronze self-portraits that quite literally depict the artist in various stages of 'self inflation'.

First we see the artist playfully filling his left cheek with a small amount of air; in the second part of the triptych, Taylor's facial features have become wholly distorted as his head begins to balloon out of proportion; in the third and final installment of the triptych, we are presented with a deflated, burst version of the bust, so to speak. Though the moment is absent we are therefore made to believe that at some point during the scenario depicted, the amount of air accumulated inside the bust must have exceeded the maximum elastic capacity of the material from which it is made. Also, the sculptures are displayed together on three plinths made from rammed earth, the most common building material in many parts of Africa.

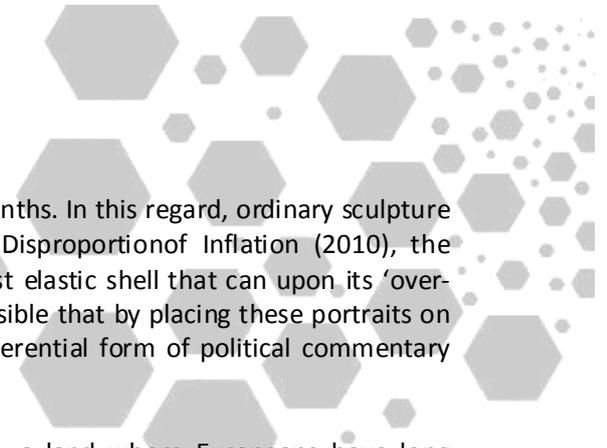
I do not think that it is Taylor's intention to make light of the sincere aspiration of artists who wish to make a success of their careers. Nor do I think he wishes to simply poke fun at the workings of the contemporary art world (which, if truth be told, often rely on large doses of hot air to animate its rather boring workings). But, rather, I would suggest that what may be at stake here is the exploration of the subtle distinction between the values of 'solemnity' and 'seriousness' – a distinction best kept in mind as an artist embarks on his or her journey into the magic factory of art superstardom.

In a talk describing her own work as 'serious play', New York designer and artist Paula Scher (2008) argues that at heart the distinction between seriousness and solemnity is one based on a difference of attitude towards life and work.

In brief, Scher argues that 'seriousness' is always playful: it capitalises on opportunities presented by chance, it does not lead to socially correct results but often generates new discoveries. On the other hand, 'solemnity' fulfils expectations, is grave or sober, and seeks to perpetuate the status quo. Where 'seriousness' is rare, 'solemnity' is commonplace, easy and dull. Put in context, artists are serious when they first begin to produce new work. At this point they are truly creative and are willing to take serious chances, often making detours in avenues left previously unexplored or ones still unknown. Once these new works generate sustained commercial and critical interest, the artist is expected to pander to the very constituency that they have helped to create.

At this point the artist has almost no choice but to become solemn and provide more of the same. Returning to the work *Disproportion of Inflation* I think that through its combined usage of medium and subject matter, it investigates the history of bronze portraiture in a playful, though serious manner. There can be no doubt that your average bronze bust is a solemn thing, originating, as it does, from a history of solemnity, noble conduct.

Representing the likeness of a person, a bronze bust also memorialises and re-presents the values and achievements of an individual to a society within which he or she has made a remarkable contribution. That is why one finds so many bronze busts of political leaders, kings, and all kinds of important people in museums and government buildings all over the world. True, many of these people first made advancements in their field by paying serious attention to its shortcomings. But, at the point where one's likeness is captured in perpetuity by the establishment, these playful aspects of your achievements have most probably long been relegated to the dustbin of solemnity.



Taylor places each of his self-portraits on heavy rammed-earth plinths. In this regard, ordinary sculpture plinths are hollow painted shapes made from wood. But in *Disproportion of Inflation* (2010), the 'weighty' bronze portrait is instead shown to be a hollow, almost elastic shell that can upon its 'over-inflation' easily burst and become worthless. Now, it may be possible that by placing these portraits on plinths made from the earth's soil, the artist is making a self-referential form of political commentary too.

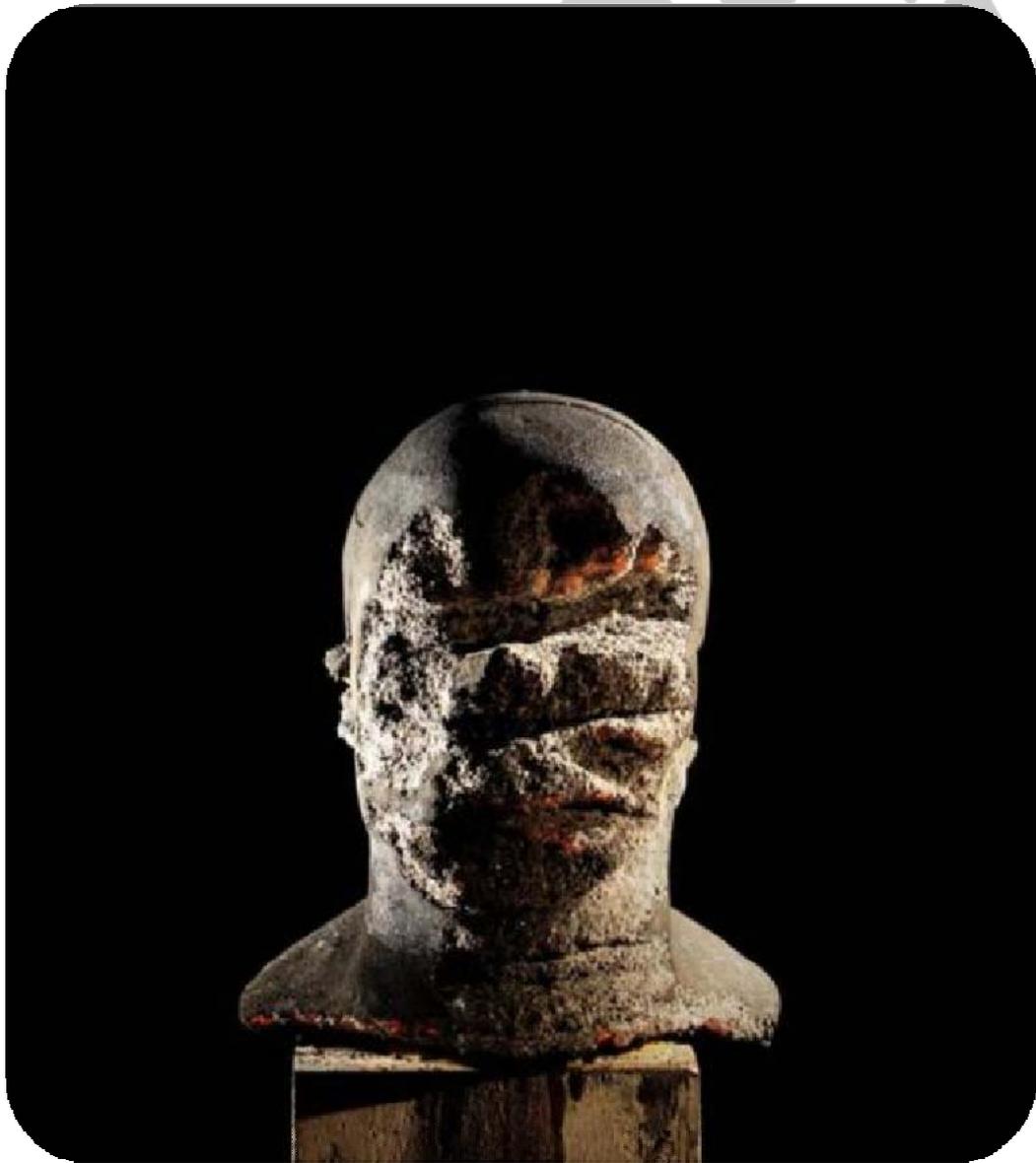
After all, Taylor is a white, Afrikan male from South Africa – a land where Europeans have long attempted to dominate the earth through various forms of technology and colonial thinking. But in keeping with my line of thought, I would suggest that the issue of continued artistic growth is at stake here. Here I would urge the viewer to pay close attention to the formal and conceptual juxtaposition Taylor establishes between the plinths and the bronze sculptures. Because, for all their seeming worthlessness (first as a functional stand for a sculpture and second as cheap natural material), these plinths may yet signify a kind of artistic 'homecoming' of sorts. That is to say, in my reading of the matter, the earthy plinths, standing in metonymically for notions of 'grounded-ness', 'territory' and ultimately even of 'home', could in fact be understood as the space of artistic play, growth and self-discovery that make possible the otherwise solemn workings of the contemporary art world. As Scher reminds us in the conclusion to her talk, no artist can continue to make interesting work without constantly coming back to the uncertain space of serious play because '... in the end, that's how you grow, and that's all that matters' (Scher 2008).

Johan Thom (adapted)

The tension between creation and destruction, the high ideals of the super-ego and the dark undertow of the id, are compellingly evoked in Taylor's darkly disturbing *The burning narrative #!* a series of photographs spectacularly charting the fiery destruction of a bronze bust. As the only remaining trace of this immolation the harrowing figure is not only a stark reminder of the fragility of its objecthood, but powerfully evokes notions of the chthonic forces at play in the creative process. The careful documentation of the fire in which it was all but consumed lends the scene the aura of a primal ritual; an orgiastic, Dionysian frenzy culminating in violent sacrifice, and calls to mind Friedrich Nietzsche's meditations on the nature of the Dionysian in *The Birth of Tragedy* (first published in 1872). Nietzsche shows how, in their licentiousness, intoxication and violence, the Dionysian festivals of ancient times shifted attention from the experience of the individual to the experience of the group. Indeed, it is through the ecstatic dissolution of the individual (or – as implied in Taylor's truncated, disfigured form – actual physical dismemberment) that re-immersion into a common organic whole is achieved.

With Nietzsche, Taylor seems to suggest in this work that the destruction of the rational self in a violent, primal ecstasy, can offer redemption; that creation and destruction are two ineluctable parts of the same whole, and that "the poet is incapable of composing until he has become unconscious and bereft of reason" (Nietzsche, *Nietzsche: The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, 1999). The transience of the object and its creator notwithstanding, the creative force that produced it, propelled by Dionysus and tempered by Apollo, remains: as Nietzsche puts it, "when the will is most imperilled, art approaches, as a redeeming and healing enchantress; she alone may transform these horrible reflections on the terror and absurdity of existence into representations with which man may live."

Federico Freschi (adapted)



Angus Taylor

The burning narrative #1 (7)

2008

Digital print: Ultrachrome on Hahnemühle paper

59 X 51 cm

Edition of 12



Angus Taylor

The burning narrative #1 (6)

2008

Digital print: Ultrachrome on Hahnemühle paper

59 X 51 cm

Edition of 12



Angus Taylor

The burning narrative #1 (2)

2008

Digital print: Ultrachrome on Hahnemühle paper

59 X 51 cm

Edition of 12



Angus Taylor
The burning narrative #1 (4)
2008
Digital print: Ultrachrome on Hahnemühle paper
59 X 51 cm
Edition of 12



Angus Taylor

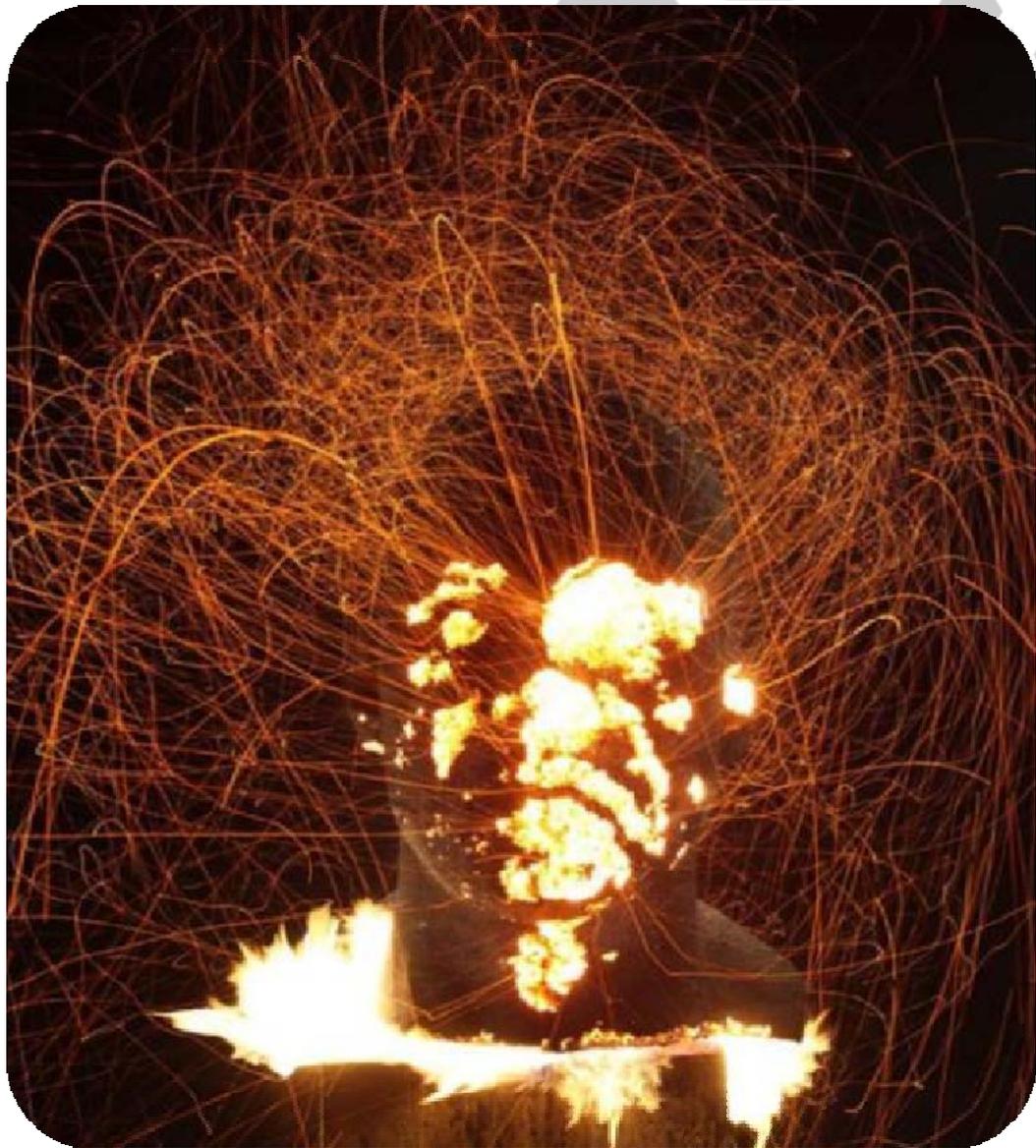
The burning narrative #1 (3)

2008

Digital print: Ultrachrome on Hahnemühle paper

59 X 51 cm

Edition of 12



Angus Taylor
The burning narrative #1 (5)
2008
Digital print: Ultrachrome on Hahnemühle paper
59 X 51 cm



Angus Taylor
DISPROPORTION OF INFLATION – Artist's Hand
2010
Cast bronze, rammed earth plinth
11 x 30 x 12 cm



Angus Taylor
*DISPROPORTION OF INFLATION –
Anticipate, Bloat, Deflate*
2010
Cast bronze, rammed earth plinths
50 x 53 x 31cm

Fabian Wargau



Biography

Born in Pretoria in 1984, Fabian Oliver Wargau is a German citizen with permanent residence in South Africa. He completed his Bachelor of Visual Arts degree including honors with *cum laude* at the University of South Africa in 2008 and has been exhibiting locally since 2007, receiving the Visual Arts Merit Award from UNISA at the end of that same year. At present Wargau is pursuing a career in the field of visual arts and cinematography, following his keen interest in the film industry. His work ranges from experimental painting through to new media, digital video art, animation, design, photography, performance and installation.

In 2009 Wargau was employed by *Fopspeen Moving Pictures* as an animator for a children's show at the SABC. He independently produced twelve stories for nine episodes of the season, from concept design to art direction and animation to editing. He is currently the Multimedia Laboratory Manager in the Department of Art History, Visual Arts and Musicology at UNISA.

Wargau continues to exhibit locally – most recently at the ABSA L'Atelier 2009 – and his work has become part of both private and institutional collections locally as well as private collections in the USA, Germany and the Netherlands.

Artist Statement

PAC_(un)accompanied by maze – Comment on Technology

The current work deals with mediation as well as reality. Here, an old and outdated technology is investigated somewhat playfully, and passed aside, leaving the idea of 'new' technology outstanding and even indefinable. Playing with the dynamic between old and new, Pac-man has been re-appropriated as a character of the twenty-first century, he is now "digitized" in a way that is still true to the original 1980's concept, but has been taken further with the "dripping" painting technique. Within the notion of "gaming", old-school Pac-man has long disappeared from our screens and the relevance exists only in the game itself.

My interests have travelled from printers, machines, surveillance and televisions through to attempting to express the sensory perceptual spectrum of the human being – specifically drawing on the similarities between the digital mechanical and the organic realms of sight and perception. The two seem to be very closely linked.



Fabian Wargau
PAC_(un)accompanied by maze
2009
Enamel on canvas plus found objects
Size variable

Derek Zietsman



Biography

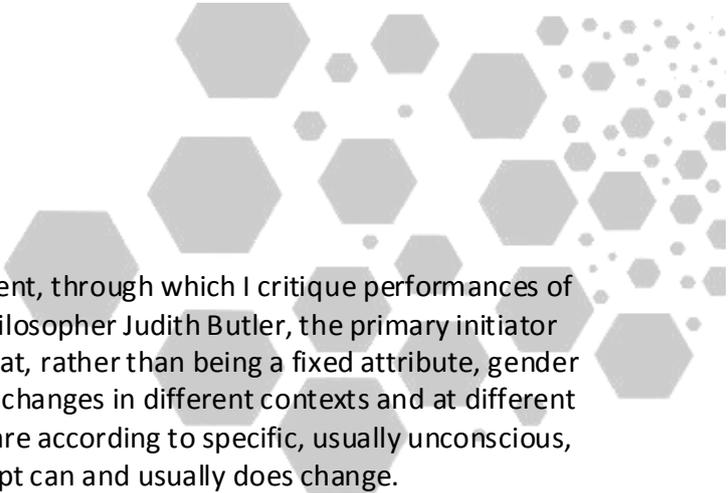
Derek Zietsman has been working as a professional artist for only the last three years. For the 35 odd years before that, he was in the business world. When Derek realised some years back that the company he was working for was becoming an attractive take-over target, he decided to live out his passion for art and enrolled at UNISA. Derek received the Bachelor of Visual Arts (BVA) degree in 2007.

Studying art formally was a watershed experience for Derek. He says that becoming more informed about contemporary art practice and art theory opened up new worlds for him, 'I realised that art-making is much more than brushing paint onto a canvas or attacking a piece of metal with a welding rod'.

The issue of 'reality' and our search for 'truth' underpins most of what interests Derek in his art making. The works he prepared for his first group exhibition after obtaining his degree, 'Intervention', which showed at Unisa Art Gallery in September and October 2008, explores these issues.

'These works' Derek says, 'comment on the machines and tools we create to manipulate our macroscopic realities, the superficiality of man's acts and structures in a universe that, at the quantum level, essentially consists of nothing. Reality really, if you excuse the pun, consists of 'nothingness''.

'It fascinates me that in our contemporary world hardly anybody thinks about where our world, and the universe, comes from and what its fate is. The opinions we may have are primarily determined by how we grew up and what the digital hegemony now tells us. It is sobering, for me to realise that over the last century, physics has discovered a world at the subatomic level that is not only more strange and alien than what we suspect, but more strange and alien than we can possibly imagine. My work deals with the uncertainty this knowledge invokes. In essence, I try to comment on the physical and social constructs, such as machines and myths which we create to explain the 'truth''.



Artist Statement

My work often contains an autobiographical element, through which I critique performances of white South African masculinities. The feminist philosopher Judith Butler, the primary initiator of the concept of gender performativity, argues that, rather than being a fixed attribute, gender should be seen as a fluid variable which shifts and changes in different contexts and at different times. In essence, we 'perform' who we think we are according to specific, usually unconscious, rules or 'script'. But, like all performances, the script can and usually does change.

The work, "What is the difference between me lifting my arm and my arm lifting?" derives from a question by Ludwig Wittgenstein which, in broad cultural terms, questions intentionality and the possibilities of action to intervene on 'reality'. The image was inspired by the famous anecdote of Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein meeting and the debate they had in Russell's study about whether or not there was a rhinoceros in the room. Wittgenstein claimed that it was impossible to know with absolute certainty that there were no rhinoceroses in the room, even if you cannot see one. I love this story of two highly intelligent individuals arguing over what most of us would regard as nonsense.

In his later work, Wittgenstein introduced the concept of language-games, wherein he claimed that words have meaning only in the context of a game. Should a person with no prior knowledge of the rules of say football, watch a game between Bafana Bafana and Mexico, it will seem to her to be very random and meaningless. To have meaning, she must understand the rules of football. Once she understands the context of the game then to watch men running around chasing a ball may no longer seem quite so mad. People who understand the rules of one game (for example football) can often find similarities in other completely dissimilar games (for example chess), but in order for these different games to have meaning, you need to understand the specific rules of that game and its differences from other games. Wittgenstein says the same concept applies to languages. To push the concept further, the members of any community, for example artists or rap musicians, develop ways of speaking that serve their needs as a group, and these constitute the 'game' they employ.

In this work, I play with 'context' and how meaning changes when context changes, i.e. taken 'out of context'. Rules (or script if you prefer) are neither right nor wrong, neither true nor false; merely useful for the particular applications to which you apply them.

The tools artists use to create their work are the tools they use to 'speak', and what they say will differ according to the tool used and how it is used. The tool I used, a pencil, is often regarded as 'old-fashioned' and it not only helps create the 'content' of the image but also comments on itself as a medium and on the process of drawing. Due to artists like Diane Victor and William Kentridge South African drawing (in the broad sense) is internationally recognised, and drawing is, in a manner, now a South African game.



Derek Zietsman
*What is the difference between me raising my arm
and my arm rising?*
2010
Pencil
114cm x 84cm

Lucas Thobejane



Biography

Born: Ga-Nkoana Village, Sekhukhune District, 1973. Lives and works in Ga- Nkoana Village.

Major exhibitions: Polokwane Art Museum; ABSA Art Gallery, Johannesburg; Franco Mozambique Museum; Sasol Gallery, Stellenbosch; Gordart Gallery, Johannesburg; Sasol New Signatures Competition; Absa L' Atelier; Spier Contemporary 2007/08; Spier Contemporary 2009/10.

Artist Statement

In the spirit of the 2010 FIFA World Cup the ball (sphere) in *Soccer Player* symbolizes the earth and as such life. The soccer ball becomes a substitute for the globe, all of whom are coming together as one on African soil to compete in this landmark event through which Africa enters the world stage. In celebration we share our diverse heritage and multifaceted culture with the rest of the world. My work is about preserving heritage and identity. This I do by showing it to the world in acknowledgement of our nation leading Africa onto the world stage through our diversity.

My works mostly figure compilations of different elements and objects combined into one, such as in the case of *Cricket Player*. Through these kinds of combinations our diversity as a nation clearly shine through.



Lucas Thobejane
Soccer player
2010
Stinkwood
46cm x 13cm x 10cm



Lucas Thobejane
Creicket player
2010
Stinkwood
51cm x 15cm x 13cm

Jan van der Merwe



Biography

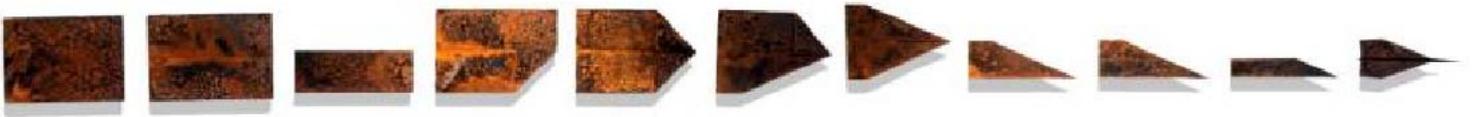
Jan van der Merwe was born in 1958, in Virginia, Free State and grew up in Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal, where he matriculated in 1975. He lives and works in Pretoria and is a senior lecturer in Fine Art at the Department of Fine and Applied Art, Tshwane University of Technology. He obtained a master's degree in Fine Art at the Pretoria Technion (now TUT) in 1999. His work is represented in a number of museums and corporate collections and has also won several awards. Since 1976 he has taken part in numerous group exhibitions and has also had several solo shows. In 2006 the Pretoria Art Museum hosted a comprehensive retrospective exhibition, entitled *The Archaeology of Time*, of his work. An extensive CV is available at www.art.co.za/janvandermerwe.

Artist's statement

The re-arranging and re-consideration of the values and meanings that we allocate to that which we find every day, is an attempt to confirm identity in the contemporary and very volatile time.

At present I work with artifacts of our time and try to transform them into archaeological relics, revealing human pathos and weakness.

I try to create a poetic moment, a brief opportunity for contemplation, reconsideration, humility and respect.



Jan van der Merwe
Paper work
2010
Rusted metal
Dimensions variable



Jan van der Merwe
Paper Cut/ Papiersny
2010
Rusted metal
Dimensions variable



Jan van der Merwe
Paper Weight/ Papiergewig
2010
Rusted metal
Dimensions variable



Jan van der Merwe
Missing Files/ Vermiste Lêers
2010
Rusted metal
Dimensions variable



Jan van der Merwe
Stray Bullet/Dwaalkoeël
2010
Rusted metal
Dimensions variable

Sybrand Wiechers

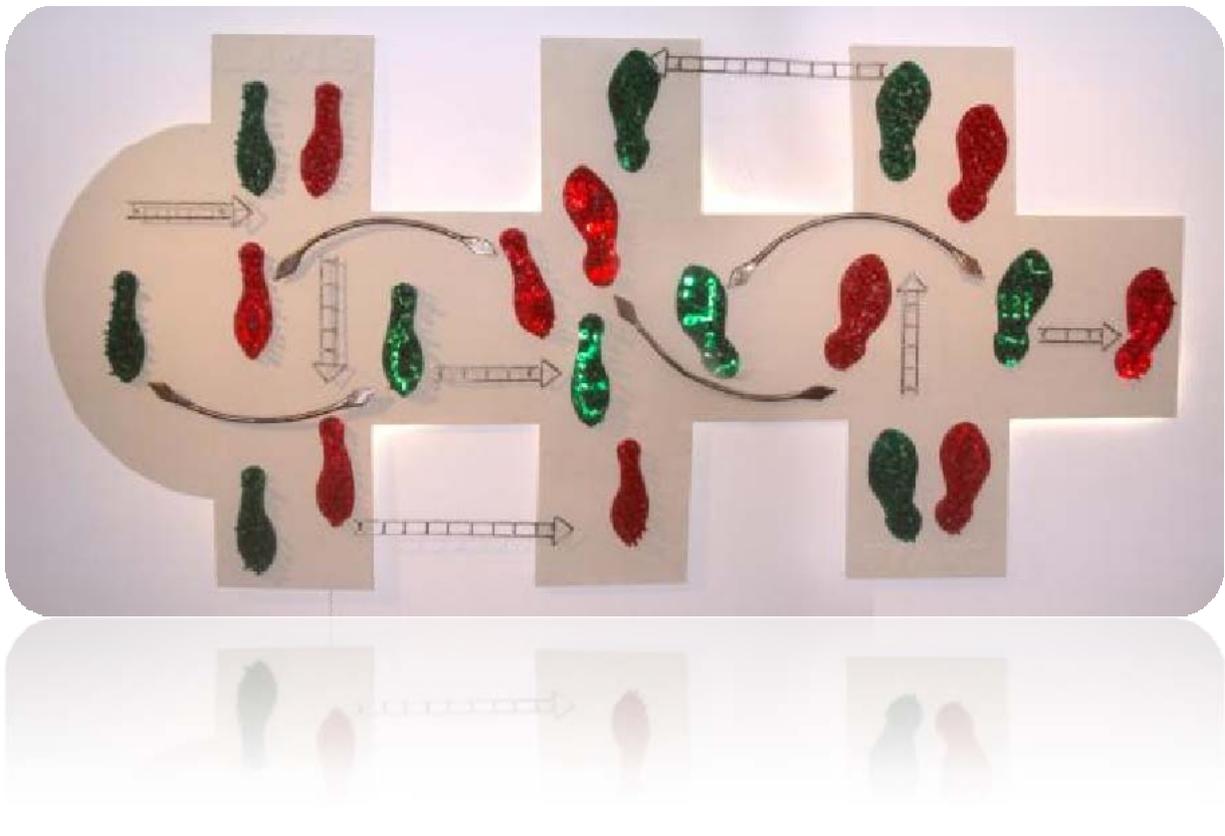


Biography

Born on spring day 1970 in Pretoria, Sybrand Wiechers spent his formative years in the capital. Being a third generation sculptor it was only natural that after completing his schooling and compulsory military service Sybrand pursued his tertiary studies in the field of fine arts. He spent the next seven years studying sculpture and multimedia at the University of Pretoria, the Technicon of Pretoria and UNISA. Over the next ten years Sybrand travelled the country and world working predominantly in the film and television industry. In 2004 he returned to his roots on the northern slopes of the Maggales Berg and resumed his sculpture career in earnest, starting with his first solo exhibition at the Association of Arts Pretoria in 2005. In 2006 Sybrand won the best Sculpture prize at the Ekurhuleni Fine Arts Award and the technical excellence in concrete award at the PPC Young Concrete Sculptor Awards. He has been exhibiting extensively across the country partaking in more than thirty group and collaborative exhibitions, including another solo show at the Gordart Gallery in Johannesburg in 2007 and at the Association in 2009. His works are represented in many private and corporate collections both locally and internationally. Sybrand's work marries contemporary sensibilities with a strong sense of sculptural tradition; he does this with humour, a passion for objects.

Artist Statement

At some point in history game play became associated with a childish or purposeless activity purely intended to entertain. The purpose of a game, from the cradle to the grave, is actually to create a simulation of an activity or aspect of life that can be repeated in an attempt to practice a skill set or to try out deferent scenarios. For practical reasons and to facilitate participation rules, boundaries and specialities gets added to all games. With my piece I'm taking the next logical step backwards and saying that if it looks like a chicken, sounds like a chicken and walks like a chicken it must be a chicken, in other words the link between "game" and "real" life is so direct that it "=".



Sybrand Wiechers
Game
2010
Mixed Media

Johan Conradie



Biography

Johan Conradie holds a MA(VA) degree from the University of Pretoria and has been teaching at a number of institutions since 2002; these being UNISA (2002-5), University of Pretoria (2005-8 on a contract basis), and FRIED Contemporary (2005-7). He has since focused on advanced tutoring for private students. A group of more than 50 of his private students participated in the recent *Baroque: historical incarnations* exhibition, held at the Association of Arts Pretoria (May, 2010). Conradie is also a practicing artist and has taken part in several exhibitions including the ABSA Atelier in 1999, 2000, 2006 and 2008. Recently, he exhibited with Jan van der Merwe and Willem Boshoff in a 3-person show entitled *Lost* (2007), and with Diane Victor and Francois van Reenen in a show entitled *Angels & Demons* (2008).

Artist's statement

The work, *Wishing well*, reflect multiple attempts in trying to come to grips with the mysterious and the primal destructive forces of the Self. I simply mean to specify acts that in any measure harm or in any way destroy sentient life, gratuitously or purposely, randomly or predictably, self-inflicted or otherwise. In Jungian theory, the Self is one of several archetypes. It signifies the coherent whole, unifying both the consciousness and unconscious mind of a person. The self, according to Jung, is realised as the product of individuation, which is defined as the process of integrating one's personality. For Jung, the self is symbolised by the circle, the square, or the mandala.

I have been reflecting for some time on the problem of darkness (*tenibrism*). Each of us has parts of our personality which surface and affect our behaviour according to different circumstances. The Neo-Baroque darkly surface of the work *Wishing well*, is a blend of total familiarity and strangeness, closeness and distance, comprehension and incomprehension, closure and disclosure. On the surface, a light is shining on it leaving a vague impression reminiscent of a decorative grid, reflection pond, kaleidoscope or rose window. In its impenetrable depths, chaos and night reign, which suggest how we get caught up in the games we play and the how this perpetually contest the integrity and the balance of the ego.

After uttering a wish, one would generally drop a coin in the well. That wish would then be granted by the guardian or dweller, based upon how the coin would land at the bottom of the well. *Wishing well* attempts to form a symbolic link between this and the fragility and instability of one's identity.



Johan Conradie

Wishing Well

2010

Digital print on hanemuhle Boryta

89 x 64 cm

Johan Thom

Biography

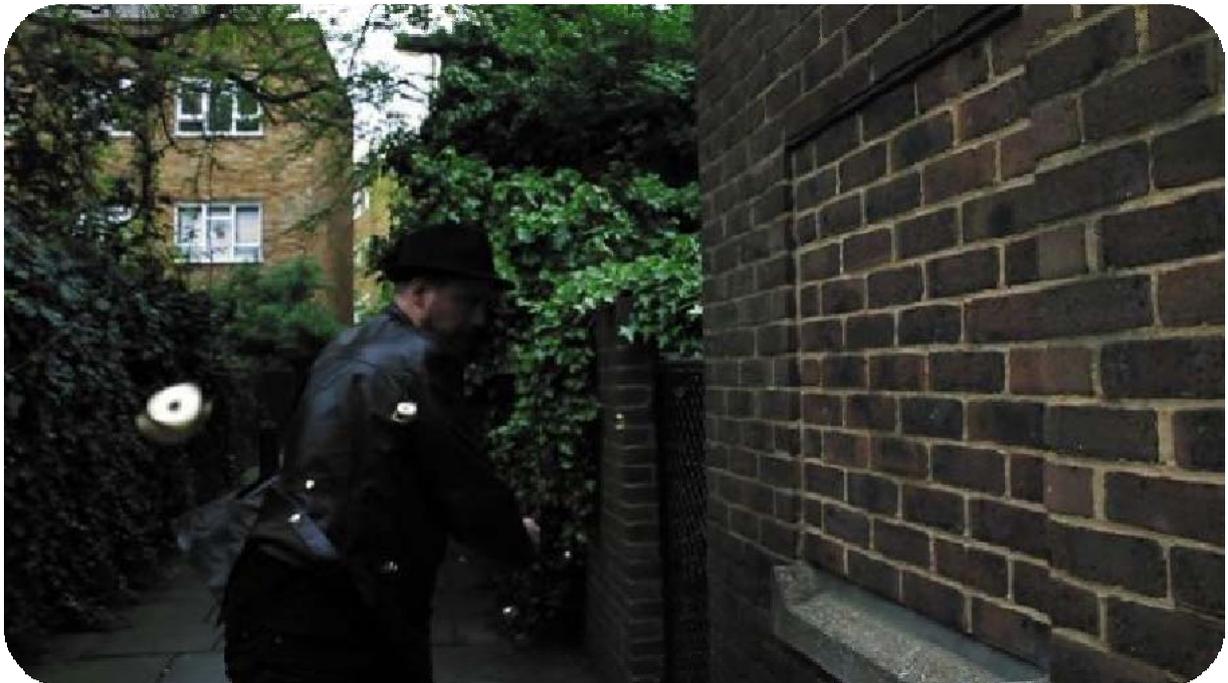
Johan Thom (b 1976, South Africa) is a contemporary visual artist, currently living and working in London. Well known for his performances, videos and video installations Thom often subjects the body to extremes in a quest to map its ongoing transformation. His works are both enigmatic and playful, subverting preconceived notions about identity, the body, politics and knowledge.

Thom is part of a generation of South Africans born in 1976, the year of the Soweto riots and the introduction of television in South Africa (a group that also coincidentally exercised for the first time their right to vote in the democratic elections of 1994). This generation of South African artists stand precariously balanced between the past and the present of South African society, its culture and history. In this regard Thom's works do not fit comfortably into the celebratory mould of the 'new' South Africa but, rather, is anchored in a constant personal movement through – and exploration of – the contradictory poetics and politics of being a 'white-male-Afrikaans-speaking-African'. His artistic position here is that of an individual perhaps somewhere between a modern day shaman, a jester and a revolutionary. The result is a darkly humorous and provocative artistic exploration of the relationship between subjectivity, knowledge and the body.

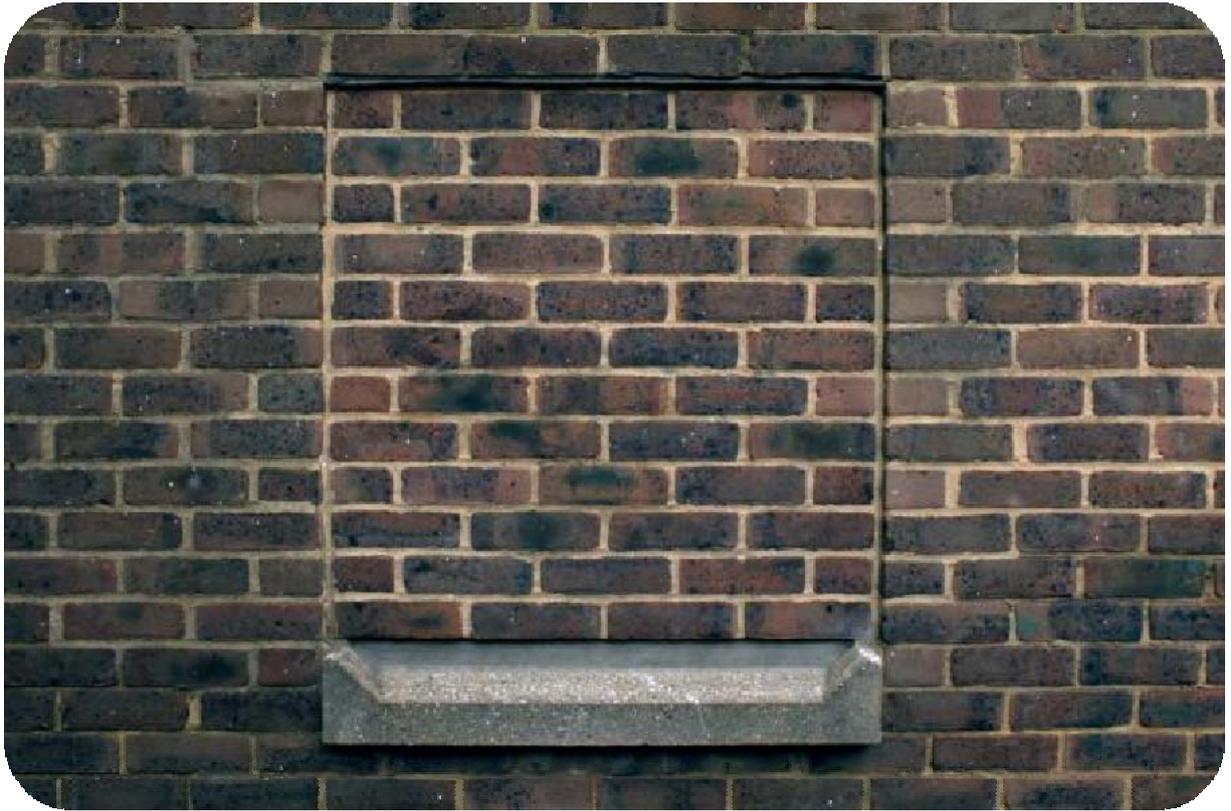
Thom has exhibited in numerous group exhibitions, biennials and has been the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards including the Ampersand Foundation Fellowship, Nirox Foundation Residency, CRIC/Pro-Helvetia Residency and more recently a Commonwealth Scholarship Commission Fellowship for the completion of his PhD at the Slade School of Art (UCL), London. He has also presented a number workshops on performance and video art and his works have featured in various journals, media articles and press reviews. He occasionally contributes to various publications and is currently researching corporeal models of subjectivity in postcolonial artistic and theoretic practice. Before becoming a full-time artist in 2006 Thom taught performance art, African and South African Art Theory and Postmodern Theory at various universities in South Africa. From 2006-2008 Thom was based at the Fordsburg Artist Studios (commonly known as the Bag Factory).

Artist's statement

The artist repeatedly throws 20 duck calling whistles against a bricked up window in a narrow passage close to his home. The whistles are made from used 12 bore bullet cartridges.



Johan Thom
Shellshock
2010
Video loop on DVD
Edition of 20



Johan Thom
Shellshock
2010
Video loop on DVD
Edition of 20



Johan Thom
Shellshock
2010
Video loop on DVD
Edition of 20

Sakie Seoka



Artist's statement

Ayoba is a "slang" word meaning "cool", "sweet", "nice" or "interesting". It is an expression of joy and extreme happiness. It is especially associated with the FIFA World Cup 2010 through its appropriation in the MTN advertisements. Therefore this work is a celebration of the FIFA World Cup 2010. It depicts the South-African supporter with all his/her accessories. The ever present *vuvuzela* that has become a fixture at any South-African football game and something that is taking the rest of the world by storm. I also incorporated the cell phone as it has become an extension not only of ourselves, but carries a strong contestation with the FIFA World Cup 2010 through MTN's sponsorship and has to a certain degree become synonymous with this event. The speaker in the base is due to the sure volume of the noise in and around the stadium. "Ayoba" is not a word to only be said, it is to be shouted! Screamed at the top of our lungs as the mantra for our support of our national football team. This work is a celebration of our South-Africanness through our representation by Bafana-Bafana in the FIFA World Cup 2010 and our hosting of this monumental event. We are shouting: "AYOBA!" and the world will take notice of us. We are South-African and we are proud of it!



Sakie Seoka
Ayoba 2010
2010
Wood

games people play

Sakie Seoka

Diane Victor

Angus Taylor

Derek Zietsman

FRIED

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Starts

17 June

Ends

18 July

2010

Jan van der Merwe

Johan Thom

Johan Conradie

Lucas Thobejane

Fabian Wargau

Sybrand Wiechers

Gallery hours: Fri 10h00 - 18h00 Sat 10h00 - 14h00 Sun 15h00 - 18h00