

DYSTOPIA

Adelle van Zyl
Brett Murray
Celia de Villiers
Christiaan Diedericks
Christiaan Hattingh
Churchill Madikida
Collen Maswanganyi
Dale Yudelman
Daniel Halter
Diane Victor
Dineo Bopape
Elfriede Dreyer
Grikkie Eksteen
Guy du Toit & Jaan Bekker
Gwenneth Miller
Jan van der Merwe
Jenna Burchell
Johan Thom
Kai Lossgott
Karljen de Villiers
Kudzana Chiurai
Lawrence Lemaana
Minnette Vari
Moshekwa Langa
Nicholas Hlobo
Pascual Tarazona
Pieter Swanepoel
Senzeni Marasela
Steven Cohen
Thando Kama
William Kentridge
Claire Gavrinsky & Rose
Shakinovsky
Zanele Muholi



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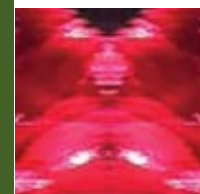
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CURATORS' PREFACE

Jacob Lebeko and Elfriede Dreyer

In the light of South African histories of political and cultural turmoil, transformation and shifting ideologies driven by visions of utopia, the exploration of a theme such as dystopia is timely and appropriate. Although often scorned as romantic garbage, the concept of utopia has retained extraordinary buoyancy in contemporary literary and visual texts, possibly as a result of feelings of directionlessness, global nomadism and world-wide economic instability. Largely oblivious of a term such as “dystopia”, many contemporary South African artists - in different ways - have dealt with and rendered various facets of utopia, transmuted into dystopia as manifested in the social order, in personal relationships or in the mundane everyday existence.

Dystopia comprises a curated sample of such artists selected specifically for the dystopian content in their work: either displaying dystopian sentiments as a response to foregoing or current utopia, or articulating utopia as a response to dystopian conditions. The exhibition will travel to venues that are very different in size, architecture and spatial layout, which made it necessary to curate every showing of the exhibition slightly differently.

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20 February 2009



CURATORIAL ESSAY

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Art often serves an observational, analytical and interpretational purpose. Both art's mimetic function and its imaginative aspect provide powerful means by which any society can introspect, investigate and visualise itself as a capsule of the socio-cultural and political status quo.

Within the geographical boundaries of Southern Africa, *Dystopia* explores the relationship of contemporary art production to society and ideology, and aims to unmask articulations of dystopia within this cultural framework. A main curatorial intention with the exhibition was to express the view that the dystopian artworks included in this exhibition and the cultural criticism articulated therein seem to have responded to an air of crisis that has been pervading contemporary thinking for several decades.

In principle, dystopia is a response to and a critique of utopia, in its original form a construct derived from the Greek *Οὐ* and *τόπος* which literally means "no place" but that articulates the notion of a fictional society somewhere - in the imagination, in some unknown fictional or even known location, or in future. Literary and virtual fictions of utopias of social order are of necessity always deferred, that is, they remain yet-to-come future societies, but owing to their fictional character remain non-threatening and entertaining. In *Nineteen eighty-four: science between utopia and dystopia* (1984), the sociologist Helga Nowotny distinguishes between two types of future (Nowotny 1984:3). Firstly, there is the "inauthentic" future that exists already, articulated through daydreams, desires and unfulfilled wishes. It is a banal kind of future that can be imagined and almost known; it is only the journey that leads to it that is new and unexpected. The second kind of future is the "authentic" future, a 'precarious existence which is that of the not-yet' (Nowotny 1984:3). It is fictional and so radically new that nobody has seen or heard or experienced it, postulating that it will replace the existing situation with a better one: a utopian dream decidedly grounded in various myths, beliefs and ideologies.

Although Thomas More coined the term "utopia" in his 1516 publication *De optimo reipublicae statu deque nova insula utopia*, the idea that the life of the citizen is inextricably interwoven with that of the polis as an ideal state is already encountered in Platonic thought. At the root of speculations on the ideal society is Plato's *Politeia* (*Republic*) (the first "utopia") of approximately 394 BCE. Ironically enough, the Greek roots of the word "utopia" mean "no place", yet the search for utopia as the ideal place or state seems to be a relentless driving force within humankind striving for ultimate happiness and a perfect world.

As critical agency, the dystopia genre is anomalous without the canon of utopian texts, much like strategies of deconstruction are not viable without existing or preceding discursive constructs and premises. According to the sociologist Kevin Hetherington

(1997:65), the impetus of the utopian ideal within modern societies lies not so much in the idea of the creation of an alternative good society, but the effects such ideas had, the conditions they were addressing and the anxieties surrounding the issue of social order.¹ Discourses on the end of utopia, according to the cultural theorist Andreas Huyssen (1995:85), are 'as endemic to the utopian imagination as its visions of the world, other times, or other states of mind,' leading to a flood of dystopian texts since the beginning of the twentieth century. Dystopian texts express world views that postulate end-of-utopia, utopia-gone-wrong and even anti-utopia.

In the dystopian genre the imagination is tweaked as a critical instrument set on deconstructing existing or potential ills, injustices and hypocrisies in society, mainly brought on by utopian ideologies and legacies. Over and above criticism and review, dystopia - more so than anti-utopia² - functions as the antithesis of utopia and mostly opposes utopia. Less cynical and less intent on rendering bleak scenes of hopelessness than commonly perceived, dystopian art, films, new media products and literature first and foremost endeavour to warn against the potential harmful consequences of utopian constructs that history has factually shown to have led to undesirable living conditions and untenable constructs, even to abuse and other evils.

Fictional dystopias in cinema, television and games such as Ridley Scott's *Blade runner* (1982), Proyas's *Dark city* (1998), Osamu Tezuka's *Metropolis* (2001), *Charlie Jade*, *South Africa* (2004) or *Crack down* (2007) portray citizens that are paranoid and cocooned, live in fear almost like hunted animals and experience a profound feeling of being monitored, shadowed, chased, betrayed or manipulated. Yet, there are many examples in the world of utopias that do and did materialise, often turning into nightmarish conditions. Citizens in crime ridden zones such as Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and agricultural areas experience *real-life* dystopian conditions that are similar to virtual encounters.

Dystopian texts - whether real or fictive, visual or literary - tell stories about, for instance, societies and places where the impact of the ideological blueprint of globalisation has created diasporic cultures and nomadic identities; or about unjust utopian political ideas such as apartheid that created social restriction, impaired mobility, repression, oppression or dysfunctionality in families. They might recount posthuman conditions as a result of the dominating influence of the technological utopianism entrenched in the emerging artifice and media culture, such as in cyberrelationships; or telematic influences that have led to rampant violence, threat to self, insensitivity and indifference to critical socio-cultural problems. Essentially, dystopian texts – dynamic and revolutionary by definition – are created from within societies and they operate *in* history, not outside of or at the end of history.

The curatorial hypothesis in *Dystopia* is that at present utopianism is being transformed. This can be described as a critical displacement of earlier utopian energies at work, 'rather than their exhaustion or atrophy' (Huyssen 1995:89). The artworks that have been selected for the exhibition function as palimpsests where dystopian maps are superimposed over utopian maps of paradise and hell, but also where dystopian constructs have been absorbed, negated and transcended in order to generate a kind of utopian synthesis anew.³

Broadly speaking, *Dystopia* deals with the following themes: political utopia-gone-wrong; teleology and apocalypse; dystopian contestations of gender, race and culture; spatiality and boundaries as postideological zones; the postindustrial city; and technodystopia.

A significant metatext in the conceptual architecture of the exhibition is the role and use of various kinds of technologies from low-tech to high-tech digital tools in the production of the artworks. Knowledge of this allows one to come closer to an understanding of the way in which culture produces itself and attributes meaning to that self-production (Motzkin 1994:149).

Political utopia-gone-wrong

Most writers on utopia agree that utopias, thickly veiled in moral ideology, in principle are romantic projections of happiness and prosperity. Constituting representational space, utopias ironically are 'places that have their origins in the realities of that everyday life, and in particular, through the realm of the imagination ... in resistance to the mundane and alienating features of everyday existence' (Hetherington 1997:23). Utopian narratives are mostly future-oriented but remain inspired by the present real, a situation that brings on a type of 'time-schizophrenia' (Polak 1973:284) in which the pull of the future and the drive towards an ideological impulse are remorseless.

Without necessarily participating in, expressing overt moral views or expounding ethical principles about the dehumanising impact of ruling utopias, dystopian texts implicitly condemn utopian designs of state through the uncovering and depiction of the stark realities of political utopia-gone-wrong. The utopian ideas of leaders such as Kim Jong-il, King Abdullah, Adolf Hitler, Robert Mugabe and Hendrik Verwoerd have had a disastrous impact and have led to, for instance, repressive regimes where three generations of a family can be punished for one member's alleged crime; a society where women can't even seek medical care without a male guardian's permission; an economic system where inflation has rocketed to more than 231 million percent (official figure at the end of January 2009); officially sanctioned violence, rape and murder, and people living in constant fear of potential imprisonment; and a separatist constitution in which the largest portion of the population have deliberately been excluded from the human right to basic education.

Dystopian critique of political utopia-gone-wrong within the South African context mainly addresses three ideological eras: the European colonial past, including Dutch, British, French, Portuguese and German colonisation; Nationalism that was the ruling party from 1948 to 1994 and corroborated a racially separatist constitution; and the current ruling party of the African National Congress. In all three periods, programmes of nationalisation were followed with regard to exclusive rights to territory, the population of territories and the deployment of particularist strategies claiming the right to 'administer, tame, proselytize, segregate, or evict different populations depending on whether they could be depicted as naturally inside or outside the "nation"' (Hesse in Westwood and Williams 1997:90). Zygmunt Bauman (1992:683) argues that the processes of nationalisation involve unification and postulates of homogeneity, but always contain ambiguity as a result of the interplay of the national-self and the national-other, friends and strangers.



Power and patronage

With regard to the design of state, nationalist visions are not dissimilar to utopian fictions and designs in ideological project and destiny, both promising the greater good for all. Most political doctrines are entrenched in nationalism, since in the most fundamental sense such control of state and human beings is premised in the desire to attain the "good". Nationalism and the modern nation-state (a concept born during the French Revolution) as well as modern-day globalism - all ideological constructs - presuppose for their actualisation certain social and technological conditions. Dystopian texts comment on such designs and intervene to subvert utopian schemes by identifying their problematic social consequences such as racial antagonism, whiteness, blackness, xenophobia, residential segregation, authoritarianism, cultural exclusivity and other social ills.

In many South African artworks, as well as in several in *Dystopia*, postcolonial critique is expressed on ethnicity, race, and issues of national and cultural identity. Such contingencies are addressed in Brett Murray's dystopian portraits with the title of *Power and patronage* (2008), works that explicitly comment on the exchange of one evil for another when political power shifts from the oppressor to the oppressed. Already in earlier works, the artist has satirically explored political utopia in South Africa, pointed out its dismal failure and expressed the view that the new democracy in South Africa that replaced the failed utopia of apartheid has merely entailed the substitution of white with black dictatorship. In *Power and patronage* the artist uses the same strategy in the black poodles (*caniches*) that represent the transmutation of the ideologies of white European colonials into the new ruling black elite in South Africa. The gold leaf frame around the poodles evokes the 'quintessential colonial icon - the seventeenth century Dutch portrait' (Shaman s.a.) and speaks about the opulence and economic wealth of ruling parties: in the past the affluent colonialists and at present the wealthy black rulers.

By addressing identity, gender and race issues, the work conveys postcolonial comment on the relations between the powerful and the powerless and questions how a geographically specific area can become illegitimately culturally redefined when biased constructs such as racism and ethnic cleansing enter the coloniser's/oppressor's utopian equation. Murray caricatures the seventeenth-century wig worn by European colonialists by hybridising it as the narcissistic clip of the poodle, in reference to the French Huguenots as colonialists in South Africa, and engaging with the deconstructing ideologies of the French Revolution. The groomed clip/wig becomes the construct and the utopian outlook adopted and implemented by its "wearer".

Political utopics are interpreted as entrenched in oppression, potently expressed via the portrayal of the copulating animals. The colonialist/ruler is copulating with the colonised/subject, an act that suggests rape more than the voyeuristic pleasure of the spectacle of copulating dogs. It becomes a satirical play on political take-over and lustful subjugation accompanied by gratification. While the artist seems to suggest that utopian ideas mostly involve conquest and rape of the indigenous cultures or of the weaker groups, his artworks at the same time contain an innate warning that utopias tend to go wrong.

Historically, portraiture has always been a powerful medium to record factualities and an instrument to trace and plot the course of humankind. As stated in the artist's



Terminal host

statement in this catalogue, Frikkie Eksteen's *Terminal host*, 2008, suggests that gender binaries as well as racial polarities (for instance, of black/white and Aryan/non-Aryan) that have been utopianistically postulated as morally and genetically obligatory for the survival and good of humankind, have come to an end. The work is based on a digitally composited image of historically significant portrait paintings in South African collections, thus constituting a portrait of a fictitious person, the portrait of which is a mere conglomeration. Metaphorically speaking, the artist's technological process of morphing different portraits together comments on the ethnic and evolutionary histories of South Africa where no ethnic group or culture can be so presumptuous as to insist on "purity" of race and heritage. At the same time the work aims to confound popular assumptions about portraiture and its uses. The work suggests that the "visible" outer appearance or representation of the sitter is only a one-dimensional image of that person, which could in fact be a misrepresentation of the person since there are other "invisible" dimensions to the personality and its history.

The distortive technique in *Terminal host* is derivative of the expressive style of Francis Bacon, creating a form of historical "morphing" and a convergence of the polarities of authenticity and copy. The technique of appropriation further recalls the collages of the Cubists and the methodologies of artists such as Sherrie Levine and Jeff Koons of reproducing known objects and images in order to create a new set of meanings and challenge the very definition of art. Yet, where Bacon's distortions have existential connotations, bringing to mind his atheist and dystopian notions that life is a sign of death, Eksteen's distortion is a comment on verification, the real and authenticity.

Almost announcing the demise of truthfulness and thereby disputing the teleology of mimesis, his work confronts the notion of the portrait as an unchallengeable factual form of documentation that becomes even more potent in the light of current widespread image manipulation techniques in the digital media. Verification, including racial, gender and cultural authentication, becomes a matter of articulation and operation.

Teleology and apocalypse

The notions of the teleological⁴ "good ending" and the ideal state, evident in utopian constructs per se, have mobilised many theories and revolutions. Intimately linked to these ideas is the concept of ideology that, broadly interpreted, may be seen as a regulatory mechanism in the creation of culture and grounded in the ideas of progressivism and rationalism that have dominated scientific and philosophical thinking for centuries.⁵ In most cultures, visions of the ideal society have taken on two guises: on one hand, a type of ideal construct that is a descriptive, dramatic portrayal of a way of life that is intrinsically "good" and fulfils profound longings; on the other hand, a more rationalistic kind of idealistic thinking in which the underlying principles of an 'optimum society' are argued (Manuel 1973:vii).

In principle, utopian projects propose good teleology at the outset and in this respect dystopic texts show similarity with utopias, since they mostly propose "better" endings through the criticism of the utopia-gone wrong. With a good teleological purpose in mind, dystopic texts criticise the content and consequences of utopias with the intention of bringing about a better world. Yet, the modus operandi of dystopian texts are dif-

ferent in that they aim to expose utopia-gone-wrong through the expression of cosmic pessimism, cosmic anxiety, fears of catastrophe and cataclysmic disaster ending in extermination and annihilation.

Therefore, in addition to dystopia portraying an end-of-utopia and utopia-gone-wrong, it can also point towards a nightmarish future society (Bergonzi 1987:211) where there are more losses than gains in the sense of, for instance, forfeiture of innocence, order, identity or stability. These dystopian elements are already encountered in many pre-twentieth-century literary examples such as Swift's *Gulliver's travels* (1726), and early twentieth-century literature such as Orwell's *1984* (1949) and Huxley's *Brave new world* (1932). For Jenny Mecziems (1987:97), the nightmarish element can be found in texts in the extent to which the utopian fiction deviates from the natural, sensory world. Furthermore, she suggests that the late twentieth century was concerned with whether there was going to be a future at all due to the environmental, ecological and other global concerns under siege of technology.

Similarly, cataclysmic texts speak of an impending apocalypse, that is, of disruption, annihilation, destruction, violence and chaos. In 'Iceberg: Utopia, dystopia, and myopia in the late-19th century', Munkner (s.a.) argues that both dystopian and anti-utopian visions are in a sense utopian, but that in both there is an awareness of pending disaster:

Dystopians are like utopians reformers of the mind, or perhaps more accurately, would-be reformers who are openly anxious, indeed pessimistic about the future. Like utopians they discern looming, threatening changes in their society, and stress their immediacy or presence respectively. Unlike utopians, they despair of any truly hopeful solution to them. The ability of the utopian mind to accept or prefigure the future as the radically new (new in the sense of progressive) doesn't exist for the dystopian. However, dystopian partially understands its predicted, inevitable catastrophic "end" as a modest "new". In how far this "new" will be able to thrive amidst an encompassing disaster is unclear.



Exhausted earth



Caltraps

Anti-utopia describes the absolute opposite of utopia, which means that there will be no "new" whatsoever. Nevertheless, it could be regarded as linked to utopia in the sense that, although different in ideology, anti-utopia also tries to predict the future: its message, however, is a paranoid helplessness that will make a great debacle happen. As a consequence, this disaster will not allow making anything new out of the doomed course of the world (Munkner [s.a.]). In images of a polluted, poisonous environment, Christiaan Diedericks's masked figures in *Exhausted earth*, 2008 - 2009, perform survival strategies in such a doomed world of technological utopia-gone-wrong. There is loss of a teleologically "safe" environment that does not provide shelter and security to its inhabitants any longer.

Guy du Toit and Iaan Bekker's *Caltraps*, 2008, an installation of multiple bronze fragments, suggests an infinite narrative of loss of teleology in its reference to the throw of the *dolos*, a South African word that refers to the divining bones of the African shaman or witchdoctor. Each object is "complete" and an independent sculptural object, possibly representing a school of thought, a social prototype or a utopian outline, yet the object's full meaning emanates only in coherency to the group. The *dolos* image also contains intrinsic references to cataclysm in its innate reference to unusually

shaped blocks made from un-reinforced concrete weighing up to twenty tons and used to protect harbour walls from the force of the sea.⁶ As such the dolos provides physical protection against the destructive power of the sea and metaphorically represents utopian construction as a kind of insurance policy against disaster, misfortune and “bad ending”. Ambivalently, the dolos as a concept projects a dystopian world view that expresses cosmic pessimism and anxiety, and connotes fears of cataclysmic⁷ disaster ending in extermination and annihilation.

In *Caltrops*, dystopia is narrated, almost as a necessary consequence, via the random and directionless but continuous patterning of the luck of the draw (throw) and the undefined number of objects in the installation,. The work is furthermore dystopic in its articulation of the loss of a teleologically determined future, subtly referring to the current political uncertainties in South Africa and a consumer-driven superficial world in which there is the belief that the faith in horoscopes and aberrant determinants such as luck and fate deploy the individual’s journey on earth.

In popular literature and oral history, millennium visions commonly encountered express the teleological expectation that there will be resolution through some form of historical or cosmic intervention, for instance a religious Second Coming or a Golden Age as was posited during the Renaissance. Through the act of throwing the dolos, destinies are abandoned to fate, evoking a sense of dystopian *laissez-faire*. The Weill/Brecht’ opera, *Rise and fall of the city of Mahagonny* (1930), is a powerful example thereof in the depiction of late 1920s feelings of helplessness in the face of the great economic crisis of the time (Booker 1994:306), a situation not unfamiliar to the world of 2009. In *Mahagonny*, the rule of the city becomes “do it” instead of “don’t do it”, the permissiveness of which leads to chaos and disaster instead of the originally planned utopia of riches flowing from the gold mines of Alaska and California. Brecht’s opera is reminiscent of William Kentridge’s theatre model *Black Box/Chambre noir* (2006) - a maquette for his opera *The Magic Flute* of 2005 - that addresses the themes of the opera in the exploration of the irrationalities and dystopian permissiveness of the German genocide in the colonial war of 1904 in German South West Africa (today Namibia).



The talk

In a mixed-media combination of paper collage, wood and industrial paints, Pascual Tarazona’s *Walking and The tall*, 2008, recall the photomontages of the Dada artist Hannah Höch in which the one-dimensional spatiality of the media converges with the banal space of the everyday. At the same time the work evokes a sense of anti-society protest and revolt that deconstructs hierarchies of power into a celebration of the vernacular and popular space. Projecting a Dadaist sensibility that favours chaos and poetry above neat rationalisations, the work articulates a deconstructionist, non-ideological stance in the title of *The tall*, simply derived from the newspaper cutting, although suggesting notions of “chosen one”, power and hierarchy. The work expresses sentiments that are antithetical to utopia and its teleological “good ending” by favouring the moment and not the future.



Vox populi/Vox dei

Johan Thom’s installation, *Vox populi/Vox dei* (2008 - 2009), comprises photographs of the blindfolded artist throwing a book in the air and rushing forward to catch it, but not knowing where it is going to fall. The books in the installation consist of the I Ching or Book of Changes,⁸ the Koran and the Bible, each representing some of the

ancient foundations of human belief. All three books prescribe a moral cosmology functioning in accordance with certain patterns of behaviour and thinking in order to ensure a good life and life after death, and all three are fundamentally prophetic in nature. Yet, none of them provide the artist as protagonist with answers; instead life itself seems to suggest acceptance of the inevitability of change and the evolution of events as part of human existence.⁹ Questions about life, death and life after death are raised by the work, underscored by a distinct existential anxiety that is further induced by the sense of loss of sight and direction. The work comments on human beings as enclosed in the present, blindly running in circles in the third millennial world.¹⁰

Dystopian contestations of gender, race and culture

Consciously derivative of Leonardo da Vinci's *Last supper* of 1498 that depicts the moment when Jesus said "one of you will betray me", Lawrence Lemaona's dystopian work, *The discussion*, 2006, is void of a sense of both teleology and ideology and does not seem to perpetuate any form of religious belief. Whereas Da Vinci's work tells the story of the consternation that this statement caused to the twelve ardent disciples of Jesus, thus engaging with the mores of loyalty and honesty, Lemaona's work appropriates free-thinking hippie culture in the setting of a field of poppies. The artist deconstructs the bind of religious tradition and dogma as well as authority by levelling hierarchies through the presentation of religious history as something taken for granted, almost as wallpaper. Religious teleology is sacrilegied into a utopia of free will and individual freedom. Dystopia is evoked in the depiction of a table at which thirteen versions of the same person is seated, thus suggesting loss of individualism through the loss of faith.

The discussion engages with the political and racial discourses on masculinity through the idea of "discussion" that evokes connotations of clans and exclusivity. The work reflects on Lemaona's experiences as a young black rugby player surrounded by predominantly white Afrikaans men in South Africa. The "rugby team" at the table is depicted in pink, a colour that has feminine associations and has become the signal colour of queer culture. One-dimensional perceptions of self are challenged, especially notions of masculinity that have defined young South African males in patriarchal South Africa through the coercive strategies of Nationalism and contemporary media culture. The hegemonies of masculinity and the polarities between masculinity and femininity as advanced by Freud, "de-valuing" femininity on grounds of 'weakness' (Taylor and Jamieson in Westwood and Williams 1997:154), are deconstructed into a "pampered" idea of masculinity that is voided of the aggression associated with a game like rugby.

In many contemporary South African renderings of identity, dystopia is apparent in images of alienation, xenophobia, the practising of cultural rituals such as male circumcision (a form of bodily mutilation where crude primitive technology is applied) and illnesses such as HIV/AIDS. Churchill Madikida's sensuous *Skeletons in my closet*, 2004, tells a dystopian story of threat, fear and suffering due to the contraction of the HIV/AIDS virus. Every year many young *abakwetha* (Xhosa for male initiates) are hospitalised or die from circumcision wounds undergone during traditional initiation rites. Ritual circumcision under some circumstances can put young men at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other blood-borne infections and those who leave the hospital



The discussion



Skeletons in my closet

alive not only take with them penile deformity, but also lifelong psychological scars. In *Skeletons in my closet* blood-red hands play the old game of creating shadows on the wall, but in this case the hands themselves are used to form flower-like shapes and forms. The display of opulent reds and the hands' simulation of sensuous and seductive dance movements contradict the harsh reality of suffering from life-threatening HIV/AIDS. At the same time, the morphing mirrored hands simulate the rapidly spreading, mutating virus that has infiltrated the body in microscopic form. Similarly, Madikida's *Struggles of the heart* refers to Xhosa circumcision ceremonies, but also to prohibitions about speaking of the rituals.



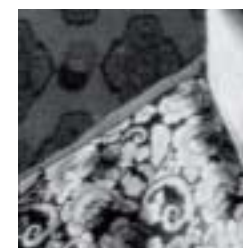
Space of Aids

In Daniel Halter's *Space of Aids*, 2007, a map of Zimbabwe is woven together with a 2006 Harare phone book and an ace of spades is drawn on the map, indicating a luck-of-the-draw situation with regard to the contraction of HIV/AIDS in a country devastated by the illness. The use of delicate fraying fabric in this work, as well as the fragile ribbons in *Save as fuck*, 2007, comments on life as ultimately precious. These works, like the others on exhibition dealing with HIV/AIDS as a topic, contain an innate criticism of governmental legislation and support systems in Southern Africa that do not seem to be managing the epidemic proportions of the illness well enough.



Asphyxiation

In a very different conceptual framework but depicting similar violence, the pins in Adelle van Zyl's *Asphyxiation*, 2008, become potent metaphors of notions of chaos, loss of control and volatile abandonment to states of trance and irrationality, all oppositional to the perceived rationality and order of utopia. The self as the Modernist individual is transmuted into a member of the postmodern anonymous crowd. Crowds have become a real part of dystopian urban life, but these congregations have mostly lost their personal coherence and become repressive in their anonymity. The title refers to the condition of asphyxia, or compressed suffocation, which is the most common cause of death during uncontrolled crowd behaviour. The mass produced pins represent the namelessness of the crowd and the irony of the potential violence that could erupt from such perceived obscurity.



Faces & phases, Siyafana

In Zanele Muholi's *Faces & phases, Siyafana*, 2008-2009, racial similarities and differences with regard to blackness are considered. The artist presents a series of portraits of human beings, all South Africans who hail from various places such as Toronto, London, Johannesburg and Cape Town. The work defies neat categorisation in terms of place, gender and identity, and intermingles utopia and dystopia. In her artist's statement on the series of works, Muholi (Zanele Muholi [s.a.]) refers to her late Malawian father's suffering at the hands of the past regime when he and his fellow men migrated to South Africa in the 1950s looking for greener pastures. 'However the reality was not greener for these "Others"'. Often they were left homeless without food and employment after their houses were burnt' (Zanele Muholi s.a.).

A particular characteristic of the series is the subtle presentation of the indefinable, fragile boundary between man and woman. Most of the artist's photographs capture androgynous images of people, especially women, who have suffered the same fate, having being subjected to violent acts such as violation, rape and murder. The artist seems to be specifically biased in favour of the destinies of queers, who as history has shown, often suffered at the hands of unforgiving and intolerant societies.

Spatiality and boundaries as postideological zones

Many ironies are embedded in the term "utopia" understood as a fictional place, articulated by Sir Thomas More in the sense of "no place" or "nowhere". Dystopian texts reinvent and transform the utopian genre to the extent that *u-topia* (no place) and *eu-topia* (good place) can become *u-chronia* (no time) and *eu-chronia* (good time); the question of "where is utopia" is the same as "where is nowhere" and the only answer to that can be "here", a non-spatial point at the centre of space (Rabkin et al 1983:246).

Nick Spencer (s.a.) argues that the analysis of social space is significant since it is the best means of accessing immanent utopian possibilities:

Utopian literary criticism that overlooks or minimizes the analysis of social space cuts itself off from one of the foundations of utopian thinking, rejects one of the most urgent and powerful tools for understanding the critical function of literary [and visual] texts But it is also possible to think of transcendental utopian thinking as an emphasis on the future that prioritizes questions of historical processes and authoritative leadership over assessments of diverse critical forces at work in the present.

Although utopia is mainly articulated as a fictional construct in literature, Michel Foucault¹¹ and Hetherington (1997:12) argue that an important contribution thereof has been the awareness it brought to the interplay of space, site and modes of spatial and social ordering in contemporary life, especially with regard to cities and the globalising world. Postmodernity today is conceived as entrenched in heterotopic spatiality where difference and Otherness are articulated as postutopian space. Hetherington (1997:43) states that:

Heterotopia signify not through resemblance, as in the way a metaphor works – one thing being used to resemble another – but through similitude, more an example of metonymy as in the manner that Magritte explores in his paintings, where meaning is dislocated through a series of deferrals that are established between a signifier and a signified rather than directly to a referent.

A principle of heterotopia, similar to dystopia, is that they derive their significance in the relationship to other sites as well as in the way they may be perceived from the outside or the standpoint of another perspective (Hetherington 1997:43). Heterotopia as liminal sites of marginality can resemble bursts of fragile bubbles with short life spans, articulated through websites and consumer products that constantly come and go, but they can also refer to carceral institutions such as the prison where physical boundaries are installed in order to monitor and control the space with good purpose in mind.¹² The shopping mall is also a carceral space, having all the technology, people and requirements to secure and monitor the shopping environment where there could be potential crime. The abundance of gated communities and security estates in the South African environment, similarly articulated as carceral spaces, paints a bleak dystopian picture of a dysfunctional society in which crime and violence have escalated to unacceptable levels. Such communities constitute little utopias with their own body corporates and socio-cultural structures and appearance, usually predefined by exotic themes such as Tuscan, Bali or French provincial that propose escapism from the harsh realities outside. Notwithstanding the appeal of security in societies devastated by crime, such communities tend to become cocooned and op-

erating according to their own rules, but can very soon fall out of favour due to the rapid changes in architectural trends and the flavour-of-the-day taste.

Gated communities provide precarious peace of mind in violent areas in South Africa, the physical entrance to the estate being an imaginary margin between the perceived jungle of crime and the safety inside. Such heterotopic ordering of urban space manifests in high levels of mobility and travel in these communities, with people commuting between work and home, or creating cocooned virtual working spaces at home. Bar-nor Hesse (1997:91) refers to a 'reductionist polarity between national-identity and national-otherness', resulting in an excess of meaning within and beyond the horizon of nationalism and leading to a split in national identity between haves and have-nots. As defined by Bauman (1992:683), nationalism in its European genesis claims exclusive right to a territory, a population, a populated territory.

In *The History of Madness* (2006) Michel Foucault criticises exclusionary practice through the metaphor or concept of the "ship of fools", derived from the Enlightenment and the Renaissance, during which a common practice was to keep the outcasts of society, especially the mad, on a ship. For Foucault, the ship of fools is a metaphor for exclusionary practices in society, very apt to South African legacies of racism, Othering and xenophobia. The idea of a ship going nowhere, having no destination, and being a kind of tower of Babel, is fundamentally dystopian and defers time and purpose. Foucault's ship has 'presence as a site, yet is not a located site but defined as Other through its relation to the space with which it is juxtaposed as it traverses' (Hetherington 1997:49). The metaphor of the ship of fools is a potent indicator of utopia-gone-wrong, encountered in many political utopias. It implies liminality being a space of ideological separation from so-called insanity, but articulates as dystopic by removing the problem from society and pretending resolution.

Such exclusionary practices still seem to be in full swing today. In February 2009, one of the very first deconstructive actions of the newly inaugurated President Barack Obama was the order to shut down the offshore prison camp at Guantanamo that, according to the media (Borger 2009:14), should be viewed as only the top of the iceberg in the planned closing down of a network of secret prisons around the world known as 'CIA black sites'. Apparently these black sites were authorised by a classified presidential directive six days after the September 11 attacks in 2001, but only acknowledged five years later by President George Bush (Borger 2009:14). The human rights group, Reprieve, has since identified a network of secret jails in the Horn of Africa, including Camp Lemonier in Djibouti, which according to its director, Clifford Smith, is only one of about seventeen ships that are still today used as floating prisons (Borger 2009:14).

Spatial heterotopia brings about fundamental undecidability in national identity as argued by Zygmunt Bauman (1992:687): 'Nationalism, the quest for a uniform world without contingency, turns out ambivalence as its' [sic] 'productive waste', and cannot but turn it out continuously and on a never diminishing scale.' The notion of undecidability recalls Derrida's (1976:163) postulation that, with regard to meaning, the answer to any question arrests an abyss which already presupposes that there is no decidable answer, that is, the answer is dragged down into the abyss in advance. The Derridean abyss of potentiality is an infinite space filled with indefinite multiplication. Hetherington (1997:50) maintains that heterotopic relationships

... unsettle because they have the effect of making things appear out of place. The juxtaposition of the unusual creates a challenge to all settled representations: it challenges order and its sense of fixity and certainty. The process of similitude is revelatory, like a collage, it brings forward the out-of-place and offers it up as a basis for alternative perspectives and orderings ...

The perceived ambiguity in the term "utopia" that articulates ideal place and connotes meanings of both the ideal and the imaginative, but also implies deferral or defamiliarisation, is a potent technique employed in utopias (Booker 1994:4). Being out-of-place articulates with the conditions of have-not, homeless and jobless: all dystopian conditions that are apposite to utopian constructs as imagined places of order. As a condition, poverty - prevalent in third-world South Africa - implies loss of teleology, directionlessness and a desperate consideration of a chaotic host of alternatives and possibilities. A common picture is the wandering and squatting impoverished jobseekers moving between spaces that are initially utopianistically considered, since they potentially hold promises of work, but soon become abject sites of frustration and disappointment when the jobseekers are turned away.

The jobseeking space is heterotopic by indefinitely remaining on the margin. In Dale Yudelmann's series of *i am ...*, 2008, the space of the jobless individual is rendered as ambivalent and its meaning as not univocally and utopianistically determined, being a contested and incongruous space. At the same time, the work expresses an innate criticism of societal conditions as leftover consequences of "bad" politics - of various political agendas of the past and present such as colonialism and apartheid that impacted detrimentally on the people of the country. The multiplicity of form of the series serves to strengthen the sense of dystopian criticism, namely that there is no resolute good ending, no respectable finale in sight yet and that it is a continuing spiral of play of politics where resistance and ordering intermingle.

Heterotopia, multiplicity and continual intertextualisation are also evident in Pieter Swanepoel's series of works entitled *The (dis)continuity of grey*, 2008, that ambivalently engage with "the death of painting", whilst still *being* paintings. The work has an intriguing effect on the viewer, due to the artistic and, more specifically, painterly conventions already put in place by history and society. Swanepoel's dystopian multiples are a deliberate attempt at disrupting the utopian space of the object that is the artwork, which for centuries has been a repository and reflection of societies' ideologies. As such, the artist contests the ideological "site" of the artwork as the monolithic romantic space of the singular masterpiece and deliberately conceptualises the work relationally within a context of indeterminate multiplicity. End-of-utopia is articulated in the deconstructionist conviction that "truth" does not exist as a single unitary entity, but is to be found in many forms simultaneously.

The ordering of the form and space of the work mirrors an orientation that can be ascribed to the influence of poststructuralist thinking, thus operating within a context of relativity. Similarly, the repetitive painting of different views of clouds, each time almost identical yet different, relates to notions of heterotopia, authorship, authenticity and copy. History has produced a tradition of painters who mimetically and expressively rendered interpretations of places of significance, leading to many valuable "masterpieces" that were each uniquely conceived and conceptualised. Such an



i am ...

example is Katsushika Hokusai's painting of many versions of a single great wave in a tumultuous sea that inspired many other artists during and after his time and there is also no limit to the edition of prints made from the original wood block. The copying of the master seems endless, like Swanepoel's series has no real "end". Yet, although *The (dis)continuity of grey* reflects a dystopian attempt at dismantling any claim to originality, it remains a model for and unto itself, since whether the series consists of five or five-hundred individual pieces is irrelevant in this case. It is irrelevant whether in the end the concept and appearance of the work define its distinctive uniqueness, since the dystopian intention underpinning the work, is still evident.

The postindustrial city

James Donald (in Westwood and Williams 1997:181) states that 'The republican city, the city as public sphere, and the rational, planned city continue to articulate the hope and despair of modernity.' In similar vein, the celebrated author, JG Ballard (2001:33), remarks that cities 'are the scar tissue of history, still itching after centuries of deep pathology that erupted, in my own lifetime, into fascism and totalitarian communism.'

From the outset, the city occupied a central role in the articulation of utopia, although it was often antidotal to the utopia of the garden as paradisiacal space. Donald (in Westwood and Williams 1997:181) quotes J Hillis Miller in his coining of the dystopian term 'atopical' with regard to urban space:

This [the city] is a place that is everywhere and nowhere, a place you cannot get to from here. Sooner or later ... the effort of mapping is interrupted by an encounter with the unmappable. The topography and the toponymy ... hide an unplaceable space.

The oldest and most common mythological vision of idealised space is Eden, of course. After the concept of utopia theoretically had been coined in the sixteenth century, paradise/Eden became conceptualised as a utopian space, mostly imagined as a beautiful garden that introduced the notions of pleasure and spectacle such as in the writings of utopians such as Carlyle and Ruskin who invoked the world of flowers and cultivation as refuge from the city. Once again, as in all utopian constructs, and in the many versions of the Edenic narrative, the idyllic setting did not have a good ending.

In pretwentieth-century literature, the city - especially its spectacularity - has often been associated with notions of paradise, arcadia, utopia, "elsewhere" and the "Other world". In Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's travels* (1726), for instance, Lemuel Gulliver describes the island Lilliput as having 'so many Beds of Flowers. These Fields were intermingled with Woods of half a Stang, and the tallest Trees, as I could judge, appeared to be seven Foot high. I viewed the Town on my left Hand, which looked like the painted Scene of a City in a Theatre' (Swift 1726:29).¹³ Although Rabkin (1983:4) argues that 'we often recognize dystopias for what they are by virtue of their anti-pastoral, post-Lapsarian nature,' according to Hunt (1987:115)¹⁴ ironically the pleasure principle is still prevalent in the place of gardens in the artificial dystopian cityscape. He argues that '... we are seduced by coloured ads which promise us immaculate lawns if we use their special fertilizer. These - and others - are the continu-

ing expression of our wish for an impossible, nonsensical, healing, perfect, nowhere world' (Hunt 1987:138).

The schizophrenic commonality between the city and the pastoral/garden as utopian space seems to be pleasure. Amin and Thrift (2002:111) view the city as 'both a focus and a producer of bodily experiences and desires which can touch on each of the senses and combinations thereof in all kinds of unexpected ways'. Utopian designs of cities as programmes belonging to the future and being novel please as they indulge an atavistic desire for a special kind of orderliness (Rabkin 1983:10).

In Elfriede Dreyer's *Utopia map*, 2009, the use of the colour green evokes notions of a "green patch" or a paradisiacal "green" zone in which politics are linked to utopianism. The delineated geographical area includes the eastern CBD of Pretoria - the administrative capital of South Africa - from the parliamentary Union Buildings south, including some of the oldest schools of the city, the University of Pretoria, the embassy lane and a sports stadium of international significance, Loftus Versfeld. This area is interpreted as having been instrumental in the education of the youth and the formation of the socio-cultural patterns and identities of the country, since it has always been vulnerable and in close proximity to political programming, diplomatic exchange and international trade. The grid-like, pixelised patterning of the map suggests the regimented thinking of closed-systems thinking, which characterised the utopian ideologies of the apartheid politics of the past.

Apart from the institutional coaching taking place in the area, several leisure areas and sports fields form part of the conglomeration, such as those of Pretoria Boys and Girls High, Afrikaanse Hoër Seunskool and Meisieskool, the gardens of the University of Pretoria and Loftus Versfeld where the 2010 world soccer will take place, the suburban gardens and the Magnolia Dell park. Commonly much networking takes place at such places that function as heterotopia, which can lead to the formation of powerful elitist and transpolitical groupings.

However, it is commonly accepted that apartheid was an ill-conceived utopia from the outset; at the same time the socio-geographical outline of *Utopia map* has become one of the urban zones most ravaged by crime and violence in the country. The patchwork map of lush green that ironically evokes notions of pleasure and spectatorship therefore functions as a pretty "virtual" palimpsest of utopia that has been drawn over the dystopian real.

In Gwenneth Miller's dystopic digital work, *Continuum system*, 2008, an image of a city is presented that simulates a scene from a science fiction film or comic such as Gotham City from *Batman*. A cloud of glass laboratory-like instruments hovers threateningly above the city, fragile, shimmering and radiant. A parallel is drawn between the seduction of the city and that of technology, the twinning resembling a Boschian heaven and hell yet abolishing duality and celebrating heterotopia instead. Imaginary postapocalypse brought on by technology is evoked and the city seems to be threatened by the invasion of technological debris, yet again creating anthropomorphic sentiments around the metropolis as a human-made artifice. Like many other dystopian texts, Miller's work links nightmare, disaster and cataclysm with the city.



Utopia map



Continuum system

It would seem that it is rather the notion of the anthropomorphic city as a projection of human power and domination that produces pleasure and gratification, aptly described in *High-rise* by Ballard (1975:19) as follows:

It was only fitting that the sun first appeared between the legs of the apartment blocks, raising itself over the horizon as if nervous of waking this line of giants. During the morning, from his office on the top floor of the medical school, Laing would watch their shadows swing across the parking-lots and empty plazas of the project, sluice-gates opening to admit the day. For all his reservations, Laing was the first to concede that these huge buildings had won their attempt to colonize the sky.



Golgotha

In *High-rise* (1975), Ballard renders the high-rise building both as an anthropomorphic space and as a dystopic capsule. Atavistic ouroboros is generated through the depiction of the technologically sophisticated apartment dwellers returning to a state of primitive chaos where murder and cannibalism prevail. Similarly, the video stills of Steven Cohen's *Golgotha*, 2008, document the artist's performance (one of a series in different cities) in New York in a milieu of desolate uniformity, business suits and homogeneous architecture. The human skulls, legitimately obtained in New York, are a vital clue to the discourse that questions Western models of progress and advancement in the light of Darwinian evolution theories. Within a materialist postindustrial world, driven by utopian gratification through dreams of money and success, the artist ironically commodifies death via his eccentric skull-shoes.

The stroller-artist in the "necropolis" (Lewis Mumford's term quoted by Amin and Thrift 2002:8)¹⁵ resembles a heavily made-up cabaret performer; the adorned shoes a macabre take on Cinderella's fragile glass slippers. Functioning as a kind of prosthesis, the skulls become pathological objects in the protocol of the public gaze. The mundane of the New York environment merges with the extraordinary of the spectacle, yet the performer remains nothing more than another "object" for consumption. Amidst sophisticated New York business people rushing to their next appointment, Cohen's "business man" in a conformist business suit provides a satire on materialism and a dystopian critique of capitalist evolution and social progression through economic voracity. In the performance the socio-geography of the urban space intersects with the artist's personal memories and mourning, as well as with the history of the city itself as the repository of utopian programmes.

In Cohen's work, the performing *flâneur* dallies with superficiality and pleasurable urban spectatorship that demonstrates the interrelatedness of cultural pleasure with streetwalking and mall hopping, although to the artist, stated in his artist's statement in this catalogue, the work is 'an experiment in personal punishment, raising questions about social ethics and retribution, politics, legislation, commerce, rituals of mourning and death, taboos, corporal punishment and degradation, sovereignty and absolute power, domination, sacrifice and the commercialisation of victims/human remains.' The performance becomes an ironic and dystopian comment on utopian programmes of existential happiness steered by technological expansion and envisioned by modern city fathers.

Notions of the imaginary, myth and memory have always been central to the articulation of the psychospace of the city, just as the sociological imagination is continually



Theodora goes to Johannesburg

recast in the changing realm of new technologies (Westwood and Williams 1997:1) that has fundamentally altered the ontology of the city as space of travel, mobility and transitivity. 1990s cybernauts (Stallabrass 1995, Negroponte 1995, Rada 1995) predicted a shift to a telemediated and posturban society, the logic of which brought with it inevitable global travelling, urban decentralisation and even urban dissolution (Graham in Westwood and Williams 1997:37).

Dystopian texts are critical of such posturban conditions, viewing transitivity as a restless, disrupting activity, essentially liminal and heterotopic, always being in between places. Senzeni Marasela's *Theodora goes to Johannesburg*, 2007, depicts the African nomad in her mother's abandoning of her rural home and opting for the city in her quest to overcome poverty. Encountering violence, rape and murder in the urban environment, she decides to rather return to her rural home. Heterotopia is manifest in the idealisation of the city, which in turn becomes deconstructed through her nightmarish experiences, and the renewed ideology imagined in terms of rural life.

Marasela's work revisits oral tradition and storytelling, the demise of which according to Walter Benjamin (1973) started with the invention of the printing press that has characterised Western societies for more than the past four centuries. Marasela engages with the slow pace of embroidery as a technology in an art world where sophisticated technologies have entered the language of media. The time-consuming character of the embroidery that sets up an intimate relationship between subject and object by figuratively "sewing" them together is metaphoric of the slow pace of the rural environment to which the protagonist in Marasela's work returns. This "love" relationship can be compared to that of a photographer to reality, described by Benjamin (1973:235) as follows:

... [the] painter maintains in his work a natural distance from reality, the cameraman penetrates deeply into its web. ... Thus, for contemporary man the representation of reality by the film is incomparably more significant than that of the painter, since it offers, precisely because of the thoroughgoing permeation of reality with mechanical equipment, an aspect of reality which is free of all equipment. And that is what one is entitled to ask from a work of art.

Benjamin's modernist views on the use of media in art as well as his notion of modern technologies as positively "shattering" the quasi-religious aura of the artwork, verge on utopianism. Supported by a deliberate choice of materials that evoke negativity towards the city and positivity towards the rural environment, *Dorothea goes to Johannesburg* expresses anti-urbanism in which, as Gold (1990:22) suggests, could entail prevailing hostility towards the metropolitan city and the emergence of visions of an urban order where people can cocoon or retreat.

Dorothea's journeys represent transitivity, dystopian and liminal in her failure to find happiness. It would seem that the conviviality of the small town, the security of the gated community and virtual work and shopping environments imply dissolution of the utopianism envisioned for the "great" industrialised city. Cities can "vanish", lose their *raison d'être* (Graham in Westwood and Williams 1997:39) and become dismembered, fragmented and alienated from the "great narratives" of power and ideology surrounding them.



generate, mutate, translate

Technodystopia

The artworks selected for *Dystopia* show the use of a range of technologies from low-tech to high-tech, which may be viewed as a reflection or a kind of barometer of the techno-social conditions in South Africa.

In works such as Christiaan Hattingh's interactive digital projection with sound, *generate, mutate, translate*, 2008, different kinds of software and sophisticated computer programming were used in its creation. The artist, doubly educated as a multimedia specialist and a metallurgical engineer, brings together the worlds of science, technology and art in his imaginative play with information and information exchange in systems, referring to any kind of system such as life systems, environmental equilibriums or cultural and language systems. As described in the artist's statement, the work has been algorithmically generated through direct generative code manipulation and random mutation of this code, introduced by a second algorithm. These two systems are then presented as species charts in a diptych: an "organic system" and a "geometric system". Computer code is transmuted into language and visual form as outlined in the legend included in the work.

Hattingh's work presents fictitious cloning in mutating plant-like forms, which at the same time evoke transient seventeenth-century Dutch vanitas painting. Just as the latter reminded the viewer of the transience of life, Hattingh's baroque virtual mutations present an enclosed virtual space where the imagination forecloses the real and runs riot in the creation of beautiful and fanciful variations on the real. Advanced levels of technological application converge with art, myth and science, and associations with genetic cloning are evoked, signifying utopia in the endeavour to recreate, improve and advance human life. The work speculates on technologies that are 'encroaching upon our inner space, invading our bodies and consciousnesses' and extend agency, augmented and arbitrated by making them a part of the body (Smith 2008:1). Whereas the prostheses of the industrial age were still external and 'exotechnical, those that we know have been subdivided and internalized: esotechnical. We are in the age of soft technologies - genetic and mental software' (Smith 2008:1, Baudrillard 1995:68).

Heterotopic deferral is nowhere more evident than in such texts where digital technology can render the impossible possible and merge real with unreal. In a utopian perspective, the notion of the artificial is ambiguous and ambivalent, since it is simultaneously utopian and dystopian. As utopian space, the artificial is host to the kind of ideologies pertaining to globalism; as dystopian space, the artificial leaves human ideologies behind and enters a new constellation of posthuman fragments of reals, cloaked in new technologies. The world as an impenetrable complexity of technoreals, artificial and synthetic, disturbs the real in that many simultaneous virtual worlds, premised in technology and novelty, are assembled so that the borderlines of humanity become blurred.

Utopias function very much in liminality, in an in-between space where the utopia moves out of a domain where words or images form the skeleton and the "flesh" is filled in by free-reign imagination. In a virtual, visually directed fiction made totally believable by sophisticated computer software, a far more ethically dangerous form of mimesis is encountered than in non-virtual dystopian texts that use similar techniques

and technologies, since the latter display a far stronger sense of the real and aim to condemn utopia-gone-wrong. Virtual dystopias, encountered in virtual gaming for instance, depict surreal and hyperreal spaces that are not taken seriously by being recognisable and often larger-than-life fictions, yet through the playful engagement with life-threatening acts and situations, the existential boundaries of right and wrong are mostly transgressed. The very rules of the game in such contexts are dystopianistically grounded in technological and logistical methodology and language, not bound by any moral directive.

Language and words have always been crucial vehicles in the communication of utopianism, both in literature and in visual texts. M. Keith Booker (1994:19) describes the relationship of politics to utopianism as follows:

The governments described in dystopian literature tend to focus their energies on language not only because it is a potentially powerful tool with which to control and manipulate their subjects, but also because language may harbour powerfully subversive energies that such governments would like to suppress.¹⁶



The revolution is ...

Often resistance art utilises political slogans in order to convey the intended message, yet telemediated messages also play a significant role in the conveying of utopian philosophies. Although instigated by the harsh physical political realities of Zimbabwe, the title of Kudzanai Chiurai's work, *The revolution will be televised*, 2004, shifts the focus to the power of public media that have the ability to create and manipulate public perceptions and opinions. The work suggests that the media can transmute political utopia into virtual reals, thereby enhancing and extending the real. The floating ship as a metaphor of heterotopia can be applied to this work, as well as to Thando Mama's *The revolution is ...* (2008) that comments in a similar way on the power of the media to create convincing reals. In his artist's statement Mama refers to the example of Fidel Castro who used television as an ideal vehicle to promote himself and the revolution.

The use of language in politics and the televisual media to convey utopia, acquires dystopic significance when people's irrevocable dependence on technology is considered in their efforts to articulate such visions. In Kai Lossgott's *Neurotech a and b*, 2008, the laser engraving of words on sycamore and morning glory leaves suggests that the relationship of human beings to their environment is ontologically premised in technology and, as the artist states in this catalogue, such relationships and systems can 'no longer be comprehended by the human mind unaided by technology.'

Dystopia also includes works such as Collen Maswanganyi's *Tintiho leti (These fingers)* and www.gavaza.cx.za, 2008, that refer to conditions of living where a pre-urban, pre-technological tribalism seems to prevail. The work has been produced with a chopper, a primitive wood carving tool used by the Venda and other wood carvers for generations. The act of counting on the fingers of the mother, part of the previous generation, is testimony to societal conditions prevailing under apartheid when blacks were barred from educational institutions. The evolutionary development towards utopia where technology in this context is viewed as representing intellectual advancement, cultural progress and wealth, often superimposed by the miseries of poverty

or superstition. A utopian map of the hope of prosperity and a “better life” for the children covers the dystopian hell of apartheid atrocities.



www.gavaza.cx.za

Maswanganyi's *www.gavaza.cx.za*, 2008, projects an ideology about novelty, especially with regard to technological systems and equipment that potentially could engineer the improvement of societal conditions. Nicholas Hlobo's *Umtya nethunga*, 2005, that mainly utilises rubber as its material, signifies novelty, consumerism and postindustrialism. The gender discourse in the work relates to questions on masculinity in the reference to men and cars, as well as to the large scale invention of machines during the nineteenth-century birth of novelties in the Industrial revolution. The Industrial utopianism projected on technology is deconstructed in the artist's connotation of the black rubber with sexuality and the threat of HIV/AIDS in particular. In his statement on the artwork, Hlobo indicates his association of black rubber with sex toys, therefore suggesting a macabre dance with death.

In *Twilight memories*, Huyssen (1995:6) argues that the world's obsession with novelty¹⁷ and its experiences, brought about by technological and production competition, is not merely one of the many forms of postmodern *pastiche* or another *fin de siècle* syndrome, but rather a sign of the crisis surrounding the notion of temporality inherent in the preoccupation with novelty that has propelled and driven modernity since the turn of the nineteenth century. The constant flux of new objects, viewpoints, events, reals, has come to simulate a grey or Huyssenian “twilight” state of being in which present and past converge into memories of space and time.

Novelty is impossible to conceive without its immediate or sometimes distant past. Therefore, a paradox exists in the very concept of the new as grounded in the past and memory. Whilst teleological notions of history are fading fast, memory seems to be bridging the gaps between the shifts and transitions from novelty to novelty, and especially the accelerating technical processes. In this context, memory has come to mean something beyond utopian space and time. According to Huyssen, it

... does not require much theoretical sophistication to see that all representation - whether in language, narrative, image, or recorded sound - is based on memory. Re-presentation always comes after, even though the media will try to provide us with the delusion of pure presence. But rather than leading us to some authentic origin or giving us verifiable access to the real, memory, even and especially in its belatedness, is itself based on representation. (Huyssen 1995:2)

Memories are evoked through the recycling and rusting processes to become metaphors of waste, loss and consumerism in Jan van der Merwe's *Time out* (2008) that incorporates discarded objects and junk materials. The rusted patina places the objects in “archaeological time”, which creates restlessness and inertia in the continuous renewal and creation of novelties, but simultaneously nostalgia for the past, an obsession with memory and a longing for a time when there was more stability. It becomes a form of “holding on” in the face of radical technologisation and the concurrent birth and death of novelties.

In *Time out*, the medium of rust effectively communicates the corroding effects of a condition of belonging yet not belonging in South African societies ravaged by xenophobia and unbridled violence. Violence intermingles with fear in the black scribbles on the wall in the corner of the installation and the work suggests xenophobia in the



Time out

presentation of the idea of the ostracised individual and the presumed “offender”. The outsiderism and exclusion suggested by the scribbles in the corner are almost like the old-fashioned habit of removing the misbehaving child from the group and confining him/her to a corner in the room. Fear sits in the corner of the installation like an animal captured or a hovering apocalypse, so that the work recalls the heterotopic Foucaultian notion of the ship of fools and *Angst* simultaneously.

The neon blue colour of Celia de Villiers's posthuman shoes, *Post-human consumerism*, 2009, evokes an ice-cold abhuman reference to the reproductive laboratories of artifice and clone, oppositional to its obvious reference to the magical realms of myth and tale. The sensual animalistic form of the shoes embodies Freudian notions of the shoe as a libidinalised erotic object, which subverts the shoes' Cinderella teleology into consumption where “use” is fused with eroticism and symbolic configurations of functional, useful and found objects present as sexual metaphors. An aura seems to surround the blue shoes, similar to Duchamp's *Bride* (1912), which in celebration of the erotic bride emanate luminescence in shades of chocolate. The phosphorescent colour of blue in De Villiers's work belongs to an erotic order that reflects Bataille's transcendent eroticism as an encounter with “divine totality, the eruptive, exuberant continuity of things” (Botting and Wilson 1997:13). The work recalls Sabine Hake's (1993:89) argument of the migration from the notion of spectacle in utopian texts¹⁸ to experiences of visual pleasure in dystopian texts. Hake (1993:104) contends that “[through] the myth of visual pleasure, a projection screen was set up as well as a place for forgetting.” The deferral of reality in the act of forgetting found in virtual reality entails deceptive pleasure, a dystopian sublime.¹⁹



Post-human consumerism

A dystopian work such as Minnette Vári's *Cyclops*, 2008, questions the very notion of the real by demonstrating the Baudrillardian position of the disappearance of the real (argued for instance in *The Perfect Crime* of 1996) as a direct consequence of utopianism entrenched in digital technology development.²⁰ Vári's vortex comments on contemporary societies' tunnel vision noticeable in biased television programmes and newspapers, all done in the name of so-called truth and neutrality. The work proposes that in media culture dense labyrinths of ideology are woven and held up as utopian visions of the future to be believed. In the context of especially the digital media, it becomes difficult to distinguish between the real and the virtual, truth and non-truth. The artist refrains from overtly expressing ideology or value judgments, but the very picture of destabilisation and liminality evoked through motion suggests disruption and dehumanisation as a condition. In her artist's statement, she asks: ‘Is truth still naked in a world simultaneously blinded and lit up by the sight of its own horrors?’



Cyclops

Closing

The investigation of dystopia shows ambivalence: old truths are deconstructed and pleasant utopian dreams are both nurtured and shattered. It seems to embody a condition that considers the uncomfortable, undesirable and unpleasant present, as well as an unpleasant and threatening but conceivable future state of society. An ambivalent sense of time is articulated in the dystopian mindset, since it is concerned with the present as a consequence of the past; the rectification of the past; and the future by warning against the repetition of the mistakes of the past. Dystopia further seems to

enfold fragmentation, relativism and questions regarding the truth value of appearances as a result of dramatic new developments in technologies over the past forty years. Driven by utopics and teleology, technological invention on one hand has led to “good endings” and almost-utopia, yet on the other hand to disastrous consequences such as the dystopia of technological warfare (utopias-gone-wrong).

In the end, in spite of its intrinsic ambivalences, dystopia is concerned with the creation of a better and more efficient future. By discovering, recognising and understanding dystopia as a condition, unspoken and implicit assumptions about the world can be dismantled and a kind of strategy can be provided to generate energy and fresh perspectives on problematic social and political issues that “might otherwise be taken for granted or considered natural and inevitable” (Booker 1994:3).

The artworks on *Dystopia* are vehicles for such strategies through the exploration of dystopian experiences and dreams of worlds, future and past. Enquiry evidently needs justification. Yet, judged on humanitarian grounds alone and ignoring for instance the impact on future generations and harm to the environment, the questioning of untenable societal conditions needs no further justification.

Pretoria, 2009.

Notes

- 1 Enlightenment philosophy’s propensity to order manifested in a number of areas, such as art, literature and architecture. As a critique of earlier baroque and rococo styles, neo-classicism harked back to the Vitruvian order of classical antiquity and sought to represent order aesthetically (Hetherington 1997:61). Within the context of the order that Euclidian geometry and space proposed at the time, utopian construction can thus be viewed as a response to anxieties about social disorder.
- 2 Although in 1984, a defining text in the genre of dystopian literature written in 1949 (published in 1949) and in which Orwell expresses anti-utopia as a criticism of utopia by describing the fictional society of Oceania as ‘the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined’ (Orwell 1961:220), there are still strong similarities with utopian narratives in, for instance, the view of sexuality as an activity intended solely for the purposes of procreation. In 1984 there is no attempt to improve the quality of human life and the ideologies of Orwell’s Party conform to models of conventional religion; furthermore there is a prevailing modernistic view of science as progress and liberation.
- 3 A hypothetical description of the reciprocal process of utopia and dystopia is found in James W Bittner’s poetic analysis of Le Guin’s *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia* of 1974 (Rabkin et al 1983:247).
- 4 Teleology (from the Greek *telos* meaning end or purpose) is the philosophical study of design and purpose. In a teleological construct such as utopia it is designed for or directed toward a final result, that there is an inherent good purpose or final good ending.
- 5 The term “ideology” was virtually unknown prior to the twentieth century. It is only during and after the nineteenth century when scientific discoveries and technological inventions started having a major impact on culture, and when the consequences of political ide-

ologies which had resulted in world wars were deeply felt, that the concept attained a historical contextualisation.

- 6 These objects were developed in 1963 in East London, a port city in South Africa, and are found all around the world today.
- 7 Cataclysmic texts speak of an impending apocalypse, that is, of disruption, annihilation, destruction, violence and chaos.
- 8 According to Wikipedia ([O] Available http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Ching) the I Ching or “Book of Changes” is one of the oldest of the Chinese classic texts and a book that uses a symbol system to identify order in random events. The text describes an ancient system of cosmology and philosophy that is intrinsic to ancient Chinese cultural beliefs. The cosmology centres on the ideas of the dynamic balance of opposites, the evolution of events as a process, and acceptance of the inevitability of change. In Western cultures and modern East Asia, the I Ching is sometimes regarded as a system of divination. The classic consists of a series of symbols, rules for manipulating these symbols, poems and commentary.
- 9 In similar vein, Franz Kafka’s *The Castle* (1926) narrates the predicament of the protagonist, a land surveyor who has been summoned to perform work for the mysterious Castle, but then has great difficulty communicating with the authorities there. Similar to Thom’s work, Kafka’s book suggests the relation between the Castle and the village as an allegory of God’s relation to humanity and the ‘general inability of modern humanity to understand the world in which it lives’ (Booker 1994:183).
- 10 The metaphor of blindness representing the dystopian dilemma of failed communication and failure to connect with a higher Being is encountered in deconstruction theory. In *Memoirs of the blind, the self-portrait and other ruins* (1993), Jacques Derrida postulates that we cannot “see” beyond the personal point of view as frame (*parergon*) and all we have are our own memories and visions (Kelly 1991:102). In such a deconstructionist mind set, all claims to authority are negated and there is no sense of teleology, the groping gesture of the blind person being metaphoric of both the artist and the interpreter who fumble about in the dark with faint ideas and partial notions of vision, accompanied by memories (Kelly 1991:103), thus fragments.
- 11 Argued especially in ‘Space, knowledge and power’ in *The Foucault Reader* (1986:239-256), and ‘A question of geography’ in *Power/Knowledge* (1980:63-77).
- 12 In the carceral state, public space is transformed into defensible space, with the installation of walls, gates, fences, surveillance cameras and security checkpoints. Such installations are meant to provide control over urban space.
- 13 In 1778, British travel author William Coxe (Briganti 1970:227) wrote: ‘As I walked about this metropolis I was filled with astonishment upon reflecting, that ... the views upon the banks of the Neva exhibit the most grand and lively scenes I have ever beheld ... it is also deep, rapid, and as transparent as crystal; and its banks are lined on each side with a continued range of handsome buildings’ (Cf. also Dreyer 2005). In the nineteenth century, escapism was noticeable in utopian visions of green worlds and fantastic gardens created in response to the fear and horrors of urban crowding and industrialisation.
- 14 Hunt (1987:137) also mentions Gertude Jekyll and William Robinson who promoted the horticultural paradise.
- 15 In T S Eliot’s dystopian metropolis in *The waste land* (1922), the ruins of Western civilisation are depicted comprising perverse personae, sexual dysfunction, social alienation, spiritual despondency, and so on. Eliot conflates sex and city, and develops the notion of

the anti-passant, in the form of the blind prophet Tiresias who cannot see or gaze at the city. He is bisexual, an old man with wrinkled breasts, and 'moves through the city like a negative passant, very much an hypocrite *lecteur* fallen prey to the most insidious vice of all, a timeless Ennui that can never break through to a new version, a new vision' (Sharpe 1990:107).

- 16 Booker's (1994:19) reference to the 'authoritative' language of political utopias that informs dystopian criticism is inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin who views language as a powerful political weapon in the articulation of ideology. Bakhtin develops an apotheosis of the medieval carnival as a metaphor for emancipator transgression against the prevailing norm (Booker 1994:17).
- 17 The modernist obsession with the new was presaged by the ideas of German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. In *The birth of tragedy* (1872) and other early works dating from 1873 to 1876, as well as in later works, such as *The will to power* (1964, originally published in 1901), he develops the theme that the past must be seen as a burden and argues that the individual must become original and "raw". As such, the individual becomes a kind a superman/woman or *überhistorisches* individual that must be empowered by finding the "true self" that transcends the present horizon of time and others, as well as by mastering the passions and channelling them creatively into deeds and works of universal or perennial form. In *One-dimensional man*, Herbert Marcuse (1964:10) argues that the evolution of mass culture and production has invaded the private space of the individual and has claimed the entire person, reducing everything to mere operationalism.
- 18 For instance the Emerald City in *The Wizard of Oz* by L Frank Baum, 1900.
- 19 Marcuse subscribes to this notion and suggests that true happiness or pleasure can be inscribed within false experiences (Jameson 1990:146), thus becoming a strange kind of artificial, simulated pleasure. In *Late Marxism: Or the Persistence of the Dialectic*, Jameson (1990:145) argues that the analysis of pleasure should be placed within 'a framework of the theory of the alienated labor process ... [that] has been prolonged by any number of contemporary discussions of the commodification and colonization of leisure.' For Jameson, pleasure means not thinking about anything, and forgetting or ignoring suffering, even where it is evident. In this sense, pleasure is escapism, a flight from a reality, a utopia or a sublime.
- 20 For Baudrillard, utopia is not to be realised in the sense of the transformation of dream into reality, since developments in technology have brought on hyperreality and simulacra as other reals. The pollution and saturation with images of the contemporary world is not about utopia but about reals per se. According to Baudrillard (1996), the end of utopia is the end of the real, a kind of vanishing act, and we are left with the dystopia of the nothing, the "no space" in which the distinctions between the real and the non-real have collapsed and vanished. In this sense Baudrillard becomes the fulfilment of Mannheim's predictions (Mannheim 1947, Chapter 7).

DYSTOPIA CATALOGUE OF ARTISTS

Adelle van Zyl
Brett Murray
Celia de Villiers
Christiaan Diedericks
Christiaan Hattingh
Churchill Madikida
Collen Maswanganyi
Dale Yudelman
Danie Halter
Diane Victor
Dineo Bobape
Eilriede Dreyer
Grikkie Eksteen
Guy du Toit & Iaan Bekker
Gwenneth Miller
Jan van der Merwe
Jenna Burchell
Johan Thom
Kai Lossgott
Karlén de Villiers
Kudzani Chiurai
Lawrence Lemaona
Minnette Vari
Moshekwa Langa
Nicholas Hlobo
Pascual Tarazona
Pieter Swanepoel
Senzeni Marasela
Steven Cohen
Thando Mama
William Kentridge
Claire Gavronsky & Rose
Shakinovsky
Zanele Muholi

CATALOGUE OF ARTISTS

Adelle van Zyl

Born 1981, Kareedouw, Eastern Cape

Adelle van Zyl matriculated with distinction at the Belgravia Art Centre in East London in 1999, after which she enrolled for the Bachelor of Visual Arts at the University of South Africa. In 2005 she obtained her degree and was awarded as student of the year. Van Zyl is currently completing her Postgraduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies at the University of Pretoria. The artist's upbringing in a family of avid collectors informs her work, which contains and focuses on museum and collecting practices. Van Zyl has taken part in several group shows, including the *Ekurhuleni Fine Art Finalist Exhibition* (2006) and *Intervention* (2008) at the University of South Africa.

Artist's statement

Crowds are a reality of dystopian urban life. Asphyxia, or compressed suffocation, is the most common cause of death during uncontrolled crowd behavior. When planning large events and their accompanying buildings and arenas, sophisticated technologies are employed to ensure the safe dispersion of large crowds. Yet emergency evacuations, political rallies and sports events cause hundreds of deaths each year.

In *Asphyxiation*, pins and labels function to question the notion of control and chaos. These are traditionally applied in medical and museological practice to display and describe parts of a specimen. Additional to these roles, pins and labels also refer to mapping as a function of ordering and diagrammatising. In this instance, pins and labels initially fulfill their function, but then strain downwards into a mass of incoherent numbers.

The use of velvet and the glass cabinet refers to the utopian ideal of the museum, which functions to explain, clarify and contextualise the happenings that make up historical events. The past and future aspects of an event (the planning and retrospective overview) are always structured, linear and quantitative in their approach. But the present, often the actual event, is disorderly and riotous in terms of its emotional and physical impact on the individuals that constitute the crowd.

Asphyxiation serves to question the act of planning and interpreting crowd control and opposes it with the trauma associated with crowds and the individual's fear of suffocation.

Adelle van Zyl, *Asphyxiation*, 2009. Wood, glass, velvet, pins and labels, 500mm x 1000mm x 120mm. Courtesy of the artist.



CATALOGUE OF ARTISTS

Brett Murray

Born 1961, Pretoria, South Africa.

Brett Murray studied at the University of Cape Town where he was awarded his Masters of Fine Arts degree. He has exhibited extensively in South Africa and abroad. His solo shows include *White Boy Sings the Blues* at the Rembrandt Gallery in Johannesburg in 1996 and *I love Africa* at the Bell-Roberts Gallery in Cape Town in 2000. He recently opened the solo show *Crocodile Tears* at the Goodman Gallery in Cape Town. From 1991 to 1994 he established the sculpture department at the University of Stellenbosch. He exhibited on the Cuban Biennial in 1994 and his works were shown at the Ludwig Museum of Contemporary Art in Germany and at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Santiago, Chile. He was part of the traveling show *Liberated Voices, Contemporary Art From South Africa* which opened at the Museum for African Art, in New York. He won the Cape Town Urban Art competition in 1998 that resulted in the highly acclaimed public work *Africa*, which is located in the Cape Town city center. He won, with Stefaans Samcuia, the commission to produce an 8 meter by 30 meter wall sculpture for the foyer of the Cape Town International Convention Centre in 2002. He was the Standard Bank Artist for the year 2002. He is a full-time artist who lives in Cape Town, South Africa.

Artist's statement

These two works form part of a larger group collectively entitled *Crocodile tears*. The works reflect on the humorous, and sometimes tragic disjunctures within ossified notions of The African Renaissance. The works address issues of power, patronage and sycophancy and comment on the farcical appearance of political players and dispensations, venal bureaucracies and fallible business ethics. Uncomfortable notions of identity, the mating call of the new South Africa, are exposed.



Brett Murray, *Power and patronage*, 2008. Bronze, 370 x 260 x 510 mm. Edition of 8. Courtesy of the artist and The Goodman Gallery.

Brett Murray, *Power and patronage*, 2008. Metal and gold leaf, 1670 x 1509 x 90 mm. Edition of 3. Courtesy of the artist and The Goodman Gallery.



Celia de Villiers

Born 1946, Johannesburg, South Africa.

The artworks of Celia de Villiers are derived from environmental triggers and cultural conventions. They address the concept of the human body as a site of agency, idiosyncrasy, subjection, and postmodern identity politics. The artist's work has featured in fourteen solo and sixty group exhibitions worldwide. She has curated and adjudicated numerous exhibitions locally and abroad of which the most recent is national judge for the 23rd Absa L' Atelier Awards, 2008. International companies have commissioned her textile as well as glass creations. Some of her works are in the permanent collection of UNISA and the American Museum of Art and Design in New York. She was awarded an art fellowship by the Sacatar foundation of California in 2004. Celia has lectured in Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, and Conceptual art at the University of South Africa since January 2001 and presented research papers at Universities in South Africa, France and Brazil. The artist travels to venues outside Gauteng to facilitate and consult for the Arts in Action community outreach initiative and is a member of the board of directors of the WasteArt Foundation. Celia has won numerous awards for her contribution to empowerment projects in the Arts and Crafts sector.

Artist's statement

The mixture of desire and fantasy exploited by erotic codes in advertising, art, media entertainment, social, cultural, economic, and technological transformations has resulted in fetishistic spectacles to create alternative worlds. Fetishism in the Marxist metaphorical sense as applied to understanding mass culture leads to use value being dislocated to become image value. The enigmatic character of the image value of commodities has become part and parcel of contemporary marketing strategies.

Appearance imagery is a silent communication through which cues are encoded and decoded; structuring elements of reality and manipulating these in an imaginative manner to perpetuate cultural beliefs and values. The cyber-body, both exoticised and disparaged by mainstream culture, is a flirtation with the post human existence fantasy where the magical and technological become inseparable in the embodied self.

The post-human shoes also refer to the Freudian theory of the shoe as a libidinised erotic object. In the colder light of science this has reproductive implications of cloning and hybrids. An adverse attraction is lent to the tactile qualities and sensual shapes by the animalistic hybrid forms and seductive surfaces which play on the utopian/dystopian disjunction.

Celia de Villiers, *Post-human consumerism*, 2009. Resin casting, Plexiglas, Variable (Size 5 shoe).
Courtesy of the artist.



Christiaan Diedericks

Born 1965, South Africa.

Fine arts cum laude graduate from the University of the North West, Diedericks has created an extensive body of work over the years. He went on to complete his Masters in Fine Arts cum laude (practical component) at the University of Pretoria in 2000. Chris has mounted almost twenty-five solo exhibitions in South Africa and abroad. Christiaan Diedericks has exhibited extensively throughout Southern Africa, as well as internationally. His work has been exhibited in France, where he has been invited and worked six times at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. Diedericks has also lived and worked in New York, after receiving the prestigious Ampersand Fellowship where his work was subsequently exhibited at the Gallery 5+5, in December 2007. Diedericks has received numerous awards for his work, including coveted awards such as the Kanna award for best visual artist at the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees in 2006. He has also been given numerous grants over a broad spectrum, which range from an NAC international bursary for workshops in non-toxic printmaking in 1999 at the Grande Prairie Regional College in Alberta, Canada, to being chosen to appear on the thirteenth *The Apprentice* on SABC3 in Johannesburg in 2005.

Artist's statement

Christiaan Diedericks' work addresses persistent issues such as gender/race biases, ongoing issues of masculinity and (homo)sexuality, xenophobia, body politics, gender-bending, sex and the prudish view society still maintains regarding the body and sexuality in general. Also, the nude male body, illustrating the male erect penis without excuse, masturbation, labelling, framing and stereotyping are investigated mainly within a South African context. Diedericks states that "in many ways I aim to "rewrite" history in my work and the dominant sense of self-awareness that informs most Western art practices. I am trying to present contemporary issues of Difference as timeless, by situating my vocabulary of images and themes in an organic flux of dreams, history, news, commercial detritus, hyperreality, and unvoiced feelings and forces of biological nature/desire. I am trying to reconcile two seemingly irreconcilable driving forces of postmodern consciousness – the desire for Otherness and the fear of losing autonomy. Herein lies the connection between my seemingly random imagery – homoeroticism, the male body under a microscope, borrowed images from contemporary culture, digital images and autobiographical imagery. I am always aiming to juggle these disparate images to make them correspond without collapsing into one particular style, mode of thought, emotion, or art-historical reference. Through the juxtaposition of self and nature I am attempting to create a new language of images appropriate to the psychological realities of our age."



Christiaan Diedericks, *Exhausted earth* (2008 - 2009). Archival pigment ink, charcoal and pastel on Hahnemühle paper, diameter 1080 mm. Courtesy of the artist.

Christiaan Hattingh

Born 1974, Vanderbijlpark.

Christiaan Hattingh received his Bachelors of Engineering (Metal) at the University of Pretoria in 1996, and his Bachelor of Arts (with specialisation in visual multimedia) in 2007 at the University of South Africa. The artist specialises in generative and interactive art, engaging with technologically advanced media. Prizes and competitions include the SASOL New Signatures 2005 merit award (top ten), Construction new media awards (Design Indaba) 2006 and ABSA l'Atelier top ten (2008). The artist is represented in the Unisa Permanent Collection.

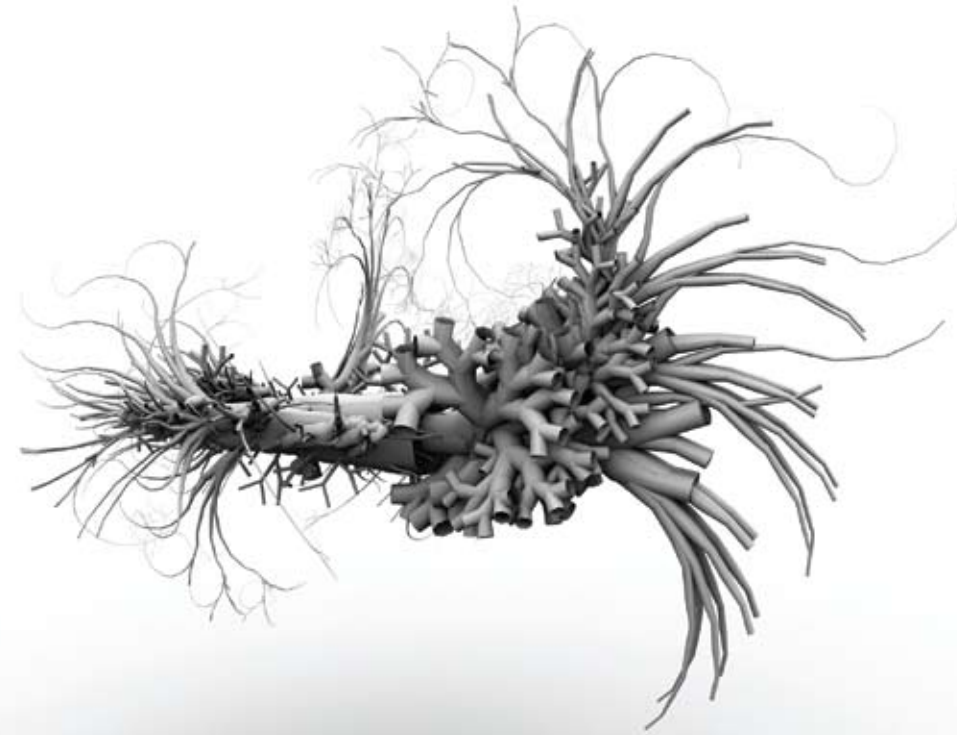
Artist's statement

Only the F's mean anything and *generate-mutate-translate*, 2008, are concerned with information and information exchange in contemporary systems. Systems here are referring to life systems, environmental equilibriums, cultural and language systems, etcetera.

Algorithmically generated forms are related through a twofold process in this work: direct generative code manipulation and random mutation of this code, introduced by a second algorithm.

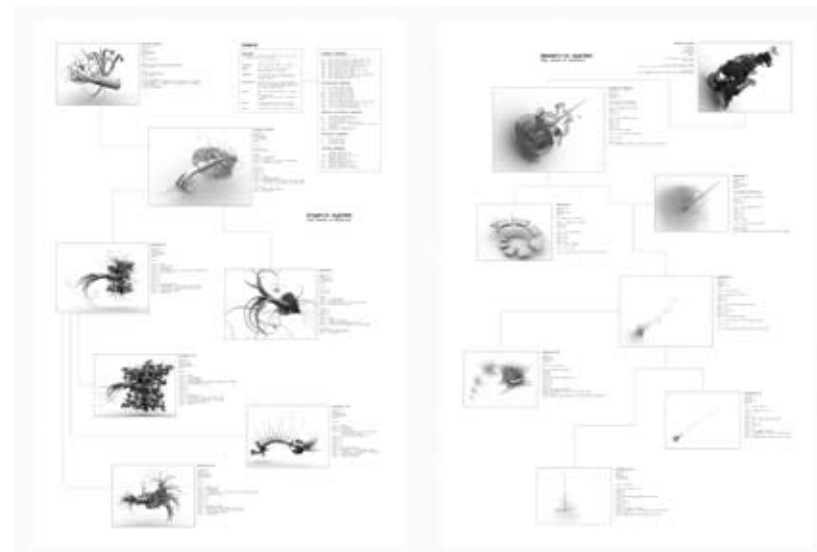
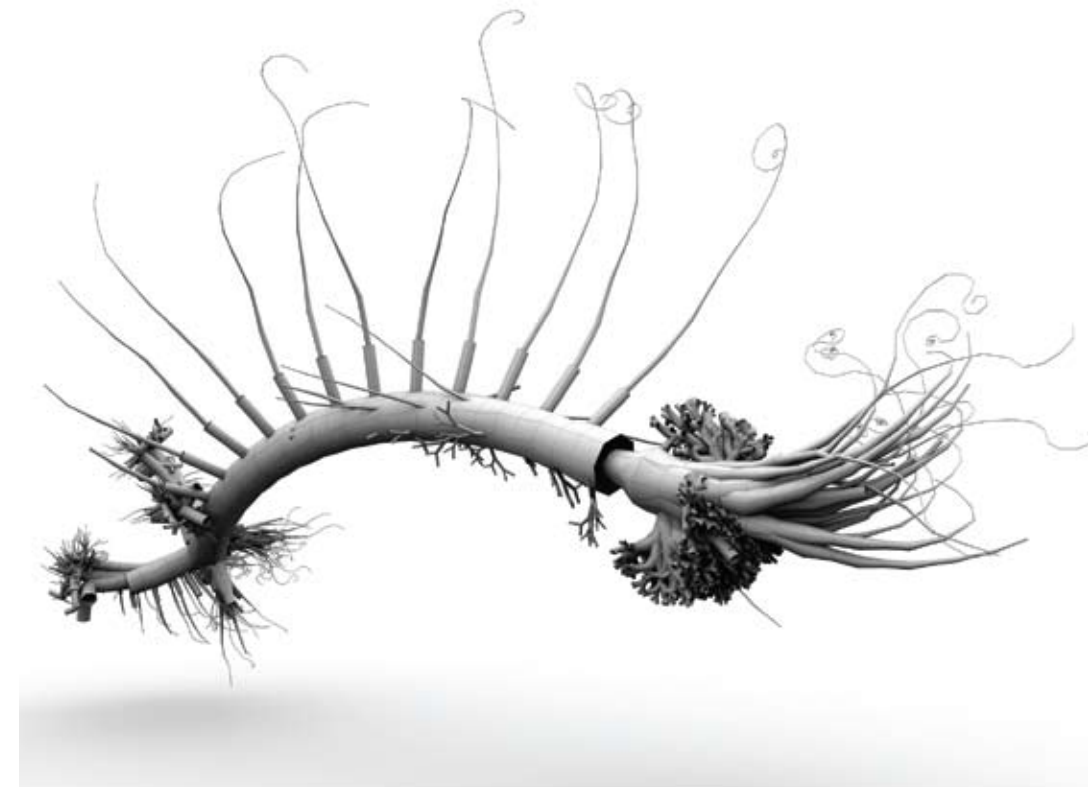
Each form is juxtaposed next to its generative code – the code used in this case is a type of context free grammar based upon Lindenmayer systems (Lindenmayer & Prusinkiewicz 1990). A generative grammar produces a generative language when parsed – and in this case the symbols of the particular language are translated into visual form as outlined in the legend included in the work.

In some cases the process of mutation has “positive” results and in some cases more “interesting” results, and in some cases “negative” depending upon the fitness function that the form is subject to (in this case primarily to suit a particular aesthetic).



Christiaan Hattingh, *Organic_m2_m3_A3.0*, 2008. Detail from *generate-mutate-translate*, 2008. Interactive digital projection with sound, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

Christiaan Hattingh, *Organic_m2_m3_A3*, 2008. Detail from *generate-mutate-translate*, 2008. Interactive digital projection with sound, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.



Christiaan Hattingh, *Only the F's mean anything*, 2008. Archival digital print (diptych), 1 200 X 2000 X 100 mm. From *generate-mutate-translate*, 2008. Interactive digital projection with sound, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist.

Churchill Madikida

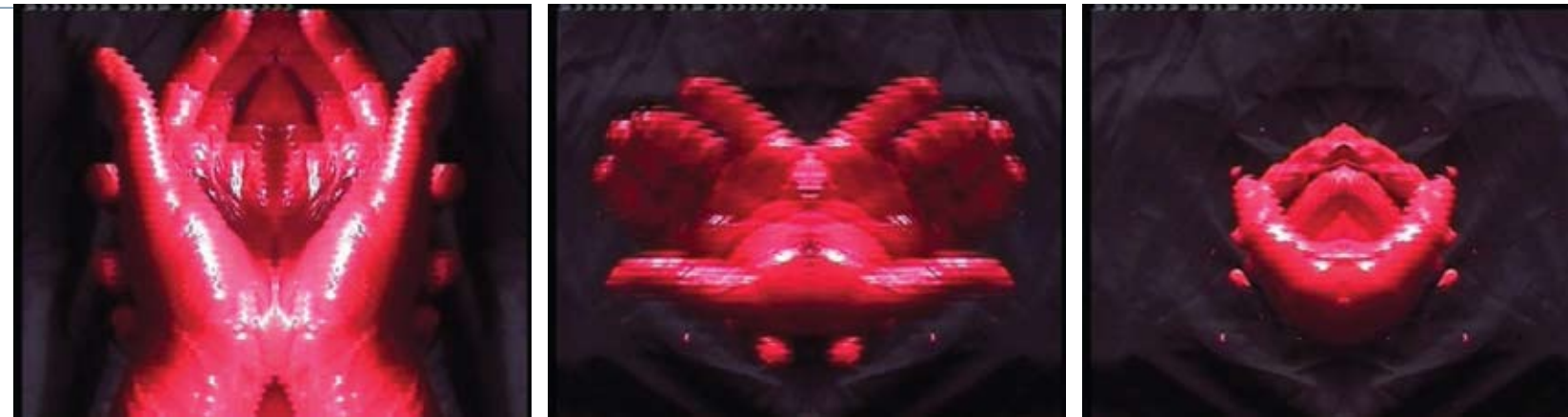
Born 1973, Butterworth, Eastern Cape.

Born in Butterworth in the Eastern Cape in 1973, Madikida lives and works in Johannesburg. He held his first solo exhibition, *Liminal States*, at the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 2003, and his second, *Interminable Limbo*, at Michael Stevenson in 2004. His work frequently explores the contemporary implications of Xhosa traditions, in media including video, photography and live performance. Madikida was one of the selectors for the 2004 Brett Kebble Art Awards, and was included as curator and artist on the major group exhibition *Personal Affects: Power and poetics in contemporary South African art*, at the Museum for African Art and the Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York (2004), travelling to The Contemporary Museum, Honolulu, in 2006. He was the Standard Bank Young Artist for Visual Art 2006, with a solo exhibition of new work which toured South Africa from June 2006 to July 2007. His installation *Status* was seen on Documenta 12, and he was included on *Heterotopias*, the first Thessaloniki Biennale, and *Apartheid: The South African Mirror* at the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, in 2007. In 2003 he was the joint winner of the Tollman Award.

Artist's statement

In *Skeletons in my closet*, a pair of blood-red hands wringing each other is shown in a digitally mirrored image that looks alternately like a red flower blooming and a gruesome piece of surgery. The work questions the inability to question tradition, such as whether customs that have long sustained a culture are still necessary and useful.

In *Struggles of the Heart* the artist is presented in a head shot, covered in chalk, continuously chewing and spitting out cornmeal paste (the action is looped). The work refers to an aspect of Xhosa circumcision ceremonies, but also to prohibitions about speaking of the rituals.



Churchill Madikida, *Skeletons in my closet*, 2004. Frames from DVD projection, duration 3:02 mins. Edition of 5. Unisa Art Collection.



Churchill Madikida, *Struggles of the heart*, 2002. Frames from DVD projection, duration 2:29 mins. Edition of 5. Unisa Art Collection.

CATALOGUE OF ARTISTS

Collen Maswanganyi

Born 1977, Giyani, Limpopo

Collen Maswanganyi comes from a family in a village in Giyani that abounds in artistic talent. Collen was taught his sculpturing skills by his father, Johannes Maswanganyi, who is an acclaimed South African sculptor and has exhibited both locally and internationally.

Maswanganyi attended classes at the Wits Technikon (today the University of Johannesburg) to refine his skills. Maswanganyi's art incorporates issues relating to both the African traditions that he has been raised with and the modern world he lives in, while he also depicts the life of traditional Africans - their dressing, lifestyles and customs and contrasts this with Africans participating in the modern, hi-tech world.

His work represents hardworking African people in the corporate sector. He also acknowledges the advantages of modern inventions and how they can impact on rural life in a positive way. Technology is used in his work to represent the easiness of communication that can now be attained through this technology.

Maswanganyi regularly participates in the national and international exhibitions contexts and in 2005 participated in the first solo exhibition of the Maswanganyi Family at Fried Contemporary Gallery & Studio in Pretoria. He also participated in the Klein Karoo Arts Festival in 2000; *Africa meets Europe*, The Hague, Netherlands; in an exhibition at the Beelden aan Zee Museum in 2002; and was a visiting artist at the Art of Africa Gallery, England.

Artist's statement

Tintiho Leti refers to the practice of using fingers to talk about things. What I have noticed from mothers where I come from in Limpopo is the use of fingers to refer to their children. They will talk about their children pointing to their fingers starting from the first born to the last.

They could be boasting about their children where they say a lot of things; and those they have not much to say about, those who are an embarrassment to them.

The fingers talk about the children and on them I engraved words that talk about that particular child.

"Gavaza" in the title of the work, www.gavaza.cx.za, is a Shangaan word that refers to the name given to girls after they have completed their initiation rites. The work deals with traditional cultures' initiation to technology.



Collen Maswanganyi, *Tintiho leti* (These fingers), 2008. Cork, wood and acrylic paint, 66 x 45cm. Courtesy of Fried Contemporary Gallery & Studio.



Collen Maswanganyi, *www.gavaza.cx.za*, 2008. Bluegum wood and acrylic paint, dimensions variable, height approximately 200 mm. Courtesy of Fried Contemporary Gallery & Studio.

CATALOGUE OF ARTISTS

Dale Yudelman

Born 1958, Johannesburg.

Dale Yudelman's career in photography has led him through two eras of South African history as well as across several continents. He began photographing at a young age and was barely out of his teens in 1979 when he landed a job as a reportage photographer for The Star newspaper. This exposed Yudelman to the harsh realities of Apartheid South Africa and he began to develop his first personal series of work, *Suburbs in Paradise*.

His ongoing series *Reality Bytes* continues his journey of embracing fictive truths, which retain the raw quality of real moments without compromising the authentic ethics and principles required by photographic naturalism.

Yudelman's images are constructed composites using multiple images to create one seamless scene. Each image encapsulates a narrative, which comments on his immediate surroundings.

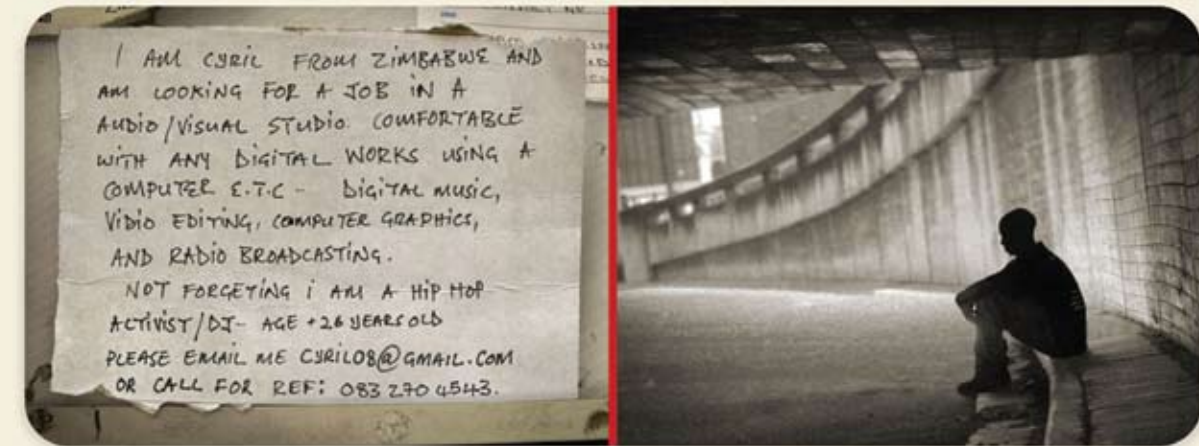
Dale Yudelman lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa.

Artist's statement

i am... is a series of photo-based works, which was developed and accepted for Spier Contemporary 2007. Yudelman's *Reality Bytes* series had grown into a successful and recognisable signature style. *i am...* was purposefully developed to introduce a different aesthetic and a personal and serious approach to an issue based narrative.

With *i am...* Yudelman returns to a monochromatic palette and has applied a multi media approach, including white foil embossing in the prints. Handwritten public notes by job seekers, found in supermarkets throughout South Africa, were anchored by poignant images.

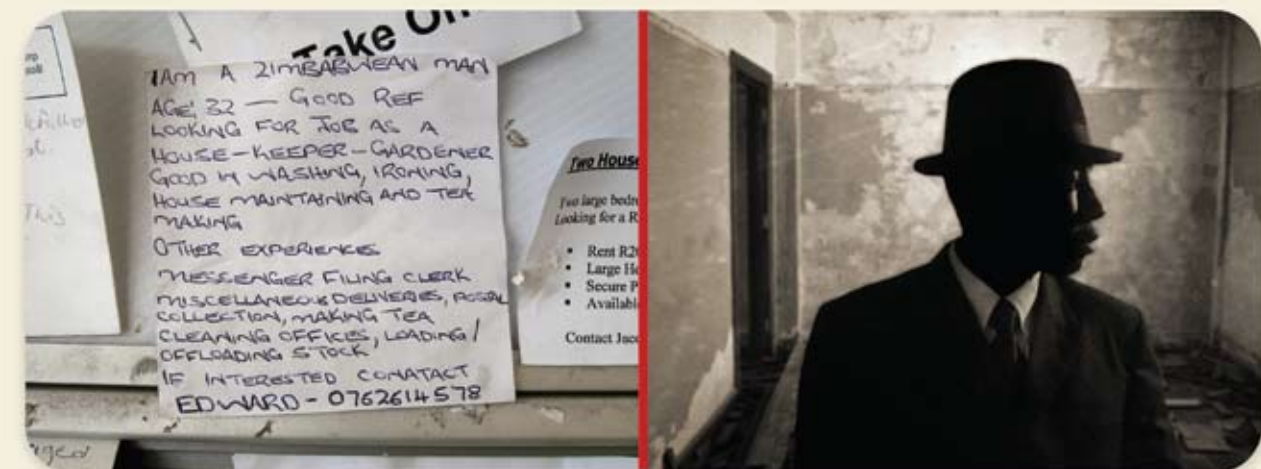
i am... handles a serious topic with sensitivity and insight offering an interesting and informative experience without compromising the dignity of those depicted.



CYRIL | 0832704543

Dale Yudelman, Cyril from *i am ...*, 2008. Chromogenic colour prints, 430 x 820 mm each. Edition/ 9. Unisa Art Collection.

Dale Yudelman, Edward from *i am ...*, 2008. Chromogenic colour prints, 430 x 820 mm each. Edition/ 9. Unisa Art Collection.



EDWARD | 0762614578

CATALOGUE OF ARTISTS

Daniel Halter

Born 1977, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Dan Halter was born in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1977. He graduated in 2001 from the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town with a BA (FA). He has had two solo shows, one at João Ferreira Gallery in Cape Town entitled *Take Me to Your Leader* in 2006 and another called *Never say never* at the Derbylius Gallery in Milan in 2008. He has taken part in numerous group shows including *Second to None* at the South African National Gallery, *Zeitgenössische Fotokunst aus Südafrika* at the Neuer Berliner Kunstverein (NBK) and *VideoBrasil* in São Paulo. In 2008 he was an MTN new contemporaries nominee. He also took part in two residencies, one in Zürich and one in Rio de Janeiro in 2008. In 2009 he will be part of the Havana Biennale. He teaches part time in videography at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, UCT.

Artist's statement

I make things that turn me on. The materials I choose resonate for me. I play with local sayings and expressions and also different meanings. The end products are potent combinations that are often ambiguous and open for interpretation. I don't want to take a position myself as I find it problematic to take one viewpoint on things.

Regarding my map works, I find the words "fabric" and "fabrication" appropriate.

fab•ric n

1. cloth of any type made from thread or fibres, whether woven, knitted, or felted
2. the particular texture or quality of a kind of cloth
3. the fundamental structure or makeup of something
4. the material from which something is constructed, especially a building, or the physical structure of something

fab•ri•ca•tion n

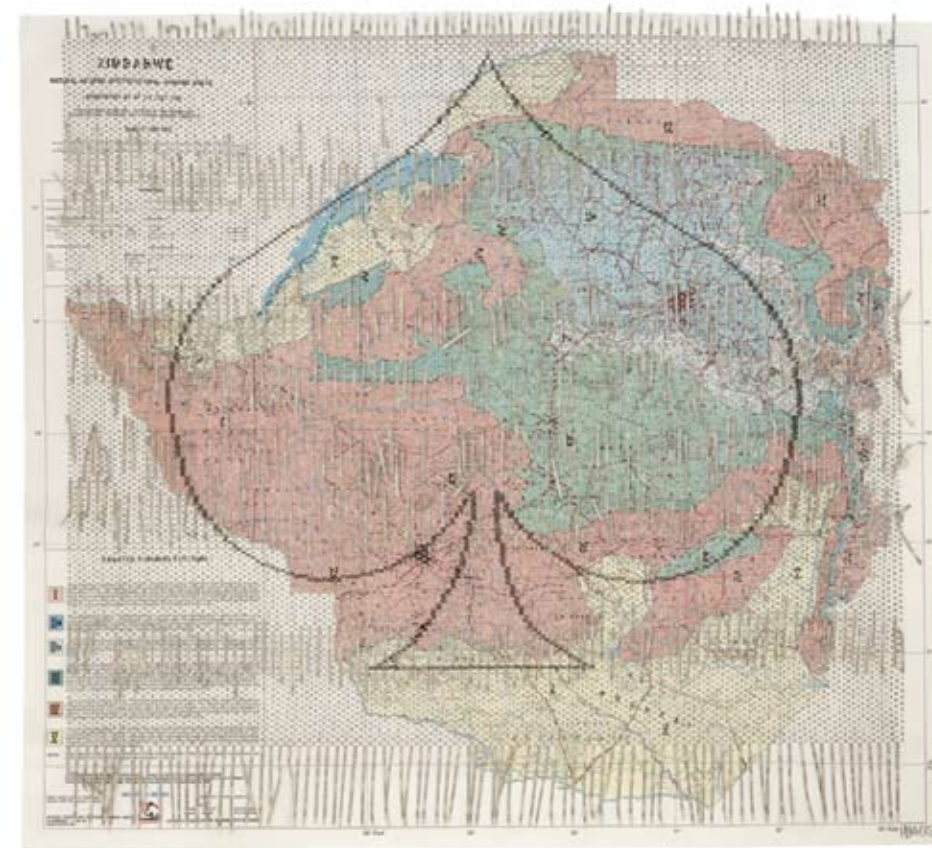
1. the construction of something, or something that has been constructed or made
2. the invention of something that is not true
3. something that is not true but has been made up
4. a fraudulent imitation of a signature or document

Encarta(r) World English Dictionary (c) 1999 Microsoft Corporation.

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These words then can refer to both the fundamental structure of something, and yet also mean a false statement.

Space of Aids is a map of Zimbabwe woven together with a 2006 Harare phone book. The words are a spoonerism of ACE OF SPADES. 'Black as the ace of spades' is an expression denoting the epitome of black. The spade symbol on my map is only an outline, empty of its blackness. This void represents the devastation in the population by both the AIDS virus and the political situation there. Aid from the rest of the world has not been forthcoming.



Daniel Halter, *Space of AIDS*, 2007. Farming region map of Zimbabwe woven with a shredded 2006 Harare Zimbabwe telephone directory, black thread, 820 x 890 mm. Unisa Art Collection.



Daniel Halter, *Safe as fuck*, 2007. AIDS ribbon, hypodermic needles, black foam-core, 810 x 1010 mm. Edition of 5. Courtesy of the artist.

Artist's statement

"Safe as fuck" is a turn of phrase that became popular in the 1990s in the rave scene. According to www.urbandictionary.com it means "cool as hell", "really rather fabulous" or it can be used as a farewell. Formed out of a continuous length of AIDS ribbon pinned into place with hypodermic needles, this expression takes on another meaning. Sex is no longer safe.

Diane Victor

Born in Witbank, 1964

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 6 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 Künste 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; Bundeskanzleramt, 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's statement

These drawings, made in ash and charcoal dust explore the instability and fragility inherent in the medium as a metaphor for the precariousness and uncertainty of the lives of white males in the current



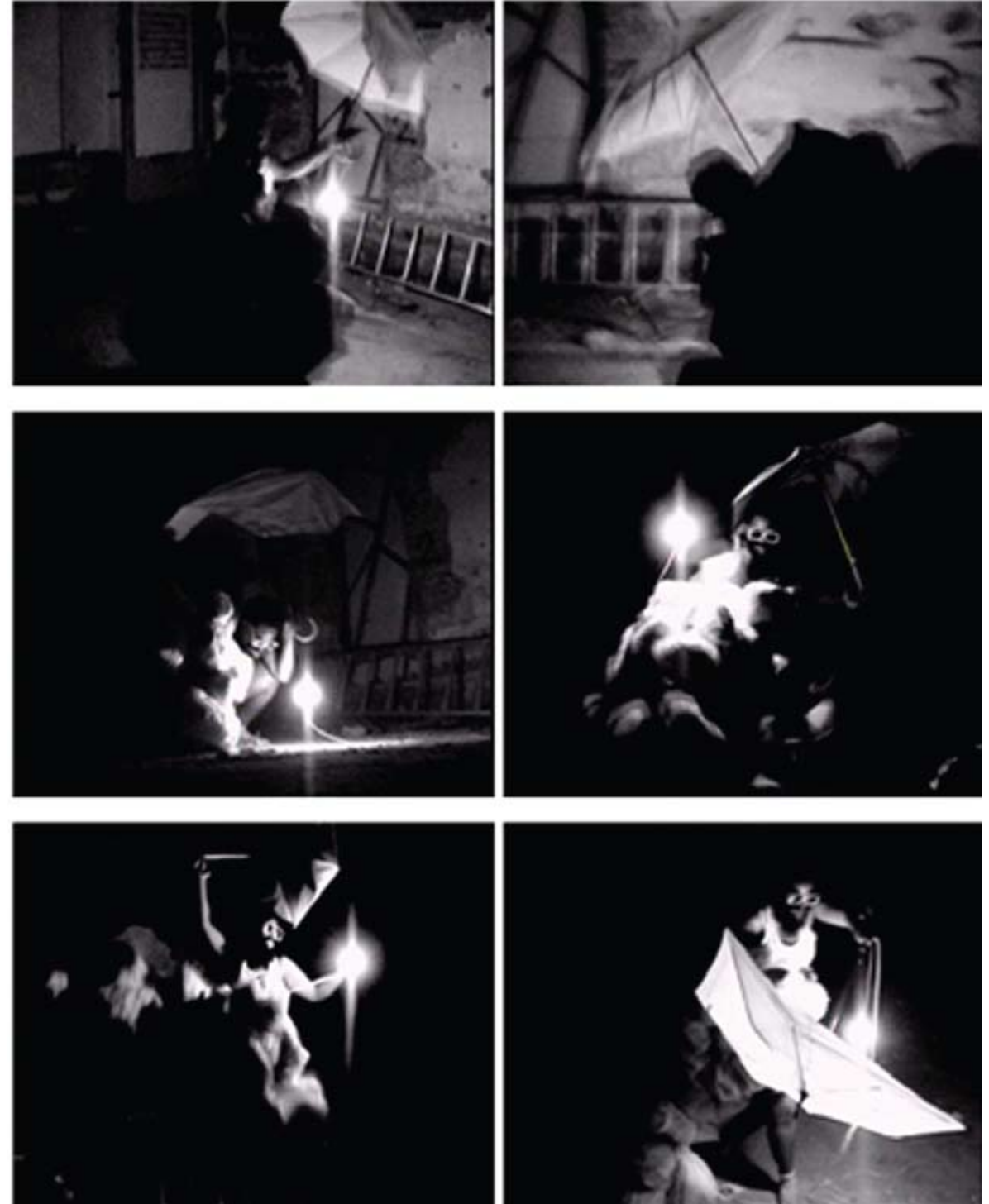
Diane Victor, Fader/Varder, 2009.
Dust and ash on paper,
1500 x 1000 mm. Courtesy of the artist.

Dineo Bopape

Born 1981, Polokwane.

Dineo Bopape graduated with a B Tech from the Durban Institute of Technology in 2004, and went on to study at De Ateliers postgraduate art institute in Amsterdam. She is an obsessive collector and assembler of objects that are redolent with past histories and future possibilities: secondhand clothes, secrets and love letters, invoices, dust swept and gathered from her apartment, spoons, belt buckles and other items. These are processed and combined in installations such as *Growing everyday*, first produced for her B Tech graduate show and reworked into a major wall piece for *In the making: materials and process* at Michael Stevenson (2005). She exhibited an installation in the experimental Multimedia Room at the KZNSA Gallery in June 2005. Group exhibitions include Cape '07 in Cape Town (2007); *New Painting* at the KZNSA Gallery in Durban, the Unisa Gallery in Pretoria and Johannesburg Art Gallery (2006); *Shared History/Decolonising the Image* at Arti & Amicitiae in Amsterdam (2006); *urban women two zero zero five* at the African Art Centre (2005); *Tangencya*, a site-specific exhibition in Durban (2004); and *Women's Day – Imvubelo* at the Durban Art Gallery (2004). She had a solo show at Mart House, Amsterdam, in September 2007.

Dineo Bopape, Video stills from *Dreamweaver*, 2008. Video, Duration: 7 mins 53 secs. Edition of 3 + AP.
Courtesy of Michael Stevenson Gallery.



Elfriede Dreyer

Born 1953, Pretoria.

Elfriede Dreyer is an associate professor in Fine Arts in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of Pretoria. She is an interdisciplinary arts academic who teaches in the fields of Fine Arts, Art History and Visual Communication. Special interests are the topics of utopia/dystopia, deconstruction and technoculture, evident in theoretical publications and her creative research. In her artworks she mostly utilises mixed media and digital technologies. Elfriede has curated several major exhibitions in South Africa, such as *Digital art* at Unisa in 2002, *Reconciliation* and *The Maswanganyi Family* in 2005 and *Little Deaths* in 2007, and she co-curated *Visibility/Commentary*, the centenary exhibition of the University of Pretoria in 2008.

Artist's statement

Like many other countries in the world, South Africa's history is fraught with utopian construction. My generation is a product of the political unrest before, during and after Nationalism when radical political utopianism drove both anti-apartheid movements and pro-government groups.

Utopian map comments on institutions as places that participate in the ideologies and utopianism of the governments of the day. During the 1960s European and American vanguard artists began to create art in response to the ideologies of institutions, perceived as places of "cultural confinement", but since the 1990s it has become fashionable to have critical discussions *within* the confines of institutions, thereby making the institution not only the problem but also the solution. As the administrative capital of South Africa, Pretoria probably experienced the onslaught of local politics in a much more pronounced way. *Utopia map* entails an aerial view of the eastern CBD area in Pretoria encompassing several institutions such as the University of Pretoria and the English and Afrikaans boys' and girls' schools; the sports stadium Loftus Versfeld; and the surrounding suburban areas. This geographical map has always been a critically significant cultural hub where ideologies have been playing out and citizens bear the scars of past utopian construction as well as of the impact of the new ideologies of the current ruling party. The colour green has been used as reminiscent of a paradisiacal 'green' zone.

To be records a young bride-to-be during her "kitchen tea", a ceremony of initiation that is especially maintained amongst Afrikaners. Similar to the initiation rites of circumcision that are still being exercised by certain African cultures since they are proposed to significantly improve quality of life, many other rituals, customs and ways of life are maintained and transmitted from generation to generation for the very same utopian reasons.

Elfriede Dreyer, *Utopia map*, 2009. Ultrachrome ink on PVC, 1500 x 1860 mm. Courtesy of the artist.



Elfriede Dreyer, *To be*, 2009. Photograph, ultrachrome ink on Hahnemühle paper, 500 x 580 mm. Courtesy of the artist.

Frikkie Eksteen

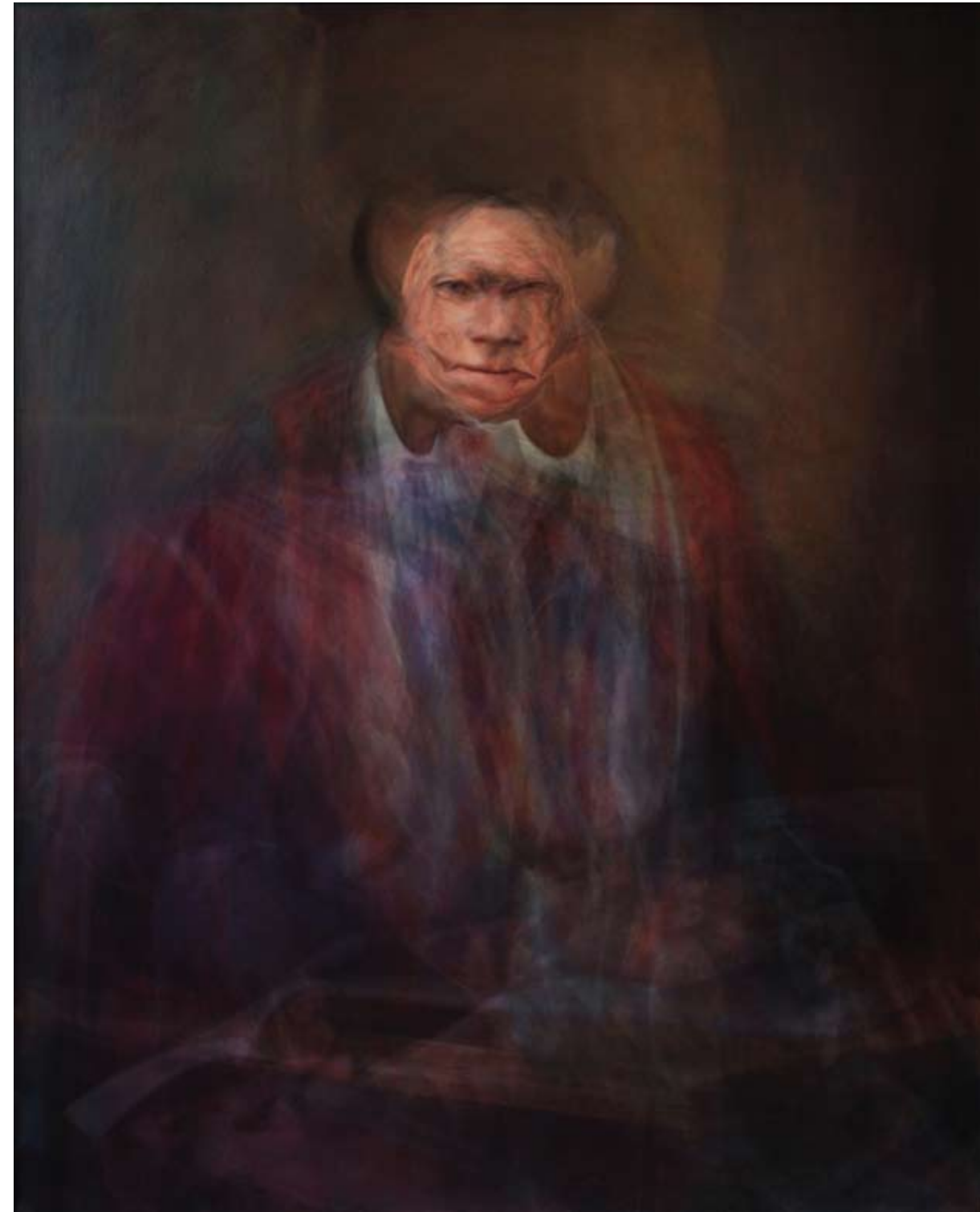
Born 1973, Pretoria.

A graduate in the town of his birth, Frikkie Eksteen completed his Master's degree at the University of Pretoria in 2000. Group projects he has been involved with include The Trinity Session's *Broadcast quality: the art of Big Brother* (2002), Bell-Roberts's art-advertising showcase, *Mettle and paint* (2003), *CLEAN/GRIME: exhibitions of de-saturated art* (2001-2003), *Roles/Robes* (2006), and *Greenhouse* (2007). His prize-winning *Hanging Garden* (2004) exhibition at the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival in Oudtshoorn is his most current solo project. The artist's work is represented in the Pretoria Art Museum, University of Pretoria, Sasol, and MTN Art collections. He is currently a part-time guest lecturer at the University of Pretoria. Eksteen's art is a multi-disciplinary permutation of traditional and non-traditional art practices; he has produced a body of work incorporating x-ray and digital imaging, photography, animation, video, projection, painting, drawing and mushroom cultivation.

Artist's statement

Terminal Host (1918-2008) aims to confound popular assumptions about portraiture and its uses. As a way of recording not only a likeness but also commemorating a particular history, a portrait is an inadequate, yet oddly specific document. Because the image has an existence apart from its subject, it is also apt to produce its own fictions. To engage with these ideas, *Terminal Host* (1918-2008) was created by interfering with eleven historically significant portrait paintings in the University of Pretoria's collection. These portraits, representing not only eleven likenesses but also a specific historical time frame (1918-2008), have been digitally merged to produce a new subject. By not being exclusively faithful to any personage, the resulting image avoids popular clichés about the portrait painter's supposedly masterful depiction of some authentic character. What it shows instead, is a generic portrait monstrously flawed by digital artefacts. Another aspect of the paradox is the image's return to the lofty medium it was sourced from. Repainting becomes at once an act of authenticating and commemorating the fiction that has been performed upon the series. By not only merging identities, but also technologies, the artwork questions the fidelity of image transcription and history writing as we know it.

Frikkie Eksteen, *Terminal host*, 1918 - 2008. Oil on canvas, 1000 x 800 mm.
Courtesy of the artist.



Guy du Toit & Iaan Bekker

Guy du Toit

Born 1958, Rustenburg, North West Province.

Du Toit graduated from the University of Pretoria in 1982 and has exhibited widely both locally and abroad and is well represented in local - private, public and corporate collections. He has been the recipient of various awards, including an FNB-Vita art award in 1993 and the Sol Plaatjie Sculpture Award in 1989. He is currently represented at the International Triennial of Contemporary Art in Prague.

He has taught/lectured at Pelmama Academy in Soweto, both Johannesburg and Pretoria Technikons, now UJ and TUT respectively, and the then Johannesburg School of Art, Ballet, Drama and Music. Du Toit currently teaches part-time at the University of Pretoria and works from his studio in Zwavelpoort, Kungwene.

Iaan Bekker

Born 1960, Winhoek, Namibia.

Studied painting under Keith Dietrich and graphic printmaking under John Clarke at the University of Pretoria, where he completed the BA (Fine Arts) degree in Information Design in 1982. He studied ceramics and glass under Retief van Wyk from 1992 to 1996. Iaan has participated in a number of exhibitions, including *AnOther Direction* at Newton Gallery (1994), *Arts Erotica* at the Thompson Gallery (1996), *Nine Strategic Imperatives for South African Export Culture* at the Stellenbosch Academy (2003), *New Trends in Studio Glass* at the Pretoria Art Museum (2005) and *Frieze of Life* at the Platform Gallery (2007). He is currently partner and creative director at BrandWealth® and has been a guest lecturer at the University of Pretoria since 1996.

Artists' statement

The allegory of dystopia is returned to the viewer by way of the multiplicity of hands. For it is so that the means (*techne*) we employ - the gun, our systems, the card, the missile - signify the dual aspects of culture. Nature is left out of this equation specifically owing to the gap left for contextual deployment (caltrops were deployed against horse, rider and political imperatives in any theatre of dispute - a deterrent, obstacle, snare). Rather we describe here the nature of human nature - why we are incited to rebellion by such primitive means as bottles and flammables? I think this is effected by exclusion from the prior means of technologically more evolved means, i.e. guns and money, nay, more - credit, the promised tender of confidences, the collective short-hand of the promise of future ambitions brought within reach.

And then what: the leap of faith, whether taken in the subliminal or obliterating sense, does technology transpose? The viewer decides. It leads to questions of morality. Is technology good? Are people bad? Surely its politics like all human endeavour express foremost history, power, luxury and the voice of the selfish meme. So it implies a set of options. Positions. But now within the framework of the Endgame.



Guy du Toit & Iaan Bekker, *Caltrops*, 2008. Bronze, variable size, approximately 130 x 150 mm each. Courtesy of the artists.

Gwenneth Miller

Born 1962, Musina, South Africa.

Gwenneth Miller lives and works in Pretoria where she lectures at UNISA and currently is the head of Visual Arts. Born in 1962 in Musina, South Africa, Gwen studied at North-West University, completing the BA (Fine Arts) degree in 1984 and a postgraduate educational diploma in 1985. She held several exhibitions under her maiden name, McLellan and since her marriage in 1993, has exhibited as Miller. She completed the MA (Fine Arts) at Pretoria University in 1997 and is currently registered for a DLitt et Phil degree at UNISA. For most of her career she worked as a painter, exploring mixed media with diverse thematic interests. During the past decade she became increasingly involved with multifaceted group projects and new media. She exhibits nationally and internationally, and has participated in 104 group exhibitions, 3 collaborative projects and 4 solo exhibitions. Her works are represented in private and public collections, such as Absa, Telkom, University of the North-West, UNISA and SASOL.

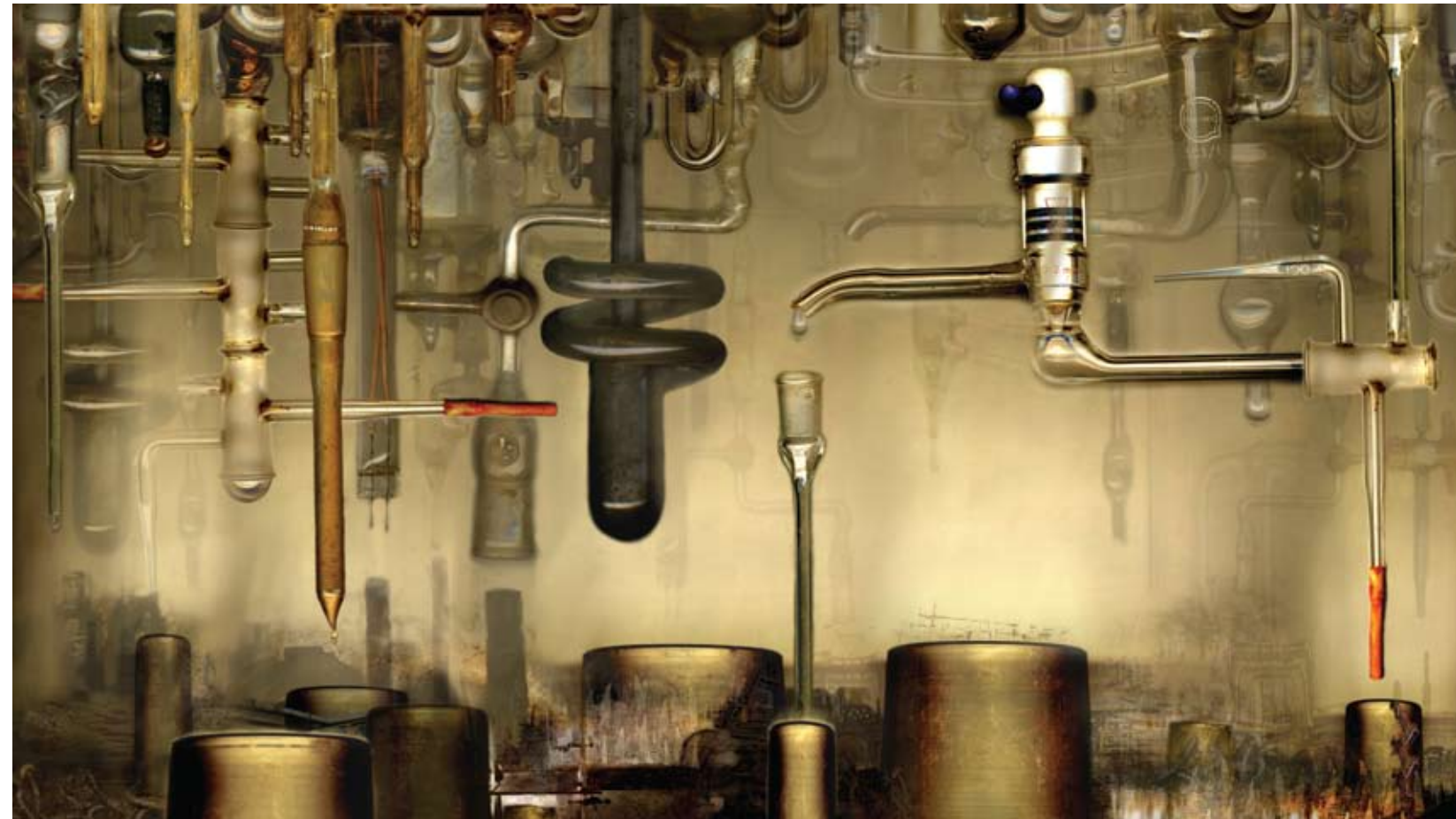
Artist's statement

Physical matter or energy cannot be created or destroyed; it can only be transformed or redirected in a closed system. 'Continuum', a term borrowed from a mathematical context, refers to transitions as opposed to discontinuities. In a time where progress is still associated with expansion and industrial development, the consideration of the earth as a closed system has jolted us into urgent responsibility. The grime we create comes back to us in unwelcome structures that dictate alternative rules.

In an organised society of a constantly changing world we attempt to measure, control and determine the reality through regulation. The use of laboratory glass equipment recalls the continuous alliance between technology and our urban lives. This representation speaks of the values of purity and intellect that society puts forward, yet underneath it the organic imperfection of physical existence labours on. The system feeds and, at the same time, withholds sustenance from the decomposing urban cityscape.

On the one hand, the idea of being constantly measured by society is related to a world of supreme peaceful order. On the other hand, it is related to the control that suppresses individuality and that breeds revolt. The visualised system is also a rather nostalgic reflection on the impossibility of living spontaneously.

Gwenneth Miller, *Continuum system*, 2008. Digital print, Ultra chrome inks on Hahnemühle paper, 500 x 900 mm. Courtesy of the artist.



Jan van der Merwe

Born 1958, Virginia, Free State

Jan van der Merwe currently holds the position of Senior Lecturer in the Department of Fine Art at the Tshwane University of Technology. Van der Merwe is presented in collections of the Tshwane University of Technology, Memorias Intimas Marcas, Pretoria Art Museum, University of South Africa, National Cultural History Museum, Sasol, University of Potchefstroom, Feniks Unite in Belgium, Sanlam, Absa, Harrie Siertsema and the Oliewenhuis Museum in Bloemfontein. The artist has participated in numerous exhibition, of which the latest include *Fusion through Art* (2004) at the National Cultural History Museum, *Reconciliation* at the University of Pretoria, *The Human Condition* at the Pretoria Art Museum and *Intervention* (2008) at the University of South Africa. Solo Exhibitions include *Unknown* (2005) at the Sanlam Art Gallery in Cape Town and *The Archeology of Time* (2006) at the Pretoria Art Museum.

Artist's statement

My work incorporates found objects and junk materials that have been discarded. I use rusted metals and tins that are forged together with inherited objects that evoke memories and serve as a starting point. Tin cans are ordinarily utilised for preservation and in my work they become metaphors for waste, loss and consumerism - an attempt to preserve a transient quality. The chemical process of rust is a physical fight against time. To rust is to go back to the original matter - the end of a process and the start of a new cycle - thus recycling. The rusted patina is a method by which contemporary objects are placed into "archaeological time", thus forcing us to scrutinize and respect contemporary life, especially the ordinary, while it also has a nostalgic effect. At present I work with artefacts of our own time and try to transform them into archaeological relics, revealing human pathos and weakness.

Time out suggests the concept of being driven into a corner, the bottled up frustration of an ordinary person when her/his spirit and creativity are restrained through misuse of power. *Time Out* also becomes an opportunity to reflect and review.

Jan van der Merwe, *Time out*, 2009. Found objects, rusted metal, paper, charcoal, installation of approximate size 3000 x 3000 mm. Courtesy of the artist.



Jenna Burchell

Born 1985, Natal

Jenna Burchell is a young and upcoming installation artist. When her parents immigrated to East Asia, Jenna grew an inquisitive eye towards relationships struggling to communicate through technology the aging process of her family witnessed at yearly intervals.

In 2004 Jenna began exploring the relationship between organic decay and technology during her Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts degree at the University of Pretoria. In 2006 a trip to Europe opened her eyes to interactive installation art, the medium which became her field of specialisation when she graduated in 2007.

Jenna takes art to a technological level seldom seen in South African galleries. She is currently (2009) exhibiting at various galleries across South Africa and is steadily building a following for her artworks that aspire to immerse the viewer in a tactile experience of art.

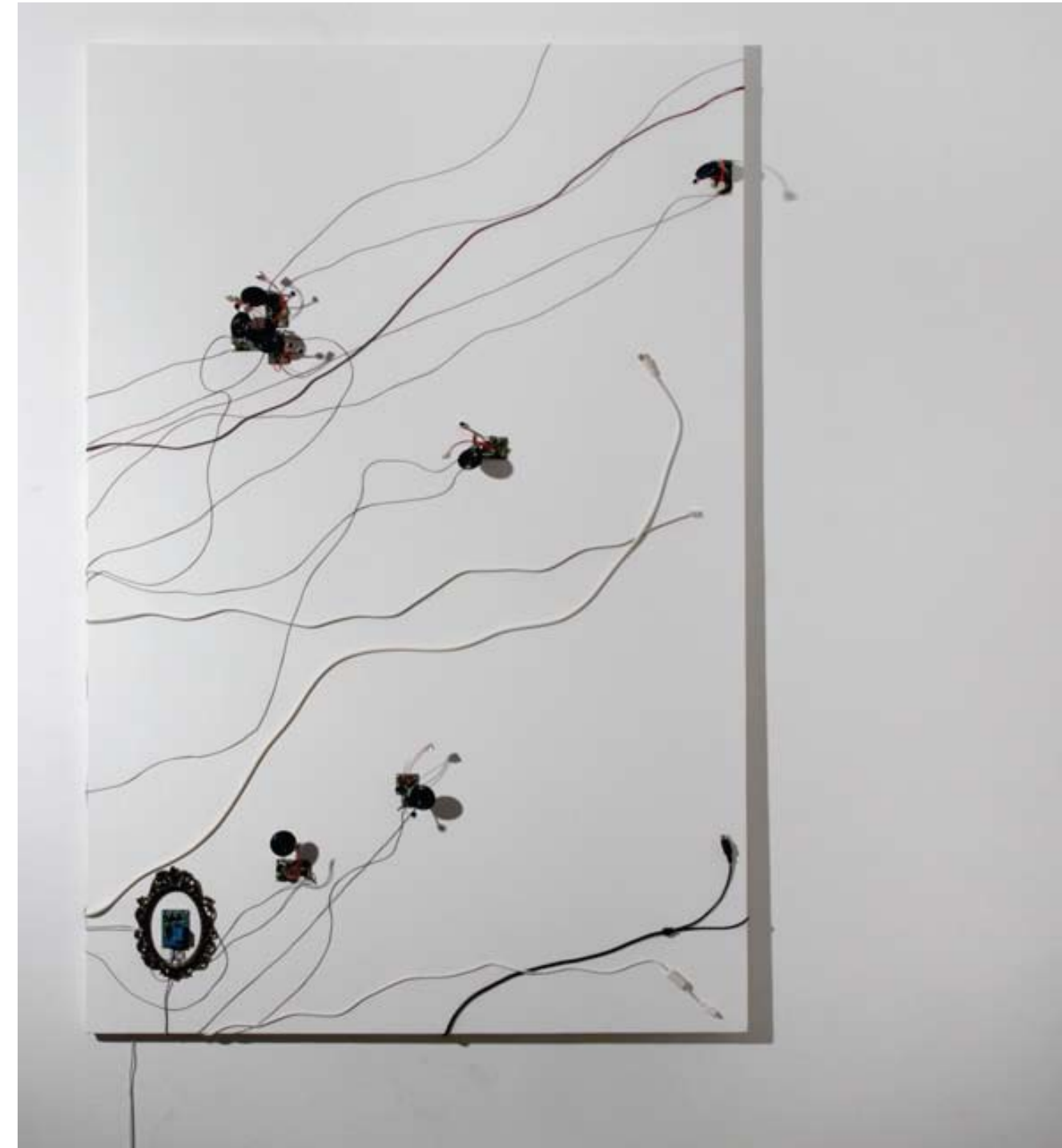
Artist's statement

Through building spaces that illustrate the mental "inscape" of individuals, I aim to pull down the barriers of traditional portraiture and search for new ways to portray the deeper existential core of people in their context. In doing this, the voice of the sitter is freed and a dialogue with the viewer is brought to life. This interchange is created through computer controlled, interactive objects stripped down to bereft aesthetics, parodying the hard edged technology with organic beauty. While surrounded by such a flux, the viewer can imagine the faces, lives and contexts of the sitters.

Rambler is an interactive art work that explores the organic form of a vine, otherwise known as a rambler, creeping up a wall. The organic vine is replaced with communication cables and the flowers by self-contained speaker/recorder devices. The audience is encouraged to interact with the work by recording their own voices into one of the several "flowers". The last recorded voice is played back repetitively until a new voice is recorded over the last.

Created out of absences rather than presences, *Rambler* creates a space of white noise wherein communications become lost in an endless rambling of unknown voices failing to maintain a dialogue. This decay of understanding is suspended in simulacrum only to be disturbed when new voices are entered into the ramblings by the current viewers.

Ultimately the organic decay preserved by technology (in the form of voice recorders), glitched in a repetitive cycle of replay, shows a contemporary loss in the depth of communication and a deterioration of understanding between people divided by time and space in a dystopic diaspora currently experienced by many South African families.



Jenna Burchell, *Rambler*, 2009. Installation, 1500 x 1000 mm. Courtesy of the artist.

Johan Thom

Born 1976, Johannesburg

Johan Thom is a video, installation and performance artist based in Johannesburg. His works are often confrontational and darkly humorous, terrorizing our sense of space, order and stability. Thom has shown and participated in numerous group exhibitions, art-projects and fellowships at venues such as the the Palazzo delle Papesse (2008), The First Canary Island Biennale (2006), Belgrade International Theatre Festival (2006), the Britto Arts Trust in Bangladesh (2006), the Rotterdam Film Festival (2006), the Venice Biennale (2003), the CRIC/Pro Helvetia residency programme in Switzerland (2004/5), the Ampersand Fellowship in New York (2005), the International Computer Arts Festival in Slovenia (2004) and various other national arts festivals and group exhibitions in South Africa. He has had numerous solo shows including the 'bind/ontbind' at the Kwazulu Natal Association of Arts (2008), 'Minotaur Series 12' at the Johannesburg Art Gallery (with Christophe Fellay, 2006), 'The Diary Of New York' through Map South Africa (2006) and the 'Exorcism' series at the National Cultural History Museum (2003), South Africa. Thom holds a BA Fine Arts degree (1999) from the University of Pretoria and a Masters Degree from the Tshwane University of Technology (2003, Cum Laude). In 2008 Thom took up his Commonwealth Scholarship awarded to complete his PhD in Fine Art at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London.

Artist's statement

The artist is blindfolded. He throws a book into the air and rushes forward not knowing where the book will fall. The action is repeated in three different locations in Johannesburg with three different books respectively: the I Ching (in a public park front of a power station in Republic road), the Koran (atop the Rennie building overlooking the city) and the Bible (in front of the oncoming traffic in Jeppe Street).

Johan Thom, *Vox populi/Vox dei*, 2008 – 2009. Action, photography & found objects, dimensions variable (approximately 1500 x 1500 x 250 mm). Photographic credit: Hans Wilschut. Courtesy of the artist.



Kai Lossgott

Born 1980, Maktoberdorf, Germany.

Kai Lossgott is a South African writer and artist who works across media. He is known for his work in video, performance and experimental film, as well as most recently his plant leaf engravings. His work is concerned with the act of sensing, with language, silence, and the vulnerable instincts which drive them. He lives and works in Cape Town.

Kai holds a BJournal from Rhodes University, majoring in documentary filmmaking and dance theatre, an Advanced Diploma in Visual Arts from UNISA, and an MA in Creative Writing from the University of Cape Town, all three cum laude. His work has been widely exhibited as part of numerous South African art award shows, and regularly shown at international film festivals. He has lectured at various South African universities.

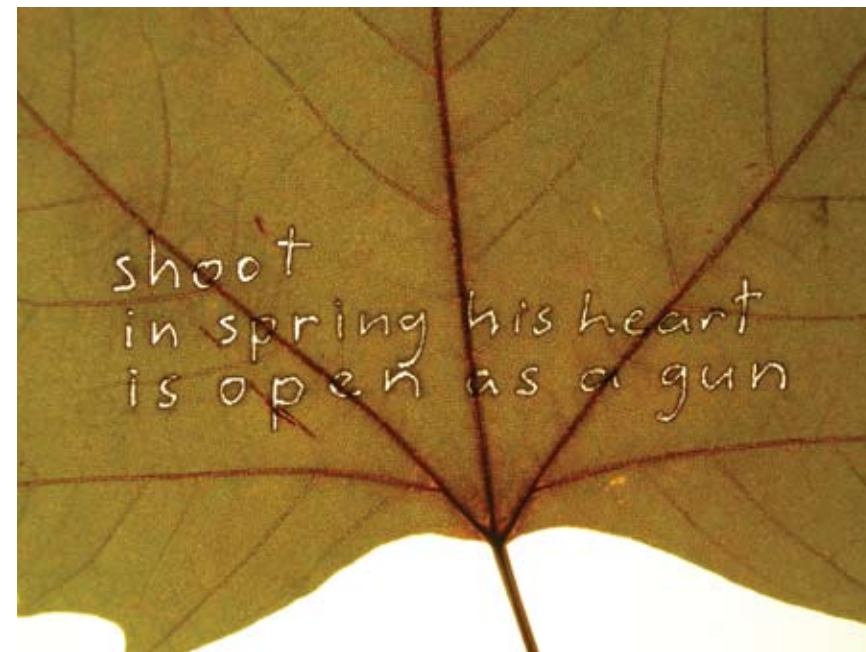
Artist's statement

The inter-connectedness of life rings out in an ever-expanding language network of complex mathematical and biological relationships. These systems can no longer be comprehended by the human mind unaided by technology. Through this we have lost our living relationship with the natural world. We are an inextricable part of these systems, and in disregarding them we disregard ourselves.

The precipitation of an embodied and integrated approach to the system can be discovered deep in the body, outside the workings of the conscious mind, through Buddhist and Taoist meditation practices, in a natural "language" of perception, an unconscious rhythm of silence and sound that runs through every living thing. In a number of studies, the changing seasons have been seen to influence the timing and duration of sleep, pain threshold, alertness, eating habits and mood. Fluctuations in light and darkness are also the root of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), or recurrent winter depression. "Shoot / in spring / his heart is open as a gun" refers to the uncontrollable emotional assault from the inside, which one might more harmoniously translate as sudden joy springing after the cold subterranean months. It is an indication of our bifurcated relationship with our world, based on either control or surrender, which threatens the survival of our living systems.



Kai Lossgott, *Neurotech a*, 2008. Laser engraving on sycamore and morning glory leaves, spruce and glass light boxes. 300 x 300 mm. Courtesy of the artist.



Kai Lossgott, *Neurotech b*, 2008. Laser engraving on sycamore and morning glory leaves, spruce and glass light boxes. 300 x 300 mm. Courtesy of the artist.

Karlien de Villiers

Born 1975, Cape Town, South Africa.

Karlien de Villiers is currently participating in the *PICHA African Comics Exhibition*, shown at the Africa Museum in the Netherlands and the Centre of Contemporary Art in Lagos, Nigeria, as well as the Museum de Arte in Sao Paulo.

In recent years the artist participated in group exhibitions such as *New Comic Art and Work on Paper* and the Johannesburg Art Fair, where her work was exhibited with Erdmann Contemporary. De Villiers also took part in *Artseasons* in Cape Town, *Open End* (shown locally and in Berlin), *Comics Brew* in Johannesburg and the *South African Comics* exhibition held in Berlin.

Artist's statement

'Why were we crucified into sex?' D.H. Lawrence asked in his poem *Tortoise Shout*. The characters, humanoids, pregnant women, halfings, feeble little men, young mothers, star-crossed lovers and other creatures that haunt the grimly expressionistic pop art of Karlien de Villiers seem to echo this question along with many other ancient existential mind-benders like: Who trapped us in these embarrassing bodies? What is eating us alive? Why are we so wracked with need, so sexually carnivorous?

To call her work "pop art" actually seems like a carelessly chosen euphemism. De Villiers has published a successful graphic novel in German, Spanish and French, and the world of comics and illustration clearly inform her art, but her drawings, paintings and prints are related to cartooning and Lichtenstein, the way nursery rhymes are kin to Nick Cave's darkly humorous murder ballads – she uses bright colours, whimsy and pop cultural references the way that Chris Ware squeezes the absent father of Jimmy Corrigan with his pot belly into a sad superman suit. With broad brush strokes and deadly detail she renders visible the carnage of human desire and longing.

© Text: Danie Marais 2008

Karlien de Villiers, *Blackeyed*, 2008. Acrylic & ink on paper, 265 x 210 mm.
Courtesy of The Photographers Gallery ZA.



CATALOGUE OF ARTISTS

Kudzanai Chiurai

Born in 1981 in Zimbabwe

Solo exhibitions

- 2008 *Yellow lines*, Obert contemporary, Johannesburg
- 2007 *Graceland*, Obert contemporary, Johannesburg
- 2005 *Y propaganda*, Obert contemporary, Johannesburg
- 2004 *Correction: The Revolution Will Be Televised*, Obert contemporary, Johannesburg
- 2003 *The revolution will not be televised*, Brixton art gallery, London

Group exhibitions

- 2008 Melbourne stencil festival, Melbourne, Australia
- 2008 *Africa now*, Round tower, Copenhagen; Northern Norway art centre, Lofoten, Norway; and Tampere Art Museum, Finland
- 2006 *Dak'art*, Dakar, Senegal
- 2006 *New painting*, Kwazulu-Natal Society of Arts, Durban
- 2005 *Reconciliation*, University of Pretoria, curated by Elfriede Dreyer

Awards

- 2005 Top 100 dazzlers and doers in South Africa, Mail&Guardian, South Africa
- 2003 Most promising art student, University of Pretoria, South Africa
- 2000 merit award, The National Art Gallery, Zimbabwe

Artist's statement

Kudzanai Chiurai is an internationally acclaimed young artist now living and working in South Africa. He was the first black student to graduate with a BA (Fine Art) from the University of Pretoria. Regarded as part of the "born free" generation in Zimbabwe because he was born one year after the country's independence, Chiurai's early work focused on the political, economic and social strife in his homeland. Seminal works like *Presidential wallpaper* depicted Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe as a sell-out and led to Chiurai's exile from Zimbabwe. Chiurai's large mixed media works now tackle some of the most pertinent issues facing Southern Africa such as xenophobia, displacement and black empowerment. His paintings confront viewers with the psychological and physical experience of inner-city Johannesburg.

© 2009 Obert contemporary



Kudzanai Chiurai, *The revolution will be televised*, 2004. Mixed media on canvas, 1200 x 1000 mm.
Courtesy of Fried Contemporary Art Gallery & Studio.

Lawrence Lemaona

Born 1982. Lives and works in Johannesburg

Lawrence Lemaona completed his Fine Arts BTech degree at the University of Johannesburg in 2007, after obtaining a National Diploma from the same institution.

Players of Colour (2006) a solo exhibition by Lemaona previewed at the Alliance Francaise, Johannesburg and went on to tour major cities within South Africa, after which it was shown at the Gallery Demosniel 89 in Paris, France. His recent solo exhibition, *Fortune telling in black, red and white* (2008) took place at Art Extra in 2008. Recent group shows include *Impossible Monsters* (2007) at Art Extra, and *I Love Jozi* (2007), held at the Beatrice Binoche Gallery in Reunion.

Lemaona has been the recipient of several awards, including the Absa L'Atelier Gerard Sekoto Award and the Sasol Art Award, both in 2007. In late 2008/early 2009 the artist was granted a fellowship on the Ampersand Foundation programme.

Artist's statement

My work was initially started with a very keen interest in the sport of rugby. Rugby, as is in the traditions of South Africa, is predominantly played by white males. My experience was not entirely positive on the rugby field and within its politics. The experience led me to investigate myself as a black male entering and trespassing into a domain that has already being "enculturated" by white males. This, further, prompted me to investigate in my work the idea of masculinity itself. In the work I stage and construct scenes that address ideas of idealism. Using Photoshop, I create collages that speak of a contemporary African masculinity. I attempt to unseat certainty into things that are uncertain.



Lawrence Lemaona, *The discussion*, 2006. Digital print on 100% cotton rag paper, 1120 x 1730 mm. Edition of 10. Unisa Art Collection.



Lawrence Lemaona, *Players of colour*, 2006. Textile, 800 x 1600 mm. Unisa Art Collection.

Minnette Vári

Born 1968, Pretoria.

Minnette Vári obtained an MA (Fine Arts) degree at the University of Pretoria in 1997. Her first monographic museum show was hosted by the Art Museum Lucerne, Switzerland (2004). Other solo shows have been hosted by The Goodman Gallery Cape (2008); Elga Wimmer Gallery, New York (2007); the Victoria H Myhren Gallery, University of Denver, Colorado (2006); Corkin-Shopland Gallery, Toronto (2003). Group exhibitions include the 10th Biennial of Havana, Cuba (2009); the 5th Seoul International Media Art Biennale, South Korea (2008), the African Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale (2007); *Personal Affects: Power and Poetics in Contemporary South African Art*, Museum for African Art, New York (2004); *Transferts* at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (2003) and *The Plateau of Humankind*, the 49th Venice Biennale (2001). She has been awarded a residency fellowship for 2009 at the Civitella Ranieri foundation in Umbria, Italy. Her work features in various public collections, including Billiton SA; the gordonschachatcollection, Johannesburg; MUHKA (Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst), Antwerp; The Museum of Art, Luzern; Rand Merchant Bank, London; Sindika Dokolo Collection of Contemporary African Art, Luanda; and the Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town. Minnette Vári lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Artist's statement

How uncanny the appearance, in almost every culture, of the primordial, the mandala; a lens of contemplation that focuses mind and spirit towards an illuminated centre - an aperture to enlightenment.

We gather in the glow of another, more mundane lens: the hypnotic eye of television; a messenger caught in the labyrinths of ideology and economic allegiance while trading in visions of the future in the name of truth. Is truth still naked in a world simultaneously blinded and lit up by the sight of its own horrors?

While in many cultures a third eye suggests special insight, the one-eyed creature must admit its divorce from perspective, from reason. The light and colour of the rose window holds us spellbound, but it is the dark stone formation of the tracery that gives structure, momentum and rhythm to the spectacle. With my body used as a recording device, I traced the gestures that play out in the news of our time. Replicated into the formulae of gothic stone carving, the movements have become a menacing daisy chain - a tracery for a window that does not necessarily illuminate. It devours. For all our labours, are we caught somewhere in the alimentary canal of a monster of our own making?

Text © Minnette Vári, New York 2004.



Minnette Vári, *Cyclops*, 2004. DVD 1-Channel video and sculpture Installation, Duration: Video 2 mins 20 secs; Audio 4 mins, looped indefinitely. Unisa Art Collection.

Moshekwa Langa

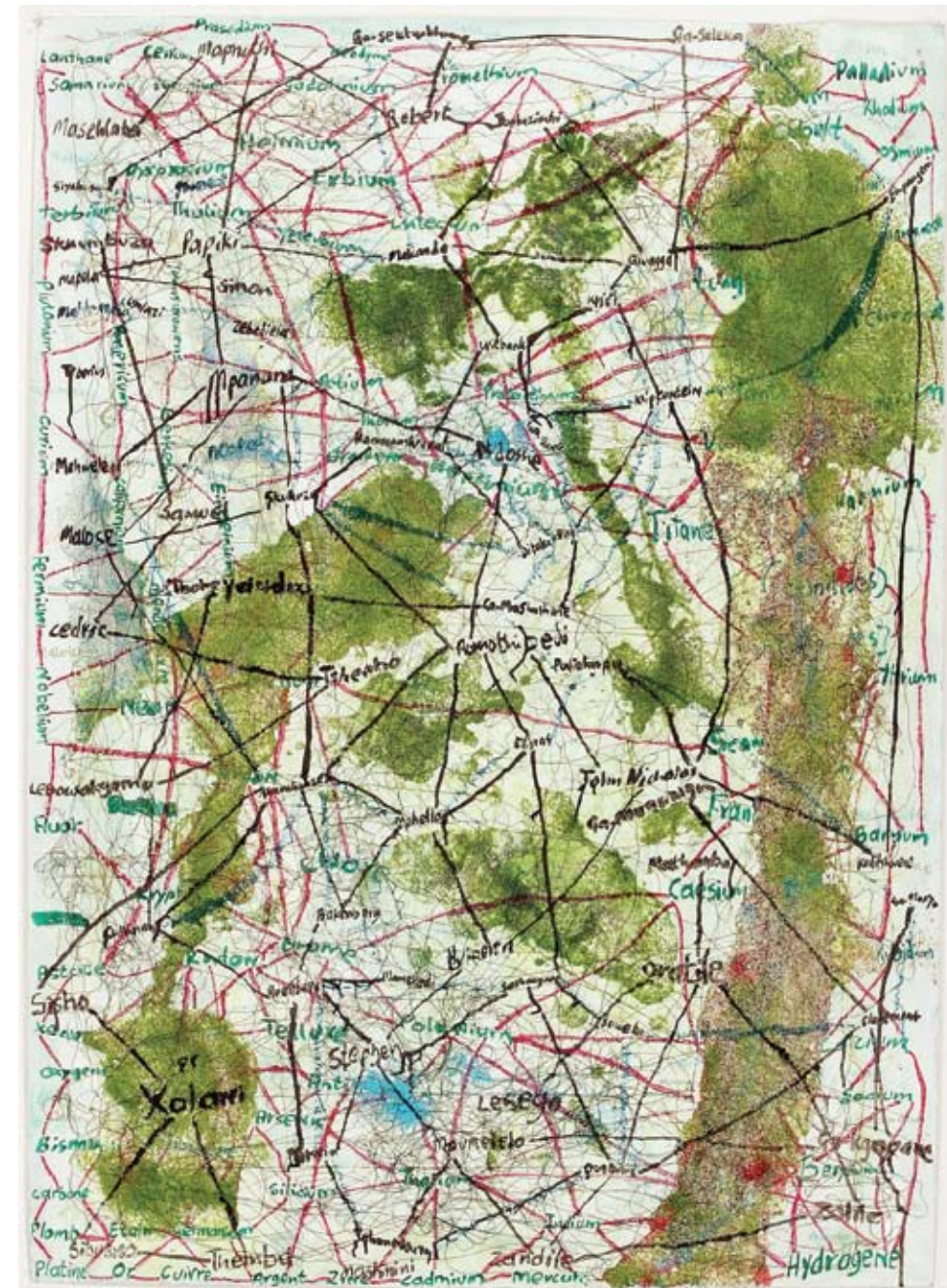
Born 1975, Bakenberg.

Moshekwa Langa has lived and worked in Amsterdam since he was a participant at the Rijksakademie voor Beeldende Kunst in 1997. Apart from participating in numerous group shows, including 'Snap Judgments: New Positions in Contemporary African Photography' curated by Okwui Enwezor, New York (2006) and the 50th Venice Biennale (2003), the artist has had many solo exhibitions. These include Present Tense(...) in Dusseldorf; Interior Monologues (...) in Cincinnati, Loose Draws and Co-wives (...) in Berlin, and Another Time, Another Place (...) in South Africa. The artist has taken part in residencies such as Fresh at the South African National Gallery and Holzwege in Berlin.

Artist's statement

Langa's works, often densely layered with a range of media and meanings, reflect on the intolerable demands and costs of a life lived in and between different places and distinct cultures. Acute observations of human foibles and poignant evocations of memory, longing and loss reflect the frame of mind and experiences of an African artist and intellectual in Europe. Text-based works function as historical ledgers in which names and relationships are mapped and obliterated as if by moving clouds. Elsewhere, lines of text, whether sourced from popular songs, literature or art history, are doodled in apparent abandon across drawings or collages, offering oblique, humorous or ironic commentary on contemporary life. -Emma Bedford.

Moshekwa Langa, *Untitled V*, 2004. Mixed media on paper, 1400 x 1000 mm. Unisa Art Collection.



Nicholas Hlobo

Born 1975, Cape Town.

Nicholas Hlobo has a B Tech degree from the Wits Technikon (2002). He has an affinity for non-traditional materials, with rubber inner tubes, leather, ribbons, soap and found objects making frequent appearances in works which explore Xhosa traditions, homosexuality and 'anything that people find embarrassing in society'. He was the winner of the Tollman Award for the Visual Arts in 2006. In 2007 he had solo shows at Extrapazio in Rome and the Pei Ling Chan Gallery, Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, Georgia, and was the invited artist for the Aardklop festival in Potchefstroom. Recent group exhibitions include *.za: giovane arte dal Sudafrica* at Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena (2008); *Cape '07*, Cape Town (2007); and *Olvida Quien Soy - Erase me from who I am* at the Centro Atlantico de Arte Moderno in Las Palmas (2006). He took up a two-month Ampersand Foundation residency in New York in 2007, and spent three months in residence at the Thami Mnyele Foundation studios in Amsterdam in 2005.

Artist's statement

The materials in these works have a strong relationship to the conversation in which I attempt to engage the viewer. The rubber, for example, relates to the masculine status symbol because it comes from cars; it also relates to industrialisation which is largely male dominated. The rubber has sexual connotations to it as well. By this I mean its association with condoms, which are made from a similar material. The kind of rubber I've used is mainly black and that relates to bondage. You get sex toys made out of the same material – black inner tube. It symbolises protection and yet is very sensitive. It can be very durable but is vulnerable to being pricked. Imagine: when driving a car you are safe as long as your tyres do not get punctured. The same applies to sex with a condom.

The inner tubes are old and punctured, gathered from tyre fitting shops dotted about the inner city of Johannesburg. They are then cut into pieces and joined together to create the object. What is interesting is how rubber tends to take on a shape of its own, despite being cut into a particular shape. It almost resembles flesh in its tone, finish, elasticity, and even fragility for that matter. One thing I found fascinating while working with the rubber is how it perfectly links to queerness. The smooth organic folds it creates almost resemble an intestine. That is very humorous, but could be heavy. Have you ever thought of the inner tube as an intestine? Interestingly, as I also explore the Xhosa language in my works, I remembered that the tube is sometimes referred to as *ithumbu* in Xhosa. *Ithumbu* literally translates as intestine in English. The link to man-to-man sex is very strong here. The pink ribbon is there to suggest homosexuality.

The thought of creating these works, especially *Umtya nethunga*, made me feel like my head was going to explode. I felt regret and determination at the same time.

When I produce something on a large scale like this, and work on it for a long time, it does something to my psyche. The process allows me time to be alone and sink deep into my thoughts.

I always find that the material tends to dominate the entire process. My ideas evolve in unexpected ways as the material helps me discover new things. The start usually seems like trying to roll a rock as large as a double-decker bus, and by the completion of the work I go, 'Wow, I can't believe I went through that and came back sane.'



Nicholas Hlobo, *Umtya nethunga*, 2005. Rubber inner tubes, pink ribbon, chain, plastic pipe, a wooden stick, steel rope, 1750 x 2700 x 2200 mm. Unisa Art Collection.

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Pascual Tarazona

Born Paiporta, Valencia, Spain

Born in Paiporta Valencia Spain, Tarazona has lived in Madrid, Paris, London and Johannesburg. In Madrid he studied theatre, cinema and fashion and in Paris and in London he worked in fashion where he also attended St Martin's School of Art. In 1975 Tarazona moved to Johannesburg, South Africa, where he excelled as a fashion designer, winning the Coty Designer of the Year award in 1981 and in 1983 he won the Coty Avant Garde award.

During the 1990s, the artist entered the domain of the visual arts and has been a full-time artist since. He has had solo exhibitions in Pretoria, Johannesburg and Madrid and participated in many group exhibitions.

Artists' statement

Pascual Tarazona's evocative gestural works are underpinned by questions about life, its memories and absurdities. His large black Romantic works occupy a space where myth, emotion, gender polarities, bold patterning and the artist's ordering of the universe intermingle. Tarazona sets up a dialogue between disciplines by mixing collage and expressive drawing with painting and photography. The end result is a multitude of layers of progression derived from different artistic processes.

Pascual Tarazona, *The talk*, 2008. Mixed media on board, 1220 x 1220 mm. Courtesy of Fried Contemporary Art Gallery & Studio.



Pascual Tarazona, *Walking*, 2008. Mixed media on board, 1220 x 1220 mm. Courtesy of Fried Contemporary Art Gallery & Studio.

Pieter Swanepoel

Born 1959, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

Pieter Swanepoel studied BA (Fine Arts) at the University of Pretoria and completed a Masters in Visual Arts at the University of South Africa. He has participated in over 50 exhibitions over the last 25 years and was active as an art critic for some fifteen years, publishing in excess of 130 art related articles. He also wrote and published short stories, poetry lyrics, theatre plays and a variety of documentary work as well as academic texts. As a professional he worked as a journalist/photographer, an art director and a high school teacher as well as a lecturer. He has taught a wide range of art subjects across disciplines, both studio based as well as theory at various institutions, including Roodepoort College, Vaal University of Technology, Greenside Design Center, Unisa, City Varsity and Midrand Graduate Institution. Pieter Swanepoel is currently a Fine Arts lecturer at the University of Pretoria.

Artist's statement

The (dis)continuity of grey consists of a series of paintings in which the viewer is, on a literal (or realistic) level, confronted with images of grey clouds. Already in the title of the work a metaphorical content is hinted at. When we look at clouds we tend to see things in clouds. Similarly, when we look at an artwork, we have a tendency to read things into the work. Rather than being a mere literal (though visual) description of clouds, *The (dis)continuity of grey* therefore refers to interpretation, and in particular to the interpretation of visibility. The metaphorical moreover grants ambiguity. Imagery of clouds here implies a number of ambiguities, not least of all the possibility that these clouds are either clouds of despair (the smoke of an apocalyptic scene) or clouds of hope (the promise of rain and renewal). Ambiguity is furthermore advocated in the title through the bracketing of *(dis)continuity*. Whereas fluidity (and continuity), from one panel to the next is foregrounded in the artwork being presented as one, long horizontal work, the fact that it consists of panels (fragments) calls attention to breaks within this apparent unity. The serial format of these panels also suggests a horizontal narrative, with the (right) outer edge of the last panel continuing the (left) outer edge of the first panel, resulting in a circular loop and a possible reference to the religious myth of "the eternal return". From a hermeneutic point of view, the suggested endless continuity (the susceptibility to infinite interpretation) is countered by the work being a self contained production – the artwork framing (bracketing) itself. What remains obvious then is that the work is not a reference to objective facts. This distrust of an absolute (true) interpretation together with the repetitive looping of the imagery is clear indications of a dystopian understanding rather than a utopian ideology.

February 2009.



Pieter Swanepoel, *The (dis)continuity of grey*, 2009. Mixed media, six works of 1000 x 1000 mm each. Courtesy of the artist.

Senzeni Marasela

Born in Thokoza, 1977

- Marasela is a full time artist.
- Education:
- 1982 – 1986: Primary School at Jongimfundo
- 1987 – 1994: Awarded first place in Zulu Disorientated
- 1994 – 1998: Disillusioned
- 1999 – present: Discovering the lens
- Selected Exhibitions:
- 1997: Martienssen Prize Exhibition' (Special Mention), Gertrude Posel Gallery, Wits, JHB
- *Not Quite a Christmas Exhibition*, Goodman Gallery, JHB
- 1998: *Women's Voices*, Daimler Benz Museum, Stuttgart, Germany (travelling exhibition)
- *Democracy's Images*, Bildmuseet, Umea, Sweden (travelling exhibition)
- *Family Ties*, Sandton Civic Gallery, JHB
- 1999: Annual Student Exhibition, Gertrude Posel Gallery, Wits, JHB
- *Unplugged IV*, Rembrandt van Rijn Gallery, Market Theatre, JHB
- *Truth Veils*, Gertrude Posel Gallery, Wits, JHB
- *Lines of Sight*, South African National Gallery
- *Democracy's Images*, Johannesburg Art Gallery, JHB
- 2000: *Portrait Afrika* - Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin
- *Translation /Seduction/Displacement*, White Box, New York

Artist's statement

Artists have an important role to play in telling stories about our turbulent history, especially when so many of the sincere gestures which make up this history have been cut down and mutilated. Hector Peterson is a good example. Up until 1976 young people hadn't really been seen at the forefront of political struggle, especially in images that so vividly depicted the slaughter of innocence. A lot of people don't really comprehend the significance of the events around 16th June 1976, especially the extent to which it marked the catalyst of events that were to bring down a regime. Stompie Seipei is another important example. He got caught up in a series of events that he didn't fully understand. The way Stompie lived and died was and still is a burden to so many people. History is making him elusive to memory. These are just two examples of children who have become the victims of political ideologies. It is these emasculated ideologies that I try to grapple with as a woman and as a black artist.

The embroidery series *Theodora in Johannesburg, 2006*, is a continuation of my work *Theodora comes to joburg*. Here I explore my relationship with Johannesburg and the experiences that my mother had when she first arrived in Johannesburg.

I use thread because it is fragile and can break easily. I also use objects that are found at homes especially on dinner tables so that I could bring closer the issues that my work attempts to address.



Senzeni Marasela, *Theodora in Johannesburg: Arrival*, 2006. All: Cotton table napkin and thread, 400 x 400 mm. Courtesy of Fried Contemporary Art Gallery & Studio.



Senzeni Marasela, *Theodora in Johannesburg: Dead Man*, 2006.



Senzeni Marasela, *Theodora in Johannesburg: Beggar*, 2006.



Senzeni Marasela, *Theodora in Johannesburg: Spectators*, 2006.



Senzeni Marasela, *Theodora in Johannesburg: Suburbia*, 2006.



Senzeni Marasela, *Theodora in Johannesburg: Departure*, 2006.

Steven Cohen

Born 1962, Johannesburg.

Education

- 1990 Matriculated from the system
- 1981-84 Bachelor of Arts degree (Psychology, Eng. Lit.), University of the Witwatersrand
- 1985-87 Forced conscription in the South African Defence Force
- 1985 Ruth Prowse School of Art, Woodstock, Cape Town

Awards

- VITA Art Now, Joint Second Quarter Award Winner, 1993
- Momentum Life Award, 1993
- FNB VITA Award Winner, 1998
- Nov 2003 - Jan 2004 - awarded the Ampersand Foundation Fellowship, New York City
- Cohen's work is in numerous public and private collections in South Africa, Australia, Europe and the United States.

Selected Recent Exhibitions

- September-December 2004: *Personal Affects*, group show of 17 South African artists, installation in Museum for African Art, New York City, plus installation at Cathedral Church of St John the Divine, New York City
- 2000: Feb *Distinguished Identities*: State University of New York at Stony Brook, New York

Recent Public Interventions/Performance Art

2008

- Jan - *CLEANING TIME (VIENNA)* Spier Art Competition and Exhibition, Cape, South Africa
- Jan - *Under Pain of Death*, installation plus performance, Austrian Cultural Forum, New York City, USA
- Feb - *Dancing Inside Out*, L'Arsenic Theatre, Lausanne, Switzerland
- Feb - *Maid In South Africa*, V-Tape, Toronto, Canada
- March - *Dancing Inside Out*, First Live Art Festival of India, residency at KHOJ, New Delhi, India
- March - *Chandelier*, Espinal, Le Mans, France
- March - *Fuck off and die*, Installation, Chapelle Fromentin, La Rochelle, France
- April - Video presentation evening in lieu of perf (injury), TROUBLE festival, Les Halles, Brussels, Belgium
- May - *Maid In South Africa*, The Enterprise of Art, Pallazzo Delle Arte, Naples, Italy
- June - *Dancing Inside Out*, Court Toujours fest, Poitiers, France

June - *CLEANING TIME (VIENNA)* Spier Art Competition and Exhibition, Johannesburg Art Gallery, South Africa

Aug - *Maid In South Africa*, Rencontres Internationales, Madrid, Spain

Sept - *Maid In South Africa*, Rencontres Internationales, Berlin, Germany

Oct - *Chandelier*, Radical Drag, SAW Gallery, Ottawa, Canada

Oct - *Dancing Inside Out*, *Maid In South Africa*, taste, Queer Zagreb, Croatia

Nov - Three Solos/Trois Soli, Festival D'Automne, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

2007

- Jan - *Dancing Inside Out*, Rencontres du Court, Poitiers, France

- March - First Jewish Theatre Festival of Austria, Vienna - invited, then uninvited once there

- March - *CLEANING TIME (VIENNA)* - public intervention, Heldenplatz, Austria

- May - 10th Biennale Bandits Images, various works, Bourges, France

- June - *Maid In South Africa*, Rencontres Internationales, Paris, France

- Nov - *Chandelier*, *Mettre en Scene*, Quimper, France

- Dec - *Chandelier*, *Rightfully Yours*, Barnicke Gallery, Toronto, Canada

Artist's statement

My project with the human skull shoes began as an investigation into the ethics of capitalism and commodification, but like any performance work, it seems to be changing nature as it develops – molting and mutating ... each time I perform the action of walking in public in the 'shoes' I expect retribution, but so far observers do not seem to be able to conceive of them as genuine.

The work is very much about the disappearance of death from public life - it is for that reason that I am attempting to re-introduce the reality of death within the living, to see what results. Because I bought the skulls in a high-end object shop in chic Soho, New York, including sales tax to the American government, it raises questions for me, not only about commodification, but about human rights and ethics of behaviour, about forms of respect (what obligations are there implicit in possession of such objects), and obvious questions about where they come from ... are they from graves, hospitals, 'donated' by criminals? How are they procured, sold, transported across the world (they seem to originate from the East).

My work has been motivated by the suicide of my brother and for me is very much an experiment in personal punishment, raising questions about social ethics and retribution, politics, legislation, commerce, rituals of mourning and death, taboos, corporal punishment and degradation, sovereignty and absolute power, domination, sacrifice and the commercialisation of victims/human remains.

This work is an experiment which aims to function as a speculum and not a suture ... it is designed to provoke questions rather than to provide answers. Is suicide a self-imposed death penalty? What is less moral, selling human skulls or wearing them? If you re-introduce death into life, what are the consequences? the ethical accusations? civil liberties vs penalties? Is this work an open-ended and reciprocal torture - on one level physical, on another psychological? Is it still defined as torture once the victim is dead and the perpetrator is not personally gratified by the actions? Is the commodi-

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fiction of symbols of death possible only because of the distance we have wedged between life and death? Is it ethical for the state - which (via sales tax) profits directly from this buying of human remains - to sanction such a transaction?

On a personal but also on a national level, what does it really mean to be civilised, on the one hand intellectually, but more practically, in terms of the actions we condone?

Figures: Stills from the performance in New York. Video images by Joshua Thorson, Jonas Pariente, Steven Cohen. Editing by Christophe Lerrai and Steven Cohen. Courtesy of Latitudes Prod, Agathe Berman, Les Films D'Ici, Les Subsistances, Festival D'Automne, Centre Pompidou, France Culture, IFAS and Michael Stevenson Gallery.



Steven Cohen, *Golgotha Empire #3 N.Y.*, 2007.
©Marianne Greber
VBK Wien 2009.



Steven Cohen, *Golgotha, Wall Street #1 N.Y.*, 2007.
©Marianne Greber
VBK Wien 2009.

Thando Mama

Born 1977, Butterworth, Eastern Cape

Thando Mama received a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Art from Technikon Natal in Durban in 2001, where he majored in Printmaking and Photography.

He works mostly with video and video installations, digital photo images and drawings. Over the last several years he has been exhibiting in South Africa and at international museums and galleries. His work is in public collections at the Iziko National Art Gallery in Cape Town and Johannesburg Art Gallery.

He is currently living and working in Cape Town.

Career achievements:

- Nominated for the Best Man Award (2006); Arts & Culture Category: *Men's Health Magazine*, SA.
- Awarded a fellowship to the Sally and Don Lucas Artists Programmes, Montalvo Arts Center, 2005. Saratoga, California. USA.
- Awarded Prix de la Communaute Francaise de Belgique, 2004. Dakar, Senegal.
- The winner of the MTN New Contemporaries awards, 2003. Johannesburg. South Africa.

Artist's statement

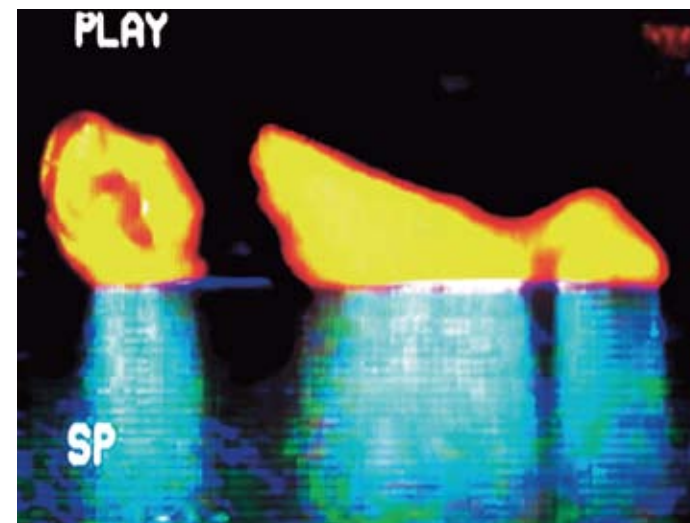
Fidel Castro seized television as an ideal vehicle to advance himself and the revolution; he literally sold the revolution on television. Television revolutionised societies; for us living in Africa we switch a button to view the outside world, our own cultures are forever affected by the images that are broadcast via television news broadcasts, live and studio events. Concepts of place and people, time and space as we know them are no more; television is a powerful tool for just causes and for negative forces.

The *The revolution is ...* video installations are in essence a fundamental desire for change in the attitudes and artistic interactions with television as a tool for artists in Africa and bring to the surface the faces of those who speak and those who are forced to be silent, to express themselves. Historically television's content and context influenced video art. This artwork is homage to that history and to an obsolete technology (analogue video, single channel video and the VCR) that revolutionised modern art and gave power to the artist. It also raises interesting questions regarding technology, art, politics and current issues that affect our society. *The revolution is ...* comments on these histories and technologies of video and television as tools of artistic expression by artists and filmmakers. In a way you are watching *The Last King Of Scotland* or *Catch a Fire* or *Blood Diamonds*, you are reading about the revolutionary leader of Cuba, you are learning that there still is no peace in Darfur, that there are thousands of screaming unheard voices of Zimbabweans, this is *The revolution is ...*. This video

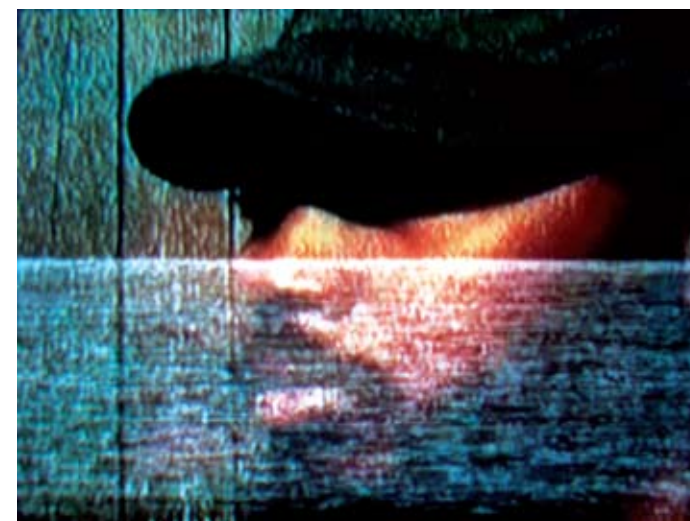
installation suggests a constant change and didactic message to the audience through the movement of a singular static image of an unnamed iconic revolutionary. Perhaps in Havana, Cape Town, Dakar, or New York.



Thando Mama, *The revolution is ...*, 2007. DVD video installations, running time variable, 1min to 7mins. Courtesy of the artist.



Thando Mama, *The revolution is ...*, 2007. DVD video installations, running time variable, 1min to 7mins. Courtesy of the artist.



Thando Mama, *The revolution is ...*, 2007. DVD video installations, running time variable, 1min to 7mins. Courtesy of the artist.

William Kentridge, Claire Gavronsky and Rose Shakinovsky

William Kentridge

Born 1955, Johannesburg.

Since his participation in *Dokumenta X* in Kassel in 1997, solo shows of Kentridge's work have been shown in many museums and galleries around the world, starting with the MCA San Diego (1998), and the Museum of Modern Art in New York (1999). In 1998, a survey exhibition of his work was hosted by the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, continuing to museums in throughout Europe during 1998/1999. 2001 saw the launch of a substantial survey show of Kentridge's work in Washington, travelling thereafter to cities in the US and South Africa. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev curated a new retrospective exhibition of his work for the Castello di Rivoli in Turin in January 2004, which went on to museums in Europe, Canada, Australia and South Africa.

The shadow oratorio *Confessions of Zeno* was commissioned for *Documenta XI* in 2002. The installation *7 Fragments for Georges Méliès, Day for Night and Journey to the Moon* was presented at the 2005 Venice Biennale. April 2005 saw the premiere of a production of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)* at the Théâtre de La Monnaie in Brussels, with William Kentridge directing and René Jacobs as conductor, touring to cities including New York, Naples, and Johannesburg. In October 2005, the Deutsche Bank Guggenheim in Berlin presented *Black Box / Chambre Noire*, a miniature theatre piece with mechanized puppets, projection and original music by Philip Miller.

William Kentridge received the Carnegie Medal for the Carnegie International 1999/2000; the Goslar Kaiserring in 2003; and the Oskar Kokoschka Award (2008). He has received honorary doctorates from a number of universities internationally.

Recent work includes *Telegrams from the Nose*, a collaborative performance with composer Francois Sarhan; and for the Sydney Biennale of 2008, both *I am not me, the horse is not mine*, a solo lecture/performance piece, and an installation of the same title, comprising eight film fragments. Among Kentridge's current projects is work towards a production of Shostakovich's opera *The Nose*, to premier at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, in March 2010.

Kentridge's work tracks a personal route across the fraught legacy of apartheid and colonialism through an innovative use of charcoal drawing, prints, collages, stop-animation, film and theatre. Kentridge sees his work as rooted in Johannesburg - the city in which he was born and continues to work today.

Claire Gavronsky

Born 1957, Johannesburg.

Gavronsky moved to Italy in 1985 after teaching at the Johannesburg College of Art, where she graduated with a Higher Diploma in Painting in 1981. The artist, together with Rosemarie Shakinovsky headed the Fine Arts Department at the Art Institute of Florence, for 16 years, where she taught painting, drawing and sculpture. From 1991 Gavronsky and Shakinovsky have run workshops, teacher training programs and residencies in Tuscany, Italy, for International artists. They have extended these workshops further a field to South Africa, (Cape Town, Johannesburg and Venda) and the USA.

Gavronsky has attended several residencies including the Artist-in-Residence at University of Southern California Grand Central, the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, and has twice been awarded the Nirox Foundation residency in Johannesburg.

The artist has exhibited locally and abroad; recent group shows include *Domestic Departures* (2007) at the CSU Fullerton Gallery in California, USA, *Shift* (2007) Cork Street Galllery London, *Faces to Names* (2006) at the Alliance Francaise in Johannesburg, *Soap Boxes (Rosenclaire)* (2005) *Permanent Sculpture* at the South African National Gallery and *Decade of Democracy as Rosenclaire* (2004).

Rosenclaire is the collective name of the frequent collaborators, Gavronsky and Shakinovsky, who have a reputation for performance and installation. Together they spend part of the year in South Africa where they are very active both artistically and educationally running workshops and cultural exchanges for both South African and International artists.

Rosemary Shakinovsky

Born 1953, Johannesburg.

Rose Shakinovsky is currently living in Florence, Italy. After graduating from the Johannesburg College of Art in 1974 she taught at Damelin College, was Esme Berman's professional assistant and ran the Katlehong Art Centre before moving to Italy in 1985.

The artist's formal career includes Professorship in Contemporary and Modern Art Theory at the Art Institute of Florence as well as heading the Fine Arts department with Gavronsky. Shakinovsky and Gavronsky have both represented South Africa in numerous shows in Italy and run an Artists Residency programme in Tuscany for International artists. Rosenclaire as a collaborative have recently been invited to attend residencies at CSU California and by the Nirox Foundation. They installed the permanent sculpture *Soapboxes* at SANG in 2005. In 2007 they took part in a group show entitled *Domestic Departures*, where among other works they presented *Gesture*, another collaboration with Kentridge where they erased a charcoal drawing of his with a child's vacuum cleaner. Shakinovsky's *Speculum Veritatis after Duchamp* a beaded version of *Bicycle Wheel*, was acquired by SANG in 2007.

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Artists' statement

History of art is a maverick reflection on the history of art in the form of a palimpsest, by William Kentridge, Claire Gavronsky and Rose Shakinovsky. This collaboration with Kentridge exposes a dynamic in the artists' work, which gives the three a collective identity in their joint creation of one print.

The work is one of an ongoing series of three way collaborative works that arise from a topic chosen by us that always records and reflects a specific site and its cultural constructs. In this case the Artists Studio. *History of Art* is the result of exploring the notion of the artist, the studio and the Eurocentric, patriarchal and colonial subtexts that form the foundation of our visual framework and artistic reference. The resultant mapping is a palimpsest of the art works that influenced us during our formative years and a reflection of a personal history that selects from and overlays the Grand Narrative of Art History.

We all drew simultaneously and spontaneously on a single etching plate while discussing the theme. This process undermines notions of originality, identity and authorship with regard to the creative act and the implied coherence of a unique artistic persona. The reference to "Planning" and "Side B" alludes to the condition for any creative dialogue where all discourses are possible and the lines crisscross and intersect rather than frame. Collaboration is plural and relational where heterogeneous worlds coexist and cocreate.

William Kentridge, Rose Shakinovsky and Claire Gavronsky, *History of art*, 2005. Drypoint and aquatint on Hahnemühle natural white 300gsm, 685 x 972 mm. Edition of 40. Unisa Art Collection.



Zanele Muholi

Born 1972, Umlazi, Durban.

Zanele Muholi completed an Advanced Photography course at the Market Photo Workshop in Newtown and held her first solo exhibition at the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 2004. She has worked as a community relations officer for the Forum for the Empowerment of Women (FEW), a black lesbian organisation based in Gauteng, and has as a photographer and reporter for *Behind the Mask*, an online magazine on lesbian and gay issues in Africa. Her work represents the black female body in a frank yet intimate way that challenges the history of the portrayal of black women's bodies in documentary photography. Her solo exhibition *Only half the picture*, which showed at Michael Stevenson in March 2006, has travelled to the Market Photo Workshop in Johannesburg and the Afrovibes Festival in Amsterdam. She was the recipient of the 2005 Tollman Award for the Visual Arts, and the first BHP Billiton/Wits University Visual Arts Fellowship in 2006. Recent group exhibitions include *.za: giovane arte dal Sudafrica* at Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena (2008); *Make Art/Stop AIDS* at the Fowler Museum at UCLA, Los Angeles (2008); and *Heterotopias*, the first Thessaloniki Biennale (2007).

Artist's statement

There is a meaning or interplay to *Faces & Phases* and why the project focuses on these two words.

I decided to capture images of my community in order to contribute towards a more democratic and representative South African homosexual history. Up until 1994, we as black lesbians were excluded from participating in the creation of a formal queer movement and our voices were missing from the pages of gay publications, while white gay activists directed the movement and wrote about gay issues and struggles. Hence, few of us were present in the forefront, but many operated underground.

I embarked on a journey of visual activism to ensure that there is black lesbian visibility, to showcase our existence and resistance in this democratic society, to present a positive imagery of black lesbians.

Aside from the dictionary definition of what a 'face' is (the front of the head, from forehead to chin), the face also expresses the person. For me, *Faces* means me, photographer and community worker, being face to face with the many lesbians I interacted with from different Gauteng townships such as Alexandra, Soweto, Vosloorus, Katlehong, Kagiso...

In each township there are lesbians living openly regardless of the stigma and homophobia attached to their lesbian identity, both butch and femme. Most of the time being lesbian is seen as negative, as destroying the nuclear heterosexual family; for many black lesbians, the stigma of queer identity arises from the fact that homosexu-

ality is seen as un-African. Expectations are that African women must have children and procreate with a male partner, the head of the family. That is part of the "African tradition".

Failing to conform to these expectations, we are perceived as deviants, needing a "curative rape" to erase our male attitude and make us into true women, females, real women, mothers, men's property.

Individuals in this series of photographs hold different positions and play many different roles within the black lesbian community: soccer player, actress, scholar, cultural activist, lawyer, dancer, film maker, human rights/gender activist. However, each time we are represented by outsiders, we are merely seen as victims of rape and homophobia. Our lives are always sensationalised, rarely understood. This is the reason for *Phases*: our lives are not just what makes the newspapers headlines every time one of us is attacked. We go through many stages, we express many identities, which unfold in parallel in our existence.

From an insider's perspective, this project is meant as a commemoration and a celebration of the lives of black lesbians that I met in my journeys through the townships. Lives and narratives are told with both pain and joy, as some of these women were going through hardships in their lives. Their stories caused me sleepless nights as I did not know how to deal with the urgent needs I was told about. Many of them had been violated; I did not want the camera to be a further violation; rather, I wanted to establish relationships with them based on our mutual understanding of what it means to be female, lesbian and black in South Africa today.

I call this method the birth of visual activism: I decided to use it to mark our resistance and existence as black lesbians in our country, because it is important to put a face on each and every issue.

Faces & phases is about our histories, struggles and lives on this queer mother planet: we will face our experiences regardless of what they'll be, and we still move on.

CATALOGUE OF ARTISTS



Zanele Muholi, *Kalmpex, Toronto*, from *Faces and phases, Siyafana*, 2008. All: Fibre based photographic print, 865 x 605 mm. Edition of 8 + 2AP. Courtesy of Michael Stevenson Gallery.



Zanele Muholi, *Mancane Selepe, Alexandra, Johannesburg*, from *Faces and phases, Siyafana*, 2008.



Zanele Muholi, *Maxine Ma'atSankofa, London*, from *Faces and phases, Siyafana*, 2008.



Zanele Muholi, *Marcel Kutumela, Alexandra, Johannesburg*, from *Faces and phases, Siyafana*, 2008.



Zanele Muholi, *Sheila Plaatjie, Johannesburg*, from *Faces and phases, Siyafana*, 2008.



Zanele Muholi, *Zodwa 'Vovo' Nyongwana, Guguletu, Cape Town*, from *Faces and phases, Siyafana*, 2008.



Zanele Muholi, *Amanda 'China' Nyandeni, Johannesburg*, from *Faces and phases, Siyafana*, 2008.

CURATORS

Elfriede Dreyer

Elfriede Dreyer is associate professor in Fine Arts at the University of Pretoria and an interdisciplinary arts academic, artist and gallerist. She holds the following qualifications: D Litt et Phil (Art History (Unisa); MA (FA) (Unisa); BA(FA) (Unisa); BA (UP); HED (UP); UOLM (UP); Int Dip (Multimedia) (Groningen).

Elfriede teaches and publishes in the fields of Fine Arts, Art History and Visual Communication, and the topics of utopia/dystopia, deconstruction, posthumanity, technoculture and urban discourses are ongoing interests in her practical and theoretical research. From 1990 to 2003 she lectured at UNISA, where she was head of department of Art History and Visual Arts from 1999 to 2003. During this period, she established a short certificate programme in Visual Arts and Computer Graphics and researched, developed and implemented a new degree, the BA (with specialisation in Multimedia Studies).

Elfriede was the recipient of several bursaries and research grants from UNISA, the HSRC, the NRF, the University of Pretoria and the CSD. She has set up international liaisons in the field of Multimedia with organisations such as the Frank Mohr Institute (Groningen) and the DCDM Business School (UK affiliated) in Mauritius. She is furthermore well known as an adjudicator of art competitions, as an external examiner in the disciplines of Fine Arts and Art History for several other institutions, and as a public speaker. She has presented papers and chaired sessions at several national and international conferences.

Elfriede held solo exhibitions locally and abroad and has participated in many group and award exhibitions, such as the Brett Kebble Art Award, the Absa l'Atelier Art Award, the Sasol New Signatures, the Momentum Art Award and the Johannesburg Biennale in 1995. She curated major shows such as the *Digital Art* exhibition for Unisa in 2002; the *Reconciliation* exhibitions for the University of Pretoria's Arts and Reconciliation festival in 2005; the travelling exhibition, *Little Deaths*, at Fried Contemporary Art Gallery and Bell-Roberts Gallery in 2007; and co-curated the UP Centenary exhibition, *Visuality and Commentary* in 2008.

Since July 2005 Elfriede has been the owner and curator of Fried Contemporary Art Gallery & Studio in Pretoria.

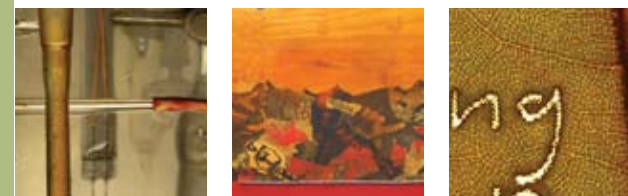
Contact details: Department of Visual Arts, University of Pretoria, Lynnwood Road, Pretoria 0001. Tel: +27 (012) 420 2353. E-mail: elfriede.dreyer@up.ac.za

Jacob Lebeko

Jacob Lebeko joined the artworld in 1993 when he enrolled at Wits for a BA (Fine Arts) degree at Wits. He had previously been a self-taught artist who practiced art during his spare-time. He grew up and studied in Soweto, where art was not taught as a subject at school level. He qualified as an artist and art teacher at Wits, whereupon he decided to go back to the township and teach art. In 1998, he joined Funda Community College where he taught History of Art at levels 1-3. In his teaching career at Funda, he educated numerous artists such as Happy Dlhame, Senzo Nhlapo, Sidwell Rihlamvu, John Mfupi and Churchill Madikida (VACA).

In his capacity as assistant-curator of the Unisa Art Gallery in Pretoria, South Africa, Jacob Lebeko has co-curated a number of high-profile exhibitions, such as the *Artworks from the 70s Era* (2003), *Unisa Reflects on its Collection of Resistance Art* (2004), *Animals as a Metaphor in Art* (2005), *Lithography as an artform* (2007) all at the Unisa Art Gallery. He has also collaborated with other institutions such as the Bag Factory and David Krut Studios in Johannesburg through exhibitions that attempted to showcase Johannesburg-based artists in the Pretoria region. Currently he is co-curating a photographic exhibition *Construct: beyond the documentary photograph* with Cape Town based curator and gallery owner, Heidi Erdmann. *Construct* is currently touring the country as is the intention with *Dystopia*. Qualifications: BA (FA) (Wits 1993 - 1996); H.Dip.Ed (Diploma) (Wits 1997); Busy with Heritage Management (Diploma) (Wits).

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