



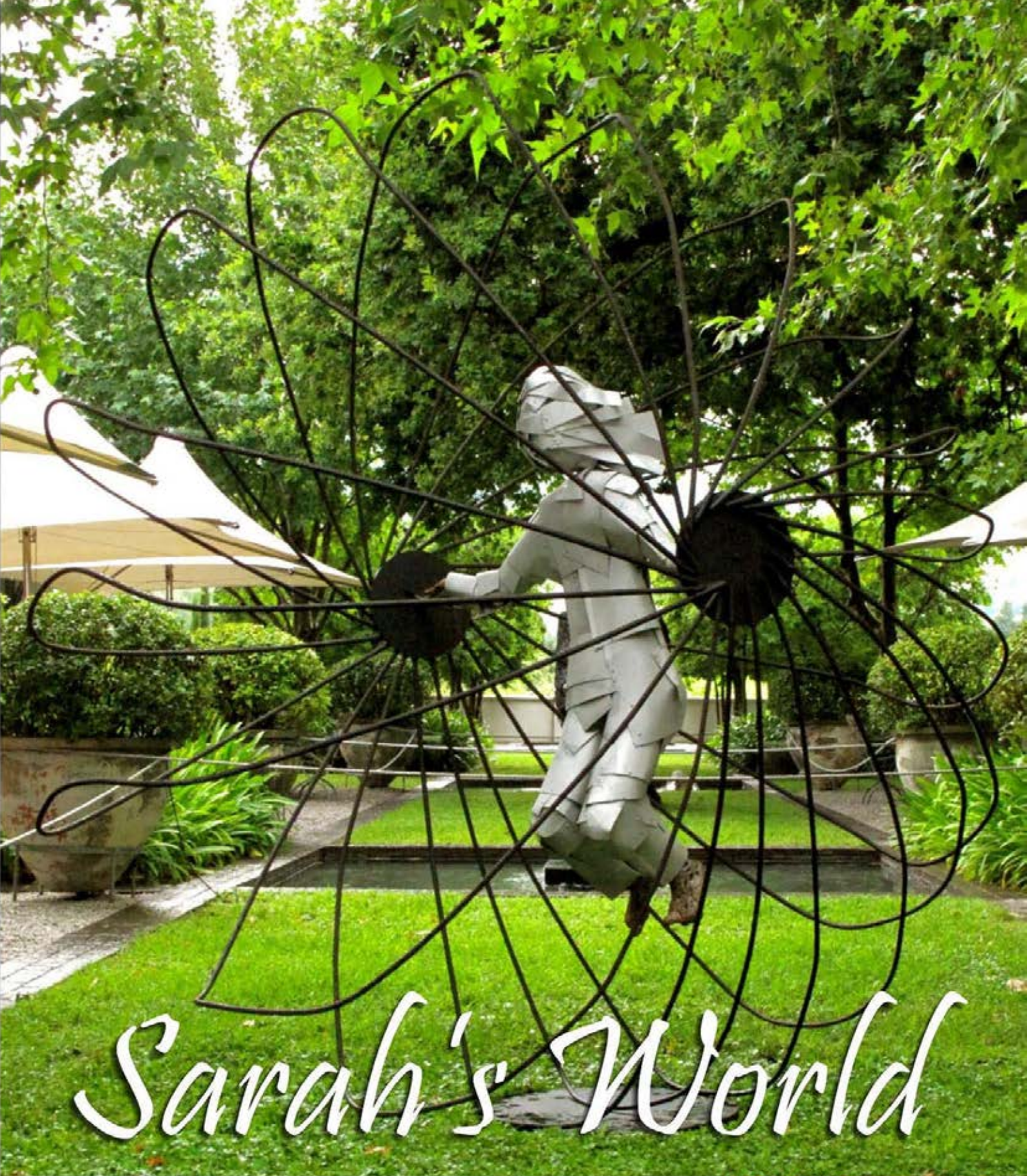
Searching  
for Feminine  
Essence



*L. Forbes*








*Sarah's World*





An abstract painting by Nelson Makamo, featuring a vibrant and complex composition of colors and textures. The palette includes bright yellows, greens, blues, reds, and blacks, with thick, expressive brushstrokes and layered colors. The overall effect is one of dynamic energy and visual richness.

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Artist: Nelson Makamo

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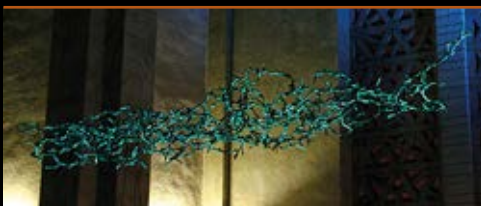
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(Image adapted from electrostatic precipitator made by Geecom (Pty) Ltd)

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# FOREWORD

This second edition of **DESIGN>ART** was a pure pleasure to produce as it celebrates two important themes: South African women artists and the centenary of the founding of the Johannesburg Art Gallery's (JAG) collection.

Steeped in history JAG has, without a doubt, had a significant impact on both the local and global art community. The core functions of the gallery are to collect works of historical importance, conserve them and display permanent and temporary exhibitions. In doing so, JAG provides the cultural backbone to Johannesburg and its collection has opened many dialogues and paved the way for meaningful, intellectual and academic debate that has ultimately impacted on society and contributed to social change.

As part of its centenary programme, JAG partnered with **DESIGN>MAGAZINE** to publish the book, *One hundred years of collecting: The Johannesburg Art Gallery*. An abridged version of the introduction chapter is featured on pages 250 to 258, which provides a fascinating overview of the history of this important cultural asset. In addition, JAG is currently staging a landmark exhibition titled *Transformations: Women's art from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to 2010* (see pages 212 to 219), which sparked the idea to dedicate this edition

of **DESIGN>ART** to South African women artists.

Women have been at the forefront of South African art scene in different capacities – as practicing artists, curators, administrators, patrons and educators – and works by Irma Stern, Maggie Laubser and Marlene Dumas, amongst others, have recently set many local and international records at auctions, outselling their male counterparts by leaps and bounds.

This edition, spanning 34 articles and 300 pages, features 20 lead articles written by or about some of South Africa's leading women artists. The contributors represent a diversity of generations, media and creative perspectives. The articles are richly illustrated and provide intriguing insight into their current work, resulting in a visual feast.

The edition also covers exhibition and book reviews, popular culture and the activities of patrons that reflect on the state of the art industry in many ways.

We wish you an insightful and enjoyable read and the best for 2011.

*The **DESIGN>ART** publishing team*



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Mary Sibande, *I have not, I have*, 2010.

Photo by Hannah Paton

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# AN ARTISTS' LIFE

# BETTIE

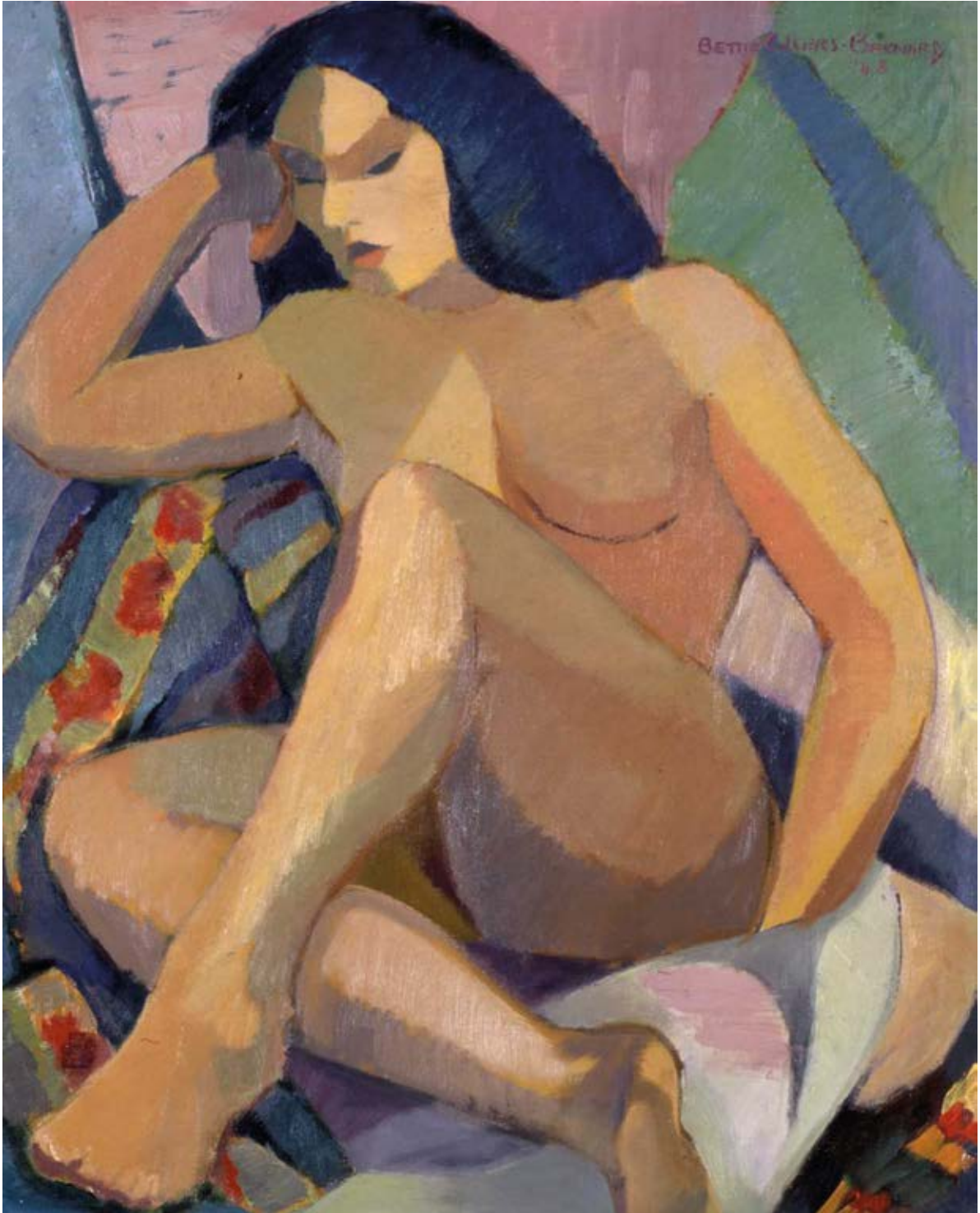
# CILLIERS-BARNARD

## 18.11.1914 – 15.09.2010

**By Pieter W van Heerden.** It would be difficult, if not impossible, for me to write dispassionately about Bettie Cilliers-Barnard and her life as an artist. First, to me, she was a dear and gentle friend, a sincere and warm confidante with whom to share ideas about life and art. By doing so, we spent delightful hours in each other's company. I fondly remember the times we worked together for the Arts Association and, perhaps more than anything else, the relaxed and quiet evenings we spent alone or with a couple of friends in her beautiful, serene home which is full of so many of her artworks and above all, was pervaded by her gracious presence.

Bettie passed away peacefully in the early hours of 15 September 2010. During the last couple of months she had been bed-ridden and her fragile body withered away. However, despite her state of physical incapacity, her mind and memories remained alert and as sharp as ever and her tender reminiscences full of kindness towards her children, family and friends. Her recollections of her childhood, the art scene in Pretoria (and the rest of South Africa) were enlightening. She had an encyclopaedic knowledge of 20th century South African art and artists, many whom she knew personally. Of course, her five sojourns in Paris were vivid and always immensely





*Nude, 1948.*









LTR: Marike de Klerk, Bettie Cilliers-Barnard, Pieter van Heerden and Mimi Coertse.



LTR: Gunther van der Reist, Bettie Cilliers-Barnard and Pieter van Heerden.

TOP LEFT:  
*Still life with  
chequered cloth,*  
1948.

TOP RIGHT:  
*Spiritual children,*  
1955.

RIGHT:  
*Revolving forces,*  
1957.

entertaining. Almost till the end, she kept a small notebook with her to make drawings for new paintings. Tiny and small in posture and always immaculately groomed she was a grande dame till the end – surely the doyenne of South African arts.

At her funeral service on 23 September 2010, the reverend Dr James Kirkpatrick referred to Bettie's fascination with the luminosity of darkness (she was a night-painter) and, from her earliest childhood, the glittering of the stars in the night skies. The programme for the service had a picture of her last, huge but unfinished painting in 2009, with the title "She stretched her wings in a timeless space where she floats above eternity."

The service was preceded by a private burial ceremony, attended by close family and a few intimate friends. Bettie was laid to rest in the same grave as her husband, Bags Cilliers, the well-known university

and rugby administrator who passed away in 2001 and who also instilled in his wife a life-long passion for the game. Before the burial, the simple wooden coffin was placed on two chairs and Bettie's grandchildren and great grandchildren painted it with flowers and birds and designs inspired by the paintings and drawings of their grand- and great grandmother. In my mind, I could see how Bettie, with a twinkle in her eyes and with her sweet smile, would have been thrilled by this small ritual at this sad but heart-warming farewell.

Thinking of Bettie's artistic career opens an incredibly rich panorama. Since 1946, and over more than 60 years, she held 80 solo exhibitions and participated in 150 group exhibitions, in South Africa and abroad. She received more than 20 local and international awards and two honorary doctorates.

About her stature as an artist, Marinus Wiechers in his preface to Muller Ballot's outstanding monograph, *Bettie Cilliers-Barnard Towards Infinity* (UNISA Press, 2006), aptly remarks: "Bettie Cilliers-Barnard has earned herself a place in the pantheon of South African artists. She is exceptional because among our artists she ranks with few who, through their total dedication and unfailing industry, coupled with the blessing of longevity, have borne witness in their creative work to the major movements and trends in South African art. Although she never consciously positioned herself in one or other school of artistic expression – whether impressionist, abstract, or whatever label pundits might have fixed to an art movement – her art has always reflected a keen awareness of changing styles and influences. Throughout evolving times, Bettie remained eminently contemporary, never as a mere follower, always as a visionary."

More than 200 articles and reviews on her work appeared during her lifetime. The most comprehensive and authoritative work in this regard is the above mentioned, excellently written and richly documented monograph by Ballot which was first published in Afrikaans and later, in 2006, in an updated English version.

Bettie's works were enthusiastically discussed and reviewed. Their lyrical qualities were often inspired, deeply thoughtful and often poetic descriptions. Merwe Scholtz (1959) observed, "The eye (that appears in her work) does not absorb the outer world but projects the fauna and flora of the spirit outward." Piet Cillié,

the well-known editor, remarked (1973) "Bettie Cilliers-Barnard has retained a fundamental faith in the essential order – and the laws of nature - which govern the cosmos." Albert Werth, long-time director of the Pretoria Art Museum, was touched by the "strong mysticism, the deep mystery which lifts (her works) outside our man-made world." (1966)

Looking back over Bettie's long artistic career, one is impressed by the fact that although she confidently sailed the waves of modernism and post-modernism, she remained eminently true to herself. To some, her almost dramatic venture into pure abstract forms and colour during the late 50s and 60s was a complete break from her earlier, more realistic works. However, such a view is not entirely correct. In her early mostly realistic works, there is already a marked emphasis on colour and light and also an affinity with lines and geometrical forms. This developed after her first Parisian stay – perhaps the most formative experience in her career – into flatly designed portraits and paintings with juxtapositioned pastel-like colours to express mood and sentiments.

Then came her years of abstract painting and graphics, years of *sturm und drang*. I believe that Bettie needed this period of abstract art, not simply to follow modernistic trends or worse, to not simply emulate European and American schools of modern art. She needed abstract expression to give vent, vividly and forcefully, to her innermost feelings, to translate her artistic ecstasy in liberated visual forms and above all, to explore the magic qualities

TOP:  
*Organic cycle II*,  
1967.

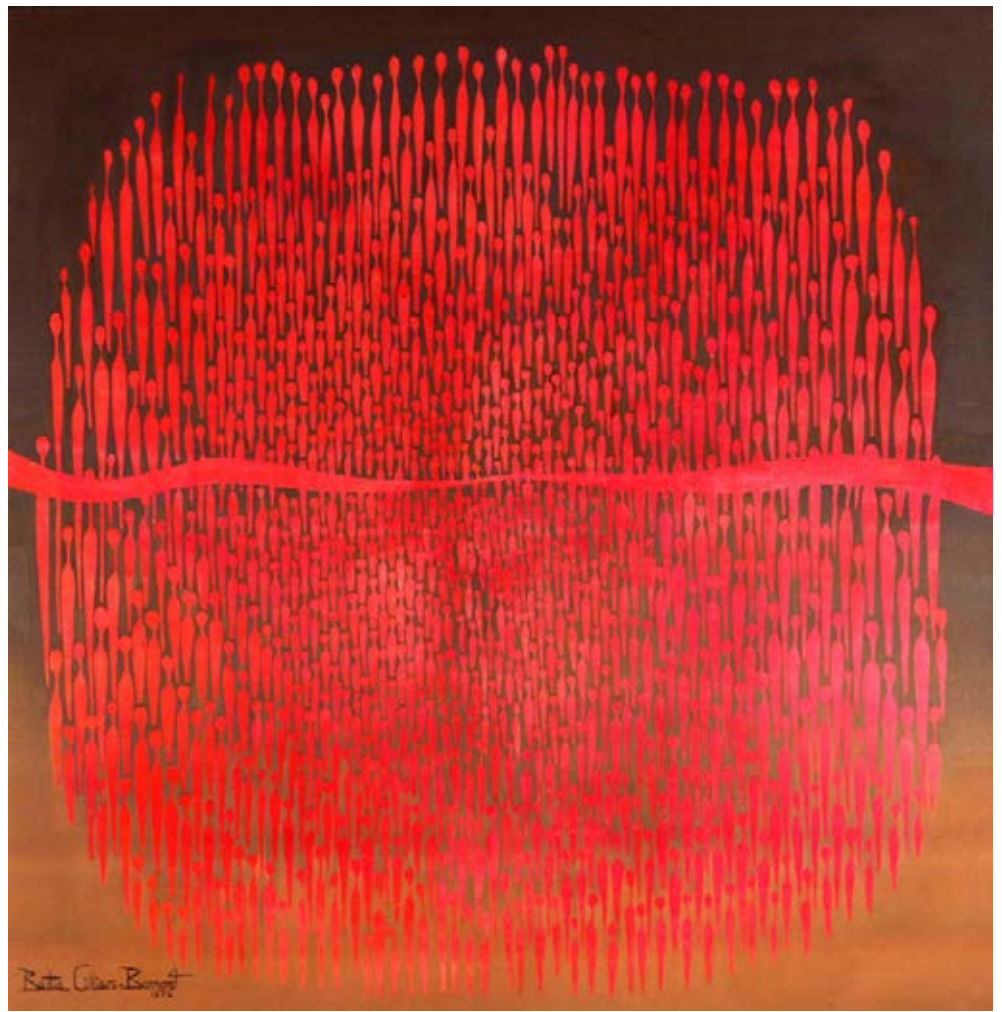
BOTTOM LEFT:  
*Flight of the  
imagination*, 1977.

BOTTOM RIGHT:  
*Cosmic experience*,  
1986-87.











TOP:  
*Spirit of woman,*  
1972.

BOTTOM LEFT:  
*Cradle of  
civilization,*  
1986-87.

BOTTOM RIGHT:  
*Dialogues,* 1989.

of colour. It is though, in this, she had to find clarity in her own mind of where she came from and wanted to go forward.

Even in her most freely abstract works there is always a strong sense of composition and harmony. This provides the key to her later works in which she constantly searched to create wholeness and unity ... to grasp the vast totality of the entire cosmos.

Out of her abstract period came first a period of figurative abstraction in which faces and human forms emerged; and later, to convert almost organically into symbolism, following with earthly and later more and more mystical. She explained to me that during this period, in 1976, a bird quietly and almost inadvertently flew into her painting from out of her subconscious. Later, birds became a marked feature of her symbolic works. To me, they signify a flight in the artist's mind which then reaches into the skies and the infinity, not only of the universe but also of the human soul. In the final stage of her work, she combined colour, form and design to reach out, as Professor Ballot observes, towards infinity. It is noteworthy to see how Bettie, in her quest to find wholeness, establishes an almost sacred order of peace and always meticulously painted fully completed canvasses, never half-painted with broken or thwarted images. Resistance art and confrontational statements would have been contrary to her nature.

An aspect of Bettie's oeuvre which certainly needs more thought is its truly African

nature. As a result of her background and studies, her work shows marked European influences. She was, from her earliest years, fascinated by African symbols and emblems, animals, trees, birds, totems, the kraal – the safe enclosure of the family and clan – and crosses which appear regularly in her paintings and graphic works. Discovering Bettie as an African artist would bring an exciting and new perspective.

On the whole, one can say that Bettie's works are dialogues with herself. She never designs or draws the scheme of a painting before she sits down to put it on canvas. "I expect my paintings" she once said, "to disclose and reveal themselves to me." This statement explains the realness of her works; they are not simply pictures on a piece of canvas, but an amalgamation of the artist's sentiments and skills and the canvas's vivid response.

Of course, an artist of Bettie's stature would evoke some jealousies and other petty thoughts. It is true that she was admired by some more enlightened members of the Nationalist government and was a personal friend of them, as well as other champions of the Afrikaner cultural and financial establishment. This led to some sniggering in lesser circles that stated her success was due to the fact that she is "mother Broederbond". Bettie, with a deep sense of humour, laughed this off. However, I knew that it did hurt her because it was so utterly untrue. Her influence and acquaintances, stretched wide beyond the circle of Afrikanerdom and her stature is widely recognised also

internationally. What is more is that she always promoted the works and the cause of emerging, as well as established, black artists. In fact, she was the driving force to one of Gerard Sekoto's – whom she later befriended in Paris – first solo exhibitions held in the gallery of the Association of Arts Pretoria.

Although, over many years, Bettie's work won considerable acclaim, it did elicit some criticism, especially in later years. For instance, it was said in the Mandala series in 2001, that the circular forms have lost their "symbolic power of expression"; that the works had become a "boring repetition" and "old fashioned", possessing only "illustrative and decorative qualities". (Muller Ballot, quoting critic Wilhelm van Rensburg). However, this criticism neglects the fact that – as a mature artist – Bettie had been ripened by decades of artistic expression. Forever in a quest for the essential, she would arrive at a stage where simplified forms and above all, subtleties of colour, tone and composition created visions of a whole universe. Nobody, for instance, could accuse Piet Mondriaan in his later masterworks of simply painting colourful geometrical lines, or Jean Miro of painting loose patches of colours and randomly making abstract markings.

Bettie was not a hermit. On the contrary, she participated actively in her husband's university and sporting involvements. She was at all times a most dedicated, thoughtful and deeply loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was a founding member, sponsor

and stalwart of my Association, the Association of Arts Pretoria, and was later elected life vice-president. For 40 years she guided and directed the hanging and exhibiting of the artworks in the galleries of the Association. As a staunch member of the SA National Association for the Visual Arts, she was the driving force for the acquisition of studios in the famous Parisian Cité Internationale des Arts and in the same capacity, assisted the curating of South African artworks for a number of international biennales.

Sadly, Bettie is no longer with us in person. However, through her works and in our memories she will always be present. As a final tribute, I can do no better than to express myself in the words of Professor Ballot in his monograph, when he says that "this remarkable, dedicated artist was capable of travelling the distance as a straight road and with purity of mind, made possible by her 'sensitivity of colour', her striking form symbols, her belief in the Primordial Force and spiritual energy, and her special desire to share with others the totality of her life and art." <

Pieter W van Heerden is Director at Association of Arts Pretoria.

TOP LEFT:  
*African legend I*,  
1998.

TOP RIGHT:  
*Centrifugal*, 1999.

BOTTOM:  
*Sanctum*, 2004.





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# HUMAN GESTURES MAKE US HUMAN

**By Judith Mason.** Long ago a dealer advised a group of clients against buying my work, as I had lost my integrity. The truth is, I have never had any. Life has been, for me, a mass of contradictory and often threatening stimuli, flashing past at random. My attempts to catch, pin down and identify some of these are what my work is about. In the nature of things I don't explore those which satisfy and delight, although in my old age I am tempted to recall beloved people, gods and mountains

in paint to remind myself what a pleasure my sliver of life has been.

Painting and drawing are my means of trying to understand the things that baffle me, primary amongst these being the nature and the necessity of suffering. I dislike being classified as a 'woman artist' and used to believe that one's gender had little to do with how one makes artworks. Lately, I am more and more drawn to the conclusion that female artists are less proactive and more receptive than males. Men seem to be stylistically stronger and impose their vision with greater force. Of course, fellow feminists are invited to shout this idea down. It is a notion, after all, not a theory, and maybe it just applies to my own passivity. The severest critics of my work have been men, repelled perhaps by its subjectivity and 'emotionalism', and possibly by its sometimes ashamed ugliness. In truth, it gets me down too – a bit of pulchritude and some irony would be nice, but as Oliver Stone said, "I'll just have to be myself. Everybody else is taken."





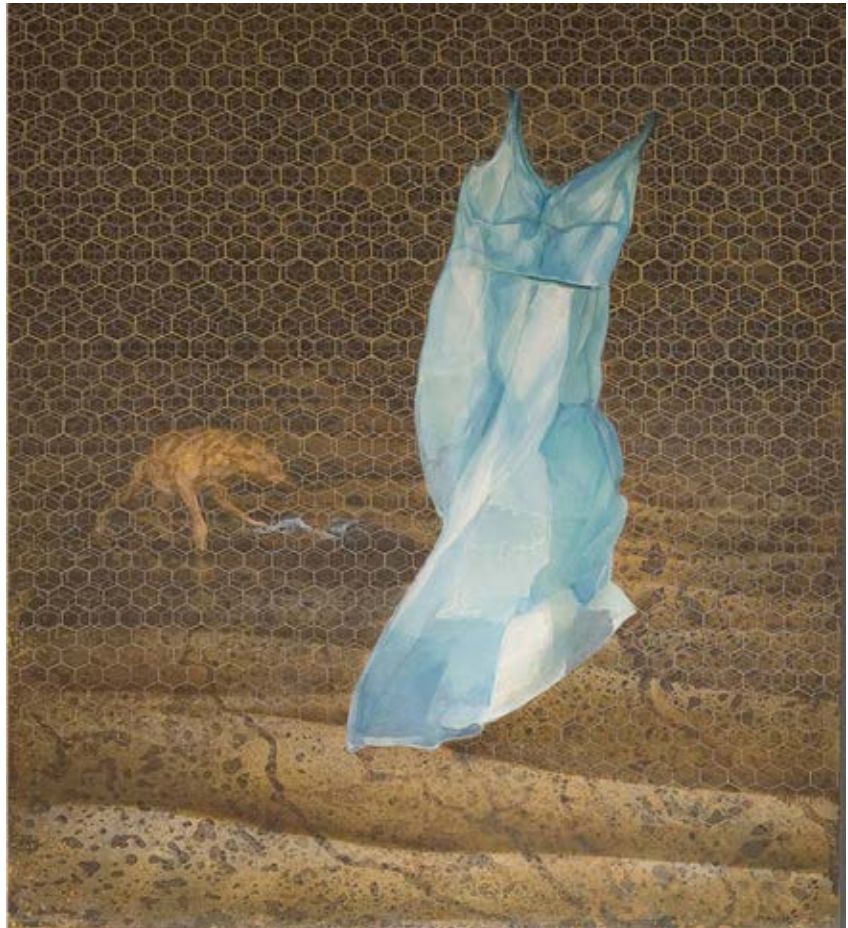
Monkey shrine, 1983. Mixed media, 167 x 120 cm.



**So, who am I?** I am elderly female art-worker – a ghastly term. My antecedents are German and Afrikaans with DNA-proven Pygmy matrilineal thread. My politics are liberal humanist. My faith is inquisitive infidel – not atheist, as I loathe the condescension of their secular priests. My education is Old Fashioned Thorough, with English overtones. My dress code is charlady chic, my hair is by sparrows nest, Mpumalanga. My mantra is that ‘Everything that lives is holy’ – with the exception of racists, demagogues, mosquitoes and people who fix cricket matches. My suspicion is that pain and greed are the cogs around which we revolve. I lack a consistent style, and my work has sometimes been compromised by the need to make a living, which can result in unresolved or flatulent images.

I respond to the moment and have a self-destructive tendency to let my judgment be clouded by the needs and imperatives of other people. But now, in what is surely the last decade of my life, I want to concentrate on the stimuli that prompt me, to harness the energy that they give me without having to compromise.

**I am a crone, not a woman, and I want to embrace all the freedom that this status bestows.**

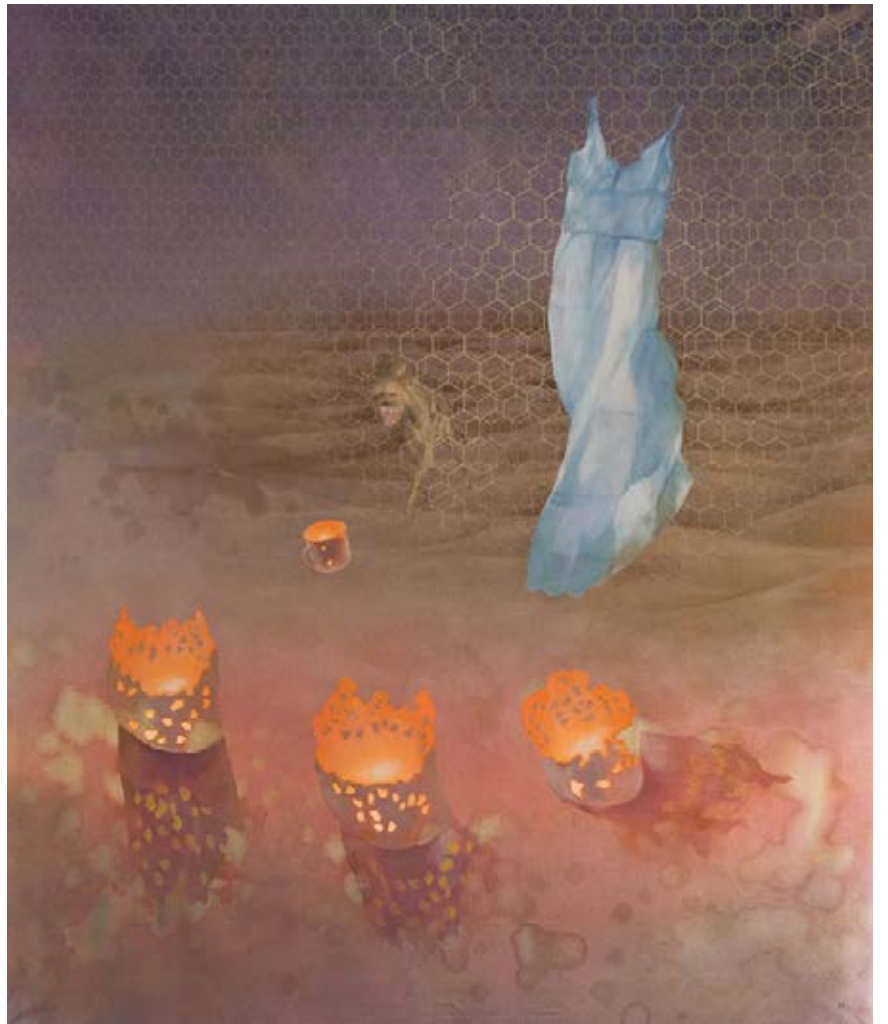


TOP LEFT: *Ballooning in the Rain*, 1979. Oil on canvas 90 x 120 cm.

TOP RIGHT: *Abstract Landscape*, 1977. Oil on board, 75 x 174 cm.

BOTTOM TRIPTYCH: *The man who sang and the woman who kept silent*, 1998. LEFT PANEL: Oil on canvas, 166 x 122 cm. CENTRE PANEL: Dress sculpture, 200 x 70 x 45 cm. RIGHT PANEL: 190 x 160 cm. Collection of The Constitutional Court, Johannesburg.









My artworks reflect the ideas and events that have engaged my life as a citizen. Politics, faith and the nature of animal life have fascinated me since I was very young, and as is usually the case, manifested themselves in belief and protest and charitable causes of various kinds.

My artworks have never been offered in lieu of participation, they are the philosophical notes I make on the actual existential business of living. Artwork cannot be a substitute for going to the barricades when called to do so, but it can help one to make sense of what one was doing there. If any sense is to be made. Lazy security policemen who knew me as a naive easy target, rather than an adversary of some importance, made three attempts on my life. With lots of these things in life, an embarrassed shrug is the only footnote necessary.

Refusing to eat meat because one is morally and physically revolted by factory farming is probably ineffective, but it certainly beats painting about it, and donating to local crisis clinics may cater to somebody's desperate immediate needs while a drawing in a gallery will not.

Making artworks has been the one constant in my otherwise disordered life. It is not because the rewards are great. I remember a tax accountant looking at me with dismay, asking me why on earth I didn't do something more profitable, when my income showed an improvement from zero to more or less nothing.



LEFT: *Tombs of the Pharaohs of Johannesburg* (triptych). 1987. Mixed media , 250 x 200 x 150 cm. Collection: Tatham Art Gallery, Pietermaritzburg.

RIGHT: *Nude*. 1978. Oil on board, 120 x 92 cm.









From the series *Walking with and away from Dante*.

TOP LEFT: *Purgatorio*, 2007. Oil on canvas, 200 x 600 cm.

CENTRE: *Inferno*, 2006. Oil on canvas, 200 x 600 cm.

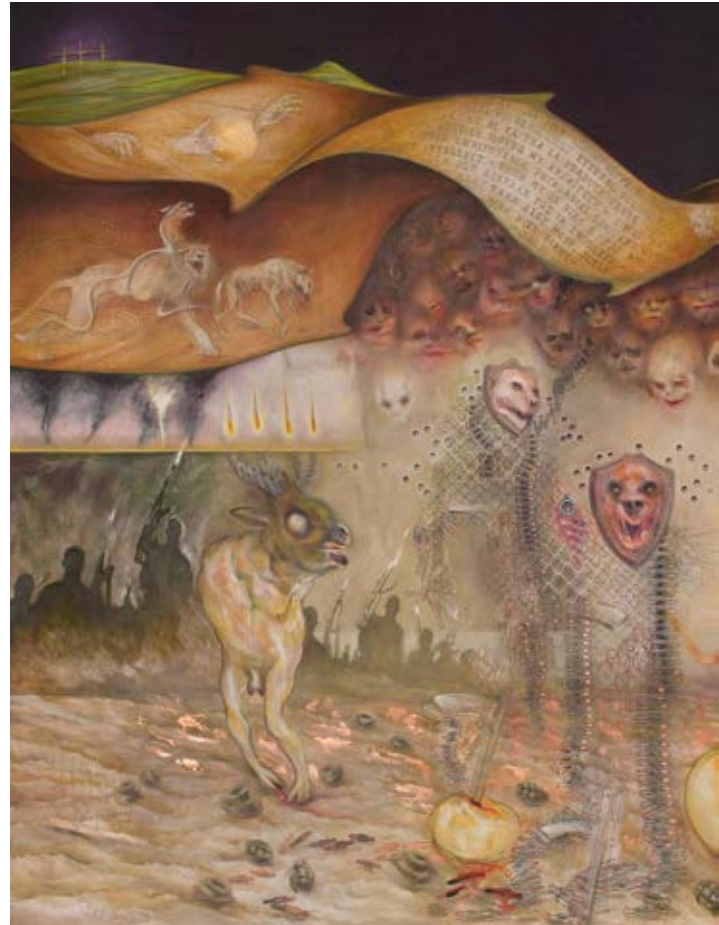
BOTTOM LEFT: Detail from *Inferno*.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Detail from *Purgatorio*.

TOP RIGHT: Detail from *Inferno*.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Judith Mason in her studio.

Photos by Michael Hall. Koekemoer/Berger Collection.



Totems from the series *Walking with and away from Dante*, 2006/7.

FROM LTR:  
*Disposable Infant*.  
Oil on supawood,  
174 x 40 cm.

*Suicide Bomber*.  
Oil on Supawood,  
175 x 35 cm.

*Count Ungolino*,  
Oil on Supawood,  
145 x 45 cm.

*Dream of Sirena*.  
Oil on Supawood,  
175 x 45 cm.

Photos by Michael  
Hall. Koekemoer/  
Berger Collection.







Making artworks is how I think. An artwork is something between a thing and a thought.

Suffering is the common thread that binds my thinking about faith, life and politics. I explore the democracy of pain in an attempt to make sense of it, and its fellows – anger, resignation and cynicism. This sounds both priggish and pretentious, but I have no better words with which to describe it – which is probably why I am drawn to working in the code of visual images, using my hand and a few elementary tools – oil, pigment and graphite.

Artwork which is mediated by other means, such as video and photography hold little interest for me, although I respect many works made in this manner.

'Haptic' from the Greek for 'grasp', refers to the process of recognising objects through touch. I literally try to grasp ideas through the use of a pencil, to identify not only objects, but states of mind, and the seismographic action of pencil or brush on paper records what I am hunting for and how the hunting was done. Each painting or drawing done by the human hand is a force field of hundreds of





small decisions, erasures, errors, apprehensions, lucky strokes and hungers. In attempting to create an image, the artist has to feel it, and this informs the boldness of a shadow, the soft feathering of a wing, the jut of a wristbone.

Tenderness, outrage and grief are plaited into the image by the artists' repetitive actions, and the idiosyncrasy of the artist's feelings reach the onlooker at a different frequency to that of, for example, a news photograph. Compare Goya's *Third of May* with any war journalism, or Diane Victor's raped infant with any forensic documentary.

Goya and Victor touch us, while other images inform us.

### **Human gestures make us human.**

When we visit art collections and museums, part of the pleasure we feel is in sharing the radiant space where so many hundreds of hours have been spent making so many thousands of marks.

Parallel with my need to address suffering, and my attempts to translate it, is my interest in religion. Belief is an artform, created as artworks are, in an attempt to understand the incomprehensible. But religions embrace



Wilma Stockenström and Mason's artist's book, *Skoelapperheuwel, Skoelappervrou*, 1988. Printed on a lithographic etching press on 250 gm Rives BFK paper by Bruce Attwood of the former Broederstoom Press. Text set in *Visigoth*, a font specially designed for the book by Cynthia Hollandsworth of AlphaOmega Typography, New York.



doctrine, I need ambiguity and tragedy and the tension of never being certain.

Nevertheless, sacred art and music have been the mainstay of my aesthetic life. I have watched, with fascination and sadness how various systems, holy wars, science, the moral squalor of adherents and the spirals of trashy discourse into which arguments descend have eroded.

Malignancy is there, but also splendour. I am trying to find a way to record the death of faith, or its mortal wounding, without being facile, without jeering. Being cognisant of the loss. Christ descends from the Cross, cutting his image down as if it is paper on a billboard. This image pleases me as it honours the capacity we have to make images, and respond to images as if they matter.

*Wrestling with the Muse.* 2005.  
Oil on board,  
120 x 130 cm.





TOP LEFT: *Pomegranate I*, 2010.  
Eleven-colour lithograph, edition: 40, 51 x 70 cm.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Pomegranate II*, 2010.  
Seven-colour lithograph, edition: 40, 51 x 70 cm.

TOP RIGHT: *Pomegranate III*, 2010.  
Seven-colour lithograph, edition: 40, 51 x 70 cm.

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Goya's Hat*, 2010.  
Nine-colour lithograph, edition: 35, 70 x 51 cm.

I also want to explore the notion of original sin, which assumes that a tiny scrap of humanity drags a toxic load behind it. I want to look behind my abhorrence at Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son to a capricious bully, to see why that ugly story has lasted so long.

I want to work out the effect of the desert on the Prophet. And the mountains on Shiva. I am ridiculously grandiose!

Who knows? Perhaps being a crone means looking at the small pleasures of life more clearly. The glancing light on a glass of wine, a couple of white browed robins, the exasperated glances of my grandchildren may well appear in future work. Maybe.

My lack of integrity is, however, a permanent condition. My work is fragmentary, made by a fractured person. This does not stop me from longing to stare into the abyss, as Dante did and "see how all the pages of the Universe are bound by love, into a single volume." Substance, accident and mode unite, he tells us – a serviceable definition of an artwork, surely, and one that holds out the promise of wholeness, while one gets out the paper and sharpens the pencils, and waits. <

View more of Judith Mason's work at [www.judithmason.com](http://www.judithmason.com)







TOP LEFT: Detail of work in progress, *Hermaphrodite*, 2009/10. Oil canvas, 113 x 168 cm

BOTTOM LEFT: *Waiting Room*, 2005. Pencil on paper, 120 x 67 cm.

TOP CENTRE: Detail of work in progress, *Prometheus*, 2009/10. Oil canvas, 113 x 168 cm.

BOTTOM CENTRE: Detail of work in progress, *Carrion landscape*, 2010. Pencil and coloured pencil on paper, 115 x 145 cm.

RIGHT: *Descent from the Cross*, 2009. Oil on canvas, 110 x 170 cm.







# DEBORAH BELL

## NOTIONS OF THE SELF

**By Jacques Lange.** In the *TAXI Art Book* series, Deborah Bell's work is aptly described "as fundamentally informed by a personal search for the 'Self' and she often draws on spiritual imagery from a wide range of sources. This continuity of form and content within Bell's opus allows the possible meanings within her work to reach beyond the personal search of the artist herself."

Bell was born in Johannesburg in 1957. She received her B.A. (Hons) and M.F.A. from the University of Witwatersrand and has since built a reputation as one of Africa's most innovative artists known for her agility to work in diverse media, be it painting, printmaking or sculpture.

Since 1982 Bell has held close to 15 solo exhibitions and participated in more than 40 group shows. She is also known for her collaborations with other artists, most notably Robert Hodgins and William Kentridge with whom she worked on various projects from 1986 to 1997, including the internationally acclaimed *Ubu and the Truth Commission*.

In an interview with *DESIGN>ART*, Bell shared some insights into her career as well as her current creative work.

You are a very prolific artist. Please describe your current work ethic and output? Over the last eight years, after moving to the countryside, I have found an easy balance between work, walking dogs in the koppies, yoga and meditation. I would get up early for these pursuits, and usually get into my studio in the late morning – often working until suppertime and finding that my most productive time commences after four in the afternoon. The rhythm of working almost every day was established and I learned early on that sitting around waiting for inspiration was not the way to go, but the process of working itself, and breaking the inertia allowed the ideas and magic to flow. However, in the last six months, I have needed to spend half of the week in the city, and am still trying to find a new rhythm of work.

You are a painter, sculptor, printmaker, video artist and draftsman. How do you alternate between these artistic expressions and how you decide on a media? First of all, I am not sure what you mean as 'draftsman' – it sounds too orderly and precise for what I do. My drawing and painting are so interlinked at this point that I am no longer sure how to label them. However, I do need to keep my oils and acrylics separate, and fortunately have two studios for this purpose, as well as a print shop and an outdoor sculpture space. The decision of which

medium to work with is largely intuitive and I generally have a lot of work in process at any one time. When I have been drawing and painting for a while, I get a yen to sculpt, and visa versa. My printmaking weaves separately through all of this, largely because I do it in collaboration with master printmakers, usually in other spaces. Working on prints is a bit like going on holiday. Whilst I have made some animated movies in collaboration with Kentridge and Hodgins, working with video is not my medium.

There seems to be an omnipresent sculptural quality, spatiality and sense of weight to all of your two-dimensional work, be it your paintings, drawings or prints. Are you primarily a sculptor at heart? Ironically, before I began to work with sculpture, my paintings were very weighty and depicted three-dimensional form in a well defined space. I was passionate about painting, and thought of sculpture as something you tripped over when stepping backwards to get a better view of a two-dimensional work of art. However, once I developed a love for sculpture, my paintings became more ephemeral – forms now suggested through thin washes, charcoal smudges and free floating lines. It was as if the monumentality of the sculpture itself freed me to describe a less material world.

You are known for your technical virtuosity. Is there a medium or technique that keeps on challenging you in more ways than others? I am presently working on a very large sculpture consisting of four pieces, in plaster. The challenge of that scale, and having to work with armatures, ladders and machinery is physically exhausting. I let the plaster dry and then attack it, carving into it with an angle grinder. Often

rebuilding and carving into it again and again. The vibration of the angle grinder plays havoc with my hands and requires weekly visits to my osteopath. The dust requires masks and goggles. Also, the focus required to balance on a ladder with a whirling lethal blade in your hands is immense.

However, I have always thought that oil painting is one of the most complex and intellectually challenging mediums to work in.

In an interview you said "I'm always pushing beyond the limits of what I do with ease." What limits have you recently conquered and what do you still want to achieve in the near future? It's a constant evolution. I have started working in oils again after a period of about 18 years and now approach it in quite a different way. Also, right now, I am not sure if I ever want to work in plaster again as it is taking too great a toll on my body. I need to find a different material and therefore may return to clay.

It is true that when I get too comfortable with a method of doing something, the work goes 'dead' on me. Perhaps that is why I explore so many disparate media.

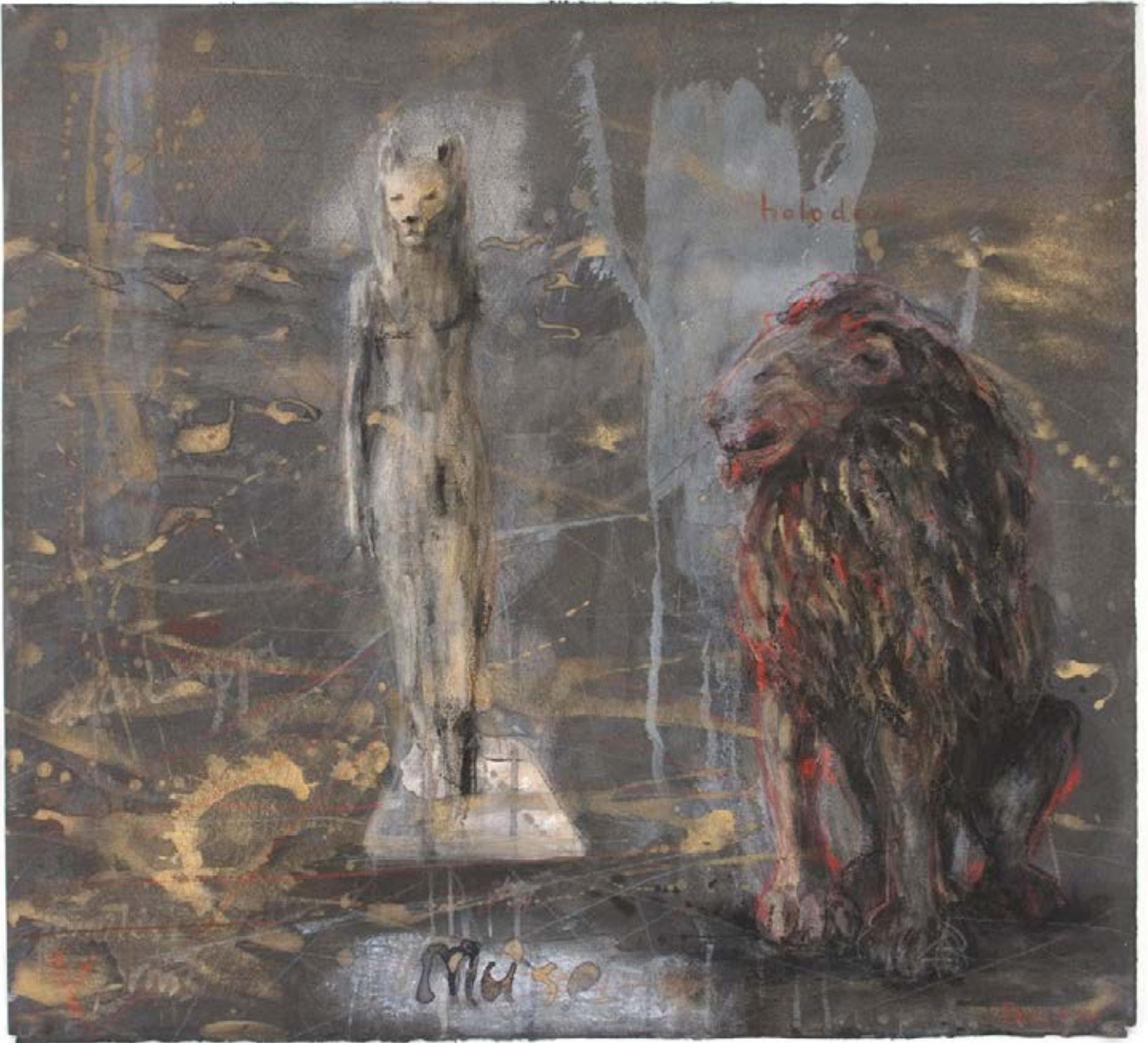
There is always the challenge of the unknown.

In an interview with *CS Magazine* you stated that: "I've often found that I'll do a work and not know what the symbolism of the work is." However, your works are filled with a great diversity of recurring symbols – horses, chariots, bicycles, lions, African ritualistic objects, idols and mythological creatures – that convey strong narratives. How do the narratives transpire/unfurl? Do the recurring symbols maintain their











same meaning to you or do they change? An interesting question. I am aware that symbols have become a vocabulary or an alphabet that I use again and again. However, their meaning does shift and change for me as my own spiritual understanding evolves. I think that the first time I used the image of a lion pierced by arrows based on a Sumerian relief (in an etching from the late 80s), I responded to it poetically, liking its visual juxtaposition within the rest of the image. As the lion became a recurring motif for me, standing for sovereignty and courage (our spiritual birthright), its wounding became pertinent – alluding to the loss of something essential within us.

For many years, I used the symbol of the 'X', marking it at the bottom of a page, or carving or painting it on the upper arms or chest of a figure. I linked it to the idea of 'crossing'. However, I now understand it as representing the 'moment of presence'.

How do you name your works? Sometimes names just appear, rising up into my consciousness. I may also be drawn to a quotation from a book, or from a song I am listening to. Other times they are very elusive and have to be hunted down. I will play with sounds and meanings and the shape of words until something resonates with the work.

You say that you work subconsciously and intuitively. With reference to the old adage, 'practice makes perfect', have you found that your intuition has developed over the years? Are there ever times when you doubt your art or are you consistently confident? My intuition has definitely developed. I suspect that there will always be times of doubt – but my

confidence has increased, and it is not necessarily the confidence of perfection, but the confidence that each work is about process and transformation, and that perfection is not necessary.

You often introduce text in your work. Apart from the carefully chosen words, I find that you have a very sensitive way of working with typography. It's not just a standard handwriting but rather an intentional expression of the message that you convey similar to the manner that a designer will match a typeface with a message. Is typography something that interests you? I have never really looked at or studied typography. However, the visual or the 'shape' of the word carries meaning for me. I know that I have not yet fully understood it, but there is something about the vibration of shape and sound that seems important.

The term 'alchemy' is often used in reviews of your work. It obviously has reference to both your use of media and analogical techniques. Would you describe yourself as an alchemist? What does gold mean to you? There has been a lot written about the spiritual meaning of alchemy, and that anyone who consciously embarks on a spiritual journey is an alchemist of the self. It is about a constant search for transformation and change – the search for alchemical gold being equated with the search for spiritual enlightenment. For me, art making is a spiritual practice and a tool I use to further explore notions of the Self.

Most artists prefer to work in a solitary studio environment but you seem to enjoy working with others. Can you describe the atmosphere and circumstances in the studios when you collaborate? Is it serious and quiet or noisy and

jovial, or does it differ? What would you choose as your most satisfying collaborative experience? I do spend most of my time working in the solitary studio environment and feel that this is where the core of my work happens. The collaborations are side trips, but side trips that may completely alter the direction that I am moving in.

Earlier, you asked me about my desire to push beyond my limits. Working in collaboration does this. You have to relinquish control, and are often pushed to try things beyond your comfort zone. The synergy of working with someone else – if you let go and just have fun – can be very liberating.

Working with [Robert] Hodgins and [William] Kentridge had an enormous impact on me. When we worked at Caversham Press with etching, we worked alongside each other in an atmosphere that was largely quiet and serious – interspersed with times of great camaraderie and dancing. We looked over shoulders, stole and borrowed images and techniques, challenged and egged each other on. This is when my love for etching and drypoint was born.



Detail of *Unearthed* series, 2001. Terracotta, Height 2 m plus.









LEFT & CENTRE: Work in progress, 2010. Photos by Deborah Bell.  
BOTTOM: Deborah Bell in her studio. Photo by Bridget Glenday.  
RIGHT: Work in progress, 2010. Photo by Robin Glanville.





But the most satisfying collaboration was in making the movie *Memo*. Animation was William's field, and it was great to venture into something so unknown. We made it in a day of inspired genius – creating sets out of paper and charcoal, frantically drawing around Robert as he made one small movement at a time – frame by frame. William was a superb director.

Recently (about 12 years afterwards), I rediscovered the imagery we created through that work, and made a series of paintings/drawings of *Re-remembering Memo*, but now with a knowledge of alchemy and its symbols.

Robert Hodgins has had a great influence on your artistic life. His passing earlier this year must have been a very emotional experience for you. What did you learn from him and how will you remember him? Robert was my mentor. I was a student of his at university, and with time our relationship became a relationship of great love and respect. After attending one of his seminars, I would rush back to the studio on fire with a desire to paint. He taught me to love the creative process – to make it part of my life and not to separate it from daily chores. His love for gardening and cooking bears testament to this.

What are your current interests, concerns and preoccupations? I am working on a number of things. In my oil paintings, I am rediscovering old imagery of nudes and figures in interior spaces, looking out at the viewer in a moment of presence, but I am working on them in quite a new way. I am also re-looking at the image of Diana the huntress taken from Titian's *Diana and Acteon* (which originally became part of my







FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

*Crying pot*, 1998. Fired terracotta.

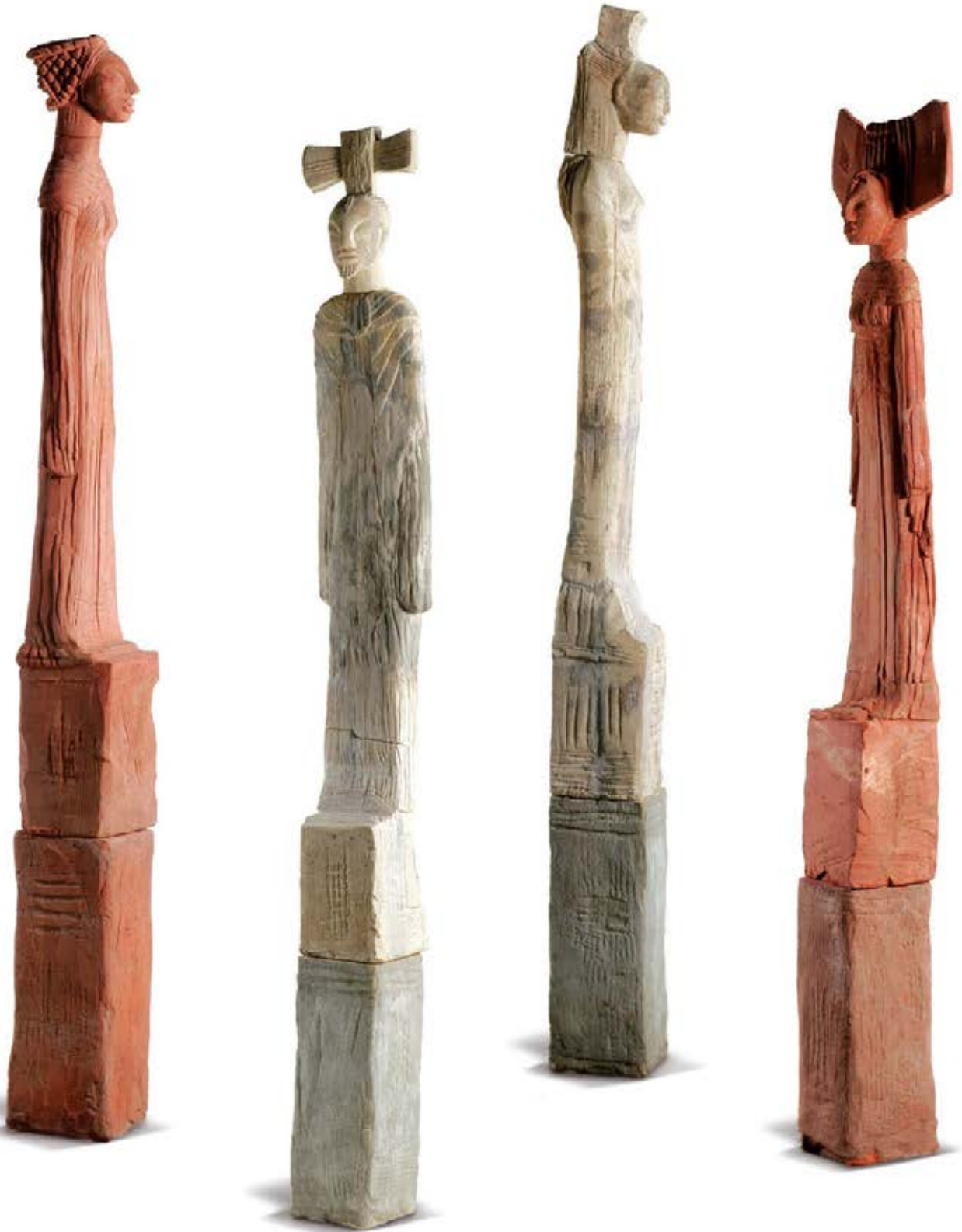
*Empress Dominion*, 2007. Bronze, 245 x 117 x 80 cm. Photo by John Hodgkiss.

*Chariot king and queen*, 2007. Bronze, bronze, 210 x 56 x 97 cm. Photo by John Hodgkiss.



*Sentinels*, 2003. Corobrick fire light or topaz clay and cement, 260 cm x variable dimensions. Photo by John Hodgkiss.





symbolic vocabulary in the mid 80s) and using it on a monumental scale in sculpture.

My paper works seem to be more connected with shamanic figures in landscape – the notion of the history under the surface, bone becoming stone; ideas of divination and summoning; the idea of the observer creating reality – the binary code – etc.

There's lots of different stuff on the go.

In your exhibition, *Collaborations II*, which opened in November 2010 at David Krut Projects, you worked with Jillian Ross, Jack Shirreff and Phil Sanders. Was this a very different experience from your past collaborations? What did you gain from working with them? It is wonderful to work with three different printmakers in different print shops – Phil in a bustling Manhattan experience. Jack deep in the English countryside and Jill in inner-city Johannesburg.

Jill and I have had a great collaboration over many years. She knows me so well and understands what I am trying to do – sometimes throwing a curve ball of trying something new such as monoprints or carborundum. We have a great ease with each other and lots of mutual respect. We have also worked together with Jack and Phil, both who are helping me find a new way to work in prints with colour.

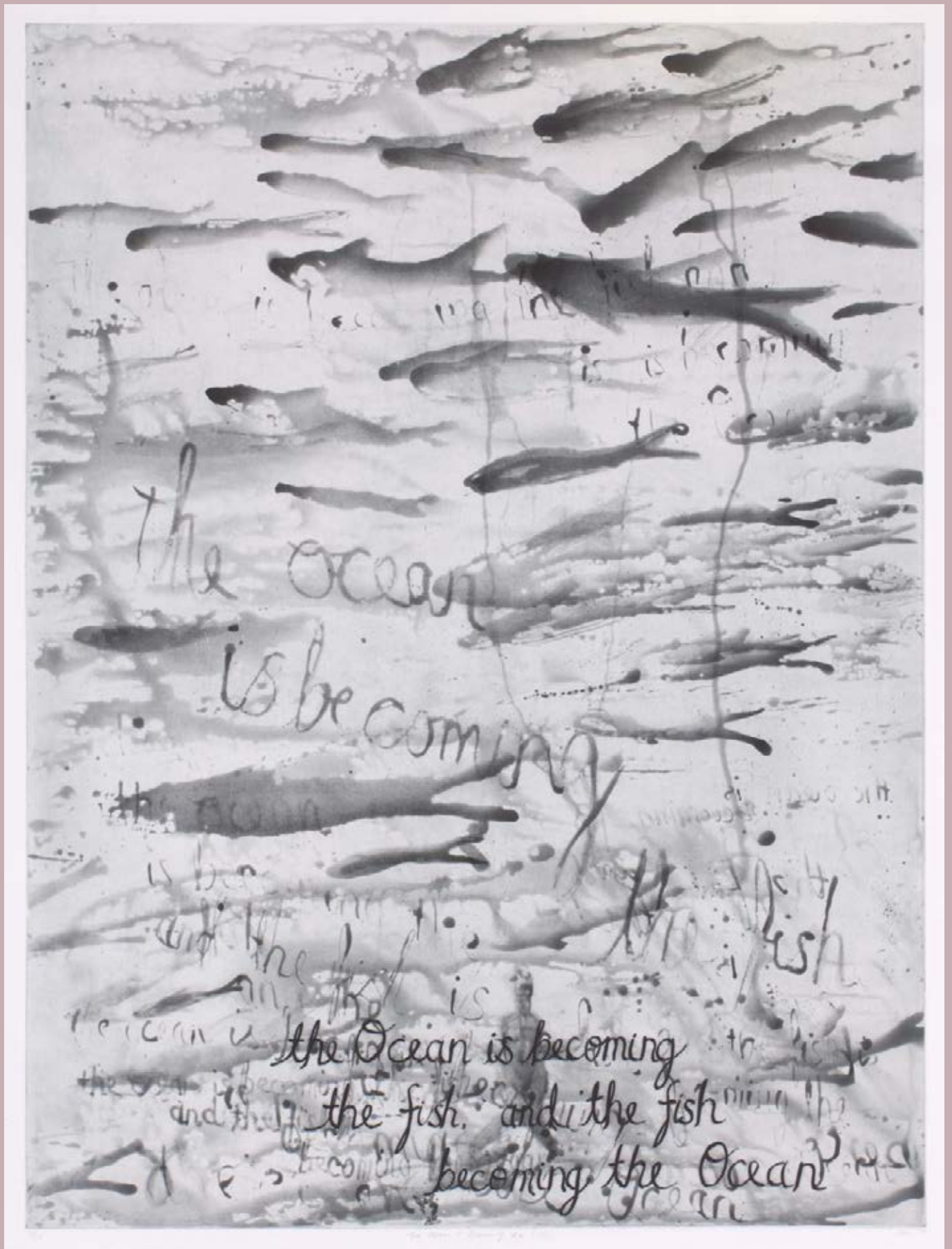
Jack's method is very direct, painting directly onto the plate, doing multiple runs through the press, adding a different colour each time before removing the paper. Or, he will get me to throw great globs of colour on the wet paper just before putting it in the press to print the plate. His methods are very painterly and raw, and impart a very vibrant energy to the work. He also gets me to work on an enormous scale.

Phil's method is more precise and delicate. When last in South Africa, he came to my studio to see how I painted and devised, through multiple plates, an equivalent feel through etching. The works I do with him are more intimate, mysterious and subtle.

What's next for Deborah Bell? Apart from finishing all the works I described for my solo show at Everard Read in March 2011, I have no idea! <







*The ocean is becoming the fish*, 2007. Drypoint and spitbite aquatint, 119 x 88.5 cm. Photo by John Hodgkiss.



# ARTS ALIVE

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL  
JOHANNESBURG

# GET SWITCHED ON TO THE JOBURG ARTS ALIVE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL DURING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

There's no better way to get switched on to Joburg's cultural scene than to immerse yourself in the annual Joburg Arts Alive International Festival.

Inaugurated in 1992, this highlight of the city's cultural calendar has grown in leaps and bounds over its history, the development of the festival playing no small role in turning Joburg into the world class African city it undoubtedly is.

Of course, the timing of the Joburg Arts Alive International Festival is impeccable: taking place each September it ushers in Spring in a city known for being home to the world's largest man-made forest which literally blooms into life during this month.

In 2010, the festival turns 18 and on the festival's route to adulthood it has picked up many defining features that remain in place each year in spite of the rotating line-up of top-notch creative talent.

From music concerts to dance, theatre, comedy, visual art and the spoken word, this event sponsored by the City of Joburg covers all creative areas and also reaches to every corner of the wards within the seven city regions. This is part of its mandate to ensure no citizen of the city or visitor is left out of the considerable cultural reach of an arts festival that now has a global reputation.

Highlights include the longstanding Joburg institution, Jazz on the Lake, which brings free live music to the city's Zoo Lake on the first Sunday of September. Several festivals within the main Festival add to the jam-packed programme and the emphasis on collaborations between artists from across the city and around the globe is also something the festival is increasingly known for.

To keep up-to-date with the Joburg Arts Alive International Festival visit [www.artsalive.co.za](http://www.artsalive.co.za) or keep an eye on the local press. Details of each year's programme are usually revealed from July onwards.



a world class African city

# JO'BURG SWITCHED ON

[WWW.ARTSALIVE.CO.ZA](http://WWW.ARTSALIVE.CO.ZA)





# DIANE VICTOR

By **Gordon Froud**. Diane Victor, recently completed a residency at the Centre for Contemporary Print in Norwalk, Connecticut, USA, where she produced work for her first solo exhibition in New York at David Krut Gallery, running from October to December. Following this in early 2011 she has an exhibition at Falconer Gallery





at Grinnell College, Iowa, where she has been invited to present workshops around smoke drawing.

These accolades are some of the many that have come the way of Victor, one of South Africa's hardest working artists. After a career that spans nearly 25 years, that has taken her to Paris,

Vienna, New York, Sydney, Vermont, Poland and many other countries, one could say that Victor is 'starting to get there'.

Victor is best known for her large-scale charcoal drawings and etchings depicting mythical subjects and her social commentary rooted in the South

*4 Horses: Baited*,  
2009. Etching and  
digital print.  
Edition of 25,  
106 x 200 cm.

African situation but made universal through her skilful technical abilities.

Beyond this, she is also a pioneer of alternative drawing techniques, constantly reinventing her media to the amazement of her appreciative audiences. She was a finalist in the SASOL Wax in Art Award in 2006 where, in her entry *The Recent Dead*, she included drawings of South Africans who had been killed in crime related attacks in the six months previous to the exhibition. What made these portraits innovative and particularly poignant was the medium. Victor drew the portraits in candle smoke from ordinary wax candles. The sooty deposits that make up the portraits cannot be fixed to the paper like charcoal can, so remains on the surface, vulnerable and susceptible to damage if touched – very much like the lives of the people depicted. An earlier series of smoke drawings *Smoke Heads* (in the collection of Iziko, the South African National Gallery in Cape Town) depicted women and men living with HIV/AIDS.

Having mastered smoke as a drawing material, Victor embarked on a new series of works in a traditional material, (charcoal) but in a new manner. She ground up charcoal, floated it on water and drew figures in stains. The inspiration for the technique came from two sources, the stains left on the ceiling by the leaking roof of her Glen Austin studio and a damaged drawing that had been leaked on by the same roof. Victor saw the potential in the damage and produced various series of drawings around the idea of the stain, stains of memory, stains of guilt, as in the drawing *The stains of the fathers* – the traces and shadows of what is left behind in our culture’s subconsciousness. She drew damaged people such as saints and martyrs alongside broken classical sculptures to show fading ideals and fading belief systems as seen in *The wise and foolish Virgins*.

Victor’s most recent innovation extends the use of a powdered medium for drawing. In this case, she literally







Diane Victor in her studio.



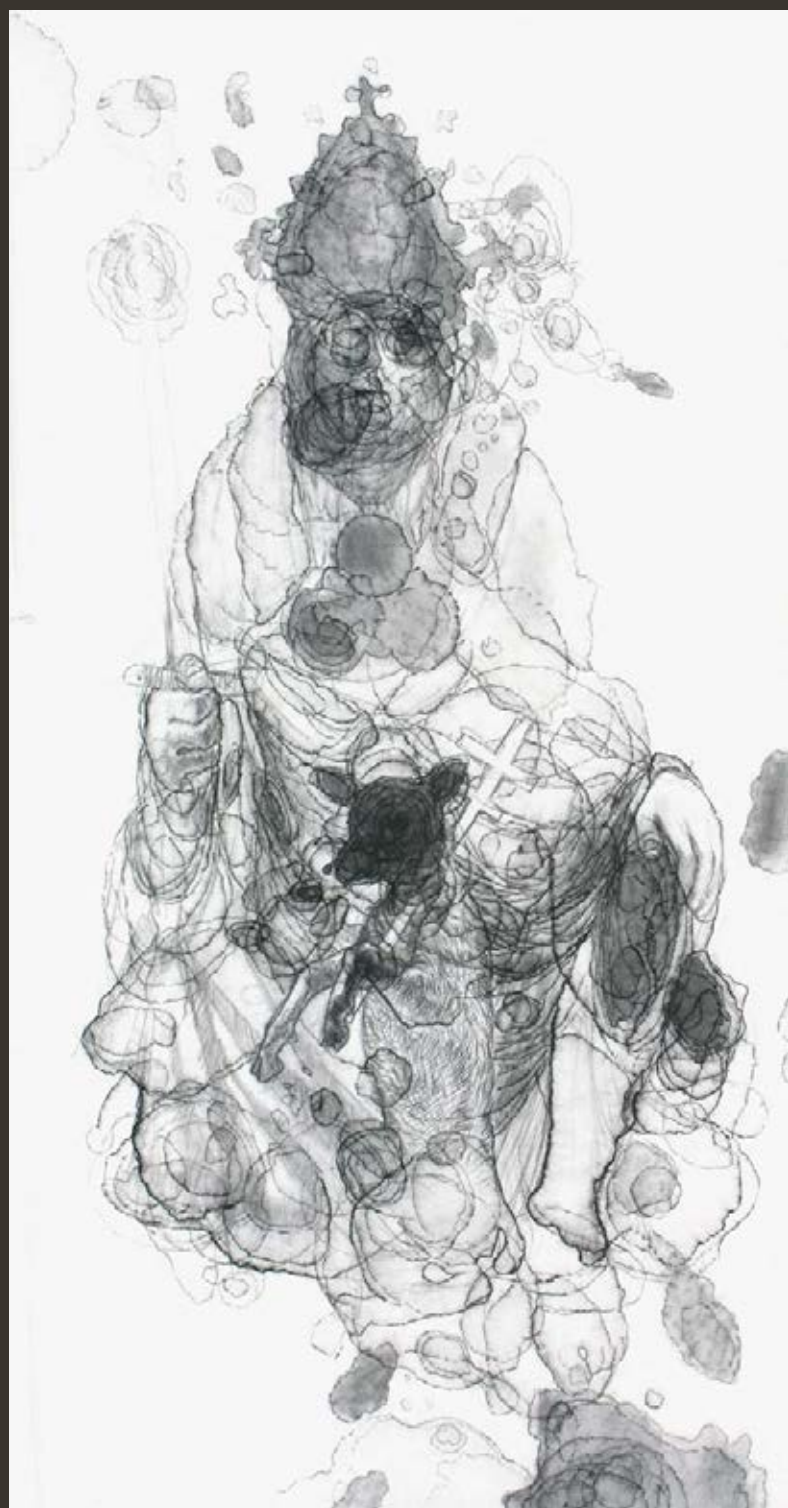
*Recent dead* series. Smoke deposits on paper, 58 x 41 cm (each panel).  
Photos by John Hodgkiss.



draws in ash. Sometimes this ash is collected from an environment and at other times is made by the artist's own hand. For the work *Transcend* recently shown at Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, the artist selectively burned books and used the ash collected from these burnings, mixed with charcoal ash, tapped gently down onto her drawing paper to capture images of the frail and almost translucent models, worn out people, the ill, elderly or dispossessed. In ethereal ash fixed to paper, Victor pays tribute to the passage of time and people, commenting on the way that they may become worn down and ultimately fade away. The use of books as the fuel to generate these drawings refers to knowledge that is lost when a person dies. She quotes from performance artist and singer Laurie Anderson who said "when my father died it was like a whole library had burned down"<sup>1</sup>

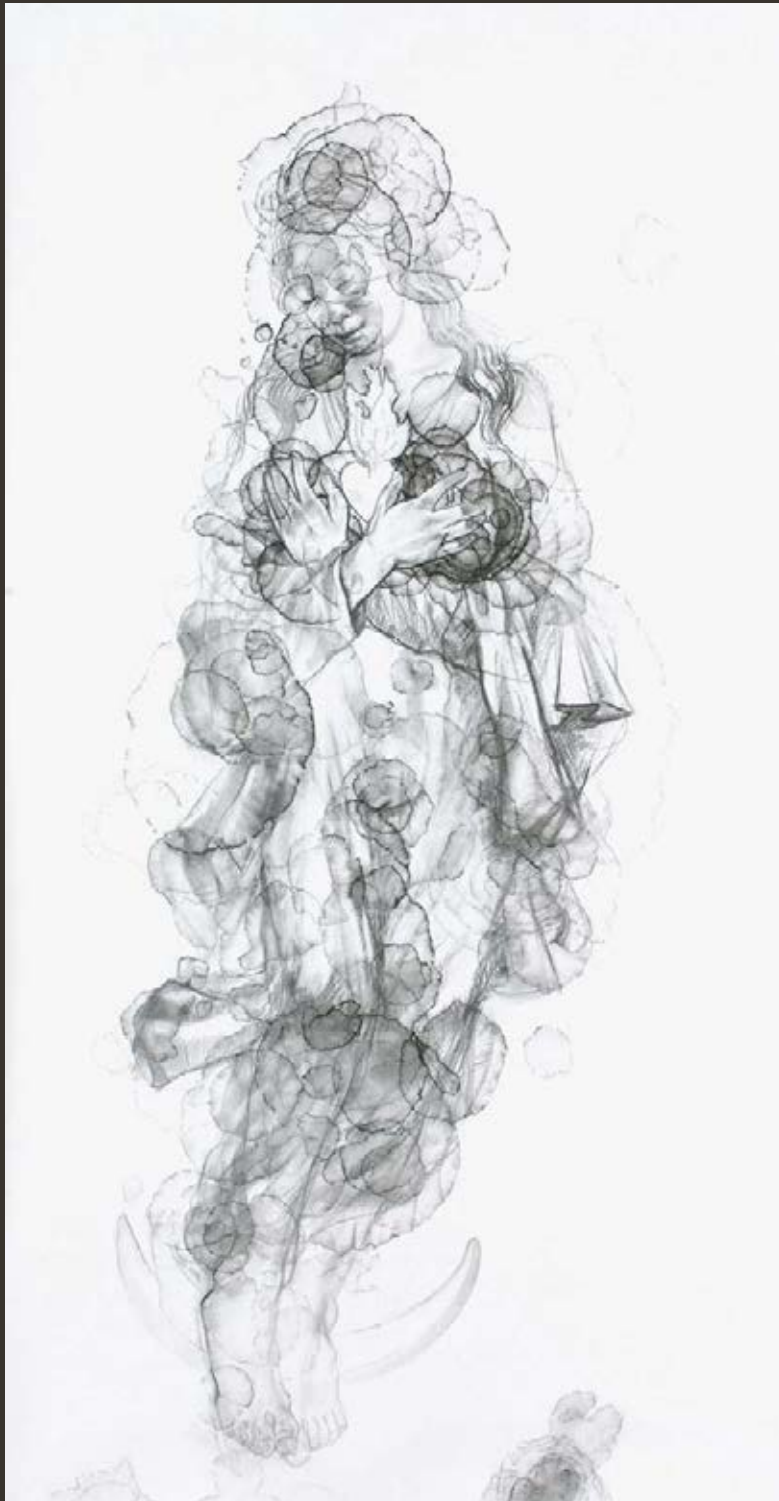
Diane Victor has also pushed the boundaries of printmaking in South Africa and has been accepted onto some of the world's top printmaking shows, competitions and biennales. She was

awarded the Statutory Award of MTG, Krakow Print Triennial, Krakow, Poland in 2006 and this year, was nominated to be included in the International Experimental Engraving Biennial in Romania dealing with the interface between digital and traditional printmaking. The works selected were large equestrian prints shown earlier this year in *Transcend* at Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg. In these prints (each of which measures nearly 2 m x 1.25 m), Victor prints one of the four horses of the Apocalypse galloping across turbulent landscapes. The horses are etched into large, shaped copper plates which are then painstakingly printed on ragpaper to get rich velvety blacks. The landscapes over which the horses hover, are digitally printed from drawings by Victor, scanned and printed by commercial printers. The horses refer to equestrian sculptures and two of them contain figures of humans concealed within them. Two of the horses have naked riders while the other two are rider-less seemingly out of control. The landscapes underfoot are turbulent and depict scenes of natural disaster and war. These monumental works have a power and



*Stained Gods* series, 2004. Charcoal and water stains on paper, 150 x 180 cm each.





technical ability seldom witnessed in contemporary printmaking.

Another series of prints gaining some exposure and bought by the Museum of Modern Art in New York and by a number of public and private collections in South Africa is titled *Disasters of Peace*. This ongoing series was started by Victor in 2001 and now numbers close to forty prints in the series. The *Disasters* were made as a direct response to articles, in the news, of atrocities perpetrated in South Africa since the bloodless regime change in 1994. Victor reaches her most critical point as a commentator in these works, by showing the events that occur on a daily basis in a time of 'peace' that would be seen as horrific even in a time of war – and yet as citizens we accept them as a way of life. Johan Thom in his introduction to a catalogue for the *Map – South Africa* project writes about the series and says "Never one to shy away from controversial subject matter, Diane Victor confronts head-on the violent reality of living in contemporary South Africa. In a series... her obsession with the rituals of suffering, submission and domination

that accompany the various forms of socio-political and economic deprivation endured daily by the citizens of the 'new South Africa' is given graphic visceral expression."<sup>2</sup>

Victor is an artist who makes work about the things that disturb her, things in society, cruelty, injustice and humankind's capacity to be inhuman towards one another. Each of the Disasters is based on an actual account. One of the early works in the series is called *Why Defy*, and refers to an incident in which a woman was abducted, raped and systematically had her face mutilated with a hot clothing iron over a number of days before being released. Professor Elizabeth Rankin in the Taxi book monograph on Victor, refers to this image

#### LEFT

TOP: *Disasters of peace series, Cluster complex*. Etching.

CENTRE: *Disasters of peace series, Mad Bob*. Etching.

BOTTOM: *Disasters of peace series, Witch hunt*. Etching.

#### RIGHT

TOP: *Disasters of peace series, To be continued*. Etching.

CENTRE: *Disasters of peace series, Why Defy*. Etching.

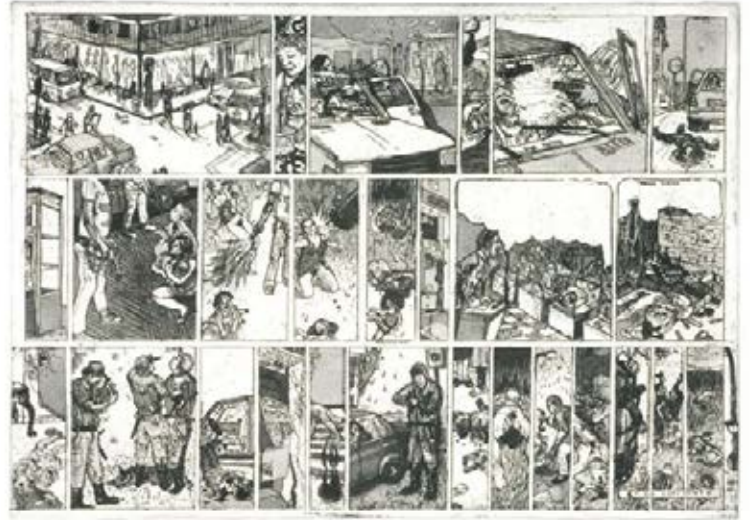
BOTTOM: *Disasters of peace series, Glue Boys*. Etching.

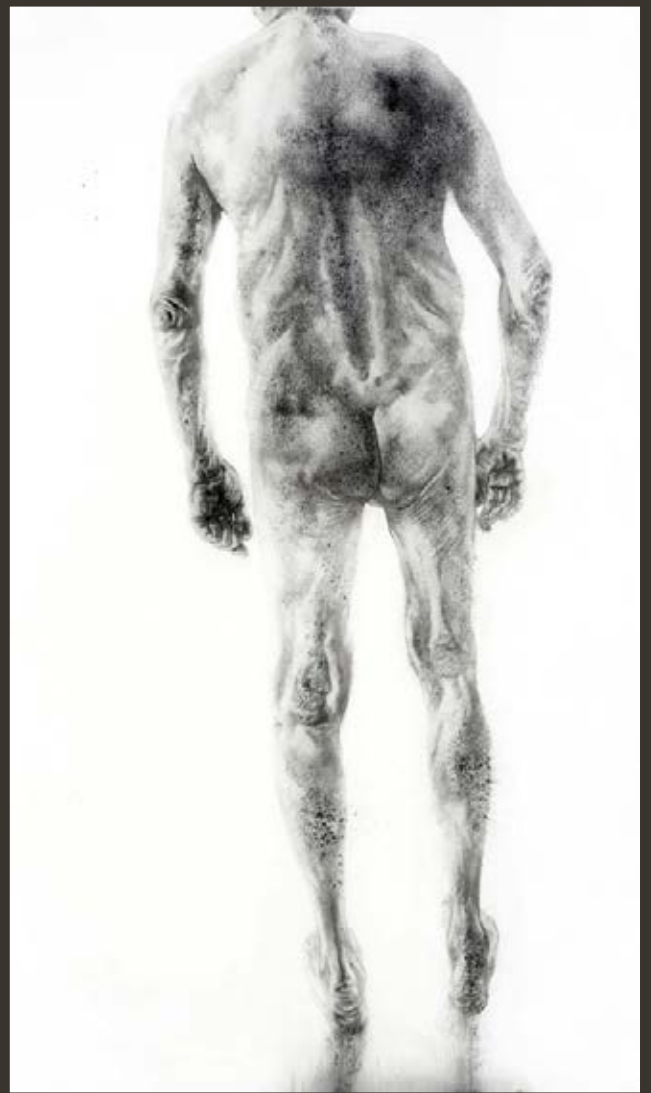
and Victor's approach "The rhyming pun of the title, slick as an advertising slogan, seems to jest about her (the victims) suffering, but provides a bearable conduit to contemplate its horror."<sup>3</sup> Victor speaks of this series as a 'cathartic' exercise and as a way of working through troublesome images that lodge themselves persistently in her memory.

She found the inspiration for this series in the works of Francisco Goya (1746 – 1828) who etched images from the Spanish Civil war in a series titled *Disasters of War* (1808 – 1814). These images that predated serious photography were a record of accounts of atrocities on both sides of the war. In Goya's case, there is a justification (albeit a slim one) for the violence and atrocities, because it was a time of war. In Victor's series, there can be no justification because these atrocities take place within a time of supposed 'peace'.

Victor continues to be a strong social commentator and is presently developing work around the subject of neo-colonial Chinese interests in Africa. A prelude to this body of work, reflected in a drypoint etching from *The birth of a nation series* shows a young oriental girl, playfully astride her trophy







Rhinoceros, her automatic rifle leaning against its lifeless body. Instead of the Rape of Europa on which it is based, this becomes the Rape of Africa referring to the Rhino horn disasters currently gripping the country and of course to the subtle encroachment by China into Africa. Her commentary is often couched in terms of black humour, where one laughs at the images and then catches oneself at it realising the seriousness of the content.

LEFT: *Transcend I*, 2010. Ash and charcoal dust drawing, 151 x 100 cm.

CENTRE: *Transcend series II*, 2010. Ash and charcoal dust drawing, 151 x 100 cm.

RIGHT: *The Rape of Africa*, 2010. Charcoal on paper, 100 x 140 cm.





Victor's position as commentator, part time lecturer (at Universities of Pretoria and Rhodes) and contemporary artist is highly regarded both locally and internationally resulting in the kind of acclaim that has resulted in her first solo show in New York. Hard work and consistency has resulted in many images of high quality, making her one of the finest and most productive artists in South Africa. And as if this is not enough, she still finds or makes time to travel and hike. She has recently found time to walk the Inca Trail in Peru as well as Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. <

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Laurie Anderson – *Bright Red* Warner Bros Inc., 1994.
- 2 Thom J. The sleeping monster produces reasons. *Map – South Africa*. Pretoria, 2008.
- 3 Rankin E. and Von Veh K. *Taxi 013: Diane Victor*. David Krut Publishing. Johannesburg, 2008.

Images courtesy of the artists. Photos by Jacki McInnes.



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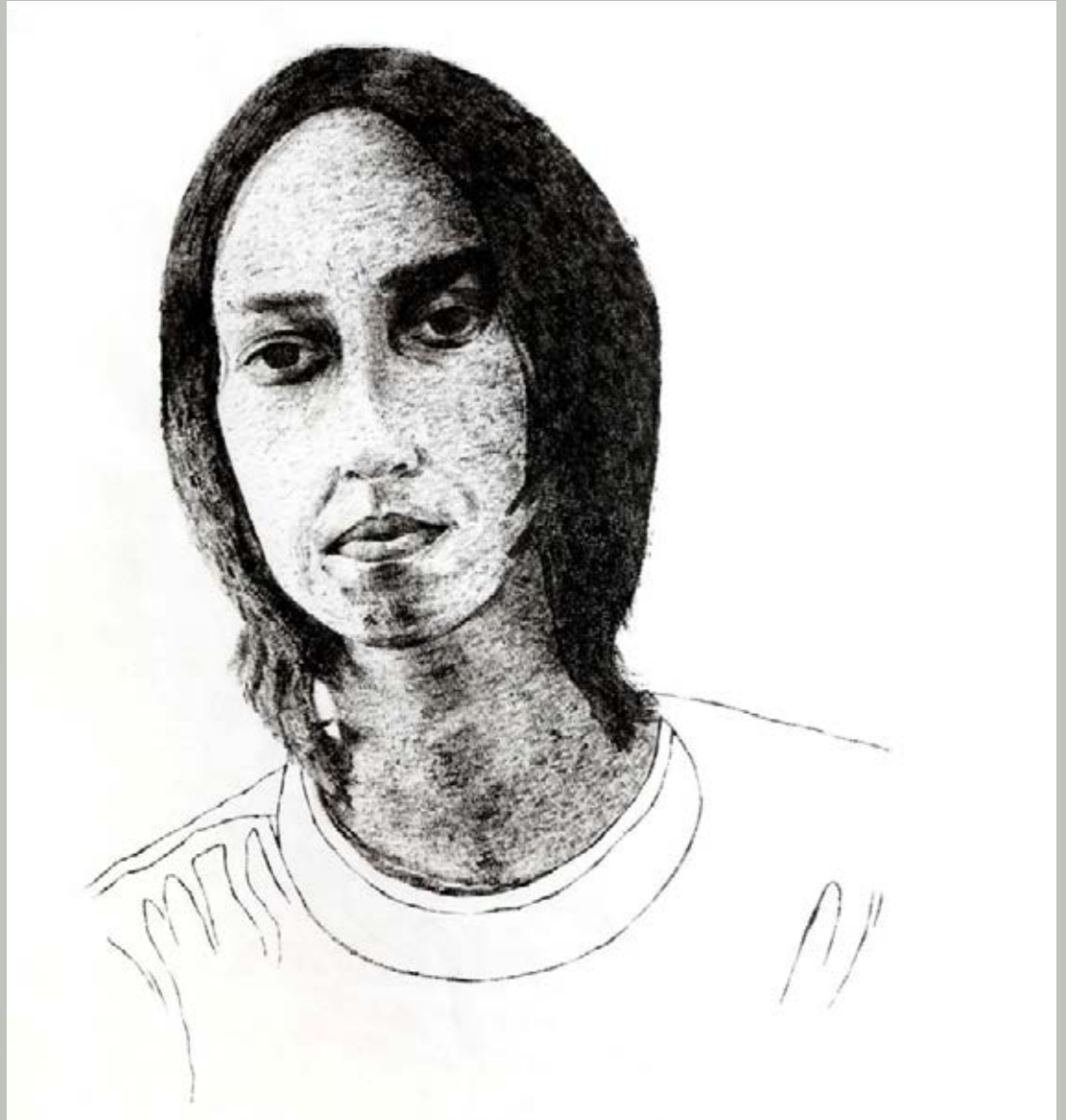


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# USHA SEEJARIM TWO HATS, ONE HEAD



Having to write about one's own work presents a strange situation of having to be two separate but related identities; that of artist and writer.

The phenomenon of dual identity is explored in my latest body of work titled *Mine over Matter*. It involves a deeply personal investigation of the self and the relationship of the self to its environment; an understanding of oneself beyond the burden of labels that we carry. Beyond being female and African, beyond being a mother, and an artist.

It is an analysis of identity further than culture, nationality, gender and heritage. When the illusionary workings of the mind and ego are revealed then a clearer perception of the true self emerges. These artworks are an attempt to grapple with this duality; the outer appearance of self; the one presented to the world, and the inner voice that exists within us.





I am struck by the notion of the two-in-one when we say things like, "I bought myself a new car" or "I am so angry with myself." Who are these two different personalities?

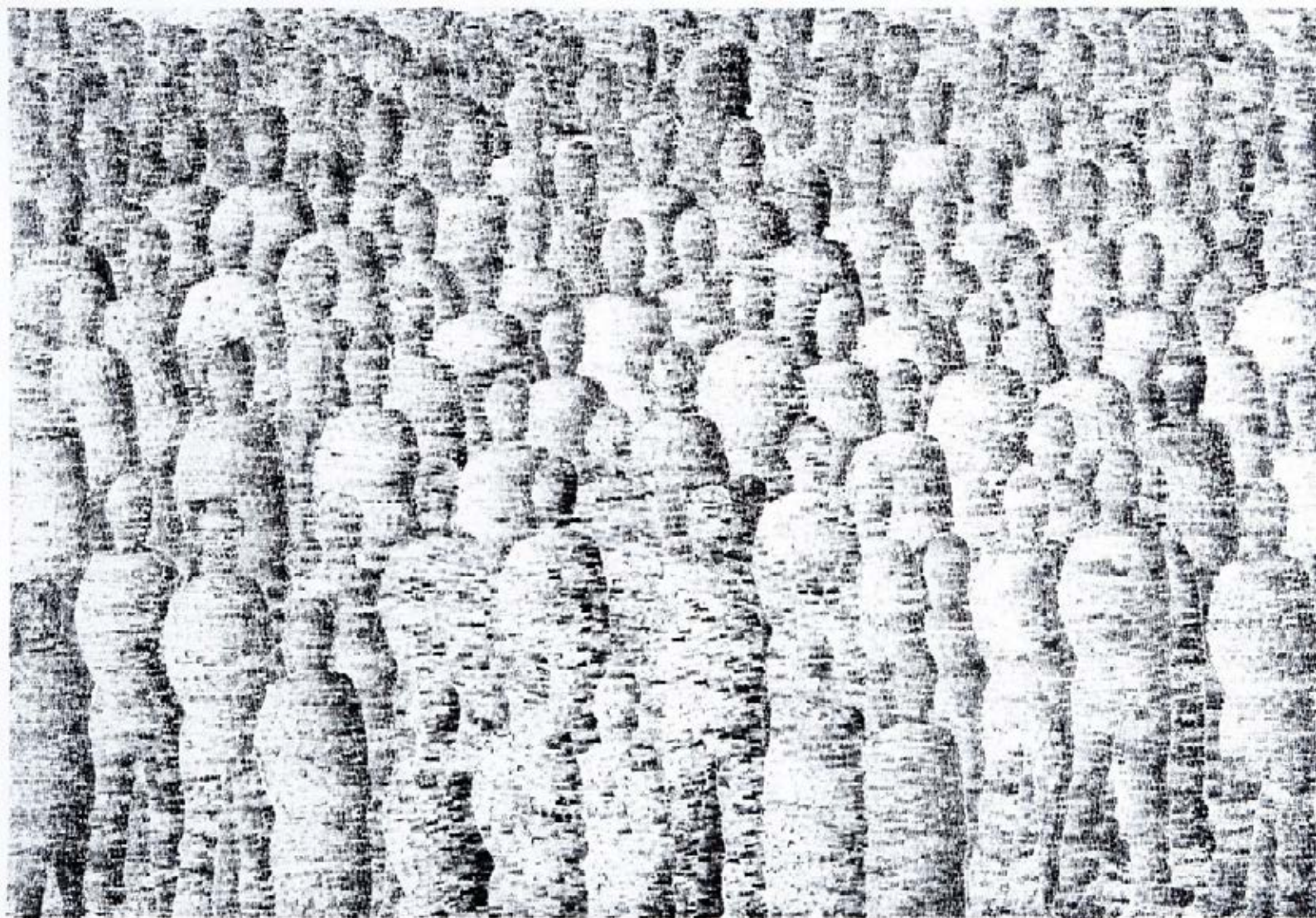
This schizophrenic occurrence is echoed in our denial of the present moment. We always seem to be everywhere else but here, mentally and emotionally. And when we are not present, our ego or superficial self is. We are physically in one place and mentally somewhere else, or physically in the present time and mentally in the past or future.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

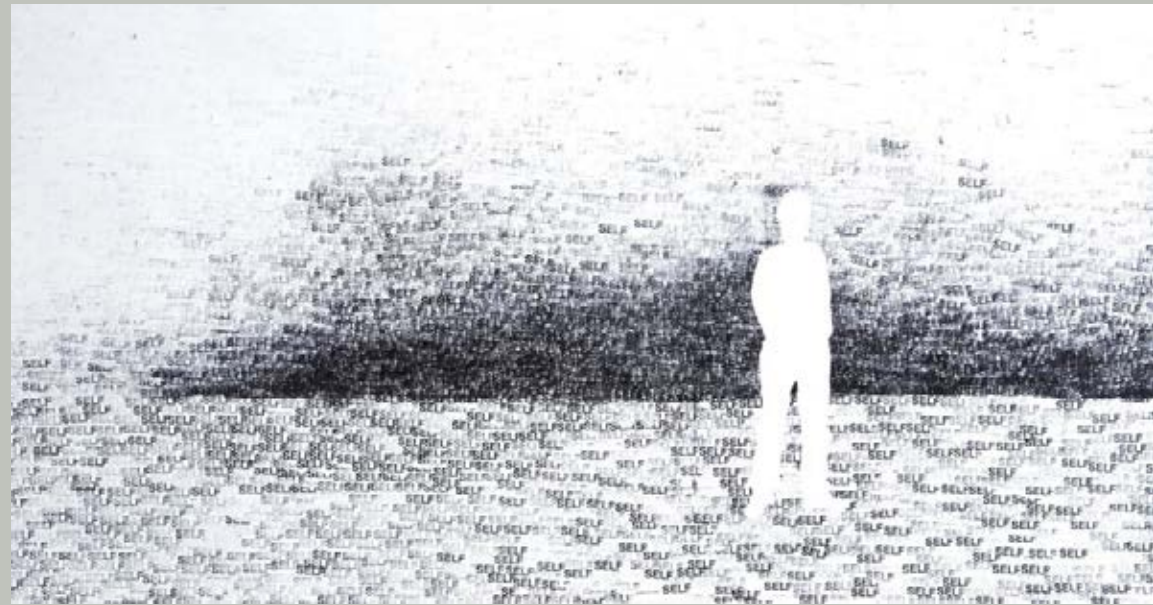
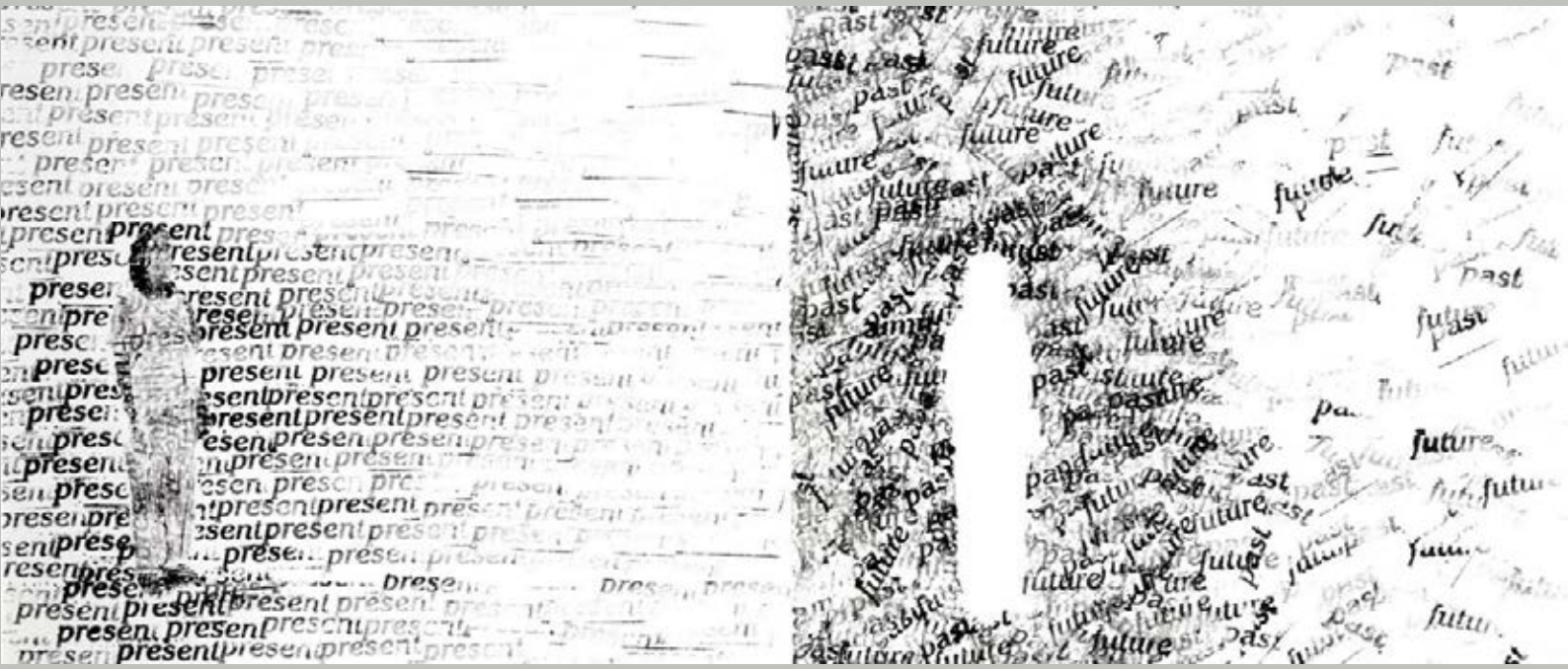
*Self portrait, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, 125 x 108 cm.*

*Defining the self; Black, Indian or Negro 1, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, Winsor and Newton ink box, 60 x 122 cm.*

*Defining the self; Black, Indian or Negro 2, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, Winsor and Newton ink box, 70 x 54 cm.*



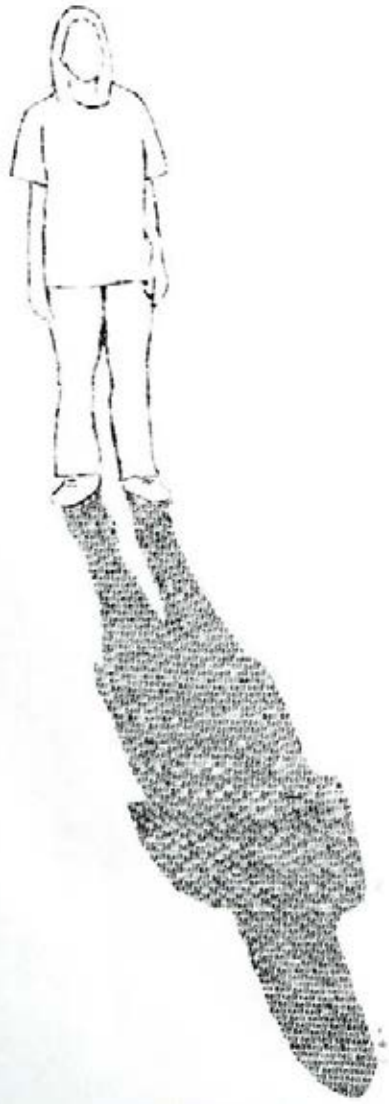




We are so confident about who we are and the space that we occupy, yet, the absence of our being is more visible than our presence, on account of our lack of awareness.

In fact, we are so preoccupied with our own selves, our own needs and our own lives, that we are oblivious to our shared identity, our larger community and the oneness of our existence.

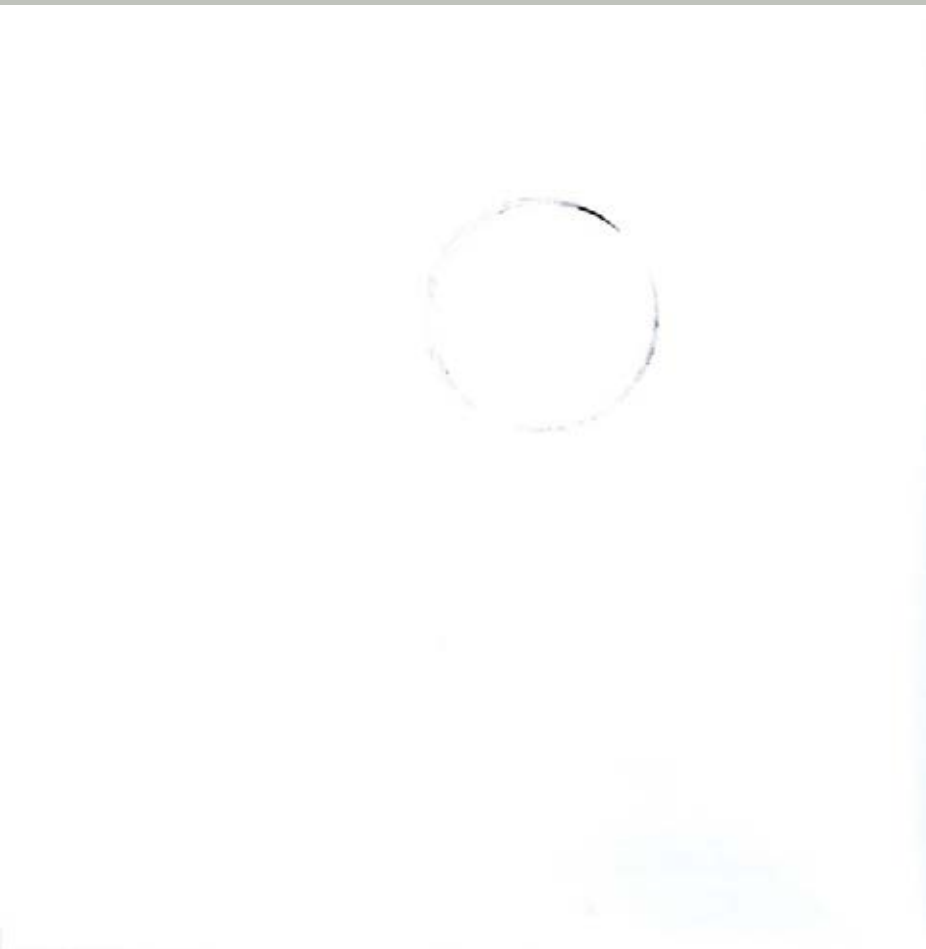
**TOP LEFT:** *Inside the inside*, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, 78 x 118 cm & *Inside the inside*, detail. **RIGHT:** *Present, and here but not present*, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, 34 x 78 cm. **BOTTOM LEFT:** *Every man for himself/the drop's denial of it's oceanness*, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, 78 x 138cm. **RIGHT:** *Me in my world*, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, 78 x 139 mm.



focus







Opportunities to recognise our true potential are all around us, and presented to us all the time. In order to acknowledge them, all we need is a tiny bit of focus, a clear moment of silence and the wisdom to act now.

The word “mine” in the title of the *Mine over Matter* series refers to the ego; the constant need within us to own, to have, to want and to desire. Even if it is the desire of non-material things, we seem to always want more than we have. And “matter” references to the stuff. The accumulation of material objects that seem to define our existence.

These works are an illustration of this awareness. They have been executed through a number of alternate drawings



#### OPPOSITE PAGE

TOP: *Self/Ego*, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, 108 x 144cm.

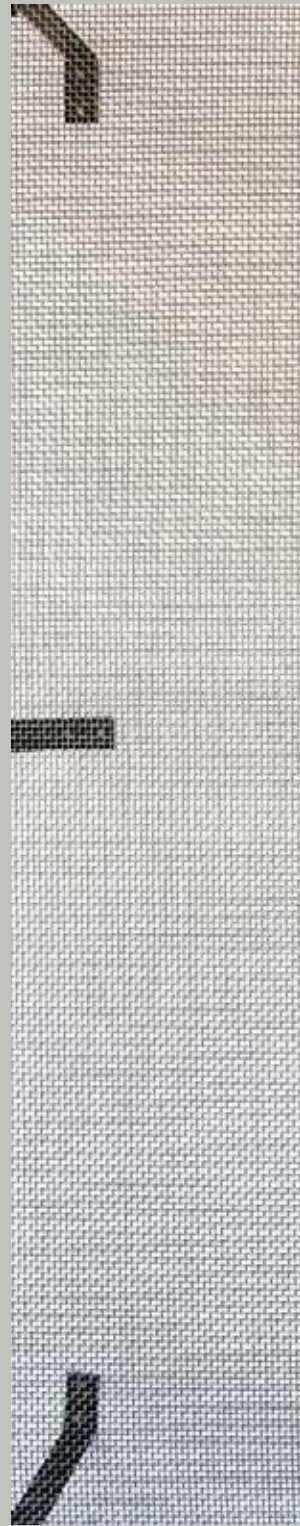
BOTTOM LEFT: *Focus*, 2009. Heat on paper drawn with magnifying glass, 91 x 142 cm.

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Now or Never*, 2009. Aluminum clock (Edition of 3), 45 x 104 cm.

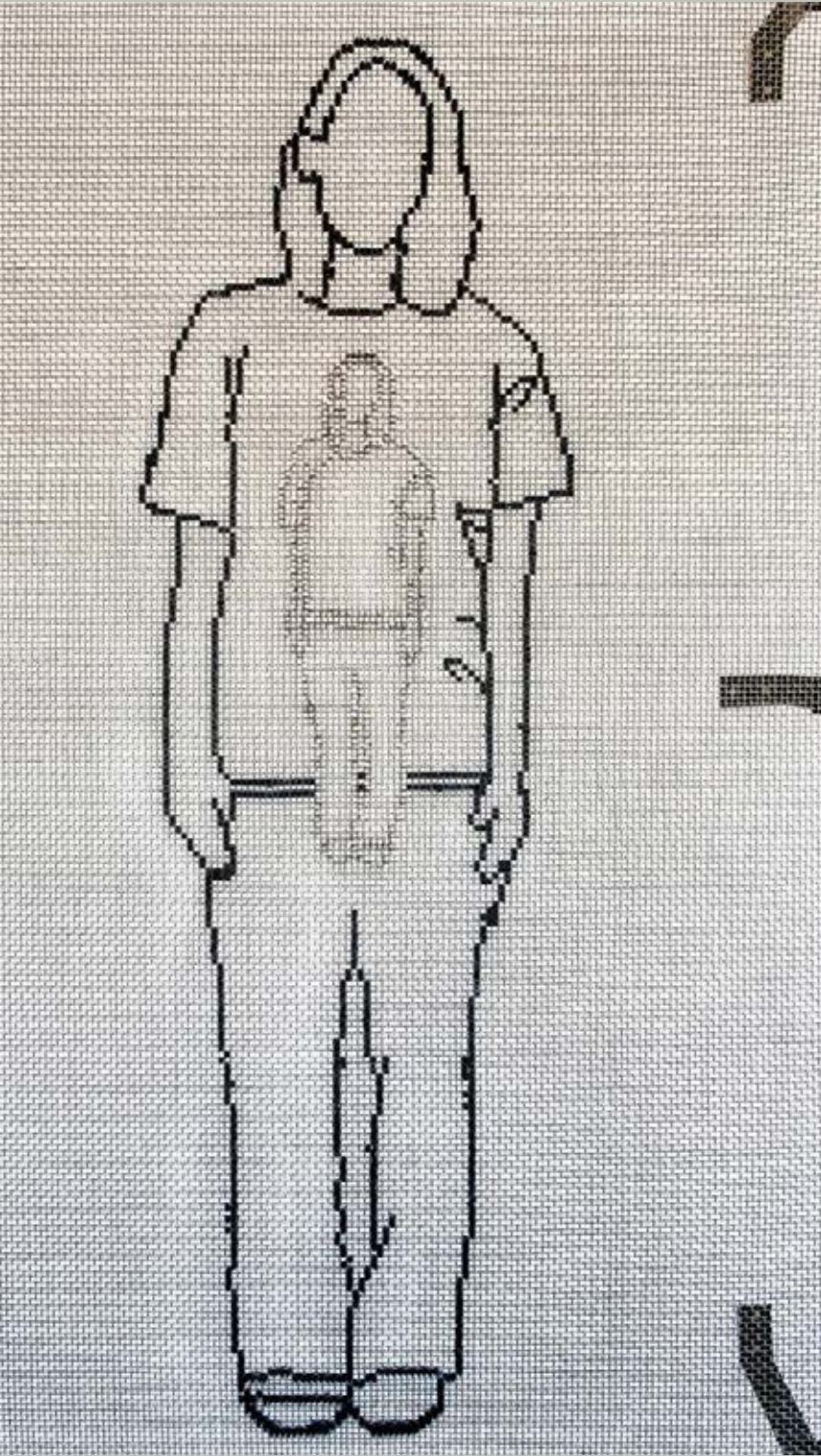
#### THIS PAGE

*A moment of silence (and detail)*, 2009. Stamp drawing in ink on paper, 99 x 101 cm.









LEFT: *Pop self portrait*, 2009. Drawing with pop rivets on mesh, 215 x 143 cm.



RIGHT: *Inside the inside (and detail)*, 2009. Drawing with button head screws and nuts on mesh, 214 x 164 cm.

techniques, many of which are, themselves, meditative (as images are constructed through repetitive acts of making). A single stamp has been used in multiplicity to reinforce the impact of each specific word, and to give form to each element.

## About Usha Seejarim

A visual artist based in Johannesburg, Usha works predominantly in sculpture and drawing and is actively involved in arts education. She has had a number of public art commissions, five solo exhibitions and exhibits widely locally and internationally.

She was nominated for the prestigious Mercedes-Benz award for public art in 2008 and in 2007 a finalist in the Sasol Wax Commission. In 2008, she completed ten sculptures illustrating the Freedom Charter for the Walter Sisulu Square in Kiptown. She has also produced commissioned public artwork installations for MTN, Eskom and the South African Embassy in Ethiopia. In 2002 Seejarim was nominated for South Africa's 2002 FNB Vita Art Prize, and in 2001 she was the joint winner of the inaugural MTN New Contemporaries exhibition. <

Images courtesy of the artist. Photos by Hannelie Coetzee.







# MARY SIBANDE

## LONG LIVE THE DEAD QUEEN

Mary Sibande, born in 1982, lives and works in Johannesburg. She obtained a Diploma in Fine Arts at the Witwatersrand Technikon in 2004 and a B-Tech degree from the University of Johannesburg in 2007. She worked at Gordart Gallery for three and a half years as a gallery assistant and as a curator of the Rainforest Project Room. Sibande has taken part in a number of group shows and workshops.

In Sibande's practice, as an artist, she employs the human form as a vehicle through painting and sculpture, to explore the construction of identity in a postcolonial South African context, but also attempts to critique stereotypical depictions of women, particularly black women in our society.

The body, for Sibande, and particularly the skin and clothing, is the site where history is contested and where fantasies play out. Centrally, she looks at the generational disempowerment of

black woman and in this sense her work is informed by postcolonial theory. In her work, the domestic setting acts as a stage where historical psycho-dramas play out.

Sibande's work also highlights how black women aspire to privileged ideals of beauty and femininity, and because of this, how they discipline their bodies through rituals of imitation and reproduction. She inverts the social power indexed by Victorian costumes by reconfiguring them as domestic worker's 'uniforms' complexifying the colonial relationship between 'slave' and 'master' in a post-apartheid context. The fabric used to produce uniforms for domestic workers is an instantly recognisable sight in domestic spaces in South Africa and by applying it to a Victorian dress she attempts to make a comment about history of servitude as it relates to the present in terms of domestic relationships.

*Caught in a rapture*, 2009. Digital print on cotton rag matte paper, 62 x 60 cm.



## **LONG LIVE THE DEAD QUEEN**

*Long live the dead Queen* is the title of my latest exhibition at gallery MOMO, which has been very well-received by both the general public and art critics. It revolves around a character named Sophie. The show is a collection of fantasies and imagined narratives focusing on Sophie, a maid. My interest is not in looking at the negatives of being a domestic worker, specifically

in current post-Apartheid South Africa, but rather the humanity and commonalities of people despite the boxes we find ourselves in. The modern fabric has been molded into many forms that are combined with Victorian references, making the pieces completely foreign but, at the same time, Sophie's own. By subverting the simple maid's uniform into the creation of Sophie's hybrid dress she/it becomes the canvas for storytelling.





When she puts on her maids uniform, the simple fabric is transformed into an imaginative Victorian dress that turns into a superhero's outfit, transformations which allow her to express her desires and inner longings. Through her imaginings, Sophie has gained the ability to travel to non real spaces and times. Sophie projects herself into scenarios, just like a graffiti artist would tag his signature on a public wall.

Playing with the human form interests me, not only by using the body as a stage or a platform for playing out scenes of fantasies and realities, but also using it to challenge the viewer's expectations. Sophie is always in a state of transforming herself, in that she can go beyond the ordinary and the expectations of being a maid. The atmosphere that Sophie is presented in is always one that she aspires to and seeks for, with her closed eyes. Sophie is an idea that came about from looking at a 'traditional role', in

LEFT: *Sophie*, 2007. Mixed media, life size.

RIGHT: *A conversation with Madam CJ Walker*, 2008. Mixed media installation, life size. At the Joburg Art Fair 2009.



the context of South Africa, for black women. For Sophie the commonly-associated fabrics of a domestic worker's uniform are used to construct costumes rich with meaning and significance, as an escape from the real world.

My work focuses on the visible, tangible outfit which was/is indexical of class and sophistication. By altering the maid's uniform which would usually identify the wearer in terms of ethnic and cultural heritage, I hope to

LEFT: *They don't make them like they used to*, 2008. Digital print on cotton rag matt paper, 62 x 60 cm.

MIDDLE: *Her Majesty, Queen Sophie*, 2010. Digital print, 110 x 80cm.

RIGHT: *The wait seems to go on forever*, 2009. Digital print on cotton rag matte paper, 62 x 60cm.





highlight the individuality that years of stereotypes have hidden and even eroded.

The exhibition is comprised of four life-sized figures cast in resin and black painted fibre-glass, each representing Sophie in one of her different personalities, i.e. the four generations of women in my family who were all domestic workers. The figures are wearing pseudo-Victorian dresses, with bustle, pleating, organza and layers of fabric. The dress

takes over the figure, becoming an impossible monster that wants to consume the body and even the surrounding environment. The four figures illustrate the linear inheritance of servitude in my family.

The first figure entitled *Sophie-Elsie* is my maternal great-grandmother, wearing simplified royal or Queen of England-style attire from her coronation. The garment is then simplified into a maid's uniform/ pattern with fabrics bought from the Indian bazaar.





The second figure is my grandmother titled *Sophie-Merica* who was next in the line of servitude.

My mother is represented in *Sophie-Velucia*, weaving a Madam CJ Walker image using synthetic hair. Madam CJ Walker was an African-American who invented hair cream relaxer used for straightening hair. My mother used to work as a domestic worker as a

teenager and after school worked as a hair stylist in a salon. *Sophie-Velucia* is looking up to Madam CJ Walker as her icon. For her, she symbolises a breakthrough from the generations of servitude. The figure is standing about two metres from the woven picture, arms out-stretched, thousands of strands of hair flying to her hands, plaiting and weaving through the canvas.

TOP: *I decline. I refuse to recline*, 2010. Mixed media installation. At the *SPACE* exhibition, Museum Africa, Johannesburg. BOTTOM LTR: *Wish you were here*, 2010. Mixed media installation. At the National Festival of Arts, Grahamstown. | *The Reign*, 2010. Mixed media installation, 330 x 200 cm. | *I put a spell on me*, 2009. Digital print on cotton rag matte paper, 62 x 60 cm.





The last figure is of the artist herself entitled *Sophie-Ntombikayise*, the artist as a domestic worker. Adopting a new position as an artist, yet celebrating the women in my family, this figure represents her appreciation and acknowledgement of the hardships borne by her family and countless others in South Africa.

All four figures are refusing the limitations of their reality by closing their

eyes, venturing into another realm in which fantasies can best materialise. They have rejected their subjugation, in that they have allowed the dress to take over their state/position in a form that is their own choosing.

The photographic show represents the artist with her entire body boldly painted black, representing the shadow that follows her throughout life – neither a positive nor negative





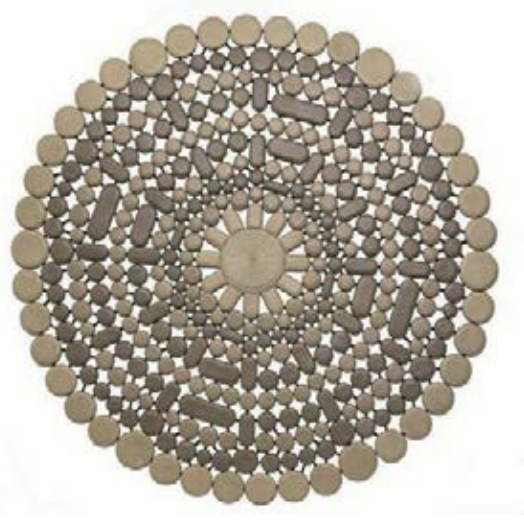
force, but simply a fact of her own life and evidence of the now impossible life that she may have lead. My choice of neutral backgrounds is testament to a desire to choose my own future and yet reflect on my personal history. <

Images courtesy of the artist.

LEFT: *I have not, I have*, 2010.  
Digital print, 110 x 80 cm.

MIDDLE: *Sophie – Velucia*, 2009.  
Mixed media installation, life size.

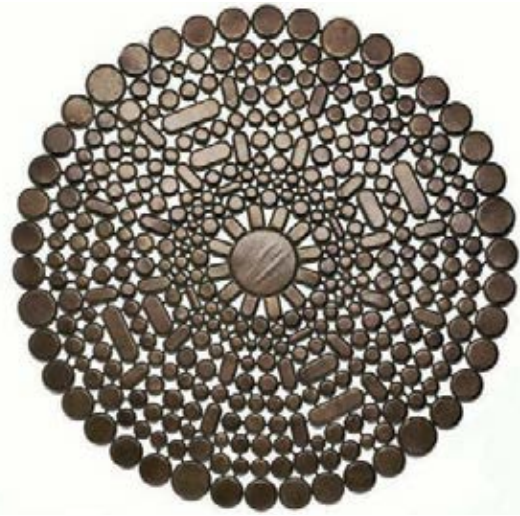
RIGHT: *Joburg City, Long live the Dead Queen* installation, 2010. Project currently underway – 19 buildings in the Johannesburg CBD.



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# RESHADA CROUSE HOW WE PARCEL, PACKAGE & SHELF





So called 'creative' people often get tetchy about being defined, boxed. Why not?

I wish to examine the use of the word 'portrait' when referring to painting and paintings. Just for fun.

*Passive Resistance*, 1999.  
Oil on canvas, 3 x 6 m.

A brief etymology of the word portrait: From Middle French the word 'portraict' or 'pourtraict' is a noun use of the past participle of *portraire*, "portray"; from Latin, 'protraho' means to draw out and protract meaning, defer, make known.

My own battered *Oxford for Advanced Learners*, which is inscribed with the name of someone never encountered in my life, offers the following:

*Portrait*

1. A painting, drawing or photograph of a person, especially. of the face alone
2. A description or impression of sth??:  
*The book contains/paints a fascinating portrait of life at the court of Henry V111*

Let me interject briefly by saying that I am highly relieved to hear from *Oxford* that writers are also painting. Since the advent of conceptual art in the last decades, painting has become a rather fringe activity for the few brave hearts who do not mind cuddling close to Auntie Anachronism. I define myself as a painter rather than an artist. Some 40 years ago an artist was generally understood to be a painter, but no more.

Truly mainstream, contemporary artists would engage freely in interdisciplinary forms of expression, overlaying, interplaying and creating any number

of post-modern or eclectic, and often quite new, forms of expression, often unwittingly through this luring to alchemy which connects their consciousness through the ether. This is how it is when you are 'of your time'. When I embarked on my studies at art school in the early 70s, a very innocent, diligent nerd type, people spoke of those early explorers engaged in strange matters as 'the fringe'. I longed to be there. It sounded so exclusive and tantalisingly sexy, only for special people who grasped the intangible, enigmatic mysteries of coolness. What can I say? Time, the close cousin of fashion, has been kind to me. In the (unfortunate) zenith of maturity I have arrived, cool, calm and collected and deeply fringe. I am a painter.

Recent reports are less dismissive of paintings. It would seem that painting just wont go away. Interestingly enough when the economic chips are down investors often start clutching onto paintings again. They are like that metal gold, kind of real and tangible and can last for quite a long time. Most importantly they can both be so exquisite...

But back to defining 'portrait'.

My enormous *Webster's New Twentieth century unabridged dictionary*, bought many years ago in a second-hand bookshop when such things still existed in my ville, Yeoville, at the

TOP: *God's Grace*, 2007.  
Oil on canvas,  
approx. 120 cm (height).

BOTTOM: *Under the old oak tree*, 2006.  
Oil on canvas,  
approx. 120 cm (height).











**TOP**

LEFT: *Veronique*, 2005.  
Oil on canvas, 60 x 45 cm  
RIGHT: *Alex*, 2005.  
Oil on canvas, approx.  
150 cm (height).

**BOTTOM**

LEFT: *Ingane Emhlophe*,  
2009. Oil on canvas,  
approx. 150 cm (height).  
RIGHT: *Birth of Danielle*,  
1975. Oil on canvas,  
130 cm (height).

recommendation of my friend Sinclair Beiles, says the following:

*Portrait*

1. *Originally, a drawn, painted, or carved picture of something*
2. *A picture of a person, especially of his face, drawn, painted or photographed from life*
3. *A description, dramatic portrayal, etc. of a person*

Notice in no.1 the subject is 'something', not 'someone'. I must say I balk at the "especially of HIS face". Americans?

A Google report says a portrait can be literal or figurative. "The author painted a good portrait of urban life in New York in his latest book". And so it goes on and on, there really is no specific meaning it would appear. Words are constructs which attempt to bring into focus many ideas or definitions but the edges still remain fuzzy. I have become particularly interested in the use of the word portrait when applied to painting and the fuzziness surrounding that use.

If portraiture basically involves a rendition of a face of the History of painting, from the beginning of time, it is surely predominantly the history of portraiture. When one considers the subject matter available to painters it really is surprisingly limited. There is abstraction and then there are the animals, landscape/city scape/sea

scape, still life and people, the human form. When it comes to preference the human form, which usually has a face on it, the portrait, lucks out way above all the rest as overwhelmingly the most popular subject matter.

Paintings which include the human form are rarely described as portraits. When do all these paintings with portraits in them become just paintings? When many portraits combine to portray a mythological, historical or ecclesiastical scene?

When animals or scapes are added?

When the painter is dead?

When the painting is old?

Is Velasquez's *The Family of Philip IV* (1656) a painting or a family portrait?

When did Goya's *Naked Maya* or Picasso's *Dora Maar* become a painting as opposed to a portrait, or are they both?

This question can also be directed to the more contemporary world. Is Lucian Freud a portrait painter or merely a painter? Interestingly enough Freud is quoted as saying that all paintings are portraits. When he paints a chair he claims he is painting a portrait of the chair. Is Frida Kahlo a portrait painter – or more accurately a self-portrait painter – or a painter? Does fame and recognition of excellence dispense with the adjective when it comes to painter? Or should one indeed say "the artist"? Does the term portrait confine the painting or painter concerned to a limited form of expression? Is a painting

a portrait when the person depicted is well known? If this is so then the use of the term as an adjective undermines the painter but elevates the sitter.

These are just some interesting questions regarding the use of the term – portrait.

I have painted many official and privately commissioned portraits (see [www.art.co.za](http://www.art.co.za)) and have come to see 'portrait' paintings as a form of ancestor worship.

The potential to rekindle an awareness of the importance of portraiture or the painting of people as a means of recording history was the most important thrust of an exhibition I curated at Museum Africa last year. Combining a display of the portraits from Museum Africa's permanent collection with a selection of portraits done by myself afforded insights into South Africa and its history, past and contemporary. Some 35 self-portraits done by some of my students were also shown as I was examining the relevance of portraiture, private, political, past and present.

It is true that the custom of painting portraits for posterity was predominantly a European tradition. This exhibition highlighted the recording of social and cultural history through portraiture. It explicates the impor-

tance of this tradition being embraced in our country in the spirit of the global consciousness, an undeniable reality. Portraiture is an extension of the multifarious existing forms of ancestor worship and it said that many official institutions, especially political institutions have abandoned this form of record. Universities still continue to commission portraits of their leaders but universities are by definition intellectual, open minded. More political institutions seem to lack mental agility on this score and associate this practice of commissioned portraits with the oppressor. Let us not forget the embarrassment in parliament when the ANC took over and did not know where to put the commissioned portraits of past leaders. Due to this confusion the baby has been thrown out with the bath water. Sad.

Represented here are some of my paintings. Or portraits.

Am I a portrait painter or a painter?

You decide. As long as I am allowed to remain fringe I guess I will compromise on any adjectives, especially now that the lady doth protest too much...

My only tease for you [the reader] to think about it and make the effort to befriend the words that come out of your mouth. Be neutral, be nice or be nasty, but for Darwin's sake, don't be doff. It really is less fun that way.

#### LEFT

TOP: *Young man at 20*, 2010. Oil on canvas, 55 x 36 cm.

BOTTOM: *Madonna and child with missing tooth*, 1995. Oil on canvas, 55 x 66 cm.

#### RIGHT

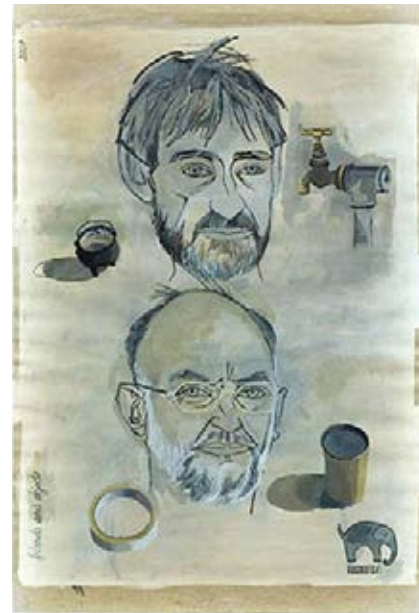
TOP: *Child at 11 – II*, 2004. Oil on canvas, 46 x 35 cm.

BOTTOM: *Child at 16*, 2007. Oil on canvas, 71 x 46 cm.













LEFT TO RIGHT:  
*Happy Birthday*, 2007.  
 Gouache on paper,  
 approx. 50 cm (height).  
*Friends & Objects* 2008.  
 Gouache on paper,  
 approx. 150 cm (height).  
*Francois*, undated.  
 Oil on canvas,  
 600 cm (height).



LEFT: *Rian Malan*, 1994.  
 Oil on canvas,  
 approx. 80 cm (height).



RIGHT FROM TOP  
 TO BOTTOM:  
*Amour Triste*, 2004.  
 Oil on canvas, 54 x 65 cm.  
*Ma and Me* 2002/2007,  
 2010. Oil on canvas,  
 15 x 10 cm.  
*Young Lillies*, 2007.  
 Oil on canvas, 58 x 66 cm.



## RECENT WORK: **NAGMERRIE**

*Nagmerrie* is a painting of a very visual nightmare I had some years ago. The dream presented strange contradictions and provoked interesting interpretations and questions. Partly it deals with the ethics of the subconscious as presented in our dreams. It questions to what extent the dreamer is morally responsible for what the subconscious conjures up.

I am not racist and yet...this image portrays a white woman (me) lying naked on a bed, drenched in light and clearly terrified of the group of black men looking at her. On one level it simply illustrates the ancient myth, the expulsion from the garden of Eden, the horror of sexual parts being exposed in a situation which is public. But why are the men all black (if not a politically incorrect term at least madly insensitive visually, they are many varied and intricate shades and not one black)? What is the fear that resides inside her brain? Is this a collective fear which resides within all white woman, the fear of rape, by the 'other'. Is this the result of high levels of rape and sexual abuse in this country or simply a response of feeling a need to caution as an intruder on a continent which is not absolutely home? Is it possible, shameful and racist as it may be and

no matter how hard one may try to be fair, open minded and to love all equally, to be a white woman in Africa and not have this fear? Or is it just me? If so the painting is really too arbitrary to be of any real interest.

In the dream these men were lined up behind a window as in an identity parade. They however are exquisite human specimens, cool, buffed, just observing rather impassively. In a twist it is rather she who is on parade. She is up for racism, pinned down and exposed by an excess of light and armless, disempowered, feeling a deep fear.

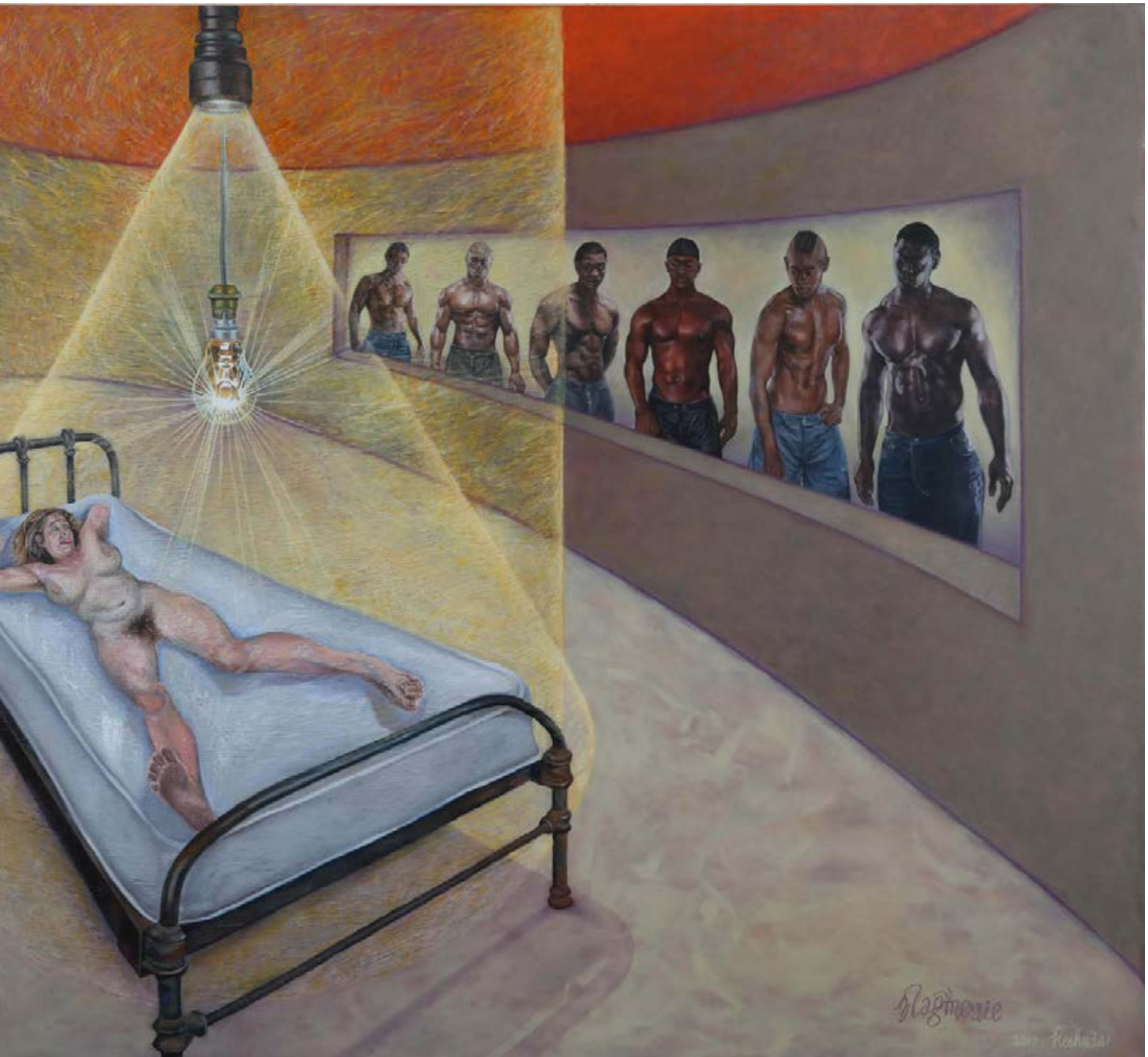
However guilty she may be this fear of physical abuse and the rapacious nature of men is something all woman live with. It is virtually impossible for men to comprehend the experience of being the weaker sex, of knowing that in almost any combative situation you as a woman will not be able to overpower a man for the simple reason that you are physically weaker. This irritating fact of life curtail us in infinite and incomprehensible ways.

The first person I showed the painting to was a man. He said, "Wow that's sexy". I said, "Can't you see she is scared". He said, "Yes I can but we men are animals. I find it sexy". So all the above is way off the mark? <



*Nagmerrie*, 2010.  
Oil on canvas,  
115 x 150 cm.





# BONGI BENGU

## RE-CONSTRUCTING MY JOURNEY

I have been dealing with the theme of emancipation and freedom since the beginning of my career as an artist. Not only do I talk about the freedom to be an artist and to be able to express one freely, but I also talk about the freedom to use different materials in my work. Over the years my artwork has evolved in texture and depth – I have used soil, collage and clay. More recently I have been experimenting with watercolours, printmaking techniques and charcoal. I enjoy using these different mediums as I find them to be more immediate. Although in my earlier process of working when I used to work with preparatory sketches, I now prefer my work to be more spontaneous and more expressive.

Through my work I also talk of the freedom of being able to make choices, for example either to choose to be a mother or a career woman. But extending these issues to include men, I also ask the question how much freedom do we as black people have?

The work *Freedom?* captures the essence of what my work is all about, which is the continual search for freedom. But in this particular work the word 'freedom' is followed by a question mark because as black people or as a young democratic nation are we really free? Do we have freedom of speech? Even though we may no longer be physically enslaved by slave-masters, are we still not slaves to other things such as materialism, substance

*Freedom Now!*, 2009.  
Mixed media, 179.5 x 125 cm.





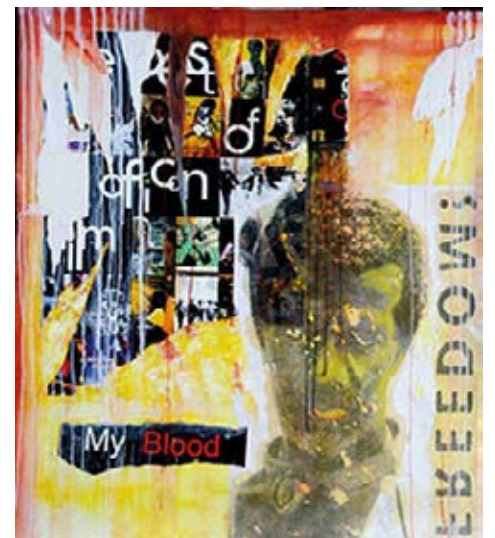


abuse etc. On the right I have used a poster of the film *Sankofa*, the poster celebrates Blackness. This creates a contrast between what we aspire to be and what the reality is – a strong Black man who is very present yet somehow fading. The injured bird on the right is reflection where we are at the moment. The use of the phrase “my blood” is significant whilst it refers to the blood lost.

The work *Freedom Now!* also deals with the same theme using different techniques of drawing, collage and installation. The work captures the anger and turmoil experienced in this country. The board piece on top depicts the pioneering leaders of this country: Fatima Meer, Winnie Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi and Joe Slovo. Covered with a net, they rise from the soil.

The *Soul Shaking* series continues this theme. These works portray the political mood of the women’s jail at Constitutional Hill. Some works in the series show women protesting against carrying passes; some works show people incarcerated and isolated in prison and yet others depict crowds. The use of the technique carborandum (metal shavings) and chille print is used specifically to depict shadowy ghosts of the past, which are faceless and nameless.

But now looking at this contemporary society I wanted to ask myself the question: what does freedom mean for me as a black female artist?







TOP LTR:  
*Human-trafficking*, 2008. 98 x 70 cm.  
*Transformation III*, 2008. Carboradum  
 print on paper, 98 x 70 cm.  
*No.4*, 2008. Mixed media on paper,  
 98 x 70 cm.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Freedom?*, 2009. Mixed  
 media on paper, 107 x 123 cm.  
 BOTTOM RIGHT: *The soul shaking*  
 series, 2008. Carboradum print on  
 paper, 29,7 x 21 cm.

1/1

Soul Shaking series

B. Bengu 2008









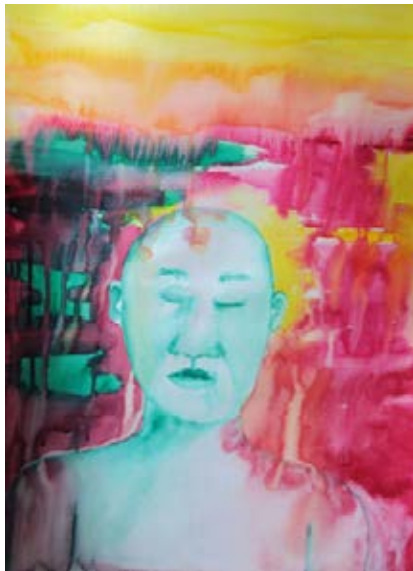
TOP LTR:  
*Headspace*. Mixed media  
 on paper, 96 x 61 cm.  
*Serenity II*, 2007. Mixed  
 media on paper, 100 x 70 cm.

BOTTOM LTR:  
*Undressing Venus III*, 2009.  
 Monoprint, 98 x 70 cm.  
*Undressing Venus II*, 2009.  
 Monoprint, 98 x 70 cm.  
*Undressing Venus I*, 2009.  
 Medium: mixed media on  
 paper, 1 500 x 90 cm.

The series *Undressing Venus* is a commentary about my life as a black African woman, and as a black woman artist. (I use the term Black female artist because although I would be happy to just to call myself an artist, but in this country being Black, female and an artist still carries its own baggage). This series of works pays tribute to Saartjie Baartman. Through these works I wanted to put myself inside Saartjie's body and truly experience what she experienced. So in this way these are also self-portraits. This series of work reaffirms my love for rich textured surfaces. The works are not only about layering textures, experiences and emotions but also about reflecting the dualities and contradictions of power and powerlessness.

In the past four years I have been practising deep meditation and healing practices originating from India. This experience has, and continues to, transform my life and my art. It has also challenged my perception of what 'freedom' is? It has made me pose the question: do we as people, as genders, races, classes of all persuasions, as black, white, brown understand 'how to enjoy', protect and give in to that which we know as freedom? And also what does it mean? Is freedom what we really want? Is freedom more important than love and respect? And what does it all really mean?

In some of my most recent works I talk of the freedom of being in a state of meditation which allows one to be in harmony and at peace with oneself and with the whole universe. This experience is reflected in the work *Serenity II*, which depicts a woman in a



TOP LEFT: *Shower of blessings I*, 2010.  
Watercolour on paper, 70 x 100 cm.

TOP RIGHT: *Godless souls*, 2010.  
Mixed media on paper, 57 x 77 cm.

RIGHT: *Floating*, 2010.

Mixed media on paper, 70 x 100 cm.

OPPOSITE PAGE: *Letting go of the mask*, 2010.  
Mixed media on paper, 90 x 70 cm.



deep state of meditation. The deep purple colour in the background is often associated with spirituality.

Also produced in the same period, the work *Headspace* (inspired by artist Francis Bacon) depicts a two-sided face. One side is dark and the other light. If one looks closely, there is more than one face; it's not clear whether it's a female or a male. For me, this expresses our daily struggle with the positive and negative (as well as female and male) aspects of ourselves.

The work *Godless Souls*, a collaborative work between me and Stompie Selibe, talks about how false assumptions, misconceptions, stereotyping are often the cause of misunderstanding in relationships. The founder of the Oneness University in India, Sri Amma Bhagavan states: "...suffering is not in the fact but is the perception of the fact."

There is a common perception that suffering is caused by others or 'outside factors' and the way to resolve that is to change others. And yet when we focus our energy inward, we will discover that the solution to our suffering lies inside.





In *Shower of Blessings* we see someone receiving healing energy, on the other hand in *Floating*, we see a woman in a meditation trance, floating, upward, her head disconnected from her body. *Letting go of the mask* is about letting go of false perceptions about ourselves that include our sense of ego and coming to the realisation that we are all connected, we are all one. Being free from the false perceptions of the mind, that is freedom. And ultimately, I am now discovering that to be free is to see.

## About Bongi Bengu

Born in 1970 in Eshowe, Bongi Bengu left South Africa in 1978 when her family went into political exile. Her schooling was in Switzerland and Swaziland. She obtained a BA in Fine Arts, Cum Laude from Mount Vernon College in Washington D.C. in 1993, and subsequently returned to South Africa, graduating with a Master of Fine Arts degree from Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town. She has exhibited widely and has been the recipient of a number of residencies abroad. <

# SCENE TOO MUCH GABRIELLE GOLIATH

By Bettina Malcomess. At about 3am every morning, daily newspapers send out people employed to put up the headlines for the morning news. Often these headline pages are slipped into metal frames over the headlines from the previous day, so one could find any headline from the past two days or so behind the current one. By 5am, when traffic begins, the city is already lined with today's news. On our way to work we pass, almost distractedly, words like 'disaster', 'horror', 'murder'. It is often more difficult to actually read the papers themselves. Whether it's *Die Son*, the *Daily Voice*, *The Star* or the *Cape Argus*, not a day goes by without a story of a tragic personal loss related to crime or domestic violence. One reacts through a range of emotions at these stories, a sense of shock and incomprehension,



*Berenice*, 2010. Installation view.







**TOP LEFT:** *BERENICE10-28*, 2010. Pigment ink on cotton Baryta paper, edition: 3/3, 108 x 75 cm. | **RIGHT TOP:** *Missing persons*, video still. Video and sound piece, edition: 10/10, 30 sec loop. | **CENTRE:** *Last seen* installation view. **BOTTOM LEFT:** *Last seen* installation view. Suspended panel/lightbox 180 x 250 cm, floor panel 180 x 250 cm. **RIGHT:** *Last seen* installation view.



followed by identification or recognition of one's own vulnerability – or worse – of others close to you. It is so difficult to distance oneself from these stories and images that on most days it is easier not to read the papers at all.

Gabrielle Goliath is an artist whose most recent work confronts these images of violence, not in their physicality but their psychological rawness.

*Berenice* (2010) is a body of work that deals with the death of a 9 year-old girl on Christmas Eve 1991, shot in her own home. While the story is a familiar one in the South African context, one of the many counts of domestic violence around that time of year, Goliath's treatment of it returns a shocking news story to a more personal experience of loss.

As part of the body of work, *Berenice 10-28* consists of 19 portraits of appropriately aged coloured girls – each one a potential substitute for the real but absent Berenice. The images are titled accordingly, from 10-28, each representing a year un-lived – a portrait for every year from the year after her death, right through to the present. There is an almost neutral, duplicate quality to the portraits referencing police mug shots or images of Jane Doe's: the same white vest, the same blank background. The use of black and white highlights the documentary nature of the imagery, being as they are records of a life un-lived. The portraits are encased within a clinical red border with the title at the bottom reading "BERENICE", and the appropriate number [from 10-28], further emphasising their surrogate nature.

This work formed the centrepiece of Goliath's recent exhibition at Circa on Jellicoe, the new addition to the Everard Read Gallery in Johannesburg. Currently completing her masters at the University of the Witwatersrand, Goliath was this year's joint recipient of the Brait-Everard Read Award.

Goliath explains that her interest in Berenice was not in the violent act itself, but in the effect, the social reaction to this loss. Goliath explained the process by which she got the various avatars of Berenice to agree to pose for the portraits. Some she found through family and friends, while others she met by chance in malls or public places. When she approached them and explained the story behind the work, they were surprisingly open to posing for the photographs. Aside from each receiving a bouquet of flowers as a gesture of gratitude, what is interesting here is the willingness of these strangers to participate in her project and posing in an uncontrived and candid way, which is often much harder than being styled and made-up. It suggests not only an empathy with the story, but an understanding of the social condition of such violence as gendered. In some way, these women recognised their own position being interchangeable with the vulnerable position of this particular girl, Berenice.

In an earlier work, *163* (2009), Goliath again investigated the social condition of victims of domestic abuse. '163' is the ward number of the Trauma Unit at Johannesburg General Hospital, colour-coded red. Goliath explains that while the word 'trauma' evokes visceral, physical images of violence; bruised eyes, cut lips, broken noses, many women experience

abuse on a daily basis without these obvious traces. Their experience is a private one, a fearful one – their normality an environment of psychological as well as pathological abuse. While bruises are temporary, the abusive environment is a constant and everyday reality. In such cases women feel trapped, locked in a manipulative and intimidating relational matrix, unable, or so they feel, to express or resolve the abuse they experience. Rather than seek treatment, they ‘suffer in silence’. More than this, many of these women exist in social circumstances that disallow them from becoming financially or personally independent, and in some cases a complicity exists between their position as women in a larger community that turns a ‘blind eye’ to the domestic situation of abuse.

The work consists of the image of a sleeping female head, seemingly ordinary, except for the harshness of the lighting, which is clinical and exposing so that every pore, follicle and freckle is visible. The tone of the image is forensic rather than peaceful or familiar. Printed large scale (200 x 90 cm), the sleeping head is presented within a hospital bed-like object, one that the viewer looks down on, whether sympathetically or judgementally. Sterile and set on castors, with a red colour for its base, the structure becomes a ‘hospital bed’, something that transports a body in trauma as opposed to a body at rest. In both cases, the image of the ‘sleeper’ is passive, reified and magnified to become equal to and contained within the surface of this ‘bed’ on castors, itself movable or at ‘rest’. The viewer is put in a strange position in relationship to this image and the object, at once implying containment and seamless-

ness in the object’s neat, clinical finish and disturbance at the ambiguity of the image – its fragmentation and dismemberment from the rest of the body. As such, we remain observers, unable to ‘disturb’, thus complicit in her containment.

Goliath’s *Murder on 7th* (Gallery Momo, 2009) was an exhibition that engaged with South Africa’s obsession with home security, a reflection on a continual state of anxiety and a kind of morbid fixation with crime. The artist points out that even the most ordinary interactions are infused with a sense of paranoia and worry – an overriding neurosis. The tone of the show is somewhat more ironic than *163* or *Berenice*, working with the presentation of rooms in the home in the style of a *whodunnit* murder mystery, cum cluedo game, cum surveillance footage. The image of each room, a titled portrait set in an appropriately suburban context, is presented within a black CCTV-like structure and is accompanied by a floor panel suited to the room in question – parquet, tiles, linoleum, Astroturf. The viewer is invited to stand on the floor panel, and as such ‘enter’ the room, visually and physically. The slightly foreshortened image works like a mock mirror reflection of their own obsession with domestic security and order.

In this show, as in all of her work, Goliath demonstrates an acute spatial sense, whether in the interaction of the installation and architecture or the dynamics of the viewer’s interaction with the work. The overall installation of *Berenice* is precisely considered to fit the oval design of the Circa exhibition space. The sculptural installation, *Last Seen*, while strongly minimalist in form,



makes reference to a specific place and time by the words of the Christmas carol *Silent Night*. In reverse and spelt out in twinkling Christmas lights, the phrase “All is Bright” is read as a reflection in a pristine, black glass surface. On the upside of the suspended panel, “All is Calm” sits in relief beneath a simple cloth cover, a reference to an absent body, a disruption of the quietness of the work’s formal appearance.

Goliath’s sophisticated use of materials and her spatial language infuse her work with a formal quality that often belies its complex social content. *Portrait of a Woman* (2010) works with four bright pink (almost pop) corrugated panels and four floor-panels housing segments of a photograph of a woman, Ntombi, living in the Masiphumelele informal settlement outside Cape Town, interspersed with extracts from Henry James’ novel *Portrait of a Lady*, accompanied by Xhosa translations. The viewer is invited to step onto the panels, thus onto the image of the person and into their ‘space’, as such conflating the human subject and their context. Again, the spatial unfolding of the work implicates the viewer in an active process of looking, which each brings their own position as a complicit observer into view.

It seems appropriate to conclude that, in a way, Goliath herself is often present in her work. The third component of *Berenice* is the video, *Missing Persons* – a stop-frame animation/video piece styled on missing persons TV inserts, but with a fractured, illegible roll call of names and text. The video is a memorial of sorts to the nameless, faceless, forgotten victims of domestic violence and homicide, commenting also on the



163 installation views, 2009. Lambda print & multimedia construction, 200 x 90 x 70 cm.



Soy una mestiza de Kimberley.



Je suis une personne métisse de Kimberley.





## TOP LTR:

*Murder on 7<sup>th</sup>*, 2009. Dining Room, Spare Room, Study installation.

85 x 100 x 100 cm (hanging component), 60 x 60 cm (3 x floor panels).

*Murder on 7<sup>th</sup>*, Bedroom, Kitchen, Lounge, Passage installation.

85 x 100 x 100 cm (hanging component) 60 x 60 cm (4 x floor panels).

*Murder on 7<sup>th</sup>*, Kitchen image detail installation. 50 x 60 cm (hanging component), 60 x 60 cm (floor panel).

BOTTOM: *Ek is 'n Kimberley Coloured*, 2007. Archival print, edition: 5/5, 48 x 78 cm.



hushed nature of many of these crimes. It is important that it is Goliath herself who plays these substitutable, anonymous victims. In the same way Goliath places herself in her earlier work *Ekke* (2007) and *Ek is 'n Kimberly Coloured* (2007). Drawn from personal experience *Ek is 'n Kimberly Coloured* makes a humorous presentation of the 'romantic' but false ideas people often have about the artist's own cultural background. In *Missing Person's*, however, Goliath's tone shifts to register the position of the personal in the social-political context in a slightly different way.

Goliath here is returning images of violence, whether they are contained in a word in a headline or an image on the front page, to the personal experience of loss. She is doing the complex and difficult work of memory,<sup>1</sup> the only way to reduce the trauma of seeing when the scene is too much.

## ENDNOTE

<sup>1</sup> Here I am referring to Walter Benjamin's distinction between voluntary and involuntary memory. For Benjamin, Freud talks about traumatic events as entering voluntary or conscious memory, so that they are never forgotten. This accounts for the level of detail recalled after an accident. For Benjamin, 'involuntary memory' is that which enters the unconscious as experience, i.e. is able to be forgotten. (Benjamin, 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire' in *Illuminations*, 156-158, Pimlico, London, 1999 (1955), trans. Harry Zorn). <



# ANTOINETTE MURDOCH ART & THE PERSONAL MESSAGE

*I love sex, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 45 X 25 cm.*

*"Art has always been, a lot of the time, a mysterious coded language. And I'm just not a coded person; I wear my heart on my sleeve, if you like. What you see is what I am. I want society to hear what I'm saying. I'm not only talking to galleries, museums and collectors. For me, being an artist isn't just about making nice things or people patting you on the back; it's some kind of communication, a message." (Emin cited in Brown 2006: 50)*

Tracey Emin's emphasis on art being a form of communication or a message deriving from a personal (autobiographic) impulse and addressing society at large relates closely to my own creative concerns. Emin seems almost obsessed with the use of words and letters and just as she uses the visual and the verbal to convey messages very directly, I also use a combination of images and text in my work.

My exploration of text in my artworks involves my personal handwriting as a form of doodling, much like Emin uses her scribbles and scratchily written marks when creating her mono-prints. But my writing is more consistently 'ornamental' in look, like a child's slow form of writing when learning to write. When compared to Emin's works, even in her appliquéd blankets where she uses cut-out capital letters, my scripted



works appear far less abrasive and rudimentary. It underlines my concern with how I have been brought up to conform to certain moral codes of conduct and Christian values, not least by way of practices such as learning to develop neat handwriting (known as *skoonskrif* in Afrikaans, translated as 'clean writing').

In contrast to Emin's very graphic and explicit images and performances, my brightly coloured artworks appear comparatively inoffensive and even lighthearted in tone. It was my intension from the start to use bright colours in the words and phrases that I fabricate as a means of underlining a seemingly frivolous or 'sugar-coated' take on what is otherwise a deep-seated conflict around sexuality and desire.

Some of my current body of works was shown in 2007 at the Premises Gallery, Johannesburg, under the title *Karaoke Confessions*. Karaoke, the popular international pastime originating from Japan, involves the act of singing along with a music video from which the vocals have been eliminated. Practiced in party situations, participants would commonly be somewhat inebriated and in festive spirit, voluntarily blurting out the lyrics of popular songs in an uninhibited manner.

My artworks make use of text in place of images, in a similar manner to karaoke.

The confessional statements are my own, but also allude to titles of popular songs or common phrases and sometimes engage the audience in some participatory way. The title of my exhibition, *Karaoke Confessions*, thus brings together aspects from a popular form of entertainment – a secular practice – with the notion of 'confession' which derives more commonly from Christian religious practice.

The connecting of these two seemingly incongruous things underpin my preoccupation with confession around sexuality and address a sense of tension and ambivalence around my upbringing in an Afrikaner environment and the moral values that it prescribes.

While Emin's confessions come across as deeply sincere and blatantly direct, my own use of text reveals an almost opposite impulse in its association with popular song titles and sentimental phrases. The phrases that I use in *Karaoke Confessions* come from utterances made by lovers such as "I am crazy about you", which could easily also be the title of a popular song.

The generic nature of these phrases as common expressions thus relate to the notion of karaoke where participants 'appropriate' the lyrics from songs to express emotions in a form of cathartic outpouring. It is these somewhat bland and 'second-hand' lyrics that carry the content of this body of work in an ironic, mediated form of confession and reflection around sexuality – addressing personal experiences of disappointment and frustration originating from dating experiences.

These brightly coloured works are made by wrapping successive layers of felt ribbon which echo the shapes of words, in a kind of doodle-like embellished text. These would sometimes resemble speech bubbles. While some of these phrases are easy to read, others are more camouflaged and obscured due to the use of close colour ranges. The process of layering thus complicates the reading of some of these works and their indecipherable nature is often intentional – representing a form of self-censorship. Some curse words, for instance, are made less decipherable and speak of my unwillingness to utter them, for example, in the presence of my parents. Again, this speaks of my deep-seated ambivalence towards moral codes of behaviour that have been drummed into me as a

young person and with which I am grappling with as an adult.

The visual appearance of these works are also loosely derived from neon signage as also used by Emin and other contemporary artists. Putting a statement in neon tubing has similar popular culture associations like karaoke.

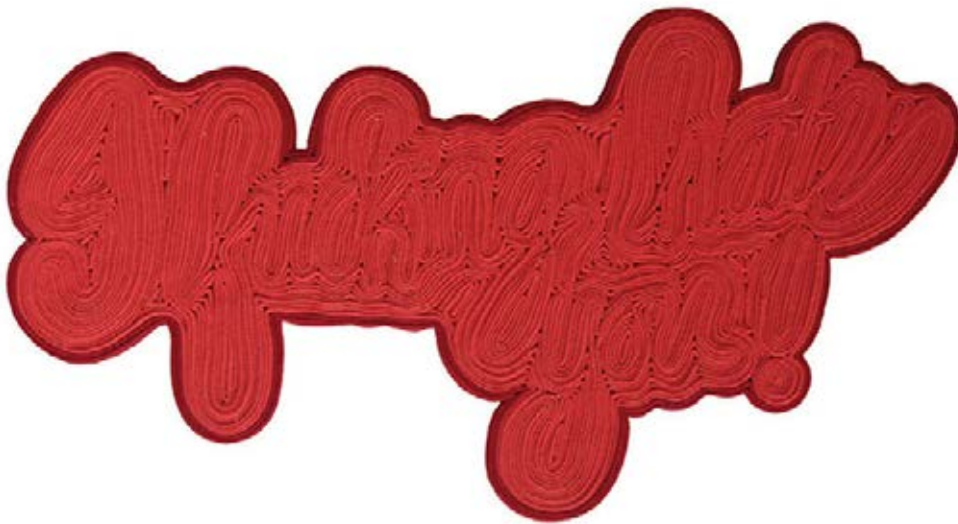
I chose felt as a medium for its properties of softness and warmth which relate to flesh and the body. Felt also provides the saturated and rich colour that I want from my material. This luminous and saturated quality, together with the successive layering of coloured bands of felt, is comparable to the glow created by neon light tubing. There is also a strong resemblance to colourful sweets, particularly the retro candy stick variety originating from the 1950s in America. The association with sweetness is intentional: candy is a highly desirable material infused with erotic qualities.

My exploration with felt also derived from early Sunday School experiences in which felt boards were commonly employed as instructional tools, where cut-out figures were used to tell Bible stories. This instructional approach allowed for interactivity between learner and teacher. The didactic





*What I did to you is unforgivable, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 95 x 35 cm.*



*I fucking hate you, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 70 x 30 cm.*



*I will not respond to that, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 95 x 35 cm.*

religious connotations are important to the content of my work and this is specifically demonstrated in *She said he said*, where some interactive participation is required from the audience.

My work addresses the disjuncture or lack of communication on matters of a sexual nature in the Afrikaner culture that I grew up in, which is informed by strictly Calvinist moral codes.

In addition, felt craft, much like Emin's embroidered quilts, is often associated with women's' handcrafts. Watson points out that the act of sewing "may partly operate as a metaphor for displaced female sexual desire, a result perhaps of the rhythmic back and forth action of sewing" (Watson 2008: 25).

Artists have often assumed the position of the narcissist and Melani McGarth directly accuses Emin of this by saying: "Tracey Emin is narcissistic" and she goes on to describe her work as lonely, furious and demanding of attention. She explains that this has to do with her being very much a part of her work.

Julian Stallabrass states on more than one occasion that Emin's work is unmediated and therefore questionable as art. Howev-

er, she seems to be able to transcend the mundane and mesmerise the public who seem to be hungry to see what she is going to reveal next (1999: 43).

McGarth disagrees as she feels that Emin is "herself the mediator between her experience and its expression."

Does this making of work about oneself and around autobiographical documentation pose a problem for the audience? Both Emin's and my work is often concerned with mundane details of our own lives which are enormously important to us personally, but not necessarily all that important to our audiences.

As Emin's place of birth and background influence her every decision in making her artworks, so does mine. The small conservative town of Margate, with its Dreamland Amusement Park attractions and sexual enticements, can by no means be compared to the protective level of Afrikaner conservatism that I grew up within South Africa during the 1970s. I clearly recall, at the approximate age of 11, reading the words "Slegs Blankes" (Whites Only) on a public toilet door and questioning my mother about this sign. She could not provide me with a satisfactory explanation. To





*I love food*, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 40 x 25 cm.

*I love art*, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 50 x 25 cm.



*I do believe in fairies* 2005. Felt on board, approx. 60 x 30 cm.

this day my parents claim not to be racist – they confess as Christians to loving all people equally – however, they were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, from before my birth, and repeatedly voted for the National Party (or so I assume) until its final disbandment in 2004. We were raised to respect our president PW Botha at the time, and sang songs of national pride at assembly in our whites-only suburban schools. Like so many other white South African children, my understanding of culture was white and exclusive.

From my point of view Emin's upbringing seems far more liberated and tumultuous than mine and she refers to her childhood town of Margate as the "place that screwed her up." Her parents were never married and she portrays her upbringing as having been very unstable. In her book, *Strangeland*, she tells of sometimes being very rich, living in hotels and other times experiencing extreme poverty.

I have lived in the same family home environment since the age of four and I believe that although I was constantly reminded of financial strain, I was extremely privileged. I was completely ignorant of what went on in Soweto, a few kilometers to the southwest of Roodepoort, and my sex education



*I wish I was an artist* 2005. Felt on board, approx. 90 x 40 cm.



*I eat peanut butter from the jar*, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 90 x 40 cm.



*80-kilos*, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 90 x 40 cm.



*I have a dream*, 2005. Felt on board, approx. 90 x 40 cm.



was limited to a hamster cage and the accompanying book: *Soesie se babas* (Suzy's babies), a story about a hamster and her babies.

In her article: *Artist as Victim, Artist as Celebrity: Interrogating the Work of Tracey Emin and Sue Williams* (1999), Lina Goldberg notes how during the 1990s minority groups became recognised and while many of these previously disenfranchised groups were praised for making their private worlds public, there were always some critics who felt that it was all just too personal. Women in particular were accused of self-indulgence. Emin, specifically, was criticised for highlighting sexual and domestic abuse, but her supporters were confident that she was reversing the women's role as "object of artistic representation" to "becoming agents of their own creativity" (Goldberg 1999: 1).

Finally, this quotation from the American writer and journalist known for her work in the confessional memoir genre, Elizabeth Wurtzel, sums it up for me in her book *Bitch*:

*"I intend to scream, shout, race the engine, throw tantrums in Bloomingdales if I feel like it, and confess intimate details about my life to complete strangers, I intend to do what I want to do and be who I want to be and answer only*

*to myself, that is, quite simply the bitch philosophy, and it seems particularly refreshing in the face of all the contortions women who are taught to put themselves through"* (1998: 30). <

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# MUSHA NELUHENI EXPLORATIONS ABOUT THE FEMALE BODY

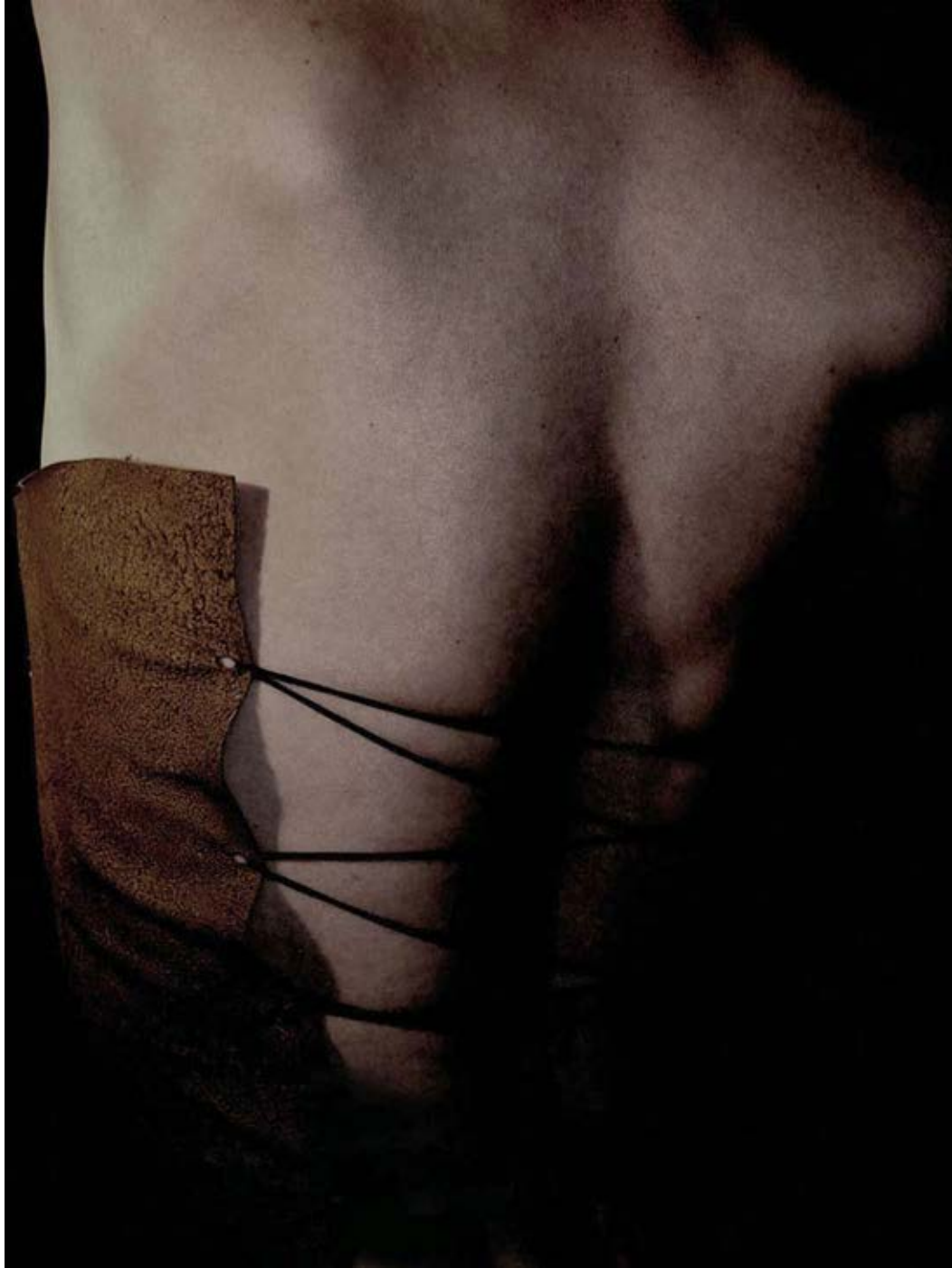
The research into the social, cultural and historical position of the female body is where my interests began. From my first solo exhibition in 2005, my drawings were about the concept of wrapping, enclosure and concealment, and about taking the female body and giving it a second skin.

Although I'm trained as a printmaker, I started exploring other interests I had, specifically sewing and creating garments. My work is foremost about tactility, about touch or the sense of touch. It is about the material, the palpable or tangible. Although some see it as such, my work is more about the art of textile than it is about fashion, although I cannot say this plays no part. A few years ago, I began looking at the corset as a garment which is

used to form and distort the body. From there, I looked at the traditional uses of the corset and the contemporary fetish object itself.

What I'm trying to explore through the corset, is an object, which in Western society has come to be seen as something that constricts, controls and restricts. It is seen as something that was used to mould a woman into a pre-conceived notion of beauty. But the corset is also something that can be used to create something desired by the wearer. Through practices like tight-lacing, a process where a wearer reduces their waist size through lacing their corset tighter over a long period of time, the wearer holds the power to how this garment operates and how they are viewed in it. The action of putting on a corset, the push and pull of the laces, is something that I try to





*Untitled 2*, 2009. Photograph.

*Submission I and II*, Charcoal 2004, Lithograph 2009.

These two drawings were created in 2004 and focussed on female submission in my traditional culture. It seemed appropriate for me to revisit them in lithography in 2009, given the turn that my work had taken. These works now speak about more than my personal, cultural feelings of submission, but refer also to the sadomasochist concepts of submission and bondage. I think that they show a course that my work was inevitably going to take. The original drawings were not exhibited and most know these as the lithographs they are now. Through the reading of my current work, these works fit in seamlessly with my working processes.

#### OPPOSITE PAGE

LEFT: *Shroud*, 2006. Charcoal.

RIGHT: *The Ties That Bind*, 2004. Charcoal.







experiment with. This oscillation between restriction and freedom, control and choice is the dynamic I'm attempting to deconstruct and, in the same token, reconstruct through my works.

There are a number of aspects and ideas around the corset that I've explored, the first being the idea of wrapping and concealing. By looking at the contemporary uses of corsets and the erotic subtext beneath it, I developed a fascination with it as fetish object.

Of particular interest to me is the play between the sadomasochistic connotations of the corset, which treads the line between pain and pleasure. Word associations started to form, like 'wrap' which originates from the

Latin words *rapere* and *raptus* – which, interestingly enough, are also the origins of both the words rapture and rape. I started looking at both these words; the concepts of the words, and the fine line between them. This is something that captured me and I play on these subtleties quite often in my work. My corsets are always seen through the male fetishist gaze, and thus the state of the female body becomes a complex playing field between control and freedom, between desire and eroticism, between pleasure and pain.

During the preparation of my last solo exhibition, *Vantage*, I found that my work had progressed to be more about gender identities rather than the positioning of the female body. When one looks at the historical and

LEFT: *Tie Me Up*, 2007. Ribbon. This was one of the first corset works I made for the exhibition titled *Tact*. The work is about the woman who wears the corset. The work is about power and control. It is about the fine line between pain and pleasure. The corset took on more of the form of restraints and explored the line where pleasure and violence are one.

RIGHT: *Unravel*, 2007. Ribbon.



contemporary concept of the corset, the male/female divide becomes obsolete with this specific garment. Both men and women have worn corsets from long before the Victorian era. Today, both men and women wear corsets, especially in the realm of sadomasochism. I had touched on this idea of male corsetry for the exhibition *Bondage* in 2007, but had never fully taken note of it and perhaps my work needed to develop further before I revisited it.

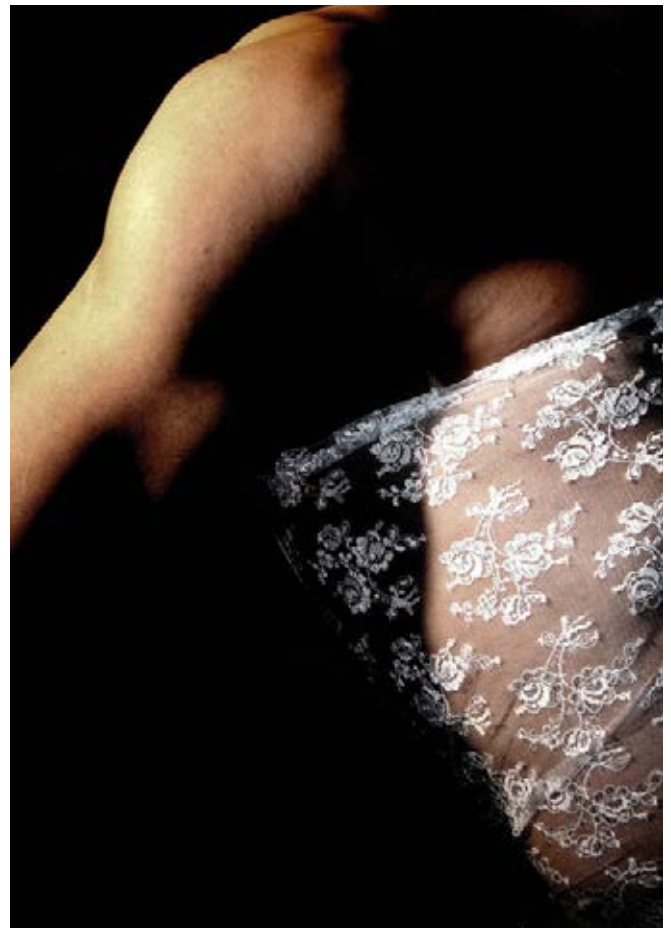
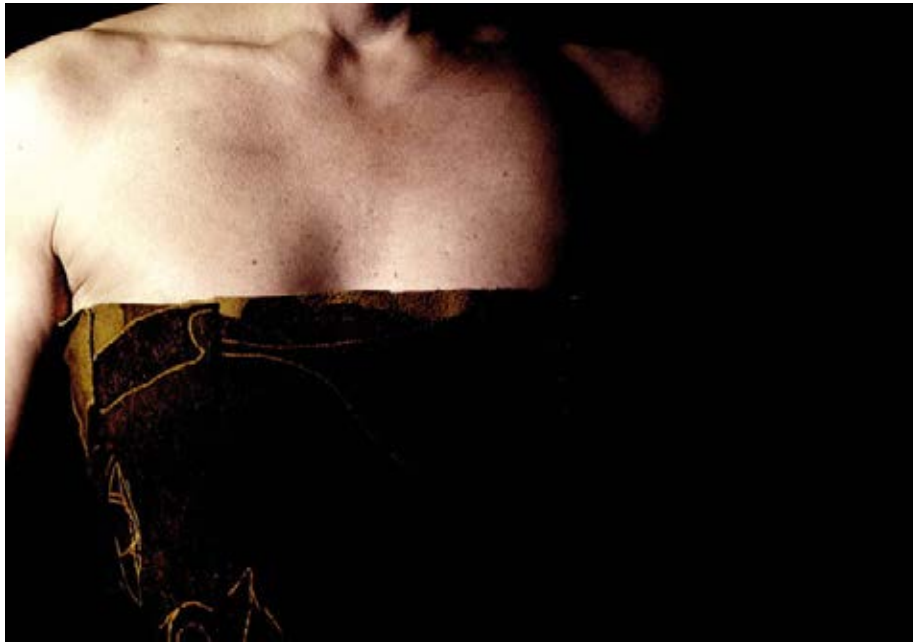
Whether the gaze is fundamentally male, or to see it as women being the object of the male gaze, I wanted to construct work where the 'gazer' and the object of that gaze were one in the same. I wanted to create work where the gender lines would be blurred and where the male viewer would be placed in a space that was both familiar and unfamiliar; a space where the viewer would feel slightly foreign but at first not know why. By placing men in corsets and then not immediately making this fact known to the viewer, I wanted to play a game

about seeing and looking; to play with our pre-conceived notions of gender identity. This began an interesting dynamic between control/freedom, male/female, sight/gaze that set up a challenging vantage point for the viewer. <

## About Musha Neluheni

Musha Neluheni is a Johannesburg-based artist. She received her B.F.A. from Rhodes University in 2005. She worked at the Sasol Art Collection for four years and lectured at Unisa in 2009. She has taken part in numerous group exhibitions and held her first solo exhibition in 2008. She has received awards at the Sasol New Signatures competition in 2005 and 2006. She was the Aardklop Arts Festival Young Curator for 2008 and was one of six artists who received a one-month residency at the Atelier Pons in Paris from the Rendezvous Art Project in 2010. She is currently Education Officer at the Johannesburg Art Gallery. <





*Untitled 1, 3 and 4, 2009.* Photographs. These three images are from my latest solo exhibition, *Vantage*. In *Vantage*, I intentionally wanted to create a strange environment for the viewer. The show was as much about the works as it was about the viewer's reaction to the works. People generally associate corsets with women, and that is what I tried to exploit. I specifically chose male models that were slight in build so that I

would have room to play in the photo shoot. In some, for example *Untitled 1*, the shadow created on the pectoral muscles gives the illusion of breasts, thereby confusing the viewer as to whether they are looking at a man or a woman. Other images gave more hints to the fact that the figures in the images were men. By carefully cropping the works, I tried to engage the viewer in a voyeuristic game.

# WHY NO ARMS? WILMA CRUISE ON WILMA CRUISE

I am frequently asked: “Why are your sculptures armless?”, “Can’t you do arms – or hands for that matter?”, “... and why are your figures without mouths?”

My usual flippant reply, “because arms are not necessary”, hides a complexity of reasons, which at their core hold the essence of what my work is about.

At the most elemental level, arms are not only unnecessary; they actively interfere with the message. They create a visual noise – a distraction – they are indeed impediments. Because it is the condition of muteness that I want to convey – a silence, an existential pause, as if hovering on the edge of the world.

I was born in 1945 and raised in the time of the cold war where the possibility of nuclear holocaust loomed large. The threat had been made awfully possible by the events at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In addition my schooling in the Christian National Education system clashed with an atheistic and questioning environment at home. The latter influence triumphed and as I grew up and became a student, I developed a despairing atheism that later found its consolation in the act of making art. Through the manipulation of clay, paint and charcoal, I attempted to make meaning of my world. I asserted a “materiality of objects”, which, as Schoeman has noted, is “a contest against nothingness, which is simultaneously inseparable from it”.<sup>1</sup> I later added words to the repertoire that became my shout against the silence.





*god and the absence of god  
light and the absence of light  
a dialectic  
like silence and  
a scream  
if there is hell must heaven exist?*

Still, the question persists. "Why no arms?"

In a critique of my 1990 exhibition, *Untitled (everlasting nothingness made visible)*<sup>2</sup>, Kendall Geers had noted the "cliché" of the "silent gaping mouth"<sup>3</sup>. His criticism stung, not only for its perceived negativity, but also for its validity. Since WWII we have been bombarded by visions of the awful. From graphic images of the dead during the Nazi holocaust to bodies flying through the air to thump audibly on the pave-

ment below the twin towers in New York, we have been swamped with apocalyptic images of such excess that the scream is rendered superfluous. As Geers suggests, it has become a cliché. The only way that artists can compete with such representations is to retreat into silence. It is within the realm of the interior, in the place of the unspoken, that the battle for meaning and relevance takes place.

Working with the unspoken and unsaid, is a position that concurs with Hélène Cixous' *écriture féminine*. Cixous, the French literary theorist, suggests reformulating the relationship between language and the body. She rejects what she terms "critiques that persist in a logocentric Cartesian discourse that posits the mind as the source of writing".<sup>4</sup> *Écriture féminine* she

*Three shades (the bully boys I, II and III), 1992/3.*  
Ceramic and cast metal on concrete bases;  
I: 175 x 80 x 40 cm; II: 184 x 76 x 65 cm;  
III: 172 x 70 x 76 cm. Durban Art Museum.



maintains "...is impossible [to define] ... except through subjects that break automatic functions, border runners never subjugated by any authority".<sup>5</sup> *Écriture féminine* is not to be confused with a 'female language', rather it is an attempt to access those verities that lie beyond language. The body is the text but the message functions in the area of the subliminal and the pre-conscious. In order to do this I strip my figures of the means of speech. Thus my sculptures are without agency. The ability to speak or gesture is withdrawn by refusing the figures mouths or arms. The subtext is that language has failed us.

*Words are cold muddy toads trying to understand the sprites dancing in the field.*<sup>6</sup>

Armless and featureless figures have characterised my work from my earliest exhibitions to the present time. From *Three shades (the bully*

LTR:

*Woodfired Babies*, 2010. Woodfired ceramic, Average length 25 cm.

*Three shades (the bully boys I, II and III)*, 1992/3. Detail.

*Woman with sheep*, 2004/5. Ceramic on metal base, 160 cm.

*Chanticleer from Cocks, Asses &...(I can't hear)*, 2007. Ceramic, 150 x 170 cm.

Photo by Carla Crafford.





*boys I, II and III*) (1992 - 1993), to the latest small fetish-like *Woodfired Babies* (2010), the condition of fragmentation persists.

*Three shades (the bully boys I, II and III)* were key figures in the cycle of works *Nicholas – October 1990*. Held at the Goodman Gallery in 1993, this exhibition revolved around the politically inspired murder of Nicholas Cruik in October 1990. *The bully boys* depict those malevolent presences that hover just off the edge of consciousness. They also portray actual people, the shadowy men who in the apartheid years terrorised through the exercise of power. In both senses, the metaphysical and the actual, they are never clearly seen but their brooding presence is felt. The figures are blind, naked and armless suggesting their own helplessness within the malevolent web of violence. Only their metal-encased penises imply the exercise of their masculine power.

The *Woodfired Babies* are rendered helpless not only by their condition of infancy but also by their lack of agency. Their armslessness suggests not so much the horror of thalidomide deformity, but future impotency. They have no means to act upon the world. The 'babies' are uncharacteristically small. Like dolls they can be individually cradled in the hand. Recalling fetish fertility figures, their rough vitrified surfaces and anatomical deformities nevertheless imply a thwarted fecundity.

Although animals had featured in my oeuvre from earliest times (particularly sheep)<sup>7</sup> they moved to centre stage during my 2007 – 2009 exhibition *Cocks, Asses & (I can't hear)*.<sup>8</sup> Animals became the ciphers for "being and nothingness" in my work.<sup>9</sup> As Schoeman noted,

*In Cruik's work animals feature as our living and feeling counterparts or totems; their*



*lives and deaths are imaged with the same sensitivity and urgency with which Cruise images human beings. Both intertwined and apart from humans, animals in Cruise's work appear as witnesses to the precariousness of being in the world. Tangled with the fragility of human beings, animals matter.*<sup>10</sup>

Stimulated by the new apocalyptic threat of annihilation through environmental degradation, my thesis in *Cocks, Asses & (I can't hear)* is that we are no longer in tune to the natural world. As the subtitle suggests we are no longer listening to the animals. "We have shut our ears to their primal screams, their rumbles, hisses, purrs".<sup>11</sup>

Central to the exhibition is a pair of armless figures entitled *Adam and Eve before the Fall*.<sup>14</sup> At

the feet of the figures is a small insignificant snake. Adam and Eve gaze dumbly at the animal. Their incomprehension as to its significance does not so much signify their fall from grace in a biblical sense, but the rupture in their relationship with the animal kingdom. The snake's arrival shatters the peace and harmony of paradise and signals the rift between man and the natural order.

Animals appear persistently in my sculptures, drawings and prints after 2007, particularly the horse. In art, the horse is a loaded image usually signifying grace, nobility and movement. But like Kentridge I have subverted this image. My horses are static and lumpen with hooves firmly anchored to the ground, or, as in the case of the 3,7 m high sculpture, *Poor Horace: (Watching The Hours)* (2009) – the animal is sus-





LTR:

*Adam and Eve Before The Fall*, 2006/7.  
Ceramic on steel base; Adam 187 cm;  
Eve 180 cm, Ceramic snake.

*I can't hear (Cat Woman)* [left], Dumas  
[right], 2007 Ceramic and steel on steel  
base, 191 cm.

*I can't hear*, 2007 Ceramic and  
steel on steel base.

*I can(t) see (with mirror)*, 2007.  
Drypoint, 99 x 66 cm.

*Horse and Rider 2*, 2006/7. Bronze, 65 cm.  
Photo by Carla Crafford.

*Poor Horace: (Watching the hours)*, 2009.  
Acrylic resin and mixed media,  
267 x 155 x 80 cm.

pended in a position of defencelessness. *Poor Horace* is depicted twice: suspended by the belly and upside down. Transporting a horse into a ship necessitates it being slung under the torso and hoisted by a crane. In the sculpture, the doppelganger of this image inverts Horace and ironically depicts another method of transportation; that of anaesthetised horses being hauled into surgery suspended by the fetlocks. Up or down, Horace is rendered immobile. His defining equine characteristic, movement, has been withdrawn. He neither bellows, nor protests his condition of immobility. Thus while his body is whole, the essence of his equine being is truncated and fragmented. His primal scream is silenced. He is a partial horse.

A key work in my oeuvre came early on and signals the role of art as an act of redemption – as



a blow for meaning in a meaningless world. *Self Portrait* (1992)<sup>16</sup> has arms. They are folded against her torso in a protective pose as if hugging herself. A small poem written contemporaneously suggests a reading.

*the artist has power  
she has arms  
she controls  
she is god  
(for a small while)  
but like god  
she confronts evil  
only in a place where  
chaos reigns*

In 2009 a drawn *Self portrait (as horse)*<sup>17</sup> was also given the agency of arms – and a camera – to record the process of acting upon the world...of observing myself observing. <

LTR:

*Self portrait*, 1992. Ceramic on concrete base, 173 x 62 x 45 cm. Private collection.

*M<sup>2</sup> i*, 2010. Mixed media on paper. Private collection.

*Madonna from Durban Pieta*, 1991/3. Photo D Hemp.

*Thoyohandou*, 1995/6. Ceramic, 165 cm.

*Earthworks, Claybody 3*, 2002. Clay.

*Springhaa(r)s*, collaboration with Guy du Toit, 2007. Bronze, 185 cm. Photo by Carla Crafford.





## ENDNOTES

- 1 Schoeman, G. 2009 "As for animal being too dumb and stupid to speak for themselves": Being and nothingness in Wilma Cruise's Sculptures. In Younge, G. (ed.) 2009 *The Urban Animal*, a catalogue for an exhibition at ABSA Gallery, Johannesburg, 2009.
- 2 Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg 6 – 27 October 1990. The title was derived from one of Albert Camus' novels.
- 3 Kendell Geers, 'Gallery's crucial role in 'showcasing art', *The Star Tonight*, 17 October 1990, p 10.
- 4 Julia Dobson, Hélène Cixous (1937 -) in Jon Simons (ed.), *Contemporary Critical Theorists*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2004, p. 130.
- 5 Cixous as quoted in Julia Dobson, Hélène Cixous (1937 -), p 127.
- 6 Martell, Yann. 2010. *Beatrice and Virgil*. Canongate: Edinburgh, London, New York, Melbourne. p 88.
- 7 *Woman with sheep*, 2004/5. Ceramic on metal base, 160 cm. Private Collection
- 8 2007 to 2009 *Cocks, Asses &... (I can't hear)*, University of Johannesburg Art Gallery 7-28/11/2007; Kizo Art Gallery, Durban, 20/06/ – 28/07/2008; White River Art Gallery 03 – 04/2009; Oliewenhuis Art Museum (Reservoir), Bloemfontein, 7/07 – 16 /08/2009; iArt Gallery, Cape Town, 9/11 – 11/12/2009.
- 9 Schoeman 2009
- 10 *ibid.*
- 11 Catalogue for *Cocks, Asses &... (I can't hear)*, 2007. David Krut Publishing: Johannesburg.

# SANNA SWART

SOMETIMES I FEEL  
MORE LIKE A  
CONDUIT  
FOR THE CREATION  
THAN THE CONDUCTOR

Someone once asked me what the first sculpture was that I ever made. I laughed and said it was probably a couple of sticks planted in the mud at the dam on the farm where I grew up. Looking back at that joking answer, I realise there was more truth to that statement than I had realised.

I had a robust, outdoorsy childhood that included three brothers. As the only girl, I was determined to keep up and do everything they did. I have fallen off more horses, crashed more soap-box cars and thrown more mud-balls than I care to admit.





On the flip side of the rough and tumble, I also lived in a household where all forms of the arts were appreciated. Music, literature, theatre and the visual arts were as much a part of my childhood as the bushveld and animals.

Creativity was combined with practicality and I spent many happy hours in my grandfather's metal workshop learning how to weld and fix things. He patiently showed me the differences in tools and materials and planted a seed in my mind to create and work with my hands.

Upon entering university, I tried for a year to follow a marketable major and assure myself a job in a creative field. So, I studied design and was quite miserable. I enjoyed parts of it, but it seemed artificial compared to the hours spent creating the 'real' things in my childhood.

Subconsciously knowing that I needed to work with my hands, I switched to fine arts and found my passion in sculpture. After completing my Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Pretoria, I felt that I needed to further my technical studies. So, I embarked on

Sanna Swart in action at Boudiccea Productions' foundry and studio.



further studies in the USA and earned my Technical Diploma in Foundry Techniques & Sculpture from the Johnson Atelier Technical Institute of Sculpture in Princeton, New Jersey. It was a gruelling apprenticeship of long, hot hours, diverse and quirky co-workers and the shock of living so far from my African home. However, like good metal forged in a hot fire, it was there that the total technicality of sculpting was instilled as an intrinsic part of my constitution. It was also the place where I fell in love and discovered the passion necessary to persevere with the alchemical processes of foundry work.

From the United States, I went to Belgium. There, in a foundry that had been casting Europe's art for generations, the great-grandson of the original founder hired me as production manager. It was my responsibility to introduce the modern methods of ceramic shell casting to them as opposed to the antiquated, solid investment casting techniques that were still in use. I was the first female ever to work in

the foundry. There was a great deal of superstition about a woman in the casting arena. Some humorous, and some not so humorous moments resulted until fears could be put to rest and new processes could be proven. My training and acquired skills from the USA were thoroughly tested and I was once again faced with a barrage of a new culture.

I lived in the shadow of a cathedral built in the 1100s and would wake up every morning to bells that had tolled over the centuries for births, weddings, coronations, during the Black Plague and both World Wars. It was a very different world for me – wonderful in its own way, but it was not Africa. My soul was crying for the veld, it was time to go home.

On returning to South Africa, I first went and immersed myself in the soil, the bush and the smells and sights that nourish my spirit and inspire my work. I had collected knowledge, I was home, and while I had continuously

TOP LEFT: *Empyrean Flight* installed at the Voortrekker Monument. Bronze.

TOP RIGHT: *Desert Song*. Bronze.

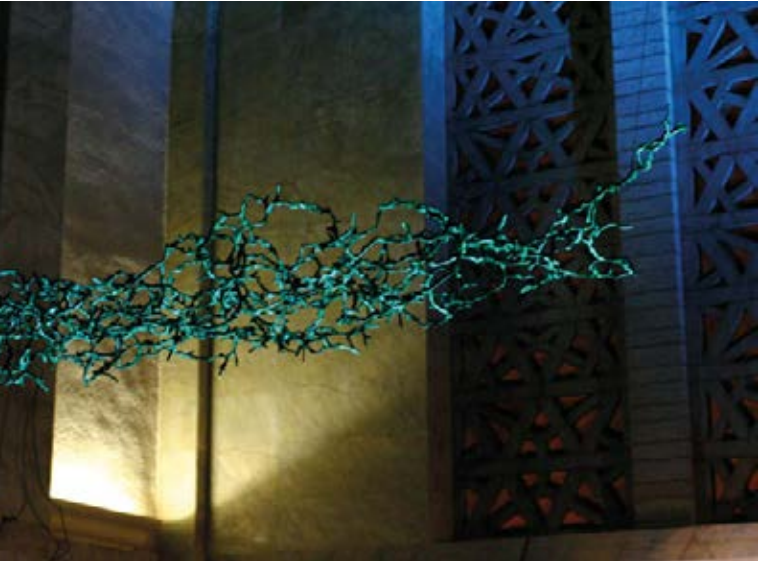
CENTRE LEFT: *Dancers*. Bronze.

CENTRE RIGHT: *Karoo Angel*. Bronze.

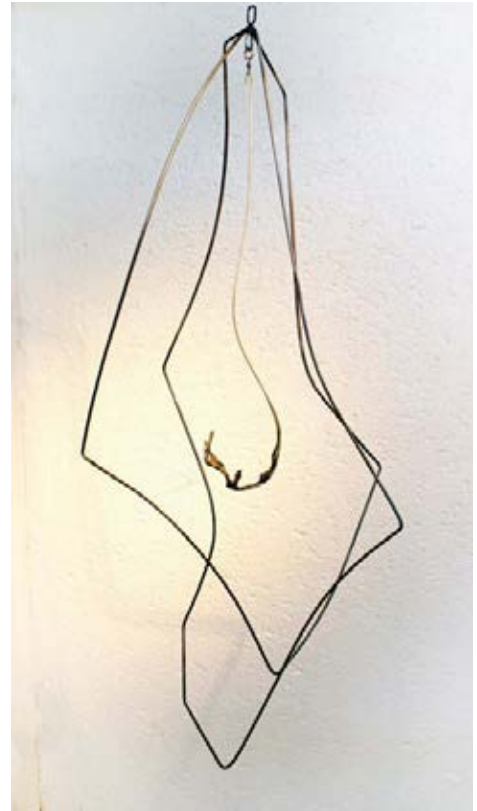
BOTTOM: *Guardian*. Bronze.















TOP LEFT: *Flight*. Mixed media.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Shimmer Angel*. Stainless steel.

TOP CENTRE: *Whisper*. Bronze and steel.

BOTTOM CENTRE: *Elysium Veil*. Steel.

TOP RIGHT: *Cycad Memory*. Bronze.

CENTRE RIGHT: *Lamentation*. Stainless steel.

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Silent Song*. Stainless steel.



sculpted throughout my travels, now was the time to get serious and explore my own limits. I set up a foundry [Boudicca Productions] and studio with fellow sculptor and foundry technician, Kay Potts. As far as I know, we are the only female artists in the country who personally cast their own bronzes.

For me, it is essential that I'm part of the complete creative process. From conception and modelling, through the casting/fabricating and finishing, I am wholly integrated with the work. The magic of melting the metal, the sweat (and yes, sometimes blood and tears) and the physicality of the processes, either casting or fabrication with sheet metal is very akin to giving birth. It is a pure act of devotion and creation. I believe that each piece of sculpture carries an echo of my spirit and a definite imprint of my emotional state whilst working on it.

If I have to label my style, I would call it abstract, organic with figurative influences. During my formative years as an artist I was influenced and inspired by such artists as Maureen Quinn, Caroline van der Merwe, Barbara Hepworth, Eva Hess, Katte Kollowitz, *et al.* Their art definitely inspired me to dig deeper into myself and to explore emotional and visual links which I might possibly have otherwise ignored.

I am, obviously, an adherent to old school training. I believe that your technical skills should not inhibit your creativity. If you can imagine it, you can master a technique to create it. I am a bit of a stickler for quality craftsmanship and I believe the skills most required by an artist are discipline, perseverance and a willingness to always learn something new.

I read a great deal, everything from art criticism to a good mystery. I am often transported by poetry and conjure visual imagery from well-crafted words.



L.R:  
*Seraphim*. Bronze.  
*Wisdom Tree*,  
 National Archives  
 Pretoria, Steel.  
*Wind Walker*. Bronze.

I spend a great amount of time in the bush, which is still my greatest inspiration, and will often spend hours sitting on a rock watching the veld breathe.

I also draw quite a bit. These tend to be more exploratory exercises, trying to capture a stray thought or a moment in time. I will often use those drawings to inspire a sculpture, but I almost never sculpt what I draw. The sculpting process takes on a life of its own. The immediacy of modelling directly keeps the piece texturally strong and lends energy and emotional inclination to the forms. Re-arranging billions of atoms into a new shape is ultimately liberating, not to mention exhilarating. Sometimes I feel more like a conduit for the creation than the conductor. I believe that

the creative processes invoked by a modern artist are equivalent to the shamanistic rituals of our forefathers.

I do not desire to portray mankind within a social context. I am more interested in the spiritual and emotional issues that drive us within the social context. Using the natural world, from which humans have become so distant, as my inspiration and as my representation of harmony and balance, I attempt to arrest a moment in time and space as a sculptural image. If I have been honest with the work and the processes, I believe that the onlookers will find their own emotional resonances within my work. <





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# THERESA-ANNE MACKINTOSH

## *THE YOUNG ONES*

By **Ian Van Biljon**. To understand the singular sophisticated constructs of Theresa-Anne Mackintosh's visual language, it is useful to look back at her preceding body of work. In the earlier part of her career, she was strongly influenced by the German neo-expressionists, specifically by their interest in humanism. Subsequently she has become mindful of Japanese pop culture and broader linguistic concerns through mechanisms of visual language. The one constant in her explorations has been to partially resolve these concerns within an autobiographical context. She manages to achieve this in her most recent exhibition, *The Young Ones*, held at Gallery MOMO in Johannesburg, August 2010, by assimilating divergent influences into a complex poetic language of her own.

On first inspection it seems that Mackintosh treats the surfaces of her archetypes and figures as landscape paintings, but in her case, it is presented as a landscape of textual dialogues. The landscape she presents is of the one found in the classic Japanese art house horror movie where numerous texts and subtexts are alluded to and simultaneously implied but none conclusively realised. In spite of this, the work remains poignant. In her work, we are presented with a mysterious world where characters live in a type of suspended disbelief. The dark and exquisitely refined Gothic poem world she manages to construct in her paintings and its interplay with the forthright quality of the introductory discourse offers intriguing reading. Behind her strong imagery one finds

*Bird King*, 2010.  
Oil on paper, 57 x 57 cm.





*Y. H. Harkins '10*





*Buena Suerte*, 2010.  
Ceramic, 43 x 22 x 22 cm.

an exquisitely refined interplay at work. The work does not afford you to draw conclusions, yet it remains powerfully engaging.

One of the true strengths of Mackintosh's work lies in the way one is drawn in to speculate around the archetypes she employs as the seemingly main reference point, only later to find that as the reading of her work unfolds, its position is merely a part of a much broader textual interplay. In some of her works this device is taken to the extreme where the archetype figure is dissolved and recontextualised within the work to such an extent that despite the strong confrontational graphic introduction, it seems an accidental point of departure. She manages to effect or 'set up' these (undermining) shifts, partially by her use of rich referential vocabulary and her masterful intuition at employing relevant form and tone dialogues. Subtexts are discreetly implied and attain a Joseph Beuys-like charged silence.

What is remarkable about Mackintosh's work, is that the strong graphic and referential presence of her figures, manages to be assimilated within the refined subverting interplay of text, to such a degree that the work itself (on reading it) is without a clear reference point. This insight becomes even more intriguing when one considers that titles are an integral part of the work and that they are centrally important as pointers to engage with

it. This leads one to speculate that the title itself is subject to subversion.

At first glance when you see her graphically placed figures, it seems that the artist's intention has a narrative departure point. As one negotiates the canvas, this is refuted by her sophisticated nonlinear compositional and textual allusions inherent in the surface treatment. Considering all of the above, one is led to confidently speculate that Mackintosh's work concerns itself with questions on the nature and structure of language, as a key concern. The suspended nature of the text has its parallel counterpart in the haunted figures found frequenting her art. Parallels are employed throughout.

In *Bird King* for example, one is presented with four main graphic archetype representational devices: background, circle (face), triangle (beak) and stylised torso. Here we find a classic Mackintosh introduction device at work. What she does is to give the reader clear signifiers to work with. The circle, triangle and torso represent parts of a figure, the *Bird King*. Then we have the background, which is also part of the Bird King – on introduction this functions as a pun: reference play. This is clearly signified by the strong graphic forms and contrasting mainly black/white palette. The title of the work functions as the fifth introductory graphic, this time in the form of words. The first impression

is of an erect childlike figure. Visually the figure presents itself frontally – this impression is achieved by the face being white on the one side, and predominantly black on the other, while the blackness of the beak visually relates more to the background.

Upon further reading, the matter of fact quality of the childlike figure, and as a consequence the figure itself, is reconfigured by the beak that simultaneously functions as title signifier but also as the bridge that introduces the background as part of the figure. The beak also introduces the first challenge to the confident, matter of fact quality of the figure. It introduces fragility – but it's a fragileness that functions on many levels simultaneously. What Mackintosh is doing is systematically breaking down the first impressions of the graphically strong figure in the manner in which a written sentence is deconstructed. We are introduced concurrently to the fragility of representation, form and psychological uncertainty. What we are dealing with here is one of the key strategies within Mackintosh's work.

The introspective tone set up by the beak, recontextualises the archetype childlike figure into a figure that loses its certainty, it also functions as an invitational device to probe the surface treatment of the background. The quite matter of fact tone of the beak is further explored and illuminated by the background. The tonal dialogue between the dry patch like surface

treatment of the figure and shadowy background serves to further deconstruct and soften the strong graphic character of the figure, bringing into play the background as an integral part of the figure. What we see is a progressive widening of the text, and a continual recontextualisation of one's reading. Although the initial graphic representation is strong you end up with a progressively poem-like feminine richness.

At first, the unfolding of the text seems to follow a linear path, but once you realise its function as an introductory device to establish textual relationships, the power and originality of her work becomes apparent. In *Bird King* we are presented with a figure that seems to be trapped, but still has dreams of freedom and flight. The pink 'melancholic' eye (which could also be a head wound), peers desperately to the sky, below the eye is the prop like beak that seems stuck on the face in a tragic-comic way. The beak looks like a medieval muzzle worn during rituals in honor of the dead. The arms look like clipped wings, the triangular form of the arms are reflected in the beak and collar of the clothing – grouping these suggests variations of powerlessness, melancholy, yearning and anger (Mackintosh frequently uses triangular forms in her other works to say similar things). This interpretation represents the first introductory reading, which has a strong narrative quality.

LEFT: *Bird's eye*, 2010.  
Oil on paper, 57 x 57 cm.

RIGHT: *Pirate*, 2010.  
Oil on paper 57 x 57 cm.

*The Bird Reaper*, 2010.  
Mixed media on paper,  
75 x 110 cm.

*Dual Party*, 2010.  
Mixed media on paper,  
77 x 110 cm.





TOP: *Twins*, 2010. Mixed media on paper, 75 x 110 cm.

CENTRE: *The Dream team 1, 2 and 3*, 2010. Mixed media on paper, 77 x 57 cm each.

BOTTOM LEFT: *If the light shines through*, 2010. Mixed media on paper, 57 x 77 cm.

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Outside*, 2010. Oil on canvas, 170 x 180 cm







*Onica, 2010.*  
Mixed media on paper,  
58 x 40 cm.



*Ham, 2010.*  
Oil on paper, 30 x 21 cm.

The work only truly becomes engaging once, with further reading, this narrative becomes recontextualised and finally ends up only being a part of the text. What becomes apparent in the ensuing reading of the dialogue between the secondary forms of patches (the white patch on the figures chest, the black and white of the face and the illuminated areas of the background) is its power to formalistically and conceptually transform the strong primary forms of the figure itself (circle, triangle and stylised torso). A process in which the narrative quality of the introductory reading – and as a consequence the title of the work too – is undermined and by which a new set of predominantly textual devices are introduced, affecting an ever widening reading. The work allows for continual reinvention of meaning/text.

Like in her paintings, Mackintosh constructs the figures found in her sculptures from a combination of all manner of archetypes and primary forms (circles, ovoids, triangles, archetypal representations of torso, archetypal representations of a figure, rectangles etc). The refined dialogue between these two closely related concepts form an important key in understanding the enigmatic resolutions within the dialogues she sets up in her sculptures. What Mackintosh

does is exploits the intricate relationship between archetype, primary forms and textual allusion.

These relational dialogues simultaneously function to introduce the device of superimposing archetypes and primary forms and as a consequence effect recontextualising of form, text and concept relationships. Because she employs reduced form references throughout, one is invited to read the text with these key signifiers in mind.

On introductory reading of her sculptures one is presented with a highly graphically constructed figure. The graphically confident nature of the first reading is subject to subversion once you start to contemplate how it is put together. This shift is initially nearly imperceptible but gains momentum (on realisation of the broad vocabulary of archetypes, primary form and textual allusions she simultaneously employs), together with the complex dialogical relationships generated by the superimposed nature of text itself. This sets up and invites multiple readings.

Since you are dealing with reduced form that is employed to signify a figure and because the figure (a sculpture) is to be read in 3D, the sculpture allows for multiple readings from any angle within the 360 degree reading field. What becomes apparent is that there is no definitive front or back – or any definitive view or reading for that matter – of the sculpture. The reading exposes,

among many, alternative constructs and numerous other figures (characters) as you read the work in the round.

In *Buena Suerte* we are introduced to an animation type toy-like figure. When viewed from the 'back', we find a further reduced representation. The hair of the 'frontal' figure with its ponytail becomes the nose and abstracted face of the back figure. From the side we find a further reduction where the ponytail is the nose and the top part of the hairpiece signifies the same thing. What Mackintosh does is to introduce multiple mutually recontextualising dialogues between the various views.

One realises that this device that allows you to read multiple figures is not limited to the representation of archetype figures but extends to include the subversion of primary form dialogues and of the broader text itself. Even the title is subject to subversion. As with her paintings there is a parallel between the enigmatic tone presented by the sculptures and a sense that the reading of the text itself remains suspended.

What we are dealing with here are superbly sophisticated and elegant device mechanisms to deconstruct text with. Mackintosh's sculptures are highly original creations. To be able to dematerialise the in-your-face graphic quality of her sculpture and in such a deceptively elegant way is remarkable. <

*Romirr*, 2010.  
Ceramic, 43 x 29 x 24 cm.

LEFT: *Silo*, 2010.  
Ceramic, 51.5 x 31 x 28.5 cm.

RIGHT: *Madonna*, 2010.  
Ceramic, 52, 37 x 30 cm.

LEFT: *Streak*, 2010.  
Oil on canvas, 70 x 40 cm

CENTRE: *Madonna sketch (3)*, 2010.  
Oil on paper, 21 x 28 cm.

RIGHT: *Madonna (Little Phoenix)*, 2010.  
Mixed media on paper,  
77 x 99 cm.









# KARIN LIJNES BRINGING THE DISCARDED BACK TO THE LEVEL OF AWARENESS

**By Wilma Cruise.** The title of Karin Lijnes' latest exhibition *&Pooof!* provides an apt metaphor for our electronic age. Our experience of the world is mediated by flickering images on television, computer or cellphone screens. The lifespan of an image is measured by the three-second sound byte, the gauge used by television producers to define the attention span of the average viewer. Things come and go with frenetic rapidity. Now it is here and then it is gone, as if by the wave of a magician's wand or an advertising executive's decision. We use and discard images, objects and substances with barely a thought for their afterlife. Our experience of the things of the world is thus fleeting

and inconsequential. The universalising impulse of consumerism, defined by the tendency to brand and to market the same objects and ideas worldwide, further serves to flatten our experiences into packaged similitudes. From Beijing to Maputo our expectations are the same. We are safe in this world as long as there is a McDonald's on the corner. These ideas underpin Lijnes' current body of work shown in a taut exhibition at the Association for Visual Arts Gallery (AVA), Cape Town, in April 2010.

It has been 10 years since Lijnes' last solo exhibition, but the ideas in *&Pooof!* were foretold in 2000 in the exhibition titled *Cross cut – Criss cross* (with Gwen Miller) where she used the humble plastic bag as her medium for embroidery. That such a throwaway object as a plastic bag could be transformed into a work of exquisite embroidery is part of the contradiction that Lijnes chose to explore between the meaning of material and the power of the image. Three beaded bags in *&Pooof!*, titled *displaced* (2009), *despatched* (2009) and *the other of the same* (2009), (re)present her ideas, currently in 2010, about the transformation of material through disruption of expectation.

One might think that 10 years is a long time to prepare for the next exhibition and in the last two years Lijnes has been



consumed – one might even say obsessed – with the construction of the elements that make up *&Pooof!*. But time and labour are the essence of her work and are integral to the point that she wishes to make. The two-floor installations that form the core of the exhibition, *Woman and Gum* (2008/10) and *Start Up* (2009/10) are constructed from over a thousand slipcast clay bottles that replicate the simplest of household objects, a plastic Jik bottle.

Jik household bleach is such an everyday substance and with its bottle so (apparently) ordinary it barely rises above our consciousness. Bleach is used to erase stains, a process that loops back in meaning to the central core of Lijnes' thesis encapsulated in her exhibition's title, *&Pooof!* – see here the blot is and now 'pooof' it is gone. In Lijnes' lexicon this symbolises the temporality of our mundane domestic experiences. The bottle once emptied of its contents, its task complete, is discarded without thought, forgotten and thrown away almost in the instant of use.<sup>1</sup> That bleach which is used in the most commonplace of household tasks ... the laundry, is an activity associated almost exclusively with women's work and thus is not co-incidental to the point. Certain types of work and objects lie low in the hierarchy of importance.

Lijnes has succeeded in bringing the discarded back to the level of awareness. Patiently, methodically and precisely she has replicated the plastic container as a fine porcelain bottle. Porcelain liquid clay

is poured into the five-part moulds. Once dried the objects are extracted, whittled and then smoothed to a perfect finish. Other than a subtle changes in tone from light greys, dark greys, gun metal grey to black, each bottle is formally identical to the one before and foretells the one that is to follow. The process of casting is slow and labourious in contradistinction to the manufacture of its plastic counterpart. As the porcelain bottles come off Lijnes' unhurried assembly line they are lined up and their surfaces are hand painted with oxides and pigments in simulacrum of common branding logos, the kind that have currency in the universal world and which mark us as a globalised society. The icons range from Starbucks and Batman to the Communist Party insignia. They are painted in a limited palette of grays, blacks and yellow. Bled of their original colours they are yet identifiable.

In the floor installation *Woman and Gum*, 837 high-fired porcelain bottles are laid out in predetermined positions to reveal a portrait of a woman. The portrait can only be perceived as a projection or from above and from a distance. Each part of the image is borne on one bottle, as if it were a single pixel (or a single pore). Lijnes herself at the time of writing is yet to see the work complete. It will only be disclosed in the gallery when it is once laid out in its designated space, at which stage a camera will project the image onto the wall. Lijnes threatens to lay the work on the paving outside her house and by leaning out of a second floor window she will be able to see the portrait for the

*Despatched*, 2009.  
Plastic, ballpoint,  
koki, beads,  
fishline, nuts,  
bolts and  
astroglass,  
70 x 48cm.

*Displaced*, 2009.  
Plastic, ballpoint,  
koki, beads,  
fishline, nuts,  
bolts and  
astroglass,  
70 x 48 cm.





first time. The risk is not so much in her precarious position of hanging out the window with camera in hand, (which she never did) but the fact that she is prepared to take the artistic decision to exhibit a work whose face is yet to be literally revealed.

In a similar fashion the arrangement of the 255 black and white bottles in *Start Up* depicts the design of the digital 'start-up' icon. The icon of the start-up button is an ideograph that has collective currency. In our electronic age it functions as a universal cipher, one that provides a simulacrum of connectedness in an alienating world. The image enlarged on the pixilated bottles draws attention to this small presence in our daily world – one that like the Jik bottle is part of us yet, at the same time, is not. It requires only the merest hint of pressure to activate, an act that Lijnes claims emphasises the 'non-physicality' of technology which she compares to the labour intensive nature of the floor installation. Drawn down to a personal level, Lijnes claims that this work symbolises her re-entry into the world of exhibiting – a re-booting as it were – as well as referencing the daily start up demanded by the task she had set herself. As in *Woman and Gum* the black bottles are painted with a variety of universally recognised logos: the Playboy Bunny, Michelin Man and Colonel Saunders, amongst others.

*Delft Figures, Male and Female* (2009) consists of a pair of enlarged porcelain figurines painted with cobalt oxide. The



sculptures are laid prone on a bed of salt in Perspex boxes. By extension the work refers to the earthy, rural kind of men and women who came to the Cape during the Dutch colonial period. The blue on white porcelain references the Chinoiserie of that time. Significantly the shift in scale from the small figurines normally associated with Delftware and these enlarged figures challenges our perception of the objecthood of things. Their brut presence and materiality occupy a space that challenges

our zone of comfort creating dissonance between expectation and perception.

This sensation of the uncanny is expanded to a greater degree on the porcelain sculpture *The Baby* (2009 – 2010), which is an enlarged replication of an anatomically correct plastic doll - the kind used by therapists and medical practitioners as an educational tool. Giganticised, the form of the baby is a grotesque depiction of the real evoking a revulsion and horrible fascination. Cognitive dissonance is

*Woman and Gum*, 2008/10. Floor, wall installation, 837 units; Porcelain, underglaze pigments; Camera and projector. 320 x 260 x 25 cm.



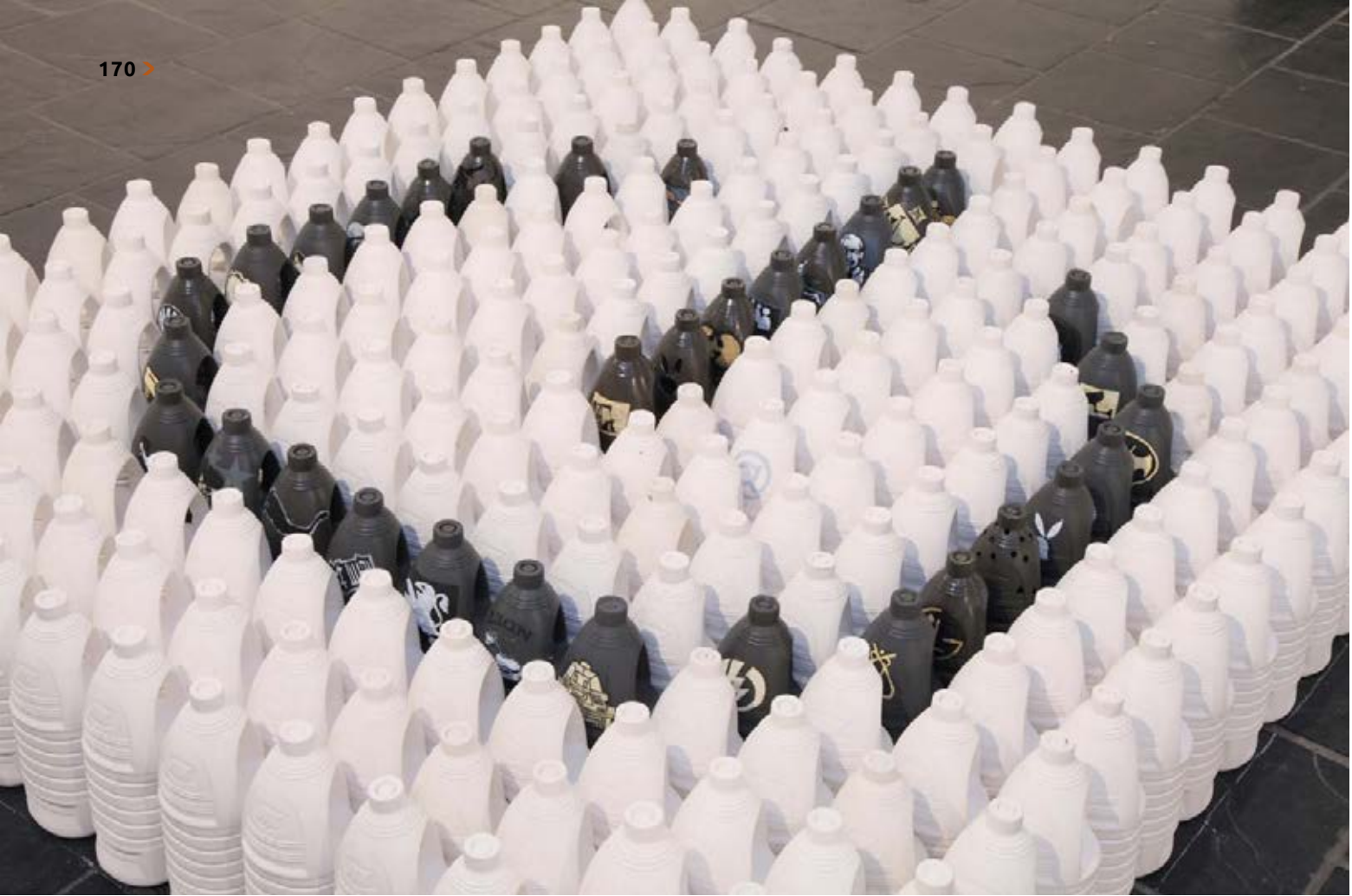


enhanced by a closer look at the decorative patterning on the surface of the white body. A butterfly has settled on the baby's face as if to consume her. The child appears startled by the intrusion. On her body the patterning shows itself as a set of intertwining logos as if she too were branded. Central to the pattern is the original Starbucks' logo depicting a twin-tailed mermaid also known as a 'mermaid', an image derived from a 15th century Norse woodcut. In 1992 the exposed nipples and navel were considered

too risqué so the siren was re-designed. Lijnes says, "I wanted to comment on the impact of consumer culture and to see what happens when I put logos on a baby who is not a baby but a plastic replica of a baby," and, she might have added, a clay replica of the plastic replica.

Lijnes' ideas are not didactic. In her curiosity she is driven to explore the effect of consumer culture on our experience of the world. She has drawn attention to the things that we use usually, although





*Start-up, 2008 /10. Floor installation, 255 units;  
Porcelain, underglaze pigments; 170 x 150 x 25 cm.*





are only subliminally aware of their significance. She has brought them to our attention and given us pause to wonder just what effect they really do have on our experiences of being in the world. In this respect she acts as a guide, one who points the way in new directions. She leaves us without answers but a greater understanding of the questions we need to ask.

## ENDNOTES

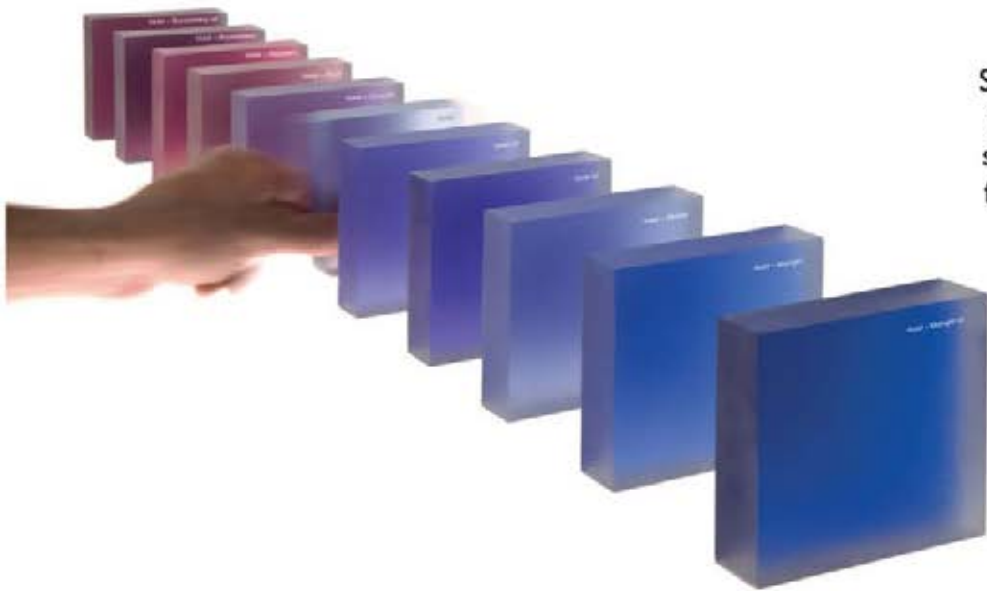
- 1 Plastic bags take from 500 – 1000 years to decompose, unless oxo-biodegradable. And they make for 25% of all landfill.
- 2 The 'model' for the male and female forms was the tiny plastic *Preisser* figures used for architectural models. <

LEFT: *Delft Figures, Male and Female*, 2008. Porcelain, underglaze pigments, Perspex box, salt; 145 x 71 x 50 cm.

RIGHT: *The Baby*, 2009. Porcelain, underglaze pigments; 80 x 50 x 60 cm.

Images courtesy of the artists.  
Photos by Fiona Barclay Smith.





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# SHARLÉ MATTHEWS TO UNDERSTAND HUMAN BEHAVIOR & EMOTIONS

I was born in Grahamstown, South Africa, and received a BA (FA) degree from Rhodes University. Although my training was in painting, through the years I have experimented with different media, techniques and materials. This is in an attempt to find the vehicle that I am most comfortable with and one that best conveys the thoughts behind the work. Found objects, rust, lace, oil painting, drawing, sewing, wirework, collage, and memorabilia are assembled into three-dimensional sculptures that hang on the wall, with

sharp light reflecting shadows that form an integral part of the piece. I have always loved antique jewelry, and I try to adorn the wall in the same way as a woman may adorn her body.

My artworks represent my personal reaction to, and attempt to understand, human behavior and emotions. I have been working in this way for a number of years and still have no deeper understanding of human behavior, I just become more confused. Best I keep on working.

LEFT FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:

*The wreath*, 2009. Mixed media and found objects, 100 cm in diameter.

*What moulds our perspective*, 2009. Mixed media and found objects, 100 cm in diameter.

*Questioning our legacy*, 2009. Mixed media and found objects, 100 cm in diameter.

RIGHT:

From the series, *Propoganda*. Collage and found objects, 30 x30 cm (each panel).

LEFT: *Towards Fulfilment*. Collage, 240 x 50 cm.

TOP: *What have we done*, from the series *Vulnerability*. Oil on canvas, 70 x 90 cm.

BOTTOM: *Lost souls*, from the series *Vulnerability*. Oil on canvas, 70 x 90 cm.

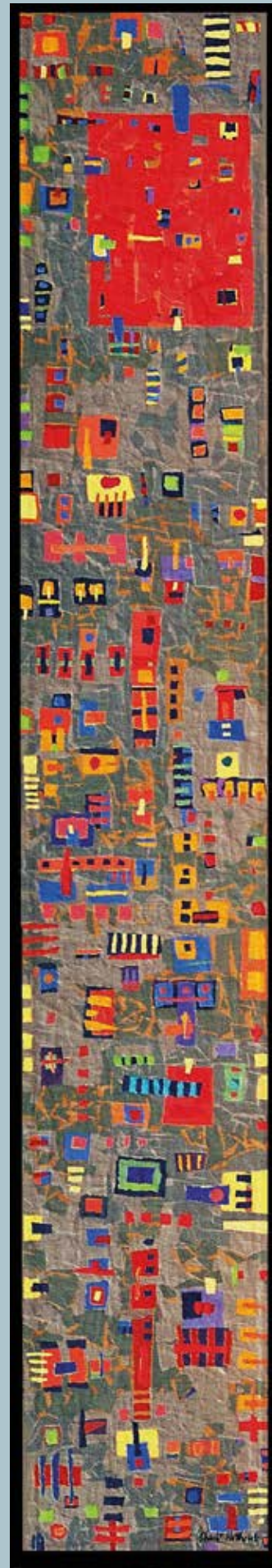
Vulnerability is ever-present and explored in my work. I worked in Soweto, Johannesburg, teaching art to orphaned and vulnerable children living in extreme poverty. The courage of these children has had a huge impact on my life, and ultimately in my work, and I started exploring themes of loss, vulnerability and abandonment. While working with these children, I lost both parents in one year which created a sentiment, a longing. The power of material objects left behind started to feature in my work.

Death is a central concept in my work and I often explore the question of who our death 'belongs' to once we die. Dignity and beauty in death, together with feelings of vulnerability, abandonment, anger and memory are issues that I constantly scrutinise.

Different cultural practices around death play out in my mind as well. I began to make wreaths and have been

working in a round format ever since. These round works could also be shields against hurt and negative emotion.

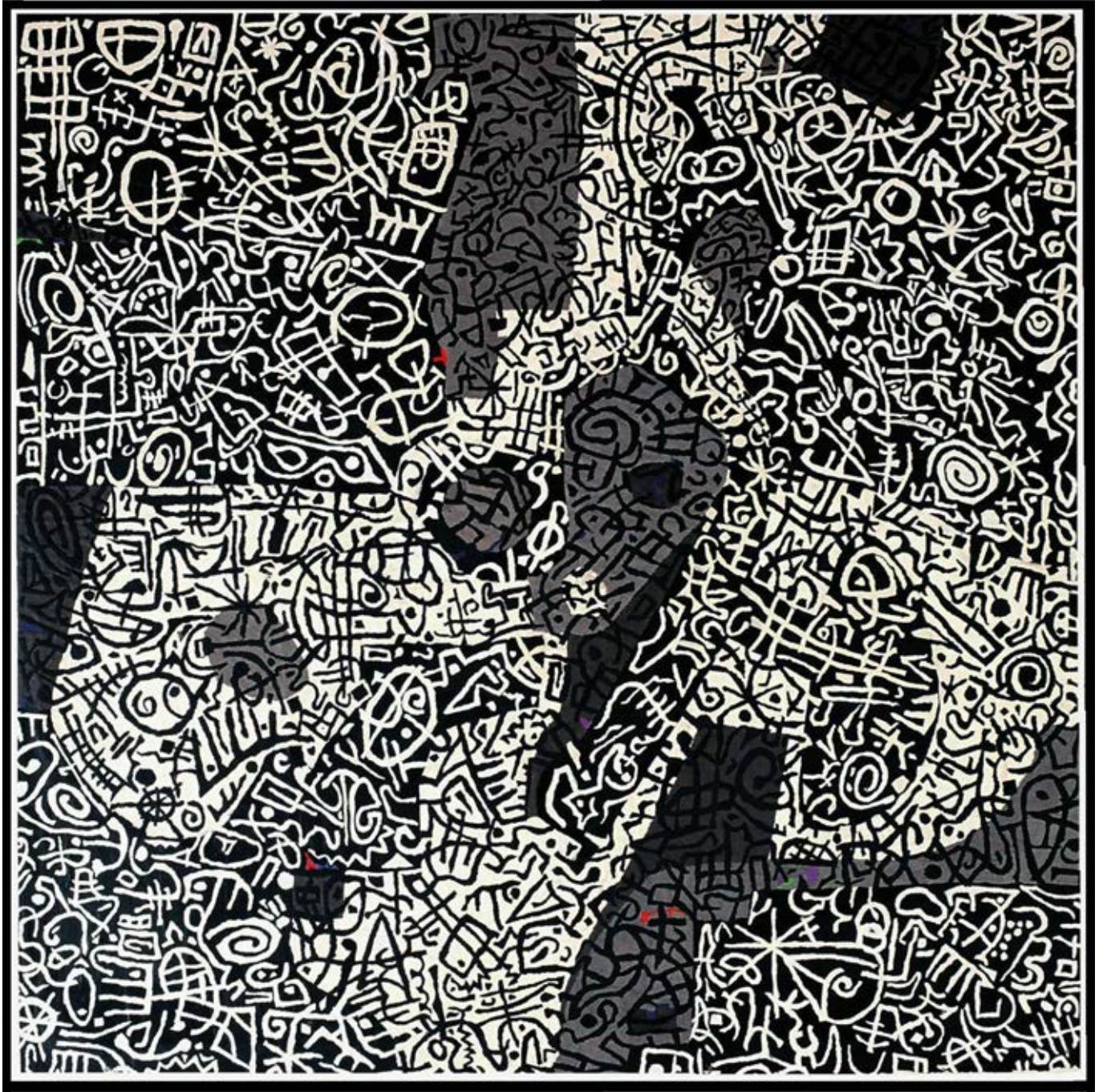
Soon after my parents' deaths, I also had to clear out the family home and found it impossible to throw away the things that had been assembled over 80 years. Seemingly unimportant objects brought about feelings of sentiment and nostalgia. My mother's first attempt at crochet, her recipes, anything with handwriting on it became impossible to throw away. At the same time I could not keep all these memories, so I started to incorporate them in my work. This was a way of letting go. Seemingly unimportant moments in childhood, like finding a roll of negatives that depicted hazy pictures showing a stranger's life and scratching through my father's garage to look for junk, that I could 'do something with' are just two things that have led me to be fascinated with the 'discarded' object. Rusted objects are













*Mind maps.*  
*Collage,*  
 100 x100 cm.

of particular interest to me as they are in the process of ageing and in doing so gain more character, until eventually they become dust. For me, rust symbolises the power that nature and natural forces have on manmade objects.

My recent works question images and the way people present themselves to others. The adornment of clothing and jewellery, makeup and the fascination to look younger and prolong death are questioned together with the emotional persona projected to the world. This 'front' that is presented to others and the ever present grapple with trying to be a wife, mother, sexual being or friend and the complexities of living in South Africa is torn apart.

My work can best be described as multimedia – as objects and images are assembled and recently, most often in a symmetrical design. Printed paper,

sheet music, hand coloured paper; prints and pictures are torn and collaged onto a moulded surface. The surface area is then sewed, adorned with beads and metal, scratched, painted and rusted to get the desired surface texture I want to achieve. The richness of early Christian art, the prudent edge of African art, mystery of San art, the power of abstract form and the luxurious colours of the Renaissance artists have all had an influence in my work.

Of particular interest to me is Jung's research into the symbols that humans use which transcend countries, race, and time. Pictographs found in Europe and those of the San in southern Africa show a likeness. The first scribbling of a child, are similar to those of ancient pictographs and writings. Much of Jung's research led us to believe that making symbolic images is central to being human, in the most basic way. If the making of symbols is

TOP LEFT: *Symbol.*

Collage, 18 x18 cm.

TOP RIGHT: *Behind Bar,*

Oil and collage, 25 x 30 cm.

CENTRE LTR:

*The vivid sounds of my dreams.*

Collage, 120 x 240 cm.

*Portal piece.* Collage, 100 x 120 cm.

*Rational irrationality.* Collage. 122 x160 cm.

BOTTOM: *Homage to Chagall.*

Collage, 40 x 200 cm.

a form of artistic communication, then art too, can be argued as one of the most basic needs all humans have.

Over the years I have done some investigation into the signs and symbols that artists from different ages and continents have used for basic communication, from San pictographs to the symbols used in modern advertising. I have also come up with my own set of symbols as a form of writing that I use to explain for example, what music might look like, if you could not hear it, or what it might feel like to view a powerful piece of African art. Most of these can be seen in my earlier work from 2008 and before. In these works I worked on mostly large flat formats, using bold colours and predominately abstracted designs.

A huge influence in my work has always come from the children and students that I teach as well as from my own

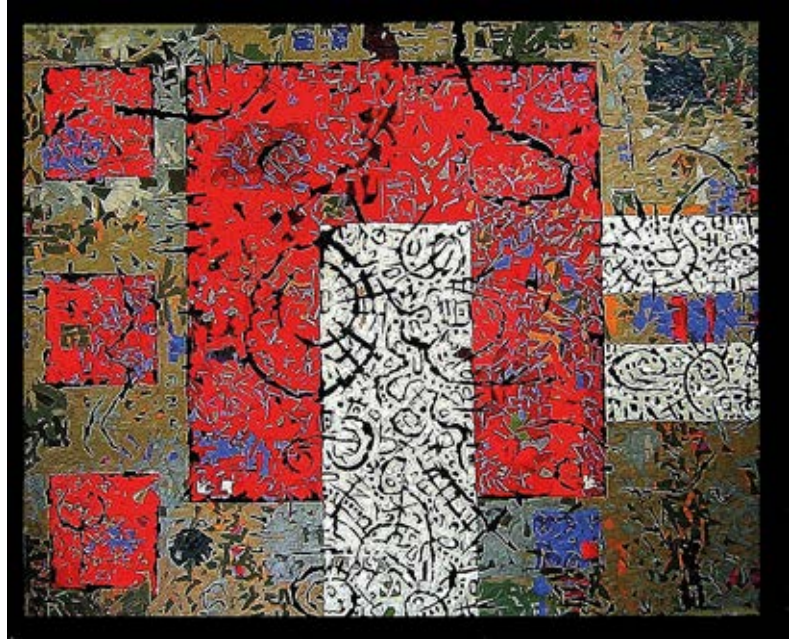
two boys. I often feel envious of the way in which they are able to put an artwork together that relays the exact message they need it to convey. As an adult, I have forgotten how to 'just do' how to just play, have fun and experiment.

## ABOUT SHARLÉ

Sharlé Matthews has been involved in teaching art at both school and university levels for the last 20 years. She is an accomplished artist with works in numerous collections throughout the world. In 2009 she received second prize for sculpture at the Florence Biennale. She is presently enrolled at Stellenbosch University for an MA in Visual Art and Community Development. <









# Beginning at the end: LIEN BOTHA



*Charlene Sylt, Germany 2010. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 40 x 54 cm.*

## One: The collector can keep the muse

Initially the return from Germany was ill-omened. This was not my first journey but it was the first time that I returned so reduced. *A reductive categorisation.* The problem was, that this time, my *muse* was stolen. Frankly, I've never been one for the *Iconologia* of Cesare Ripa but now that *Mnemosyne* was absent, I realised it. Inchoate, I was trading water above a deep sinking ship which sensed



*Alexandra, 2010. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 54 x 40 cm (each panel).*



*Angela, 2010. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 54 x 40 cm.(each panel).*





*Rantum Nord*, Sylt, Germany 2010. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 40 x 54 cm.



*Solstice* Sylt, Germany 2010. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 40 x 54 cm.

me into such lassitude that I could plod small steps only.

By the end of August it was evident that something had to be done and thus I managed a decision to contact 'the collector' who only invests in *women's stories*, since I knew that he was interested in purchasing the Nan Goldin. It entailed a smaller journey, but dependent on

*The ballad of sexual dependency*, I booked the flight. His eighty year old secretary shuffled me along a narrow passage through the umbrageous anteroom and into the vault where the Goldin print was unwrapped and assessed on a cabinet which was covered with acid free board (I was assured). Propelled by an uncomfortable silence I noticed an entire box of the white

gloves used for handling prints and while he routed a magnifying glass over the explicit surface of Nan's life, I became aware of a torso-sized wrapped object; a bit like Man Ray's *Enigma of Isadore Ducasse*, but less angular. Next, my acute sense of smell kicked in and I imagined that the collector's shrine had fallen foul of some ill deed. Still, the transaction was concluded



on Hahnemuhle paper,



*Dieter*, 2010. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 54 x 40 cm (each panel).



and I left the collector's house just before dark. Gauteng always seems more dangerous at night time than in the middle of the day. And yet as I drove past the Acacia trees etched on the Highveld plateau, a comfortable relief came to me. Don't let the *muse* return – ever. She will sink you.

## Two: Unlucky Lucky 1983 – (2013)

In the early eighties there was a small metal camera with which I made some attempts at bracketing a reality. Looking at some of those images now, it seems as if they do not quite belong to me. Mostly black and white, often not great prints. A car bomb exploded in Church Street and it had to fly to make the front page. Instruction from the editor: shoot, push process, zap it through the developer, stop/fix 2 minutes and hair dryer 1 minute. Going back was inevitable, even though that would be one's last choice.

*The great verbs of the sea come down on us in a roar. What shall I answer for?*  
(from *Letter VI* by WS Graham)



TOP: *Two sisters*, Pretoria North, 1981.  
Colour print, 28 x 42 cm.

BOTTOM: *Lucky*, near Swartruggens, 1982.  
Silver print on fibre paper, 28 x 42 cm.

TOP RIGHT: *Helene Lambert's book: Parrot Jungle*, 2009. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 28 x 42 cm.

CENTRE: *Maggie Laubser Street, Strand: Parrot Jungle*, 2009. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 28 x 42 cm.

BOTTOM: *South African Museum, Cape Town: Parrot Jungle*, 2009. Digital colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 28 x 42 cm.





### Three: The Memory of Birds

“One of our tribe members, a philosopher, was exiled to Agapemone to purify himself from illusions. First he undertook never to use the past tense again. The past is a lie. Then he gave up laughing, because that would be to imitate trees. Then he decided to stop employing any word with an *a* in it. *A* was the beginning of appearance, of the rot. You know what happened to him? Wadd takes off his sunglasses to show his kohl-rimmed yellow eyes to the red-faced consul. ‘He became tongueless. He went mad. We had him evacuated to Mori. He could only whistle *The Night Journey of a Bird.*” (*The Memory of Birds in Times of Revolution*, Breyten Breytenbach: Human & Rousseau, 1996))



Somewhere between practice and theory I have attempted ‘maps’, perhaps because before the metal recording device there was a word which linked the land to the sky, then back to the sea so that *drought* became a metaphor, and *endless* became a soliloquy, and a *shark* became an endangered paragraph.





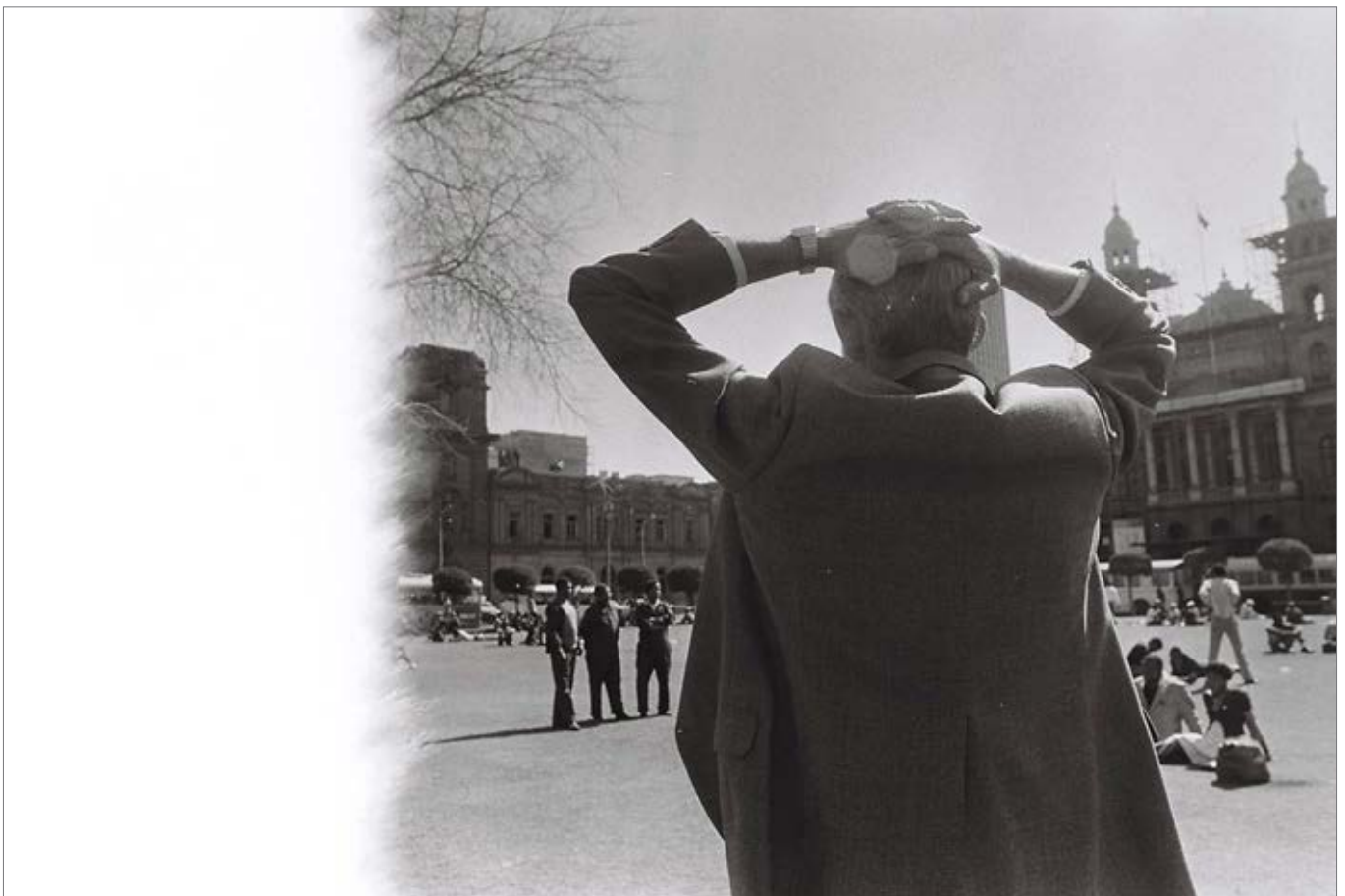


## Four: Curse your own process into being

There are times when being a practicing artist (in this country) seems so irrelevant by comparison to the many plights within our society, but after thirty years the piece of metal is stuck; the camera and its grey scale is what I know

and understand: it is an accomplice. After nearly thirty years, the shutter has become a meta-thesis of the documentary lens: pursuing the constructed image, the buried image, the installed image and the concordant possibilities of other substrates such as glass, wood and fabric.

Then last year with the advent of my own *digital revolution* I seemed to have lost the 'stockpile' of the past thirty years and ended up with a documented narrative which seemed in a sense to have its beginning and end at the same point, with the difference that so many stories were collected between the ravaged past and the unknown future.



LEFT PAGE TOP: *White stick for the Arctic: inside the house the mother did not build*, 2008. Digital (construction) colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 45 x 73 cm.

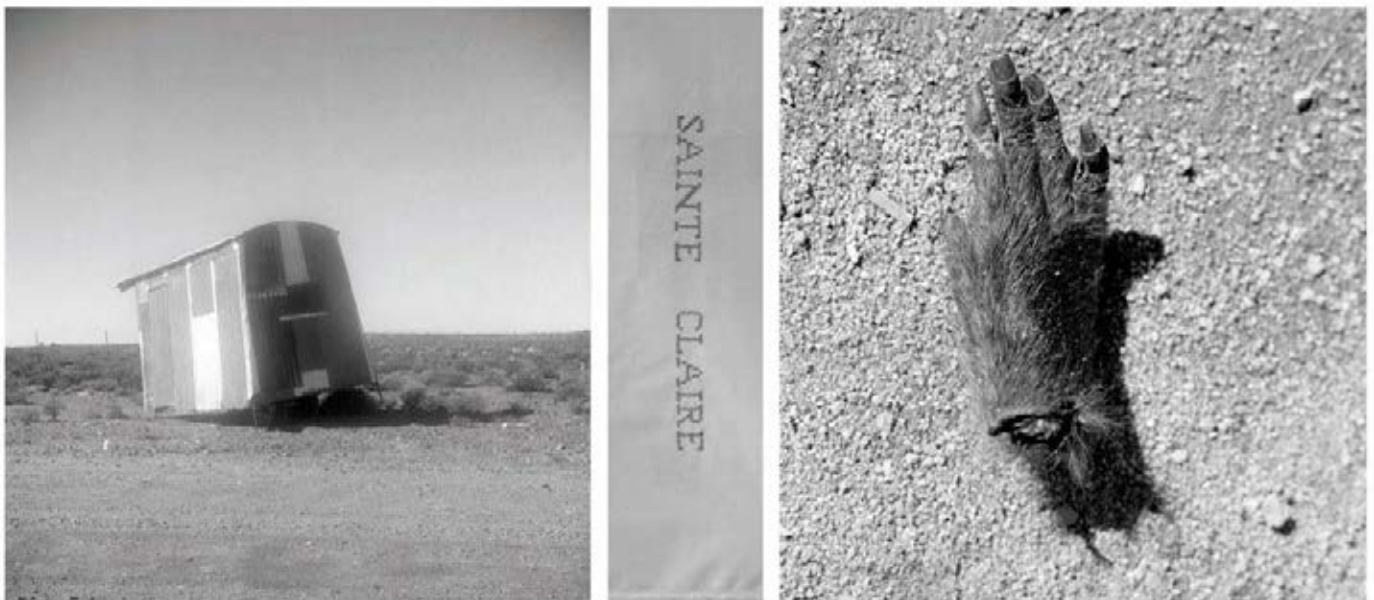
CENTRE: *Library hours: Kathy Moon*, 2004. Digital colour print on vinyl, 33 x 40 cm (each panel).

BOTTOM: *Library hours: Garton Bouwer*, 2004. Digital colour print on vinyl, 33 x 40 cm (each panel).

THIS PAGE: *Church Square*, 1983. Silver print on fibre paper, 28 x 42 cm.



*Amendment 8: the case of a drowning river*



*Amendment 10: the case of the nyctalopic missionary*

TOP: *Amendment 8: the case of a drowning river*, 2006. Digital (construction) colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 40 x 88 cm.

BOTTOM: *Amendment 10: the case of the nyctalopic missionary*, 2006. Digital (construction) colour print on Hahnemuhle paper, 40 x 88 cm.



## Five: (Copy, paste and conclude)

The copy, paste, edit, cut and select all, the erasure of Photoshop, the landscape as one wishes it to be invisible/visible, the landscape without the memory of the wind or a flood or of a donkey cart trekking across it or of a drought or of a time before 1948. Images according to our state of 'civilisation'. The German landscape for instance and by comparison a subject of correlation these days, the Middle East: before and after 9/11, and the altering vision that comes with loss or longing, after death before love, after love before war, after hunger before hunger – all of that. The camera has the potential of being a third person, an alternative, an option – it is the new 'shrink', the psychologist of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our fast track to conscience are issues driven by the technological hollow, the in-between of Einstein's gravity and the Hawking's declaration that there is no more need for God. Digital has buried Freud and beyond blogging you should be able to cut and paste your own options of the version you prefer on a particular day in a given context.

## About Lien Botha

Lien Botha Botha was born in Gauteng in 1961, studied languages at the University of Pretoria and worked as a press photographer for *BEELD* before moving to Cape Town in 1984. In 1988 she obtained a B.F.A. from the University of Cape Town. Since then she has participated in more than 80 South African group shows and 36 international group exhibitions and has held nine solo exhibitions. She has curated five exhibitions including *Photo Works by Women* in 1994, *Bloedlyn* for the Klein Karoo Arts Festival and *Invincibles* for the Pretoria Art Museum (both in 1999).

Over the past two decades she has produced consistent bodies of lens-based work. including: *Africana Collectanea* (1994), *Krotoa's Room* (1995), *Boxing Days* (1997), *Postscript* (1998), *Ten trees growing nowhere* (1999), *Ten degrees of separation* (2000), *Book of gloves* (2001), *Radio Maria* (2002), *Brother's Keeper*, *Safari* (2004), and *Amendment* (2006).

In 2008 her mid-career retrospective called *Anthology*, opened at the Oliewenhuis Museum in

Bloemfontein and proceeded to the Thompson gallery in Johannesburg through March 2009.

Botha runs a professional photographic practice and has been invited as part-time lecturer at the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town, Stellenbosch University, the Ruth Prowse School of Art as well as Studio Art Centres International, Florence, Italy and the San Francisco Art Institute.

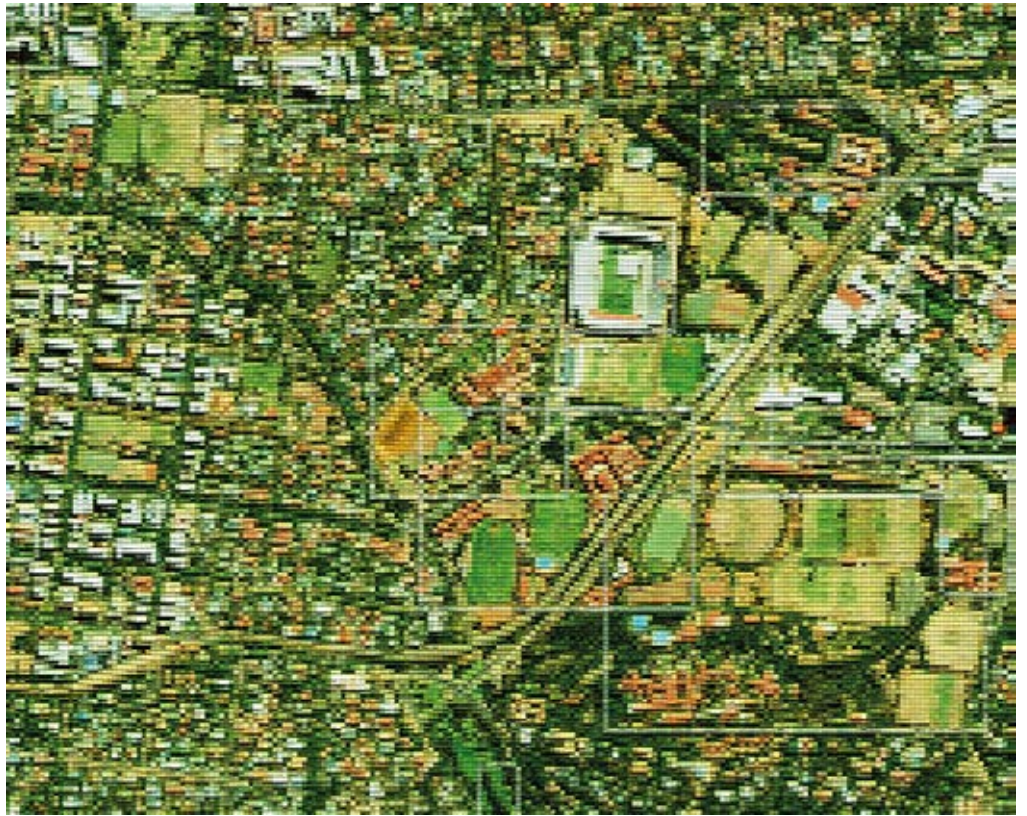
Her work was included in the group show *Construct: Beyond the Documentary Photograph* which toured South African venues through 2009.

*White stick for the Arctic* was exhibited at Reflets d'Afrique: Pan-african Festival, MOMA, Algiers, July-September 2009. *Parrot Jungle*, her ninth solo show, opened at the Photographers gallery, Cape Town in October 2009.

In June 2010 she attended an invited residency at kunst: raum sylt quelle in Germany. <

# ELFRIEDEDREYER

Utopia/dystopia, technology, deconstruction and the city



*Utopia map, 2009. Ultrachrome ink on PVC, 150 x 186 cm.*

I am an arts academic, curator, gallerist and artist, who selectively produces artworks for specific exhibitions and curatorial projects.

An ongoing interest present in both my creative work and theoretical research is world construction – its conditions, modes of thinking and Zeitgeist, with particular focus on the use of utopia/dystopia, technologies, deconstruction and the city. Ultimately my work is about writing, painting and representing worlds. My work, even as far back as the heavily collaged scapes produced during my final year of the BA in Fine Arts, has been concerned with the transformation of the modernist flat surface of the painting and painting as a discourse. The conventions of

flatness and illusion are questioned, deconstructed and recomposed through physical and digital layers (often paper), sometimes found materials and lately digital strata.

In my most recent work, the surface layering has given way to horizontal and vertical gridding and pixelisation, viewed as an interaction between an 'inside' and an 'outside'. The surface of the work becomes a site of mediation where illusions of the real are negotiated and visibly analysed through a semantic investigation of form as visibility and as a metaphor. These layers operate as nominal references to the real world and expressing tropes of world making more than fulfilling an aesthetic, compositional and structural role. In the





*Hanging gardens*, 2009. Multichannel video, 4 mins 58 secs. Edition of 3.

face of public policy making and utopianism, the surface generators of grid, pixel and layer act as guardians and protectors of the private and the personal. Yet, it is unavoidable that the inside becomes infiltrated by the outside so that these remain mediated surfaces more than gestural bursts of emotion. Painting in this mode entails a density and a complexity that transcends the conventions of mimesis and perceptual translation, of the observed real, into texturised, emotionally fulfilling experiences.

From 1983 to 1992, I completed the undergraduate and Masters studies in Fine Arts and mainly produced two-dimensional work in mixed media. In 1996, during a sabbatical

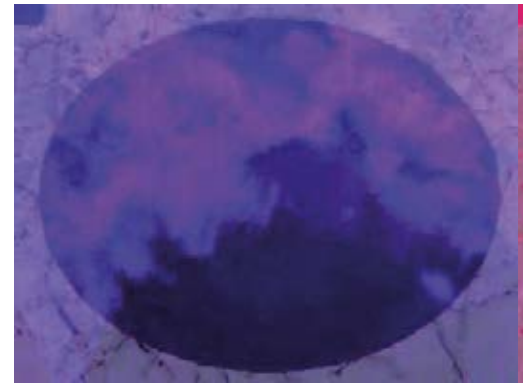
visit to Netherlands, I studied Multimedia at Frank Mohr Institute and from 1997 to 2001 was Head of the Department of Art History and Visual Arts Unisa. Amongst many other duties then, I undertook research on and the development of new Multimedia degree programmes for Unisa, which resulted in my own artmaking taking a backseat during that time. From 2002 onwards I produced new media work which, since 2008, has been intermittently produced together with mixed media works.

## Selected artworks

Like many other countries in the world, South Africa's history is

fraught with utopian construction. *Utopian map* comments on institutions as places that participate in the ideologies and utopianism of current governments. 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 sport 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 whilst citizens bear the scars of past utopian construction and the impact of the new ideologies of the current ruling party. The colour green has been used in reminiscence of a paradisiacal 'green' zone.

Stephen Finn wrote the following about the work in *de arte* 80:54-62: 'How different this is to Elfriede Dreyer's gentle, peaceful *Utopia Map*, ultrachrome ink on PVC, depicting the geography of success: a view of Pretoria with the University of Pretoria, the top schools, Loftus Versfeld and the road linking them all: a swathe of green, showing the pre-liberation influences on this country's political ethos, from where so many of



*Real crime*, 2004. Stills from video installation.

*Verneem (learned)*, 2008.  
Paper, acrylic, oils and neon on board. 190 x 120 x 10 cm.  
Collection of the Development Bank of Southern Africa.

the movers and shakers came. From far, it is a thing of beauty, but not Keats's joy forever, as the closer one gets the more pixelated it becomes, making us realise that those who lived there lived in boxes. Dreyer's vision is akin, therefore, to that of the Gao Brothers: in this utopia lies a stronger dystopia. The green is not, in this context, lush life blooming into success, but a symbol of stagnation,

a swamp of algae threatening to suck the life from the country. This is all the more disturbing because of the tranquility that attracts one initially and superficially.'

In nineteenth century literature and art, escapism manifested in utopian visions of green worlds, arcadias and fantastic gardens and was created in response to the fear and horrors of urban

crowding and industrialisation. Utopians such as Carlyle and Ruskin invoked the world of flowers and cultivation as an antidote to the city. Even the hanging gardens of Babylon were built by Nebuchadnezzar II around 600 BCE in order to please his sick wife, Amytis of Media, who longed for the trees and fragrant plants of her homeland Persia. Gardens, including





green sports fields, also refer to Eden, cultivation, civilisation, leisure and power games.

In *Hanging gardens*, the idea of the synthetic 'garden' is articulated: the utopian hope that maybe we will have 'immaculate lawns' if we use special fertiliser. Framing a polluted view of the CBD of Pretoria by way of pictorial texture of embroidery, pixelisation and Lego blocks, and the lush African shrubbery speaking of colonial, Nationalist, struggle and other dreams of the good life, freedom and prosperity, often both leads to devastating consequences. The binaries of above/below, distant/near, real/virtual, nature/culture and utopia/dystopia are articulated in images of the central CBD area in Pretoria.

These works form part of a series of works dealing with trees, where the living tree as well as its demise, in the form of paper and charcoal, form part of the

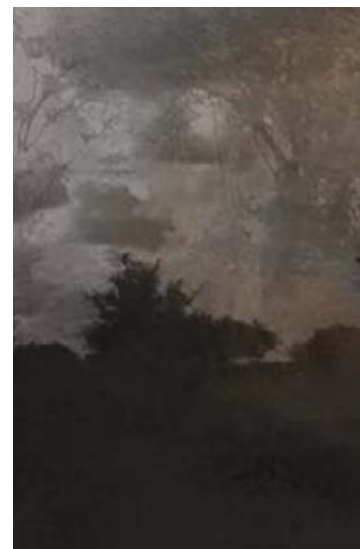
concept. I use the life cycle of the tree as a symbol to set up narratives regarding time, human lifetime, technology and the making of worlds. *Verneem* specifically comments on our engagement with the tree and the book in its recycled form as sources of knowledge. The books – donations from friends and family – refer to acquired knowledge and its residues in memory, which entail processes of gain, storage and empowerment. Yet, the shredded character of the books evokes associations with assimilation and absorption, as well as a loss of knowledge. Information on South African colonial history, religions, botany and education can be found in the books, but it is inaccessible. The use of green refers to knowledge as utopian construction in terms of visions of accomplishment, the 'good' ending, progress and advancement, whereas brown refers to loss, decay and dystopian ruin.

*Shaman* formed part of a series of 12 works, produced for the M.F.A degree, that mark the beginning of an interest in utopia/dystopia discourses, images of roads, shadows, traces, and tumultuous landscapes. These were employed to comment on a turbulent time in the political history of South Africa. Nelson Mandela was released from prison during this time, marking a new period of hope but also of socio-political upheaval.

## More about Elfriede Dreyer

Besides my full-time academic appointment as associate professor in Fine Arts at the Department of Visual Arts of the University of Pretoria, I am also deeply involved in curatorial practices which include public and community art projects and running an art gallery, Fried Contemporary in Pretoria.

Examples of curatorial projects include the *Digital Art* exhibition



*Binnebos I*, 2009. Charcoal and digital media on Hahnemühle German etching paper, 29,7 x 42 cm.

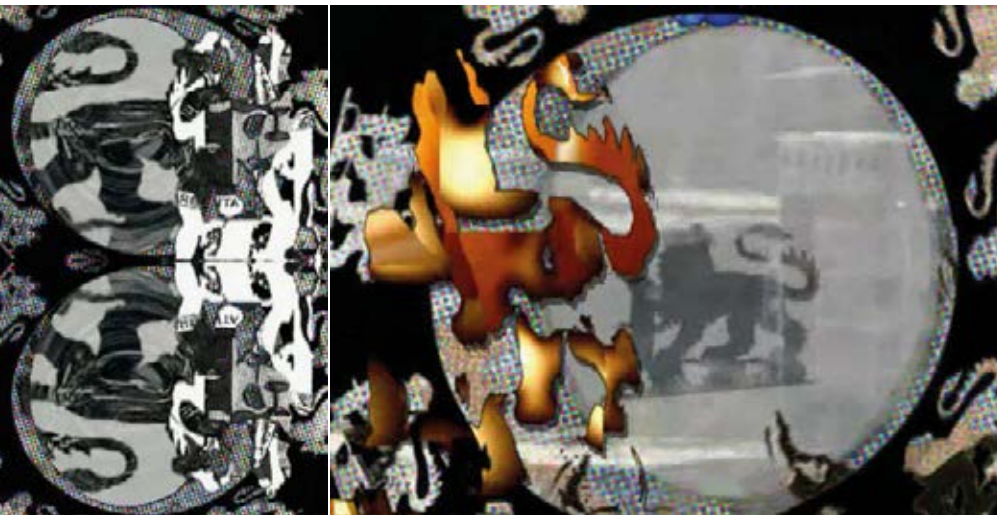




*Delta*, 2005. Photographic stills #29 and #42 from video production.



*Shaman*, 1990. Mixed media on canvas, 210 x 120 cm. Unisa Permanent Art Collection.



*Zoo city*, 2007. Stills from video production.

for Unisa in 2002 that encompassed the work of 13 new media artists; the *Reconciliation* exhibitions for the University of Pretoria's *Arts and Reconciliation Festival* in 2005 of whom Nobel Laureates Desmond Tutu and FW de Klerk were the patrons; *Little Deaths* that showed at Fried Contemporary Art Gallery and travelled to Bell-Roberts Gallery in 2007; the UP Centenary exhibition, *Visuality and Commentary* in 2008; and

*Bodies in transition*, *Collateral* and *Games people play* in 2010.

At present I am co-curating an internationally travelling exhibition, *Dystopia*, that has showed in 2009 at Unisa Art Gallery, in 2010 at MuseumAfrica in Johannesburg and Oliewenhuis Art Museum in Mangaung, and will travel in 2011 to Belgium. <

# GWENNETH MILLER

## MEDIATED SYSTEMS

The act of visualising the *relationship between different systems* forms the conceptual base of the current body of work that I am developing. One can trace this idea to some of my earlier works that were created whilst I was working towards my MVA. Works such as *Life water* (1996) and *River of forgetfulness* (1996) revolved around the background of systems of seeing and systems of understanding. Both works formed part of an exhibition that explored strategies to embody a contemporary sublime, in the sense of presenting the impossibility of understanding. In some ways this seems like a lofty ideal, but for me it dealt with a very common striving that I experienced – the ability for a person to make some connections and have particular insights into the world, yet at the same time accept that much of our complex world lies beyond comprehension.

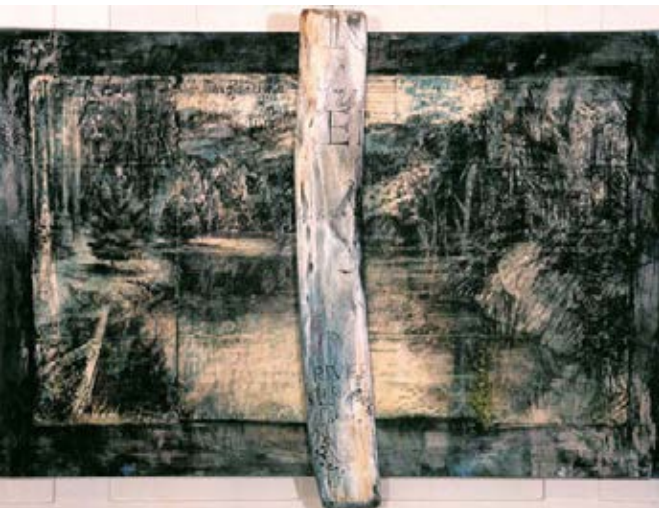
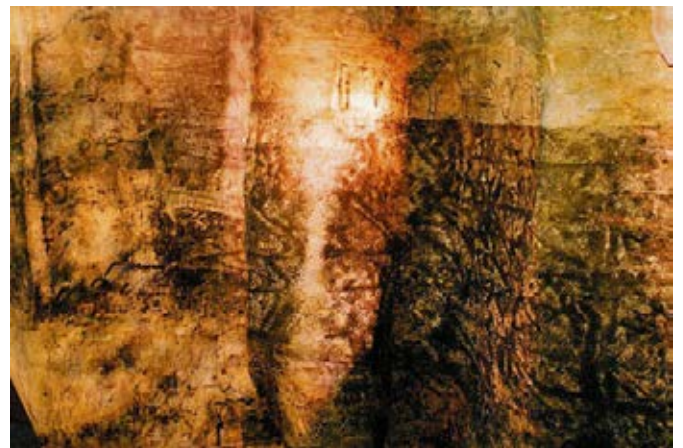
The visual systems that I looked at were based on an analysis of Romantic portrayal mechanisms and how we build up references to help us observe the world. The layering of systems of understanding is usually not acknowledged by the viewer. In the *River of forgetfulness* (1996), it was of interest to me how the pictorial presentation of a site in nature (like a dam I photographed in Mpumalanga), became heavily saturated by all the images presenting nature that I knew as an art student. Therefore

my observation of this site, my mere looking at it, was layered by my memory – ‘baggage’, that blocks the clear perception of a site.

The title of *River of forgetfulness* refers to the mythological river ‘Lethe’. According to myth, if you drink the water from the river you forget all that is past. For me, the codes of knowledge and layering of systems not only enriches and encodes understanding, but also blocks out previous ways of understanding, just as the fabled river makes one forgetful. The use of the punctured filter or funnel in the mixed media painting *Life water* is also a representation of a system that loses value – where much of the water that is poured through the funnel will be lost and not reach the bowl.

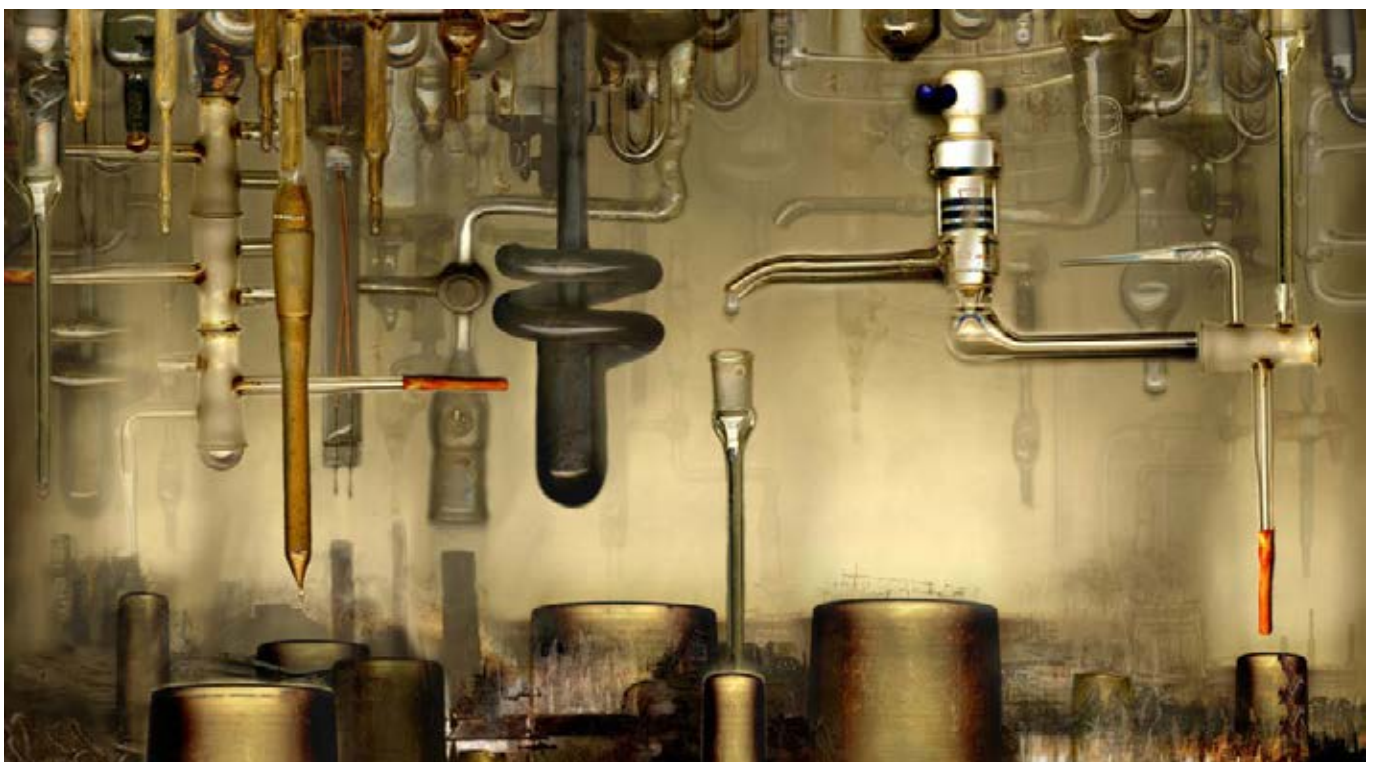
The next pivotal work, *Earth skin* (2000), considers the relationship between our living off the land and depicts the earth as an entity with potential to be scarred. This site-specific work started its exhibiting schedule in Lady Grey and changed form each time it was exhibited in the year 2000, reflecting sensitivity to the four sites where it was presented. In this work, the order and structure of a place (where it was exhibited) imprints its system on the artwork itself, in a process of negotiating and assimilating meaning.





**TOP:** *Life water*, 1996. Collaged drawings on wood with oil painting, beeswax and inlaid sticks; 95 x 54 cm. | **BOTTOM:** *River of forgetfulness*, 1996. Charcoal drawing on paper and board with beeswax, oil paint and overlaid wood; 90.5 x 122 cm. | **RIGHT:** *Earth skin*, 2000. Charcoal drawings on layered Vilene with oil painting, beeswax and hair embroidery; format variable.





**TOP:** *Holy relics*, 2008. Limited edition digital print: Ultra Chrome Inks on Hahnemuhle paper;  $\pm$  A1.

**BOTTOM:** *Continuum system*, 2009. Limited edition digital print: Ultra Chrome Inks on Hahnemuhle paper; 53 x 95 cm.



The works created from 2008 onwards consider *acts of ordering* where they apply the tools of one 'world' – that of the scientist – to create several other imaginary worlds: industrial, urban or simply imaginary systems of control. When my father-in-law gave me most of his old laboratory equipment, along with several of his notes and publications, my limited understanding of the science of chemistry spurred my own, rather odd, system of ordering. These scenes of mediated 'laboratories' form the current output of work that will be exhibited in 2011 as part of an exhibition that forms the visual focus of my doctoral research. It will be exhibited in context with other artists in a curated show that investigates the dialogue between digital and traditional art methodologies.

The initial work of this series: *Holy relics*, engages with the concept that science has taken the high ground during the last century – particularly in relation to religion and the 'soft' sciences. In this work the glass laboratory components are firstly seen as precious collectable items and then secondly, they imply redundancy: owing to the escalation in technological development some even relatively recent objects belong to another technological age. The collection of randomly selected glass represents mundane, yet at the same time, very rare objects that were specially manufactured for Dr Leonard Miller, a scientific researcher who practiced in Germany and later in South Africa. The visual conversation between the calculated arrangement and the glowing atmospheric quality refers to the mind's organising habit and furthermore implies the elevation of our rational mind, which possesses romantic over-

tones of religious paintings of the past. The work considers the idea of a quiet intervention, positioning given objects in a new contemplative space, unsettling the original familiarity. In the work *Continuum system* (2009), I work with the idea that 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.

The idea of being constantly measured by society is on the one hand related to a world of supreme peaceful order and on the other hand, 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.

This work is closely related to an earlier work *Urban night* (2008) where the translation of the lab glass altered into droplets started the concept of an enclosed world. *Urban night* considers intervention of science as looming and ambiguous. Laboratory burettes and pipettes are about to rain down like luminous droplets, enshrined through light and dense configuration. I particularly enjoyed the play between the illusion of glowing glass and the same glass presenting the grime of the urban landscape.

I conclude with another urban landscape, a mediated hybrid space of panoramic vastness and industrial sites. The title *Homo Viator* refers to the human being as a traveller searching for spiritual fulfilment, a displaced witness to the community of humankind, literally meaning 'pilgrim man'. In this work the stance is critical, in that the figure is in the attire of the scientist observing the technological world he has created, adrift with smog. This figure is also "homo technologicus", technological man, referring to the ability of manipulating his/her environment with either dire or impressive consequences. Formally this work is a parody on

Caspar David Friedrich's 19<sup>th</sup> century landscape painting, *Wanderer above the mist*, a work that reflected the Romantic sentiment of harmony in sublime vastness of nature. Friedrich evoked tension between awe, being part of the splendour of nature, and terror, an insignificant issue of humankind. In my work, glass laboratory components are used once again to construct the land. The visual conversation between the assembled industrial scape and the glowing atmospheric quality sets up a theatrical dystopia, which recalls the overtones of Romantic paintings, yet asserts that this is an artificially raised reality. The work *Homo Viator* is a transcoding comment across time, the spaces of the natural and the artificial. On the one hand the work engages with our inability, as wanderers, to connect: in the presence of undesired spectacles, the work places the traveller centre-stage, yet renders him incapable of reaching the vastness of his doing. On the other hand an environment situates our being, as much as we construct its physicality.





*Urban night*, 2008. Limited edition digital print: Ultra Chrome Inks on Hahnemuhle paper; 50 x 45 cm.





## About Gwenneth Miller

Born in 1962 in Musina, South Africa, Gwen studied at Potchefstroom University, completing the B.F.A. degree in 1984 and a postgraduate educational diploma in 1985. She held several exhibitions under her maiden name, McLellan and since marriage in 1993, exhibits as Miller. She completed the M.F.A. at University Pretoria in 1997 and is currently registered for a DLitt et Phil at UNISA. She lives and works

in Pretoria, lecturing at UNISA where she is the current head of Visual Arts. She exhibits nationally and internationally, and has participated in 108 group exhibitions, 4 solo exhibitions and several collaborative projects. She works in a range of traditional two-dimensional media and in digital media. Her works are represented in private and public collections, such as Absa, Telkom, University of the North-West, UNISA and Sasol. <

*Homo Viator*, 2010. Limited edition digital print:  
Ultra-chrome on Hahnemühle paper, 43,4 x 26 cm.



Walter Battiss  
*Desert*  
Screen print  
450X640mm  
10/30

November 2010 Marcus Neustetter *In motion*

December 2010 Walter Battiss *Screen print exhibition*

January/February 2011 Mark Kannemeyer (Lorcan White) *Solo exhibition*

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# LYNETTE TEN KROODEN TRAVEL WOMAN

To understand my work, I need to take you on a personal journey. I am often categorised as a 'landscape artist.' This narrow definition is perhaps too restrictive if you consider the different angles that influence my work. The metaphysical quality of my paintings derive directly from my many years of traveling and being a scholar.

People know my work from the use of textures, layers and a unique gold leaf process. With multiple layering of rich colours, overlaid in some instances with sharp graphic line work, I try and add a depth to my paintings which is uniquely my own. Gold leaf, which I sometimes use in abundance, comes from the depth of the earth and we sometimes forget that it is one of the purest minerals available to man.

My work penetrates deeper than mere representations of landscape and they become vehicles for my exploration of symbols and spiritual dwellings with a metaphysical quality. Twenty-five years of travel and research into fossil life, ancient civilisations, their petroglyphs and cultures has resulted in my forming of a universal mythology which I utilise as a forum for discourse. Within this context, I often explore microscopic and macroscopic aspects of nature as a reflection of human communication with the earth, with each other and with their gods.

My footprints stretches over the patterned lave rock of Driekopseiland south of Kimberley to Petra and the Jordanian desert; Timbuktu in Mali up to the Sahara desert. From the lush Fiji islands to the solemn Uluru rock in Australia. 'Ancient travellers' and 'Ancient Playground' has become part of my personal iconography. Like a modern-day Thesinger, I have become a trader on the ancient old trade routes from South to North, from East to North. My trade route has grown from my own trade roots.

TOP: *Fire and Ice*. Mixed media on canvas, 100 x 100 cm.

BOTTOM: *Chasm*. Mixed media on canvas, 100 x 100 cm.





After many years of documenting petroglyphs and symbols on the ancient trade routes from South Africa to the Middle East, through the Sahara Desert and Western Africa, the ecology and anthropologies has intertwined into a personal iconography of mankind traces on nature's legacies. Like nature leaves fossils behind, mankind leaves traces of information in the form of scratches and lines, always filled with meaning and information.

My love of rocks and stones, relationship between water, sand and the movements of the earth has become lands of *Fire and Ice*, *Chasm* and *Desert dawn*. Over these ancient landscapes, the wailing songs of the ancient Bedouins and dwellers will linger.

I cannot deny that my 20 years of travelling in the various deserts of the Middle and Far East, has left a magical romance that I do not want to deny as an academic documenter.

When you touch a melting glacier, or see how the dust sediments of the Iceland volcano has left its sedimentary lines for generations to come to discover and explain, you cannot be ignorant about the stance of mankind/earthkind in the destruction of our fascinating earth. I cannot deny the awe that still fills me when I stand on the edge of a chasm or feel the winds of chance on my face...always been there...will always be there. All these attempts reveal my awareness of time as an agent of change, information and the fragility of mankind.

Combine these with the amazement that fills my mind when I see a caravan of 3 000 camels arriving from the salt mines in the Sahara into the dusty and forgotten town of Timbuktu. Each camel will still carry nine blocks of salt and the Tuaregs will still sit with silver hammers and chisel these blocks to sizable pieces to be shipped by river boats down the Niger River on its

TOP LEFT: *Last survivor*. Mixed media on canvas, 80 x 80 cm.

TOP RIGHT: *Baobab*. Mixed media on canvas, 80 x 80 cm.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Desert dawn*. Goldleaf and oil on canvas, 100 x 70 cm.

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Baobab*, from the *Ancieny trees* series. Mixed media on canvas, 100 x 100 cm.





way to the markets in Morocco. Some things will surely never change...except that in 1421, there were seven universities in Timbuktu, 100 000 scholars studying and working in this far away city in the sand. Today this city is disappearing in the nothingness of sand.

If this is my experiences in my trade root journeys, I cannot think about my work purely on a cognitive level. Mankind and the struggles of ancient cultures have too many human emotions and the saving of our environment is very much connected to our hearts and not only our minds.

Since visiting the ancient city of Petra in Jordan, and the mud architecture of Mali, my awareness of 'sand' has grown and I have been experimenting with sand (gathered from site specific

places) and resin paintings where water has become the brush. These works of art is totally environmentally friendly, but the subject matter is also connected to our heritage (see *Last Survivor* and *Baobab*). Most recently, after I photographed a rhinoceros at the Rietvleidam near Pretoria, I was shocked to see her carcass in the news, just a week later, her becoming yet another victim of ruthless poachers. I went and gathered the sand from the reserve and made *Last survivor*.

Another series which is also connected to travelling is the *Window seat* series. Experiencing the shifting landscapes of the Karoo through the windows of a car (memories from my early childhood) has become a ritual in my own traveling on our roads on my way somewhere in South Africa. Over the many years of sitting with my nose

TOP LEFT: *Window seat*. Oil on canvas, 70 x 100 cm.

TOP RIGHT: *Caught in time*. Mixed media on canvas, 100 x 100 cm.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Up in the air* from *Ancient place* series). Mixed media on canvas, 100 x 100 cm

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Fossil land*. Mixed media on canvas, 640 x 640 cm.





against the window of an airplane, taking photos and documenting the traces of the African landscape from the air, my mind has been formulating my own *Up in the air* window seat paintings. Lately the territories that mankind has made and the changing cloudscapes, the visible changing ecology, most probably from the influences of climate change, has interested me to paint especially the area from the Horn of Africa, where the plane passes over the Gulf of Aden on to Yemen and the Arabian continent.

In my latest *SPACE2010* exhibition (Ann Bryant Art Gallery, East London, October 2010), I explored the endlessness of space. This refers not only to the infinity, distance and quietness of the shifting horizons of the landscape, but also to an interval in time, the freedom of my 'mindscape'. Personal breathless moments are reflected in layers of gold and line work. I invite the observer to travel with me through the landscapes of Africa, the Middle

East and Italy, always looking for the next shifting horizon.

For the last 18 years I have been exhibiting in Dubai at the Majlis gallery. They are very sensitive to the changing environment and are involved in social uplifting public programs to make the Arab kids aware of the importance of the arts as a vehicle to help save the fragile deserts around the United Arab Emirates. During my last residency there, I worked with two other artists from the UK and Damascus in a workshop situation. This all happens during Dubai Art which showcases all the prominent galleries from not only the Middle East, but also from abroad. In 2011, I have again been invited for a series of workshops at the Bastakia in the old part of Dubai. The gallery is housed in one of the old Iranian tea merchant wind tower houses. It reeks of tradition and heritage and I am privileged to be included in this special project. <

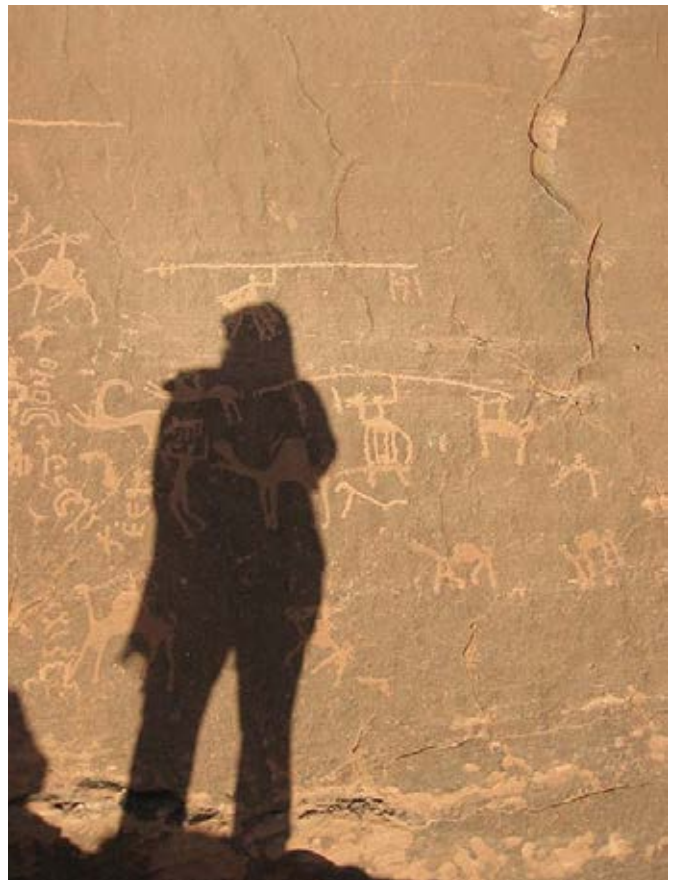
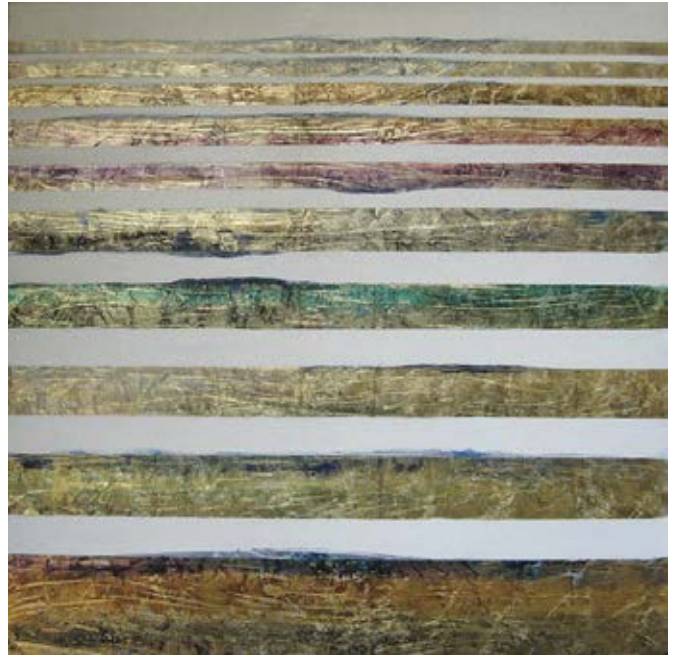
TOP LEFT: *Voortrekkermonument* from the *Monument* series. 100 x 100 cm.

TOP RIGHT: *Horizons*. Mixed media on canvas, 120 x 120 cm.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Karoo*. Oil on canvas, 100 x 70 cm.

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Traces*. Digital print on Hahnemuhle paper, 120 x 80 cm.





# TRANSFORMATIONS WOMEN'S ART FROM THE LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY TO 2010

The subject matter, medium and approach that women have embraced in their art making has changed dramatically since the 1900s. Early work shows strength largely in the fields of still life, landscape and genre scenes. Lace making, embroidery, ceramics, tapestry and beadwork have also been the preferred media for women's creativity. However, gathering momentum from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the content and mode of production explored by women artists has widened exponentially in response to the broadening compass of their lives.

**By Nessa Leibhammer and Musha Neluheni.** *Transformations* is an exhibition of a selection of women's art from the Johannesburg Art Gallery collection, curated by Nessa Leibhammer, Reshma Chhiba and Musha Neluheni. *Transformations* reflects this changing vision. It celebrates National Women's Day and will be open to the public from 11 August 2010 to 31 January 2011. Fourteen themes that include 'Abstraction', 'Buildings and Townscapes', 'Interiors', 'Mother and Child' and 'Social Commentary' make up the exhibition. These themes were chosen in response to the range of works in the JAG holdings. Choices within each of these themes were driven by the curatorial premise to show continuities, ruptures, contrasts

Landscapes







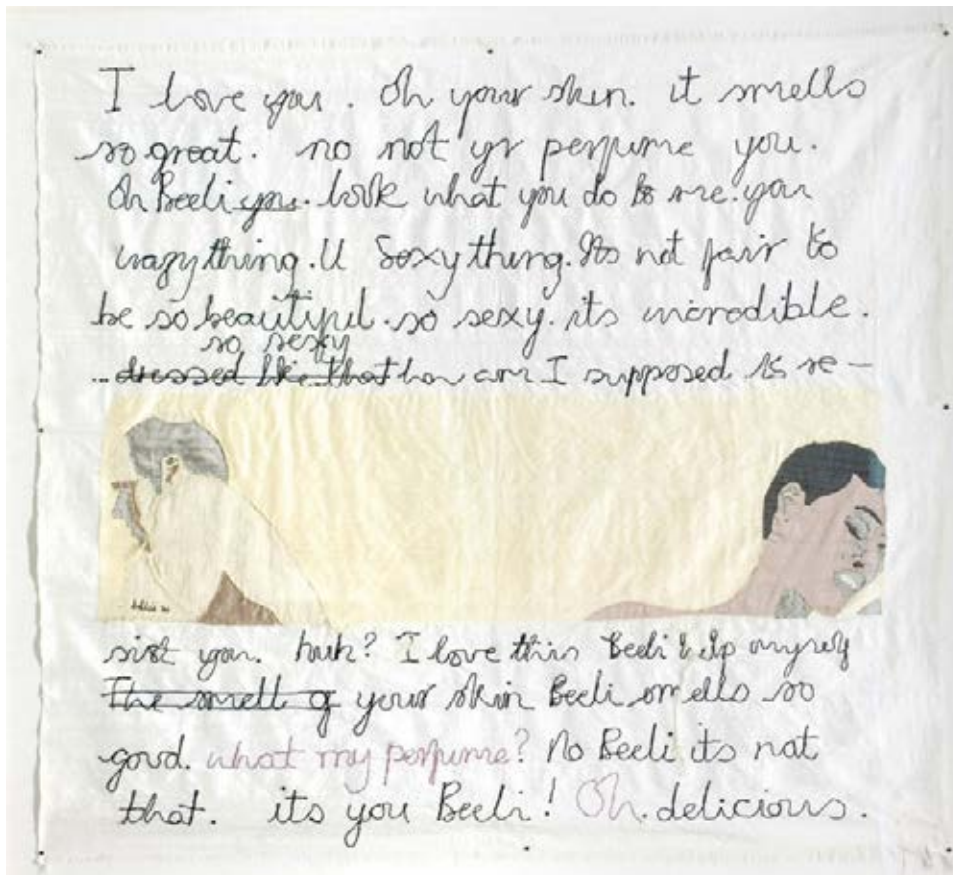
and commentary evident in women's art from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In the section 'Women's Media' a small work – *The Seamstress*, attributed to Rosa Brett (second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) – depicts a woman demurely sewing while seated in a walled garden. She is turned three-quarters to the viewer, with her gaze away from her work. She does not confront the viewer but, rather, stares blankly into the distance. A high red brick wall behind, and the plants and flowers around her, create a shallow and claustrophobic space. This work speaks not only about the woman depicted in the image, but also about the artist Brett. It points to the social and economic limitations

placed on respectable middle-class Victorian women who were restricted in their social activities and prohibited from engaging in any commercial pursuits. Psychologist Freud believed that constant needlework was one of the factors that 'rendered women particularly prone to hysteria'.

Below the Brett hangs a work by Frances Goodman. This mixed media, lozenge-shaped relief encrusted with golden glass beads, and with the letters 'oozing sex', picked out in brownish-red beads show how far women have come since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in engaging issues of their own sexuality. Both Goodman's and Billie Zangewa's *Pillow Talk* (2004), deal with subjects that

*Transformations* is installation view. Back left is Christine Dixie's *Bloodspoor* installation (11 parts), 1998, and centre is Bertha Everard's *Peace in Winter (Mid-Winter on the Komati River)*, 1909.



would have been taboo for women to reveal publicly before the second half of the 20th century.

Like Brett, Zangewa's work *Pillow Talk* reflects something about herself in a contemporary environment. Her environment is, however, quite different from the one in which *The Seamstress* was created. Social constraints on women have lessened. There is a freedom to choose, not only regarding the process of art making, but in the content reflected in the work. By choosing sewing combined with raw silk and satin fabric collage – art forms that are traditionally and essentially female – Zangewa is placing a new ownership

on this medium and deconstructing the idea of what 'Women's Media' is. Images of the artist and an unnamed man are stitched onto the background. Text has been embroidered onto this surface in the form of a written letter – a declaration of love complete with its imperfections and hesitations.

While the section 'Women's Media' shows shifts in the way women's personal world has changed, 'Landscapes' reflects a growing awareness of the dynamics of power embedded in the South African landscape. The genre of landscape is very broad – it includes naturalistic depictions of mountains, rivers, fields and hills but can also show

LTR:  
Billie Zangewa, *Pillow Talk*, 2004. Cut silk and cotton.

*The Seamstress*, attributed to Rosa Brett, Second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Oil on canvas.

Christine Dixie, *Request*, *Nieu Bethesda*. Etching from *Bloodspoor*, 1998.

&  
Christine Dixie, *The Great Kei River and Moni's Kop*, Etching from *Bloodspoor*, 1998.

Senzeni Marasela, *The Comforter on a Park Bench*, 2009. Linocut.





'inner' or 'spiritual' landscapes. More recently, a number of artists have explored the dynamics of possession in relation to South African land and its ownership. Bertha Everard's *Peace in Winter (Mid-Winter on the Komati River)* (1909) is a large oil painting of a place she cherished. Her passion for the land, intimately known, and painted directly from nature, shows it empty and burnt by sun and frost. No human activity disturbs this poetic rendering. This rural idyll is in sharp contrast to Christine Dixie's *Bloodspoor* (1998).

The descendent of 1820 settlers in South Africa, Dixie reveals her ambivalent relationship to land in the Eastern Cape owned by her ancestors. Her work explores the

history of the colonial landscape and deals with issues of land ownership, surveillance and documentation. The Eastern Cape is a region particularly fraught with frontier wars and their associated brutality. In this work Dixie researches her ancestors, Philip and Elizabeth Dixie, who settled in the Eastern Cape in 1820 – their portraits an integral part of the 18 separate framed images that make up the total installation. Each framed image explores an aspect of this conflicted region. In *Request, Nieu Bethesda*, the viewer is placed in a run-down farmhouse, looking out of a window. On the left of the window there hangs a painting of a picturesque landscape. When the settlers migrated from Western Europe to the Eastern Cape, they came with rather



grand ideas and idealistic expectations. The reality they faced in the harsh landscape of the Eastern Cape was considerably different. This imagined landscape is captured in the painting hanging on the wall of the farmhouse, in contrast to the real but much less idyllic, landscape that can be seen outside the window.

In the image *The Great Kei River and Moni's Kop*, we are placed within the Eastern Cape landscape. A man stands on one bank of the river and scans the opposite side with binoculars. He is oblivious to the two figures, which stand below him. This work subtly makes reference to the violent nature in which land was acquired in these colonial times. There was no thought given to those who occupied the land at the time of colonial inroads. Black landowners retaliated in response to

being forced off their lands resulting in some of the most violent periods in South African history.

The 'Mother and Child' image is archetypal in the history of both Western and African art. In particular, from the Byzantine to the Renaissance eras, images of the 'Madonna and Child' were popular with this theme resurfacing later in the works of Modern artists. Whereas the 'Madonna and Child' icon relies on the symbolic, the metaphoric and the ecclesiastic, images of 'Mother and Child' typically focus on the emotional bond between parent and infant. The works in this section explore this bond but also the instance where it is absent.

*Mother and Child* (1942), a charcoal work by Irma Stern, shows a child held close to a mother's breast, captures





LTR:  
Maud Sumner, *Portrait of the artist*, 1936. Oil on canvas.

Jo Ractliffe, *Nadir 15*, 1988.  
Lithograph, screenprint  
on paper.

*Transformations* is installation  
view. In the front is a detail  
of Claudette Shreuders' *The  
Neighbour*, 2003. Jacaranda  
wood and enamel.

Bonnie Ntshalintshali, *Elijah*,  
1991. Screenprint.



the nurturing aspect most often associated with this genre. It reflects the warm closeness between mother and child, as does the work by Käthe Kollwitz's *Mutter mit kind auf dem Arm* (Mother with a Child in her Arms) (1910) of a working class Berlin mother and child. However, it is in Senzeni Marasela's graphic work *The Comforter on a Park Bench* (2009) that the absence of a mother's care is most poignantly felt. Marasela's own mother, Theodora, suffers from bipolar schizophrenia and was absent for most of her childhood. This resulted in a sense of disconnection and dislocation with her mother. Her artwork is therefore characterised by a search for this mother figure, and we see Theodora making appearances in much of her work. In Marasela's performance pieces, she often incorporates dolls, which she alternately deconstructs and reas-

sembles. These dolls become her children and, in essence, her mode of investigating the mother and child relationship.

In *The Comforter on a Park Bench*, a figure sits on a park bench bent over a stiff and unresponsive doll. She holds it cautiously between her hands. Warmth, affection and any human connection are absent while the sense of alienation, dysfunction and dislocation is overwhelming. The figure on the bench may be Theodora, disconnected from the doll, which is a stand-in for Marasela. Alternately, we can see this seated figure as Marasela herself, trying to find some way of articulating the connection missing in her relationship with her mother. This image, however, also alludes to an occurrence, which is essentially South African. This absence of mothering is perhaps



a reference to the South African experience where black domestic workers left their own children behind in rural areas to care for the children of white employers.

Self-portraiture is an art form with a history that stretches back to the Renaissance. Women artists are considered some of the most notable producers of this genre. This can be attributed to the fact that, in the past, for reasons of decorum, women artists were not allowed to attend art classes where live models were being used. Furthermore, society decreed that a woman's place was in the home. For the most part, women artists only had themselves and the people around them as models.

Most self-portraits tell you who the artist is. The confident *Self Portrait* (1960) painted by Bloomsbury artist, Vanessa Bell portrays a serious but secure individual – someone who is certain who she is within social context. However, Gabrielle Goliath's photographic work *Ek is 'n Kimberly Coloured* (2007) (see page 122) is about who she is mistaken for – who she is not! While Goliath may know who she is – as someone of mixed race ancestry – her identity is ambiguous to others. In this piece, the artist places herself in the guise of romantic characters that she's most often mistaken for – Brazilian, French and Spanish. She includes the statement "Ek is 'n Kimberley Coloured" in the local languages of Brazil, France and Spain, in the images. Through these photographs of what she isn't, Goliath constructs a self-portrait of who she is.





LTR:

Frieda Lock, *Interior, a women sewing*, 1947. Oil on canvas.

Marlene Dumas, *Young boy (Blue body)*, 1996. Watercolour and ink on paper.

*Transformations* is installation view. In the front is Elsa Dziomba's *Women*, Mid 20th century.

Joni Brenner, *Nigredo*, 2001. Oil on canvas on glass.

Joni Brenner, *Pyroclastic*, 2001. Oil on canvas on glass.

Maggie Laubser, *Portrait of Kalie*, 1925. Oil on cardboard.

The exhibition *Transformations* is rich in both the associations that can be inferred between works and in the range of artists represented. In addition to the artists discussed above, the show includes international artists Lucie Rie, Gwendolen Raverat (granddaughter of Charles Darwin), Dame Elizabeth Frink, Celia Paul, Marlene Dumas and Barbara Hepworth. South African artists include Maud Sumner, Irma Stern, Dorothy Kay, Elsa Dziomba, Dianne Victor, Zanele Muholi and Anthea Moys. All have been selected from JAG's important international and local holdings. <

Images courtesy of JAG. Photos by John Hodgkiss. and Anri Theron.

# STAGE

## INTERVIEW WITH HANNEKE BENADE

**By Stacey Rowan.** In theatre, the stage is a designated space for the performance of theatrical productions. The stage serves as a space for actors and a focal point for the audience. As such, in art, one can view the 'theatre' as the art gallery or venue where art exhibitions, or 'theatrical productions', are showcased. The actors, in the form of artworks, are the focal point of the audience, otherwise known as art-lovers.

Hanneke Benade's new show *STAGE*, exhibited at the Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, has a body of work that portrays stage actors which she has posed in different ways, bringing a new thematic and theatrical approach to her work.

**DESIGN>ART** interviewed with Benade.

What is the meaning behind *STAGE*? Stage can be seen as a metaphor – a point, period, or step in a process or a development.

Why did you decide to explore 'stage-like' actors in this exhibition? I asked third year drama students at the University of Stellenbosch to pose as models to work from for my exhibition. I loved the idea of using actual actors. For the first time my models were characters in costume. I liked the idea that they felt comfortable pretending to be someone else.

I go through a long process of planning before I start working on the actual pieces. Taking photographs is a crucial part of my process. I take hundreds of photographs of my models before I select a handful of pictures that I can work from. I plan a set, dress the models in costumes and sometimes 'build' a small set and source for props.

Using stage actors for this exhibition was actually not so far removed from my usual work process that I have been using for a very long time. I have always felt, to a degree, that I am the director in my own play, finding the right actor for the role, creating a set and directing the actors.

How do you approach your models used within your artworks? I am always on the lookout for new models to work from. I usually ask my younger brother's friends to sit for a photo session. I like using younger people in their early to mid-twenties as they have an uncomplicated approach to the camera. I prefer not to delve into the character or



LEFT: *Curtain call*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 x 70 cm.  
 RIGHT: *The other apron*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 x 70 cm.



LEFT: *Waiting by the ghost light*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 x 70 cm.  
 RIGHT: *Understudy*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 x 70 cm.





LEFT: *Muse*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 x 70 cm.  
RIGHT: *Hour Before Half*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 x 70 cm.

LEFT: *Ingenua*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 x 70 cm.  
RIGHT: *Stage Whisper*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 x 70 cm.



person I use as model. I approach the person in front of the camera like a vessel to carry my emotions and I project onto them what I feel.

Some people feel uncomfortable with the idea to buy and hang a work of art in their space of someone they do not personally know, but the portraits I do are not portraits of specific people – the models become anonymous. What is of importance is not who they are but how they make you feel. What do you recognise in yourself in them?

**You are known for your use of soft pastels, which create quiet and pensive figurative works, depicted with exquisitely delicate formal skills. How did this use of pastels come about?** I started with life size drawings in compressed charcoal which later on developed into the use of soft pastels.

**In your previous works, women have formed the majority of the subject matter. You have shown the women in calm, contemplative poses, bathing your figures in a tranquil light creating a timeless, Baroque-like stillness. In *STAGE*, you have introduced male models which are a variation on your previous work. Why have you chosen to do this?** I do not perceive women or men in a certain way. The people (irrelevant of gender) that I paint in pastel are all portraits of how I think of myself. The recognition of the underlying emotion, tension or longing that we all can relate to should resonate in the viewer.

My earlier work was mainly self portraits; I soon became bored with the subject matter

and started using female models, asking friends to pose. I gradually introduced male models into my work, but overall I enjoy working with female models more. Female models are more solid in form.

**What have you aimed to achieve with this exhibition?** My aim is to communicate. Communication gives me a sense of satisfaction even if only one person understands the mood of the work. For one person to recognise something of themselves in the work is enough.

**How important is storytelling and narrative in your work?** When I work on a body of work, like *STAGE*, I always create a storyline or theme for the show, but the narrative is part of my own mythology and I seldom conjure up stories – if there is a narrative it is never obvious. The works are never just individual pieces, they form part of a whole even though they can function on their own. They were created in context, but when I work on individual pieces they always stand alone. The narratives in the work are never literal.

**What is your favourite artwork within *STAGE*?** I like the work *Standing at the ghost light* as well as its title. I didn't know what a ghost light was at first.

**Who has inspired you or has had influence on your artistic development?** I studied at the University of Pretoria. I did my major in printmaking, specialising in lithography. Diane Victor was my lecturer in drawing at the time and she inspired me to draw.



LEFT: *Waiting in the Wings*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 100 X 130 cm.

RIGHT: *Soliloquy*, 2010. Pastel on cotton paper, 123 X 150 cm.



What inspires you as an artist? The art I make, I make because I need to share an image in my head— there is always an image and it is there long before it reveals itself – it has always been there.

One constantly sources images, subconsciously every day... every moment. I think to be an artist one must be aware: to examine everything, whether your art responds to the world inside or the world outside. Influences come not just from art. Art is a reduced form of life. To create art you must not just be influenced by art, but by the original source.

What are the highlights of your creative career? I consider the greatest achievement in my career the fact that I still can produce art. That I can support myself through my art and that I still enjoy it.

What are your views on the South African art industry and the artists within it? Many artists had to give up because of financial pressure or various other reasons. It is not easy, especially in a country with little support to artists and art itself. Art education is still seen as a luxury and not a necessity.

How important is presentation in showcasing your artworks? Presentation is just as important as the work itself. When I curate my own independent shows I have more reigns to choreograph my exhibitions.

As an artist, what advice would you give to other artists? One thing I always remind myself of is not to compete and not to compare. You only become doubtful and unhappy when you compare your work to others. I do what I feel I have to do and hope to have staying power in the end. <





Kunstenaar: Hanneke Benade, Titel: Die Reisiger, Medium: Pastel op wit katoenpapier, 2010, Grootte: 100 x 70 cm

# Ons verstaan die kuns om kuns te verstaan

Die ATKV se kunsversameling weerspieël die Afrikaanse leefwêreld en ondersteun Afrikaanse kunstenaars. Trots Suid-Afrikaans, in Afrikaans.

# GOODMAN GALLERY

CAPE TOWN JOHANNESBURG



David Goldblatt, The ruins of Shareworld and Soccer City, Johannesburg, 6 June 2009

# TJ

## SOME THINGS OLD SOME THINGS NEW AND SOME MUCH THE SAME

JOBURG PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID GOLDBLATT

GOODMAN GALLERY **JOHANNESBURG**

7 OCTOBER-6 NOVEMBER 2010



# CONFRONTING THE CONTINENT

While South African contemporary art galleries have often remained insular, mainly presenting the work of local artists in a bid to nurture local production and national ambition; there exists an escalating drive for South Africa to be located within a broader context. Many local artists are extensively exhibiting and, in some cases, relocating overseas. Yet, bringing artists from the rest of Africa and beyond to show their work in South Africa creates the potential for new dialogues and fresh dynamism on home soil.

The Goodman Gallery, with three major spaces – a main gallery, a project space in Johannesburg as well as a gallery in Cape Town – is increasingly concerned with showing work not only by local South Africans, but also by artists stemming from the rest of the continent, as well as those who speak compellingly to the African context. Three recent exhibitions reveal this drive. For the months of September and October Goodman Gallery's three spaces showed work by local photographer David Goldblatt, Madagascan-born Joël Andrianomearisoa and African-American Hank Willis

Thomas. These three divergent artists – stemming from three different countries and working in very different media – all offered South African audiences an opportunity to reflect on human experience in both a global and national context.

Photographer David Goldblatt's show *TJ* at Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg (7 October to 8 November 2010) was the closest to home, elucidating on particular aspects of the sprawling city of Johannesburg that both infuriated and astounded the artist. "One of the most damaging things that apartheid did to us," Goldblatt says, "...was that it denied us the experience of each other's lives." This denial is further exacerbated by a continuing urban fragmentation. The exhibition was subtitled "Some things old, some things new and some much the same." and explored the intricacies of crime and materialism in Joburg, both of these elements contributing to divisions within urban society. While the legacy of a system that tore people's lives apart continues, new boundaries are being erected despite apartheid's demise.

Much of Goldblatt's frustrations lie in the city's remarkable oversights, greed and lack of planning, with exorbitant amounts being spent on stadia and events such as the Miss World competition, while certain areas, such as Diepsloot, remain in dire need of basic facilities such as school libraries and storm water drainage systems. The old Joburg is recalled through black and white photographs of previous decades, while the urban sprawl that the city has become, as well as its often-desperate conditions, was revealed through aerial shots of the indiscriminately structured northern suburbs, of Zimbabwean refugees sleeping in a congested Methodist church, as well as striking portraits of ex-offenders.

An artist who considers boundaries in a more conceptual mode is New York-based Hank Willis Thomas. Known for his candid and, at times, playful confrontation of identity, history and popular culture, Thomas exhibited solo for the first time in South Africa with his show *All Things Being Equal...* at Goodman Gallery Cape (2 September to 2 October 2010).

Thomas provokingly borrows the visual language and terminology of mass media, and commandeers symbols and images from popular culture. Through this appropriation he seeks to question and subvert established definitions of personal identity and the narrative of race. His work considers the way race and 'blackness' has not only been informed but deliberately shaped and constructed by various forces – first through colonialism and slavery, and more recently through mass media and advertising. This reminds us of the financial and economic stakes that have always been involved in the representations of race.

*All Things Being Equal...* brought together recent works by Thomas that explored the legacy of slavery and colonialism as well as segregation and apartheid, employing subversive visual strategies to disrupt superficial notions of likeness and to find value in particularity rather than comparison. Assuming the principle that race and blackness are radically contingent socio-cultural constructs, the exhibition addressed the idea of a particular local black experience and attempted to excavate meaning in the differences between South African and African-American blackness.

Moving from an examination of 'blackness' to the colour black itself, Malagasy and Paris-based artist Joël Andrianomearisoa's exhibition, *A Perfect Kind of Love*, explored the contradictions inherent within intimacy and romance. Having taken place at the Goodman Gallery Project Space at Arts on Main, (4 September to 16 October 2010) *A Perfect Kind of Love* presented an arrangement of various, mostly black, textiles and textures in a large-scale

Photographs by David Goldblatt

**TOP LEFT:** *The Women's Hostel, Alexandra Township, 26 June 2009, 2009.* Digital print in pigment inks on 100% cotton rag paper.

**TOP RIGHT:** *Homage to Federico Fellini: while in traffic, 1967, 1967.* Silver gelatin photograph on fibre-based paper, 30 x 40 cm.

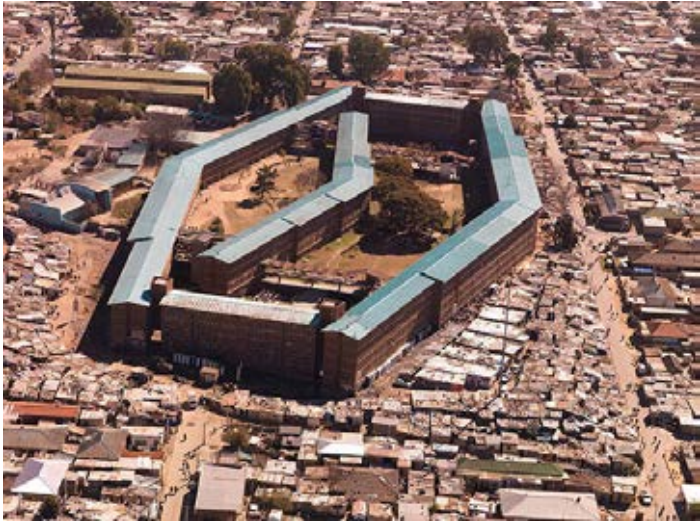
**CENTRE LEFT:** *Refugees from Zimbabwe sheltering in the Central Methodist Church on Pritchard Street, in the city. 22 March 2009.* Silver gelatin print.

**CENTRE RIGHT:** *On Eloff Street, 1967, 1967.* Silver gelatin photograph on fibre-based paper, 30 x 40 cm.

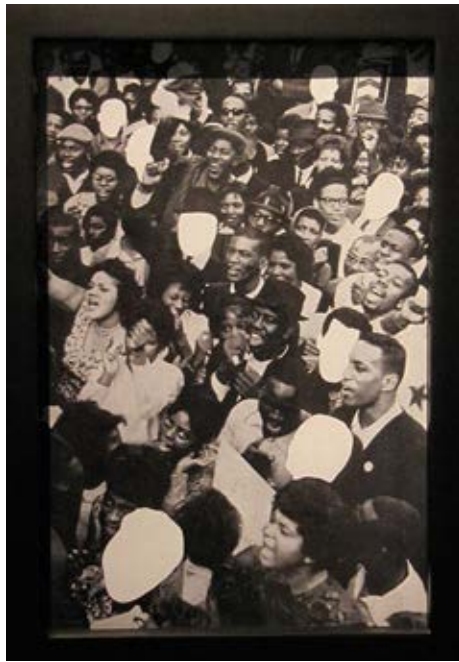
**BOTTOM LEFT:** *A miner waits on the bank to go underground, City Deep Gold Mine, 1966.* Silver gelatin photograph on fibre-based paper, 40 x 40 cm.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** Trevor Mabuella, born in Alexandra Township, Johannesburg, 2010. Silver gelatin photograph on fibre-based paper.









TOP LEFT: Hank Willis Thomas,  
*Gold Dust Twins*, 2010.  
TOP RIGHT: Hank Willis Thomas,  
*Intentionally Left Blank*, 2010.

BOTTOM LEFT:  
Joël Andrianomearisoa  
*Darling you can make my  
dreams come true if you say you  
love me too*, 2010.

BOTTOM RIGHT:  
Joël Andrianomearisoa  
with his work *Très Cher*, 2010.



installation. For Andrianomearisoa the colour black is a myriad entity. It can be fashionable or offensive. Every material made in black looks different to the next, every shade slightly alternate. And, because of this mass divergence of one thing, one element - black - like love is difficult to pin down, its perfect form is elusive.

*"A Perfect Kind of Love* continued Andrianomearisoa's ongoing exploration of eroticism and desire, his negotiations with a love of a darker kind," explained curator Storm Janse Van Rensburg. "Love is rarely perfect, and perfection is not always lovable, and Andrianomearisoa's engagement with this contradiction is what formed the raw material of the show. How does one speak of love, or understand love in the age of reason, or amidst the cynicism of this current moment? Romantic love is never just a private declaration or an emotional contract between two individuals – it is a political battlefield. Sexual bodies engaging in acts of love are, at times, also sites of violence, disease, moral judgment and commodification and are subjected to legislation, marginalisation and criminalisation." Works made of paper, high-priced thread and video tape ribbon, interspersed with shards of old movie posters, pages from tabloid and pornographic magazines reflected this through a visual language that is both stark and provocative.

For Andrianomearisoa, the body itself, alluding to volatility and contained chaos, was a central aspect to a negotiation of space and ideas within his work. It is through performance that Andrianomearisoa expresses this aspect of his creative intent most poignantly. *Cut Cute*, presented at SA Fashion Week, was an extension of his show at the Goodman Gallery Project

Space. This performance involved several participants who were subject to a layering of various textiles and materials. The final "cut" of their outfits are a result of a dramatic creative process that has been openly disclosed to the audience, having offered what art critic Virginie Andriamirado refers to as "infinite propositions". "To build or deconstruct, to dress or undress, to fill or empty, to wrinkle or fold, to light up or turn off – Andrianomearisoa is situated between these opposing forces that, according to him, combine rather than conflict against one another. In these paradoxical connections, the works offered infinite propositions," states Andriamirado.

Andrianomearisoa's work not only deconstructs modernist ideals such as 'purity of form', and 'truth to materials', but also recalls French curator and theorist Nicolas Bourriaud's notion of relational aesthetics. "I like art that allows its audience to exist in the space opened up by it," explains Bourriaud. "For me, art is a space of images, objects, and human beings. Relational aesthetics is a way of considering the productive existence of the viewer of art, the space of participation that art can offer." Andrianomearisoa employs this approach in his use of the body as one of the many materials that he integrates and layers within his work, ultimately questioning the way in which our bodies are used and manipulated in a broader context. *Cut Cute* took place on Fox street outside Arts on Main on 2 October 2010 and acted as both a collaboration with another creative industry – fashion – as well as an alternative platform for Andrianomearisoa's use of the body and textiles within performance. <

Images courtesy of the artists.

# 2010 SASOL NEW SIGNATURES

“A perceptual shift  
from 'my place in this  
world' to 'my world  
in this place'”

Peter Binsbergen

By Anri Theron. I have to start by making a confession. I've lived in Pretoria for the past seven years but have on only two other occasions been to see the finalists of the SASOL *New Signatures* competition. The first, two years after arriving back in South Africa after living abroad for some years. Feeling very uninformed I did what all people who have a steady Internet connection do – I Googled. 0.27 seconds and 155 results later, I caught up on the basics. I made my way to the Pretoria Arts Museum to view the exhibition.

2010 was the 21<sup>st</sup> year of the *New Signatures* competition making it one of the oldest of its kind in South Africa. From this year's 664 entries submitted nationally, 78 finalists were selected that best embody the *New Signatures* mantra; controversial, contemporary and cutting-edge. According to Peter Binsbergen, the national chairman, the “use of free associated thinking, conceptualisation and experimentation of all art media” defined the finalists' work.





An hour is far too little time to take in an exhibition of this scale and diversity. As I walked from one work to another I silently scolded myself for missing this annual exhibition the other four out of seven years. I no doubt had underestimated what I'd find and my expectations were properly turned upside down. When asked what set this year's finalists apart, Binsbergen said "an exceptionally high standard was set. There is a good balance between new media and traditional art making processes which is very exciting. The works do not lean to any specific favoured media. There is a good balance and a wider variety of work and this creates a more dynamic and diverse feel to the body of work."

The winner, Alhyrian Laue's *Royal Visit*, was created from an old rowing boat, the ceramic pieces of a lavatory, and other found objects seamlessly combined to form a water closet. The judges praised the work as being "innovative, conceptual and flawlessly executed with high

regard for detail and finish." The sculpture stands a little taller than your average individual and viewers curiously and cautiously interacted with the sculpture. When one peers through the two swinging doors of the 'closet' you see a kinetic pendulum suspended above a visible lavatory bowl underneath the sculpture. According to the judges the artist did not attach a specific meaning to the work, preferring the outcomes to be open ended. Binsbergen further comments "Objects are selectively combined and results in the sum of the parts losing their inherent meaning to become something new and innovative. The crude reference to a sculpture referring to a lavatory and consisting of parts thereof is thus lost in a subtle play on puns and parodies resulting in an artwork which is cutting edge, controversial and contemporary."

Daandrey Steyn's, *Skeumorph*, confronts the viewer with a screen projection of portraits of Eugene Terreblanch and Julius Malema that morph into one another over a long period of



time. Despite the dramatic effect the morphing process is extremely subtle, almost delicate, and one really needs to pay close attention to see the changes occurring. Just like *Royal Visit*, this artwork captivates viewers and, like myself, many would come back for a second round perhaps in an effort to better 'see' the changes. Binsbergen elaborates: "The strong polarisation of two opposing political viewpoints morph into a hybrid identity forming a symbiotic environment in which the one 'feeds' off the controversy of the other."

When asked what he would attribute the high standard of this year's entries to Binsbergen credited the involvement of universities and tertiary institutions explaining that most of the finalists were either at art school or are graduates of art schools furthering their studies making the works complex and bearing academic relevance. Common themes relating to issues of identity and the environment were apparent but more significant was the "perpetual shift from 'My place in this World' to 'My World in this Place' creating an interesting harmonious visual voice" as Binsbergen suggests. "These new signatures are more concerned with the present and what the future may hold and their place within it. There is a search for that magic, the golden thread which binds all South Africans together. Issues of our socio-political past have been set aside in favour of a celebration of true unity through diversity" he continues.

Young artists, are daring and forceful barometers of our times, Binsbergen states, and this makes the latter statement almost optimistic, comforting, as all South Africans could do with a lot less platitudes and a bit more translucency. The bar has been raised, not only for the 2011 entrants but for contemporary South African art as a whole.

TOP:

**WINNER**

Alhyrian Laue (Port Elizabeth), *Royal Visit. Sculpture.* "The title is further strengthened by the found objects used, the boat, a lavatory and references to water."

CENTRE:

**RUNNER UP**

Daandrey Steyn (Pretoria), *Skeumorph. Video Installation.* "Skeumorph is an archaeological term for an object duplicated in a different, suitable material similar in function and form, for documentation purposes. According to the artist, both political figures embody the same form and function, but here created from substitute materials."

BOTTOM:

**MERIT AWARD 1**

Gerrit van der Walt (Pretoria), *Change. Digital Installation.* "The viewer is confronted by three flat digital screens to form a contemporary dyptich. The work is both visually interactive and juxtaposed causing a visual play on digital texture and drawing thus creating a feeling of timelessness. The opposing trajectory of visual stimulus causes the eye to jump. The work utilises a post-human approach depicting societal change and evolution."





**FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:**

**MERIT AWARD 2** Zane Wesley Lange (Port Elizabeth), *Joystick*. Sculpture. "The work is playful, interactive and loaded with parodies of 'school boy' humour made concrete in its visual form. The viewer is invited to sit on the chair and interact with the 'joystick' creating suggestive humour. Here the formal elements of art are challenged by the art historian's taboo, the word 'fun'."



**MERIT AWARD 3** Gerhardt Coetzee (Port Elizabeth), *Bridge Becoming* and *Becoming Dereliction*. Photography. "A photographic diptych referring to 'presence in the absence'. References to incomplete architectural structures speak of loneliness and strongly references the past or traces of humanity. The artist makes references to the records of passages with the meaning and conclusion left open ended. An uncertainty exists in the constant state of becoming that which has not yet been."



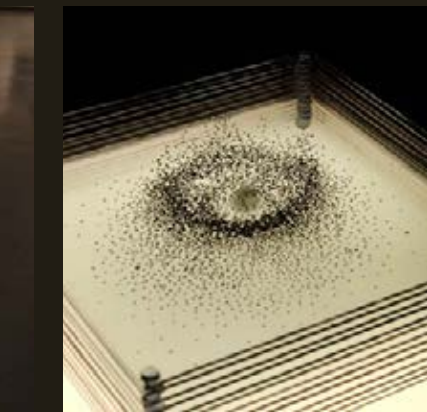
**MERIT AWARD 4** Lorinda Samantha Pretorius (Port Elizabeth), *Truth Obstructed*. Glass and oxide installation. "Two dimensional marks on sheets of glass represent the concept of the layering of realities. They cannot exist alone and require a symbiotic relationship in order to enter the next dimension. Here the concept of thought becomes illusionary as the complexity of layers may be deconstructed into raw two dimensional form and vice versa further strengthening the illusion of time and space."



**MERIT AWARD 5** Nastassja Hewitt (Pretoria), *Let Them Eat Cake*. Installation. "The colour of the material refers to the opulence of the subject matter and rendering the function of the cushions obsolete by hanging them on the wall as opposed to sitting on them. The title 'Let them eat cake' is brought into context in contemporary South Africa. According to the artist, these political figures have all eaten cake and later in their careers handed out the cake."







sasol  
reaching new frontiers



congratulations to the finalists and winners of the  
**sasol new signatures art competition 10**

This has been another exciting Sasol New Signatures experience and once again the competition has produced cutting edge works that speak of a truly universal South African visual language.

Peter Binsbergen, National Chairman, Sasol New Signatures Art Competition Committee

**overall winner: Alhyrian Laue**

runner-up: Daandrey Steyn

merit awards: Gerhardt Coetzee  
Nastassja Hewitt  
Zane Wesley Lange  
Lorinda Samantha Pretorius  
Gerrit van der Walt

▼ association of arts pretoria

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**controversial contemporary cuttingedge**





# [CRADLE SNATCHER]

## FEATURING SCULPTURES & PAINTINGS BY GAVIN YOUNGE

**By Stacey Rowan.** One can define a cradle snatcher as an older man or woman, from the age of 35+ who has a sexual relationship with a younger person around the age of 16+. In the context of Gavin Youngé's [*Cradle Snatcher*] exhibition, this definition falls short of the truth.

As a deliberate reference to the *Cradle of Humankind*, the title denotes a literal meaning, illustrating how the artist accurately snatches this iconic area and captures it in his artworks, whilst treating history of this area as a story not yet fully told.

Exhibited at CIRCA on Jellicoe, Johannesburg, from 9 September to 2 October 2010, this new body of work, featuring sculptures, drawings, paintings and photographs, is centred on a part of our country that is close and dear to us, The Cradle of Humanity.

Gavin Youngé, a sculptor, author and curator had this to say in an interview with **DESIGN>ART**.

You came up with the idea of treating the Cradle and its surrounds as a landscape – a landscape that had been foraged upon, changed, altered and re-interpreted from many different perspectives over a very long period of time. How did you come up with this idea? How did you become interested in this area? In the 90s I was the field director for the 'Picture Cape Town: Landmarks of a New Generation' project for the Getty Conservation Institute. My involvement in this six-nation project stemmed from a meeting in the Olduvai Gorge [in the eastern Serengeti Plains, northern Tanzania] between Mahasti Afshar and a colleague at University of Cape Town. This strengthened my interest in the fossil record and I was awarded the commission to produce a three-storey high sculpture for the Convention Centre in Cape Town entitled *Olduvai*. It follows that I would be interested in the Cradle of Humankind and its inception as a World Heritage site in December 1999.

TOP LEFT: *The Foster Gang*, 2010. Vellum, bamboo, linen thread. Dimensions variable. Five elements, tallest is 164 cm high.

TOP RIGHT: *Quagga Project*, 2010. Vellum, polystyrene, 10 units, each unit 120 x 125 x 33 cm.

BOTTOM LEFT: *Turkana Boy*, 2010. Vellum, 136 x 37 x 31 cm.

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Turkana Boy*, 2010. Cast bronze, 136 x 37 x 31 cm.

You present an impressive collection of 'fossil' cameras that you call *The Foster Gang*. This 'family portrait' of the infamous brigand, William Robert Clem Foster and his mates brings to mind their last days holed up in a cave awaiting the arrival of Peggy Lee, the proto-typical gangster moll. This saga is only hinted at in the title of the vellum cameras poised on their spider-like tripods. Explain the story of the infamous Foster Gang. This is a story of deceit, deception, hope, glory and valour, which courses through the narrative of the gold fields of the Witwatersrand. Basically, we are all culpable at some stage in our shared past.

Your galloping Quaggas are eloquent of a recent past and yet somehow fictional. In 'restoring' this extinct species through your artworks, it can be assumed that you ask the viewers to think about their world knowing full well that change is not only inevitable, but also desirable. Where did your inspiration for the hanging 'horses', or Quagga, emerge from? In 1997 three artists comprising of an Angolan, a Cuban, and myself, a South African, undertook a trip to Southern Angola where we exorcised the memory of the war there. One of my works related to the listener's choice programme was called *Forces Favourites*, a radio programme disseminated over the airwaves. I decided to emulate this by re-creating an airborne herd of Quagga. That work was exhibited in South Africa and in Europe and the present work is entirely new. After its debut at CIRCA, the Quaggas will travel to the Forteresse de Salses near Perpignan in France for next year's *Monuments/Animaux* exhibition.

There is something rude, even shocking about using animal skin in artworks. You used vellum

for the *Quagga Project* (2010) piece. What interests you about this material? I am attracted by metaphoric associations which flow from the tanning process (depilant phase using lime), and by the recuperative associations of (medical) stitching. Thinking back to the school playgrounds of my youth, the severity of a wound (and consequently the honour earned from it) was counted by how many stitches were needed to close the wound. Since vellum is organic in nature, I prefer to think of a process of 'stuffing', rather than of 'covering'. Although the sutures might point to an arrival point, they are only parts of the journey. The skin appears to be a shield and preserve these memory objects, but, in fact, the skin replaces them.

You have used different types of materials for the different artworks in the exhibition. Some of them are, or appear, fossilized. Why do you 'fossilise' some of your works? I work with a variety of materials. I like the term taphonomy, it represents a kind of decay and a sense of preservation. Fossilising achieves this sense of preservation too.

Some of your artworks also resemble skeletons found in the Cradle of Humankind. In saying this, there are two artworks titled *Turkana Boy* – one in cast bronze and one in vellum. Who is Turkana boy? Turkana Boy is the common name for KNM-WT 15000, the nearly complete skeleton of a 12-year old Homo erectus, who died 1.6 million years ago. It was discovered by Kamoya Kimeu, a member of Richard Leakeys' paleontological expedition to Lake Rudolf in 1984. In this re-visioning, the African child is shown as a vellum mannequin prior to being subjected to a process of taphonomy (being cast in metal).



*In Camera (Plover's Lake, Cradle of Humankind), 2010, Colour photography, Lightjet print on archival paper, 59.6 x 84 cm.*



*In Camera (Sterkfontein, Cradle of Humankind), 2010, Colour photography, Lightjet print on archival paper, 59.6 x 84 cm.*



*In Camera (N14, Cradle of Humankind), 2010, Colour photography, Lightjet print on archival paper, 59.6 x 84 cm.*



You also present photographs from the *In Camera* series, set in the Cradle of Humankind. What does the title refer to? The title *In Camera* refers to the secret legal process meaning 'in the judges chambers', as well as the participatory framework that includes the apparatus in the making of the photograph. Both enjoy a long, but separate etymological trajectory through time. Cameras are of fairly recent origin and are considered machines, or apparatuses for the making of moving or still images. The cameras featured in these 'assisted landscapes' are among the best, soon to be outdated fossils available: the Hassleblad 500c, the Nikon F1, Canon 7D, and the Canon IXUS.

How do the photographic images link to the landscape, and the Cradle of Humankind? How do you feel about the landscapes? The photographic images are themselves enigmatic and sealed entities. Both reveal instances of allogenic succession. One image was made at Sterkfontein, the other at Plover's Lake, both in the Cradle of Humankind. The portions of land indicated in the photograph are in themselves obsolete. Like packaging around a highly prized item, these portions of landscape are unimportant. However they have been worked upon; they lie in readiness for some future discovery. In term, they are pregnant. Their titles indicate their provenance to Cradle of Humankind, an area imbued with substantial mystique. The photographed grasslands point to some re-visioning, either as a part of a re-wilding exercise, or simple landscaping.







*Number 28 series, 2009.  
Colour photography, ink on cotton paper,  
195 x 112 cm each.*

*LTR: Samuel Hendricks., Andrew 'Bones'  
Jacobus, Cornelius 'Whitey' Noto (TOP).  
Frank Jacob., Daniel van Wyk. Shafiek  
Abrahams (BOTTOM).*





*Molo-Rainbow*, 2010. Acrylic on canvas, vylene, 120 x 200 cm.



*Molokwane*, 2010. Acrylic on canvas, vylene, 120 x 200 cm.



*Tin Taung*, 2010. Acrylic and emulsion on canvas, 140 x 170 cm.



*Sediba Sediba*, Acrylic and emulsion on canvas, 140 x 170 cm.

With regards to the 28 prison gang, why did you photograph only men and not women in your photographs? I often employ photography as a medium. I only photographed men as I never found any female members of the 28 prison gang.

What do your paintings, *Tin Taung*, *Sebida Sebida*, *Molokwane* and *Molo-Rainbow* comprise of? The paintings comprise thick textural imprints (a reference to the electric power lines that intrude on the managed landscape, chicken houses, and so on.) Two of the paintings feature hide-shaped pieces of vylene onto which tattoos worn by members of the 28 prison gang have been transferred. I consider the tattooing of gang lore on their bodies, a form of 'writing on landscape'. The second painting in the pair also comprises thick textural imprints (a reference to ring marks on furniture and the physical appearance of stone-walled houses), and several skeins of a deep red oxide colour. The direct, and highly improvised style of these paintings is inspired by a viewing of the work of French Artists, Guy Ferrer and Gerard Gasiorowski. <



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Artwork: Ronit Judelman, UNISA student

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# UNISA art gallery

Gerard Sekoto, *Four Figures at a Table*. Oil on board.

**The Unisa Art Gallery is the contemporary gallery of the University of South Africa featuring established and emerging South African and African artists working in different media of expression like painting, ceramics, photography, multi-media and sculpture. The Art Gallery is currently situated in Pretoria, at the University of South Africa Main Campus, Theo Van Wijk Building, B-Block, 5th Floor.**

The Unisa art collection was established in 1961 by Prof. Karin Skawran. The Unisa Art Gallery was accommodated in the former Unisa Library in 1988 with the appointment of the first art curator. Since then the gallery has grown to be one of the most significant exhibition spaces in South Africa and is privileged to be in possession of a hugely relevant collection of predominantly contemporary South African art.

This year, 2010, marks a very significant point in the development of the Unisa Art Gallery, as the Unisa permanent art collection is moving into its first state of the art exhibition space and storage facility. These facilities can be found at the entrance of the Unisa main campus in Pretoria.

With its new curator: Bongani Mkhonza, the Unisa Art Gallery and the permanent collection will be moving into the new art gallery space which claims to be the biggest in Pretoria. The Unisa Art Gallery as a valuable cultural asset, aims at national and international relevance by promoting the culturally diverse manifestations of the visual arts. Within the spirit of academic excellence and cultural relevance, the Unisa Art Gallery strives to collect, document and conserve primarily South African art.

Exhibitions expose and focus on diverse and relevant aspects in the arts. They include regular exhibitions of the Unisa Art Collection, as well as exhibitions curated by the Unisa Art Gallery considering current research

of historical, cultural and educational value, as well as significant travelling exhibitions curated by other institutions. Student exhibitions, community outreach exhibitions and international exhibitions also provide the opportunity for endless creative and intellectual stimulation. Opening events, presentations and walk-about are arranged in order to engage with exhibitions and to provide a platform for interaction.

The Unisa Art Gallery is one of the most significant exhibition spaces in South Africa. The collection encapsulates the richness of our social fabric and the creative potential of South African artists. Our permanent collection acquisition team have consistently been collecting historical and contemporary artists that are pushing the boundaries of creativity in South Africa. In terms of historical artists, the collection boasts artists like Cecil Skotnes, Durant Sihlali, Maud Sumner, Gerarld Sekoto, Alexis Preller and Maggie Laubser.

It is crucial not to portray these historical artists and their contribution in a cosmos perception but to bring to light their interrelationships as workers, fathers, educators and human beings. If you trace their histories most of these artists (through their careers) have crossed paths; worked together or even creatively influencing one another. Cecil Skotnes made a remarkable contribution to the art history of South Africa between the 50's and the 60's when he worked as a Cultural Officer at the Johannesburg City Council's Polly Street. Polly Street offered adult education for black people at that time. Durant Sihlali was taught by Cecil as one of the students in Polly Street and he was amongst the artists that started the trend called 'township art'.

Maud Sumner was born in Johannesburg of British immigrant parents from Warwickshire. She was educated at home and later attended Roedean High School for Girls in Johannesburg, where she took art lessons from A.E. Gyngell, the curator of the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 1913. Sumner's later work departed from the late-Impressionist style of the Nabi movement and became more intellectual.

Gerald Sekoto befriended artists Alexis Preller, with whom he exchanged a lot of ideas and Alexis taught Gerald to work in oil. Within a short time Gerald Sekoto started exhibiting his work and had built up a reputation in the Johannesburg art scene. However, Sekoto was unhappy in the racial and claustrophobic work environment in Johannesburg. In 1942 he decided to leave Johannesburg for District Six in Cape Town before he went abroad in exile.

In the contemporary collection, we have artists like Lawrence Lemaona, Nandipha Mntambo, Lyndi Sales, Gwen Miller, Steven Cohen and many more.

Reference: Manganyi, NC. 1996. *A black man called Sekoto*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Contact the gallery:

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 Email: Mkhonbw@unisa.ac.za  
 Administrator: Magda Botha Tel: (012) 429 6823  
 Email: ukun1@unisa.ac.za  
 Fax: (012) 429 3221



Maud Sumner, *The Garden Party*. Oil on canvas.



Maggie Laubser, *Landscape with Pink House*. Oil on board.



Steven Cohen, *Let the Voice of the Youth be Heard*. (1993). Hand Painted Chair.



Lawrence Lemaona, *Players of Colour*. (2006). Fabric



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Artwork: Jenna Crawford, UNISA student

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# CHANGING CONTEXTS

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2010 ONE  
HUNDRED  
YEARS OF  
COLLECTING:  
THE JOHANNESBURG ART GALLERY

*Cover of 100 hundred years of collecting:  
The Johannesburg Art Gallery*



A century ago, the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) began collecting art under the guidance of Florence Phillips and Hugh Lane. Today, its collections are vast (consisting of around 10 000 pieces) and include historical works from 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch and Flemish artists through to pieces by 18 and 19<sup>th</sup> century French and British artists, Japanese prints, South African art, contemporary works, and furniture and lace amongst others.

Forming part of the Gallery's centenary programme, a splendid hardcover book *One hundred years of collecting: The Johannesburg Art Gallery* was launched on 28 November 2010.

With 200 pages illustrating more than 370 artworks, the book features essays by researchers, curators and artists Jillian Carman, Bongzi Dhlomo, Sheree Lissoos, Nessa Leibhammer, Khwezi Gule, Jo Burger and Elza Miles. It is edited by Jillian Carman, an Honorary Research Fellow at the universities of the Witwatersrand and Johannesburg and formerly a curator at JAG.

What follows is an abridged version of Carman's *Introduction: Changing contexts*, which provides a brief historical context and an overview of the essays featured in *One hundred years of collecting: The Johannesburg Art Gallery*.

When the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG) opened to the public on 29 November 1910, it was acclaimed for its modern art collection. In fact, the more progressive of London art critics lamented that this rough young mining town in the colonies had received something that was more avant-garde than anything 'back home'. Today, 100 years later and with the benefit of hindsight, this avant-garde claim seems absurd. But that was the opinion of the time.

A century later JAG is again acclaimed for its collection of contemporary art, the term preferred in 2010, as 'modern' no longer has an avant-garde meaning. The assessment criteria and the vast scope of JAG's collections, of course, are radically different from what they were in 1910. JAG today is far more than a gallery of contemporary art. Its various collections constitute a unique record of the development of public culture over the past 100 years. It is a visual archive and a witness of political and social change, as well as of the huge shifts in assessing 'what is art' and what objects are worthy of collecting and holding in trust for the citizens of Johannesburg; and, indeed, of who the people are who are considered citizens. This centenary book sets out to explain the complexities which make up JAG in 2010.

Bongi Dhlomo's essay, *Seeds of change*, sets the scene for describing this one hundred-year-old institution. She was the first black person appointed, in 1992, to JAG's Art Gallery Committee (AGC), a structure that had been in existence since the signing of the deed of donation in January 1913. The deed was created to keep JAG and its collections in trust "for the behoof and public benefit of the inhabitants" of Johannesburg in perpetuity, ensuring proper maintenance for the collection, as well as its integrity and protection from political interference (Deed of *donatio inter vivos*, 21 January 1913).

All decisions concerning JAG's collections and related matters are made by the AGC before going through various municipal committees, and before reaching the full council for ratification. Council may refuse to ratify an acquisition – as Nessa Leibhammer describes in her essay concerning the purchase of the Lowen Collection – or withhold adequate maintenance and purchase funds, but it has no power to treat JAG's collections as disposable assets, or to instruct the AGC to act in an immoral or illegal way.

The AGC has seven trustees: three political representatives (two municipal councillors – one usually the mayor – and a government appointee) and four worthy citizens. Political interests cannot overrule those of Johannesburg citizens, and the terms of the trust cannot be changed. This admirable document has ensured the safe-keeping of JAG's collections, but it has also ensured an often conservative grip on JAG's policies through lack of change in the committee.

The four committee members representing Johannesburg's citizens cannot be removed from office unless they voluntarily resign, commit a social indiscretion, become incompetent or die. Historically, many seem to have led long and upright lives with no intention of giving up a prestigious public position.

Demographic change in the AGC lagged behind JAG's realigned collecting and exhibition policies. This partly explains why it took 80 years before black people became visible and actual stakeholders in JAG. Dhlomo explains how she wondered if she was a 'sell-out' when she accepted her appointment in 1992. But then she goes on to describe her passionate involvement in developments during the years leading to 2010, and the current demographic and democratic ownership of JAG by all Johannesburg's citizens.

The arrangement of the three essays after Dhlomo's underscores the trajectory of the changes in JAG's collections over the past 100 years, the challenges to the canons of western art history, and the nature of the collection in 2010. *Becoming historic*, by Jillian Carman and Sheree Lisoos, describes the first 50 years of JAG's life, and a collection that was firmly based within the tradition of western art. Nessa Leibhammer's essay, *Filling the spaces/Contesting the canons*, is intentionally framed by *Becoming historic*, and Khwezi Gule's *Contending legacies: South African modern and contemporary art collections*.

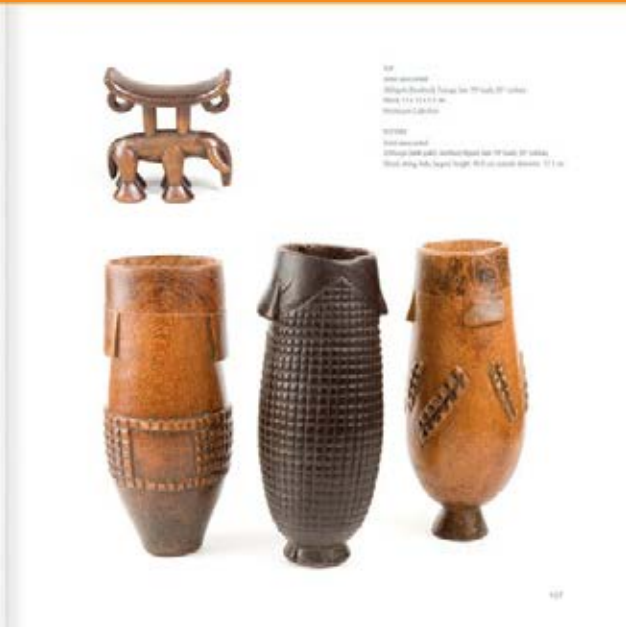
Leibhammer, by examining the items in JAG's collection made by indigenous





Pages from Khwezi Gule's essay, *Contending legacies: South African modern and contemporary art collections*, featuring works by Jackson Hlungwani, Johannes Maswanganyi, Johannes Segogela and Lucky Sibiyi.

Pages from Nessa Leibhammer's essay, *Filling the spaces/Contesting the canons*, featuring traditional southern African works by unrecorded artists (TOP & CENTRE).





southern African artists, interrogates accepted art historical practices and the nature of what is considered art; probably the most acute challenges to the history of art in South Africa. Gule's essay describes JAG's contemporary collection as it is today, drawing together the strands that make up the complexity of art as it is practised and studied in 2010.

*Becoming historic* describes the foundation collection that was established with Randlord money, most notably from Otto Beit and Lionel Phillips. The project was driven by Florence Phillips with the support of her husband Lionel, put together by Hugh Lane, and moved, in 1915, into a building designed by Edwin Lutyens.

The essay addresses the basis on which the collection was built during the first 50 years of its existence, the main emphasis having been the filling of gaps identified by Lane. The gaps, however, remained largely unfilled due to lack of funds until the 1930s, when the municipal council belatedly realised what a valuable asset it had sitting in Joubert Park. It funded the 1940 additions of the east and west wings to the Lutyens building, which had opened in 1915 in an incomplete state and remained incomplete until 1986, when Meyer Pienaar [architects] enclosed the courtyard and added wings, in the spirit of Lutyens' original concept.

The council finally, in 1937, created a full-time director's post with Anton Hendriks as the first incumbent, and allocated an acquisition budget. The collection then began to have its gaps addressed, a major

gap having been the paucity of South African art – although only of art made by white South African artists. Black artists were virtually ignored, with the exception of Gerard Sekoto, who had one western-style painting acquired in 1940 [*Yellow houses: a street in Sophiatown*, 1940], the only item by a black artist held by JAG during those first 50 years.

The central position in the book of *Filling the spaces/Contesting the canons* is a metaphor for the central position of traditional southern African art in the radical reassessment of art and art history in this country. The traditional collection contests the very criteria that Lane used to select items for JAG's foundation collection: the aesthetic judgement that conformed to the grand narrative of western art history in deciding what is good art, and what is not. According to this narrative, art made beyond its perimeters was primitive, exotic or merely 'other'. It was not part of mainstream art history. The traditional art-making, therefore, of the majority of inhabitants in South Africa would have been judged inferior to that of the European settler elite. Only those works by black South Africans that were made within the western canon would have been considered proper (or fine) art and, if judged (by western standards, of course) to be of sufficiently high quality, they could be purchased for a public art gallery.

In his essay *Contending legacies: South African modern and contemporary art collections*, Gule in a way inverts the process of the essay, *Becoming historic*. He discusses issues around what is modern and what

is contemporary, and then works backwards to trace the nature of the legacy handed down to today's practitioners. Carman and Lisoos start with the modern (or contemporary) a century ago and follow it into an historical space. Gule discusses artists and artworks that are rooted in South Africa, its politics, subjects and contending identities. He shifts to the margins those grand white artists who feature centrally in twentieth-century books about the history of South African art, and traces the artistic legacy of South African art from the 1930s onwards in terms of black artists practising in a western idiom who were ignored during JAG's first 50 years.

JAG's overall collections do not fit neatly into these three main areas covered by the chapters, nor is its history a tidy, focused development along predetermined lines. Museums are far too messy to fit into such confines; many would say this is to their advantage. One of the earliest indications of diverging purposes was the development of JAG's name from Municipal Gallery of Modern Art in the 1910 catalogue, which was produced under Lane's direction, to the title given in the deed of donation of just over two years later, Art Gallery and Museum of Industrial Art.

The latter name was evidently according to Florence Phillips' wishes, Lane having since resigned as London-based director of JAG. Phillips' intention was always to have examples of lace and furniture and other educational items as part of JAG's collection, but Lane had thwarted her plans by putting together a collection of

modern art that excluded industrial art (also known as applied or decorative art).

Phillips had also wished to have an art school attached to the gallery, and for the building to house an art library. Neither of these plans materialised as part of JAG's extended functions. However, early gifts of Cape Dutch furniture are still part of JAG's collection, as is Phillips' gift of a lace collection. The latter, however, was largely ignored until the late 1980s, when members of the Witwatersrand Lace Guild assisted in cataloguing, repairing and cleaning the lace prior to placing it on display.

The furniture and lace collections have both been considered closed (not actively pursued) since 1994, when JAG issued a policy document analysing its different collections, indicating which were closed, and what the future collecting focuses should be. The highly regarded Japanese print collection of some 200 works has also been considered closed since 1994, as well as the oriental ceramics collection of some 100 pieces. Both were consolidated during Hendriks' directorship in the 1950s and early 1960s. Both today are extraneous to JAG's core policy, but nevertheless they remain superb assets which enhance JAG's collection and exhibition profile.

Perhaps JAG's most important closed collection is the contemporary international one started by Nel Erasmus. When Erasmus became director in 1966, she announced that JAG's future policy would be to continue buying "only the best South





1957  
 Edoardo Villa (1916-1988)  
 Seated female figure  
 Bronze, 23 x 18 x 11 cm

1951  
 Cecil Skotnes (1924-1998)  
 The love of gold, 1951  
 Handmade paper, 14 x 12 cm



1957  
 Edoardo Villa (1916-1988)  
 Standing female figure  
 Bronze, 23 x 18 x 11 cm



1957  
 Ben Arnold (1916-1988)  
 Figure in a room, 1957  
 Oil on canvas, 20 x 12 cm

1957  
 Ben Arnold (1916-1988)  
 Figure in a room, 1957  
 Oil on canvas, 20 x 12 cm



1957  
 Penny Siopis (1917-1998)  
 Figure in a room, 1957  
 Oil on canvas, 20 x 12 cm

Pages from Khwezi Gule's essay, *Contending legacies: South African modern and contemporary art collections*, featuring works by Sydney Kumalo, Ben Arnold, Winston Saoli, Louis Maqhubela (TOP), Cecil Skotnes, Edoardo Villa, Walter Battiss, Alexis Preller (CENTRE), Penny Siopis and Deborah Bell (BOTTOM).

African works" but it would not specialise in South African art "because it is felt that other South African galleries and museums are doing this". Her focus would be on acquiring "suitable overseas art as the means allow". Sculptures by Henry Moore were acquired and, in the early 1970s, possibly Erasmus' most famous acquisition, a Picasso drawing of a harlequin [*Tête d'Arlequin II*, 1971], partly funded by the then newly formed Friends of the Johannesburg Art Gallery. It caused a huge controversy and was the best public relations exercise the gallery could have hoped for.

Also acquired under Erasmus' directorship were American colour-field paintings by Jules Olitski and Helen Frankenthaler, while her successor Pat Senior continued the focus with works by Alexander Calder, Kenneth Noland, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd and numerous additions to the print collection. Later a Francis Bacon [*Study of a portrait of a man*, 1969] was added and in 1996, with the aid of funds from the Anglo American Johannesburg Centenary Trust, two highly important pieces by Marcel Duchamp [*Boîte*, 1968] and Salvador Dalí [*White aphrodisiac telephone*, 1936] were added to this collection, demonstrating that even with a focused policy, there should be sufficient flexibility and awareness to enhance existing closed collections.

The principal focus of the 1994 collecting policy document is the same today as it was 16 years ago: to consolidate the South African collections. These are made up of traditional items, modernist twentieth-century art (particularly that of previously marginalised black artists) and contemporary art, including international artists with South African links, like Marlene Dumas, and artists from other African countries, like Oluwarotimi (Rotimi) Fani-Kayode. The purpose of this collecting focus is to build on JAG's unique strength: it is ideally placed to be a major international centre and archive of South African art, within South Africa.

This book should be ample evidence of this possibility as JAG goes into the next century.

*One hundred years of collecting:*

*The Johannesburg Art Gallery* is available for sale at the JAG bookstore or can be ordered for shipping via Michelle Swart at [Michelle@designmagazine.co.za](mailto:Michelle@designmagazine.co.za) <





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## BOOK REVIEW

# I WONDER

## MARIAN BANTJES

**By Jacques Lange.** *I Wonder* is a most apt title for the new book written, illustrated and exquisitely designed by Marian Bantjes and published by Thames & Hudson. The layered meanings of the title allude to her introspection around the themes 'wonder', 'honour' and 'memory'; and her thoughtful treatises on art, design, beauty and popular culture. Yet from a reader's perspective, it reminds me of the lyrics of Joe Cocker's song *I Stand In Wonder* ("...Oh, I stand, *I stand in wonder* of you..."), because of the awe-inspiring tactile and visual experience that Bantjes creates with this book.

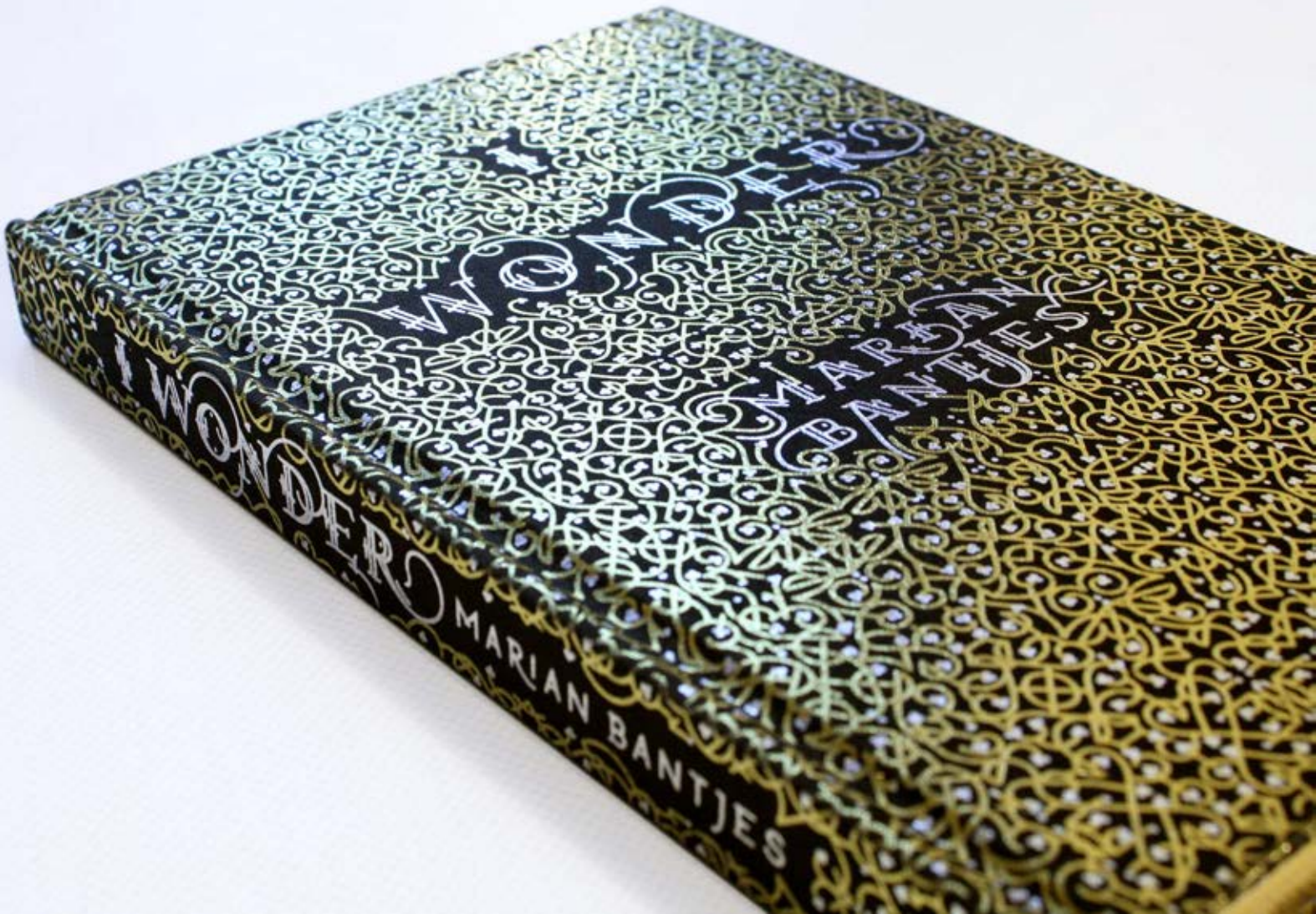
Bantjes is a designer, typographer, writer and illustrator who works for an impressive international client base from her studio on a small island off the west coast of Canada. She started her career working as a typesetter in 1984 and founded her own design firm in 1994. In 2003, she left all of that behind to begin an experiment in what she

describes as "following love instead of money, by doing work that was highly personal, obsessive and sometimes just plain weird." At the same time she began writing for the highly respected design weblog *Speak Up*, and her cheeky but thoughtful articles (some of which appear in adapted form in *I Wonder*) soon gained her international recognition in the blogosphere.

Bantjes' art and design crosses boundaries of time, style and technology. She is known for her detailed and precisely patterned vector art, obsessive handwork (drawing with pencil and ink), use of unexpected media (such as plant material and food ingredients) and her graphic ornamentation, which is reminiscent of Mediaeval manuscripts.

Like many other reviewers, it took me several days after receiving a copy of *I Wonder* before I could commit time to engage with this book with its jewel-like appearance.







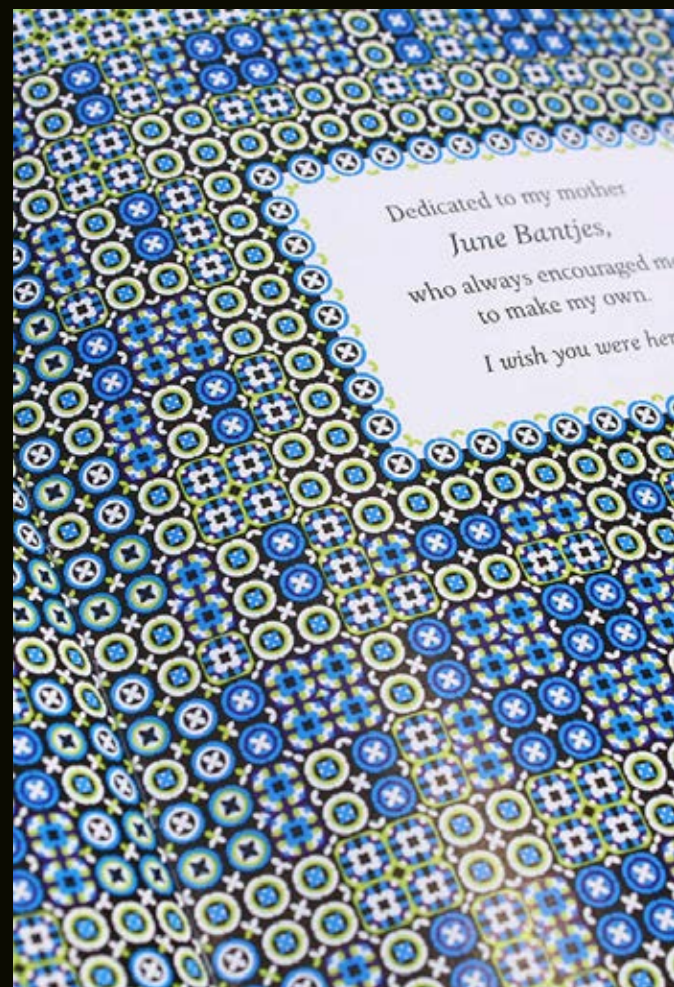
When I opened the courier package I realised that this was something special that required dedicated time and due respect because of the book's impressive outer appearance, ignoring the old saying that one should not judge a book by its cover.

Similarly, Michael Surtees wrote that "Going through the book yesterday I realized pretty quickly that I'm going to do this review in two parts. This first part is going to be about my reaction to the book and the second part will be after I actually read it. I'm going to be taking some time off soon and want to spend some quality time with the book. I was struck that while making notes that my first four bullet points had

the word 'feel' in it. It's appropriate in so many ways. Before opening it I felt I needed to wash my hands. I sort of wish that it had a special box to contain it. Turning the pages was an activity in joy."

Bantjes writes that the book is dedicated to her mother "who always encouraged me to make my own." And so she did. This book is a manifestation of Bantjes' self-defined world, specifically the creative world where she sees no differences between art and design.

When asked if she referred to herself as an artist, graphic designer, or neither, Bantjes replied with "graphic artist". It's a



Details from title pages and Marian Bantjes' *Introduction*.

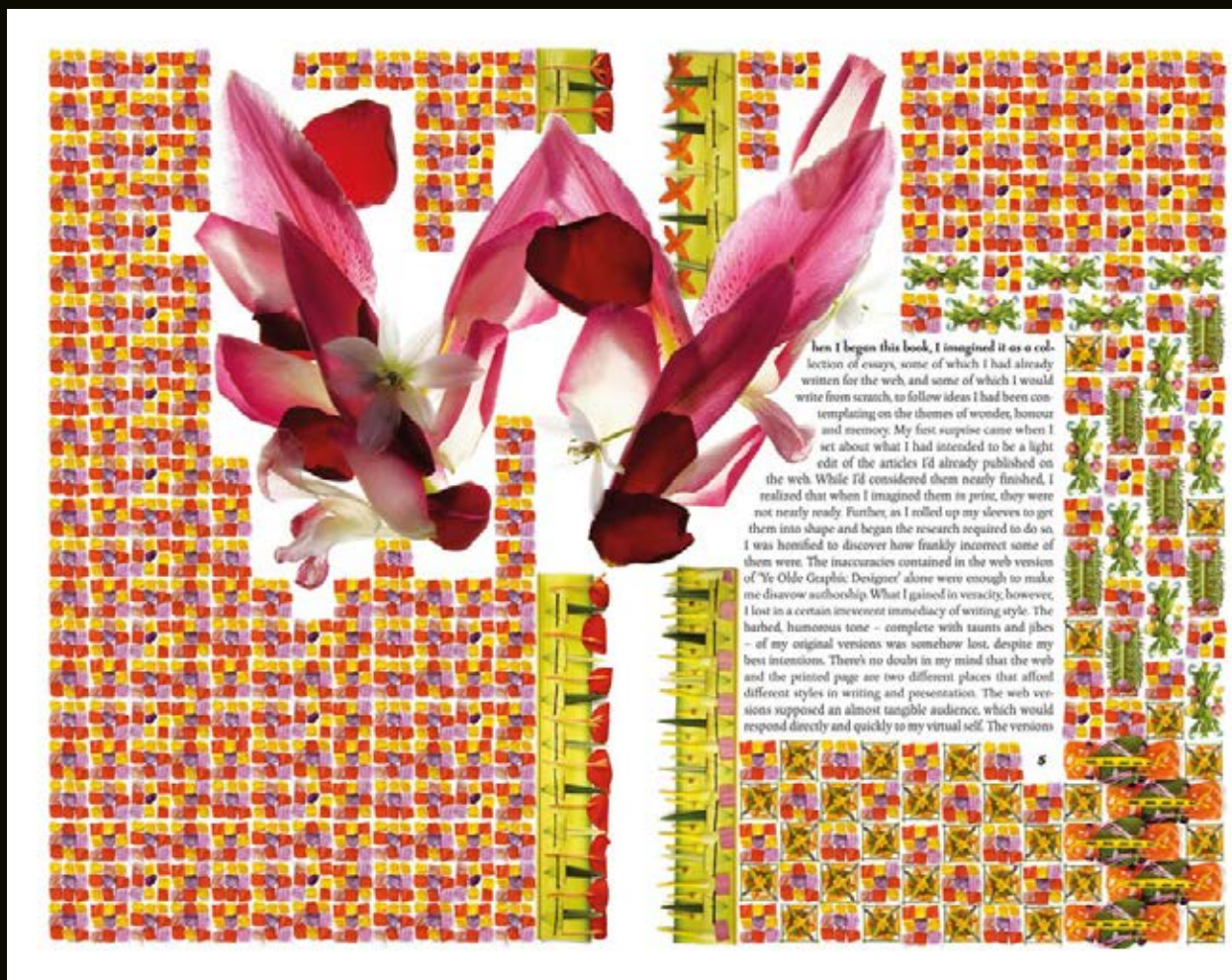


term that, she believes, went out of fashion in a similar way to how 'graphic design' is almost being lost to 'communications', but still it neatly implies a combination of fine artist and designer.

*I Wonder* is a production masterpiece. It must have tested the skills, budgets and patience of the publisher and printer to the extreme. Techniques include multi-layered foils on the covers and combinations of CMYK and gold spot colour printing on the text pages.

The book is structured to cover 13 essays. The Monacelli Press describes it as follows: "Beginning with the title essay, *Wonder*, Bantjes explores the history of ornament from the

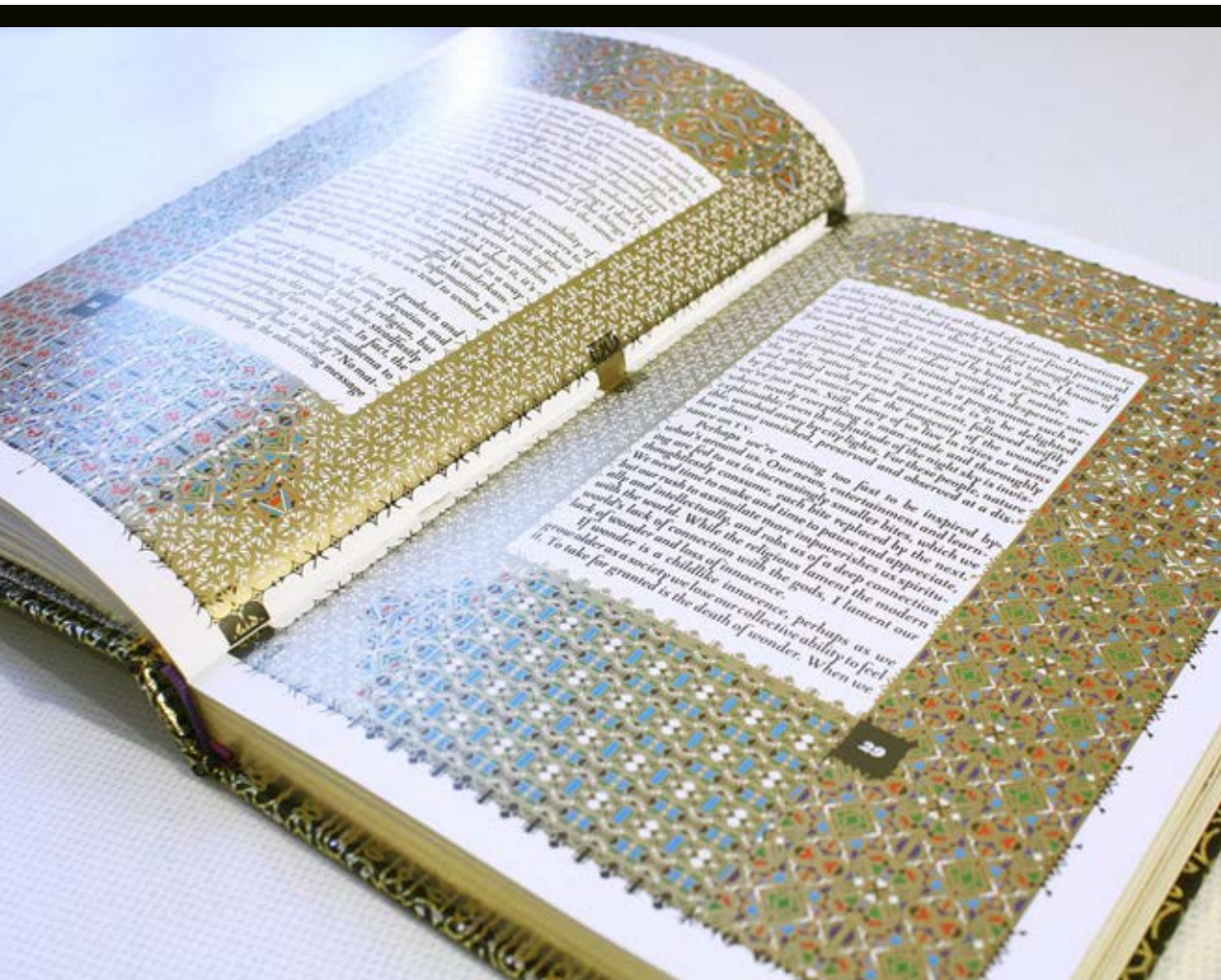
illuminated manuscripts of Christian scribes to contemporary architecture. Broad in scope, this essay touches not only on ornament of Western origin, but on Islamic and Tibetan traditions as well. Bantjes' research was clearly extensive, and this piece is a fascinating overview that culminates in the author's exhortation that we embrace wonder wherever we find it. Bantjes concludes the chapter by writing "To say 'I wonder' is to say 'I question; I ask'. The mind seeks. Sometimes it finds answers, sometimes it does not. We need wonder in order to keep moving and growing – to stay alive to the world. It gives us meaning and, in fact, makes us human" – a similar statement that Judith Mason made in an earlier article of *DESIGN>ART No 2* (see p39).





*Honour*, another linchpin chapter of this book, begins with a discussion of the modernist design ideal of 'content over form', and segues into the notion of protection, the framing of a design element such as a logo in white space. Bantjes calls the reader's attention to the historical precedent of elaborately framing items of significance, with a picture frame perhaps or – more dramatically – with the Victorian practice of adorning a small photo or a locket with the braided hair of a deceased loved one. In the end, Bantjes asks readers to recognise that, in this short life, we must honour with our time, effort, and energies, that in which we find true value.

Bantjes' writing, while thought provoking, would likely fall upon deaf ears, were it not for her artistic hand – an aspect that she intentionally aims to highlight. For her, image and text needs to work hand in glove. The breadth of her expertise as an artist and illustrator comes through in the diverse and adventurous ornamentation she creates around each of these essays. *Wonder* is laid upon pages that seem to be wrought from gold leaf with elaborate 'etchings' which are in fact vector patterns created and composed by Bantjes in Adobe Illustrator.



Details from *Wonder* (LEFT) and *The Sun, the Moon, the Stars* (RIGHT).



In contrast, *Honour* is framed with a background of pasta of varying shapes and sizes, which Bantjes manually placed and photographed without the aid of digital assistance.

The essays in *I Wonder* are diverse in both content and presentation and culminate in a piece on memory, in which the author recalls her mother's obsessive note-taking in steno pads that she and her brothers had come to refer to as "Mum's brains." The graphical element of this essay is a composite of Bantjes' mother's actual notes, and the art and text balance and interact wonderfully with each other on the page.

In the forward to *I Wonder*, designer Stefan Sagmeister calls Bantjes' work, "beauty facilitating the communication of meaning," and goes on to say that "it's like meeting a super-model who turns out to be a neuroscientist." Bantjes' origins as a typesetter and a graphic designer inform the painstaking rigor that underlies her complex ornamentation.

*I Wonder* is ultimately more a work of art than a regular book since the physical experience of the reader/viewer is equally critical to Bantjes' intended narratives, which operates on two levels: (1) text and image should operate symbiotically – each has its own



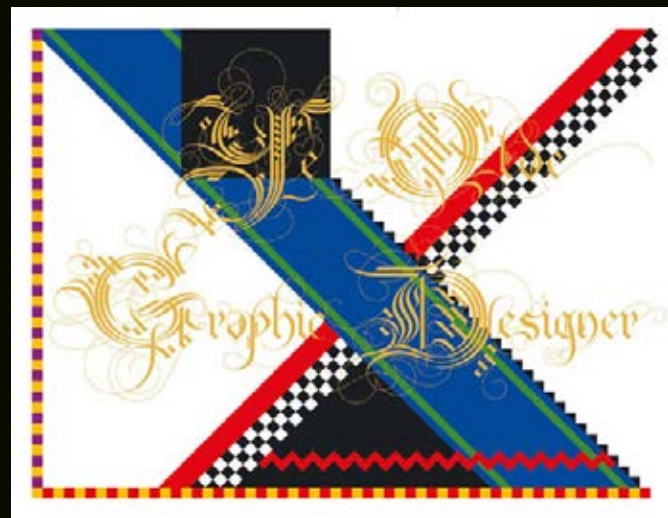


strengths and the one needs the other to convey a truly meaningful experience; (2) books are precious artefacts which can only be experienced in a physical manifestation. With this, Bantjes proves that 'print is not dead' and that the digital age has not yet been able to replicate the multiple sensory delight that a physical object can provide.

Bantjes says, "I spent 15 months writing, illustrating and designing this book. It's a gorgeous hardcover, with gold and silver foils on a satin cloth, with gilded page edges. ... At

a smallish size, it is a book meant for holding and reading, curled up in your favourite chair." "Every single illustration is new ... and the content is not about my work (i.e. not a monograph), but instead combines graphic art with the written word, and lends my own contemplative but frequently amused voice to my observations of the world."

"As a book experience, the relationship between the content and the graphics is very important. They are totally interdependent and neither the articles nor the graphics can live without the other."



TOP LTR: Details from *Honour* and *Ye Olde Graphic Designer*.  
 BOTTOM LTR: *The Alphabet: A Critique* and *Santa™*.

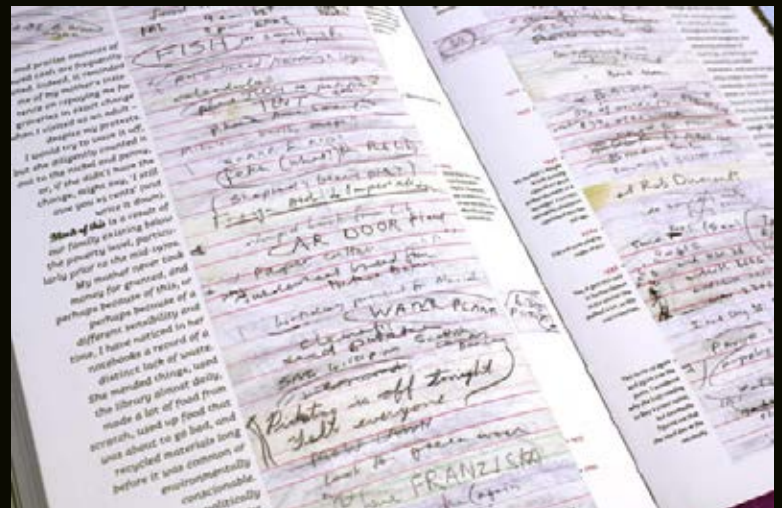
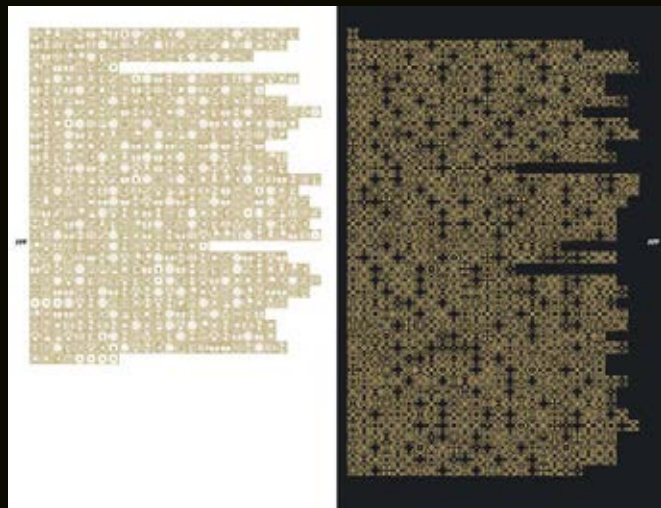
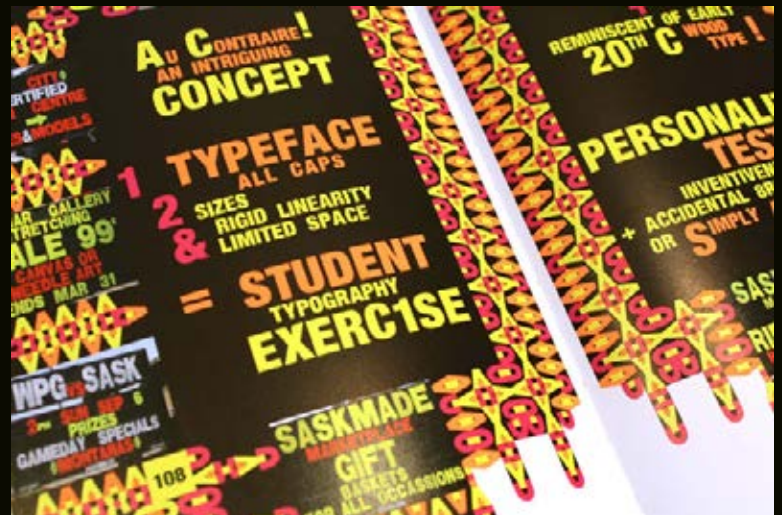


“The book is in many ways eclectic, with a variety of forms and moods, represented in an abundance of typefaces and graphic styles. But, much in the way of one of my favourite documentary *Fast, Cheap and Out of Control* by Errol Morris, this disparity picks up threads one from another as it progresses, and starts to weave together in a unified whole.”

Bantjes concludes: “Ultimately the range of thoughts, personal history and hare-brained ideas come together. To the eyes, it is a feast for visual gluttons, but as those who are fa-

miliar with my work will already know, there is food for the mind and the heart as well.”

*I Wonder* is indeed a feast for visual gluttons but I also believe that it also has a strong auditory quality. The book takes the reader on an eclectic musical journey comprising Mediaeval chants, Italian opera, Celtic inspired ballads, to contemporary indie rock. However, its Joe Cocker’s lyrics “...Oh, I stand, *I stand in wonder of you...*” that keeps repeating in my mind every time I look at this book because Bantjes created an incredible sensory experience. <



TOP LTR: Details from *Cemeteries* and *1 Sign 4 All*.

BOTTOM LTR: *Secrets* and *Memory 2: Notes on a Life*.

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# KARIM RASHID

## DESIGNS LATEST SODASTREAM MACHINES

Karim Rashid, one of the most prolific designers of our generation, has formed a partnership with Sodastream to design the latest edition of the brand's new eco-friendly home carbonation machines.

The demand for pre-packaged bottled drinks is increasing and so is the impact on the environment. Sodastream is taking a stand against pre-packaged bottled drinks and offers all consumers the option to reduce their carbon footprint by making their own carbonated beverages at home with the beautifully designed *Karim Rashid Limited Edition* drinks maker.





Whether Rashid is designing a fashion boutique for Agatha Ruiz De La Prada in New York or a 600-room hotel in Bangkok, he believes in merging aesthetic taste with functionality and draws inspiration from everyday life by observing and analysing everything around him.

"I believe good designs should replace three products with one," says Rashid. "Sodastream already does that with its responsible products. I was inspired by this and wanted to craft an energetic, fun, colourful spin on the products. I was asked to decorate their existing product, which is a great start to our relationship."

"The pattern used for Sodastream is an extension of my ikon language. It means 'futureretro' – retro, because soda always reminds me of America in the 1950s and future because it reminds me of a movement and a kaleidoscope data-driven age."

"I see the future of our aesthetic world crossing all the disciplines. Art, architecture, design, fashion, food and music fuse together to increase our experiences and bring greater pleasure to our material and immaterial lives. Our motivations should focus around our conscious collective memory and a desire to fill it with ideas that are seamless between art and life. I bring differentiation, innovation and human needs and desires to new products. Without these, brands will not survive in our shrinking global highly competitive market place." In design, it is not the form that is primary; it is the idea, the concept. Designing is not just 'decorating' and 'applying cosmetics' or 'forms' to existing archetypes or archi-

tectural spaces. The key to beautiful design is in the human element, the human scale and the human condition. Design touches us on every level and design can continue to define and shape our dimensional interior environments and create new progressive human behaviours and new languages."

According to Guy Rogers, marketing manager of Sodastream South Africa, "Sodastream offers consumers a great-tasting product which is intrinsically environmentally-friendly, healthier, more convenient, and cost-effective – something the whole family can enjoy. Sodastream enables consumers to make fresh sparkling flavoured drinks in the comfort of their own homes whilst having fun mixing the different flavours together."

"Who says being environmentally friendly can't be fun?" asks Rogers. "The sleek, modern lines of the Karim Rashid Sodastream drinks maker with its' curvy design and playful – is aimed to suit everyone."

South African consumers are joining the international fight against bottled water and other pre-packaged beverages, which many believe are unnecessary, costly, and harmful to the environment and possibly to drinkers themselves. Many are turning to alternative eco-friendly sources to enjoy healthier and more environmentally friendly drinks, such as home carbonation systems.

Once the centre of the 1980s South African suburban kitchen, Sodastream is finding renewed favour with shoppers, homemakers







and health-conscious consumers as the environmental impact of the bottled drinks industry and the scourge of PET bottles becomes more evident. Now, in 2010, bottled water is losing its value as a status symbol as more people realise the irony of paying considerable sums for a high quality resource that is piped cheaply into millions of homes around the country.

“We are very fortunate to live in a country where we have constant access to drinking water of a very high standard. Unfortunately, we simultaneously have very low levels of PET recycling and a growing use of bottled drinks. Where are all these bottles going to end up?” asks Guy Rogers of Sodastream. “Water is the ‘blue gold’ of the 21st century, a scarce commodity that is becoming scarcer. Does it make economic or environmental sense to use up to seven litres of water to produce a litre of ‘filtered water’?”

Across the world, consumers are asking the same questions and turning their backs on bottled beverages. “Eco and health conscious consumers are beginning to realise that the hidden costs of bottled beverages outweigh the slight convenience they offer,” concludes Rogers.

Sodastream is the world's largest manufacturer, distributor and marketer of home carbonation systems. Sodastream is sold in more than 30 countries worldwide. Sodastream's long standing and deep heritage dates back to 1903, when the home carbonation system was introduced as an innovative solution to the beverage market. <

Illustration inspired by Sharlé Mathews' artwork, *Rational irrationality*.



# CREATING A PORTFOLIO LIFE

HOW MANY GIGS ARE YOU JUGGLING?

By Madi Hanekom



Gigs? Juggling? You might think you are reading an article about the popular South African zef-rap band, *Die Antwoord*, doing a show in Pofadder - that dusty little platteland town in the Northern Cape – or the circus coming to town... but you could not be more wrong.

It has everything to do with having a greater say over your life's journey and specifically, if and how you might elect to participate in the "gig economy". Tina Brown, a British journalist and the founder and Editor-in-Chief of *The Daily Beast*, an online news magazine that derives its name from the fictional newspaper in Evelyn Waugh's 1938 novel, *Scoop*, coined this interesting term which aptly highlights a growing new local and international trend where, instead of having one job, people pursue a number of "gigs".

"No one I know has a job any more," writes Brown on 12 January 2009 in an article about the gig economy on *The Daily Beast* website. "They've got gigs ... a bunch of free-floating projects, consultancies, and part-time bits and pieces."

Brown is also the author of the 2007 bestseller, *The Diana Chronicles*, the former editor of *Tatler*, *Vanity Fair*, *The New Yorker* and *Talk* magazines and hosted the now defunct CNBC television show, *Topic A with Tina Brown*. Although once

described by novelist Jamaica Kincaid as "Joseph Stalin in high heels with blonde hair from England," it would be safe to say that Brown knows what she is talking about on the career front. She currently successfully juggles a number of gigs including magazine editor, author, talk show host, to name but a few, which makes for a rather fascinating and meaningful mix of work-related portfolio elements.

The portfolio approach, comprising of work-related activities, comes into its own and adds significant value when its 'concept' is broadened, by making it relevant within the wider context of living a fulfilling life.

## So what is a portfolio life?

A portfolio life is, in essence, about a lifestyle choice. It embraces the idea of deliberately opting to structure your life, and career, to achieve fulfillment and financial reward through a combination of concurrent interests and income streams. It also encompasses redesigning or re-engineering your life to have greater control over how you manage your time and efforts to achieve better balance between work, home and leisure. And that, as we all know, is darn difficult. But if there is a good chance that the benefits

can far outweigh the efforts to bring about meaningful change, it might just be worthwhile considering.

What is a portfolio life not? A portfolio life should not be confused with purely having many projects on the boil at once. The various activities in the portfolio therefore are viewed as rewarding ones, only if they are executed well and bring a healthy balance of fulfillment and income.

Let's investigate where it all started.

## The original guru

Many moons before the formidable Ms Brown shared her insights about the gig economy with the world, there was the international business guru – Charles Handy – the prolific author of at least 19 books, past professor at the London Business School, recipient of honorary doctorates from various universities and too many other accolades to mention. He ignited thinking around the concept of a 'portfolio life' already in the 1980s and made it applicable to life in general, not just a career.

Handy in his book, *The Age of Unreason* (1989), explained the approach as follows: "If, rather than think of life as work and leisure, we think of it as a portfolio of activities – some of which we do for money, some for interest, some for pleasure, some for a cause – that way, we do not have to look for the occupation that miraculously

combines job satisfaction, financial reward and pleasant friends all in one package. As with any portfolio we get different returns from different parts and if one fails the whole is not ruined."

The professor can attest to the fact that creating a portfolio life is not something that happens by accident. It takes careful planning, serious commitment and excellent time management. When he decided to create a portfolio life for himself, he resigned from his full-time professorship and set "aside 100 days a year for making money, 100 days for writing, 50 days for good works and 100 days for spending time with my wife". Says the eminent professor further, "It is a freeing way of life."

It was into this broader concept of a portfolio life, developed by Handy, that Tina Brown has so cleverly inserted her idea of the "gig economy", giving it some contemporary "oomph".

## The South African guru

A prominent South African portfolio lifer is Johann Redelinghuys. He is a partner in Heidrick & Struggles, an international leadership advisory firm that effectively blends executive search & leadership consulting. Redelinghuys is also co-owner of De Hoek Country House in the Magaliesburg, is involved with a number of business schools both locally and abroad, is a non-executive director of the Starfish



Greatheart Foundation, an international development charity in South Africa which aims to “bring life, hope and opportunity to children in South Africa who have been orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS” and is a registered psychologist. As if this is not enough to keep him busy, he is furthermore the founder and chairman of a new business called Portfolio Life ([www.portfoliolife.co.za](http://www.portfoliolife.co.za)), a web forum interacting with like-minded people around the world.

Redelinghuys holds the view that, “The portfolio life principle is about having a number of work streams that give you financial freedom and much more fulfillment...” and that “...We want to change the way people work and live. Firstly we need to undo the programming that we have all undergone, making us believe that a single permanent job is the ideal lifestyle arrangement.”

Speaking at the Expo of the SA Business Schools Association (SABSA) on 9 September 2010, Redelinghuys put forward a case that “Career management is increasingly being governed by a range of new paradigms. At all levels, from new graduates to senior executives, it is much more the ‘sovereign individual’ and much less the traditional 9-5 corporate animal which will be successful.”

He agrees with Handy that following a portfolio approach to managing your career is also smart from a risk mitigation point

of view. It is obvious that having a number of career balls in the air will cushion the impact of any ill-wind blowing down one of your much-needed income generating activities.

Redelinghuys is also quoted in *Business Day* (16 February 2010) as saying “A single, full-time job is no longer sufficient or satisfying for increasing numbers of people. And, aside from the fact that most independent non-executive directors and chairmen already live rewarding portfolio lives, there is a growing sector of self-employed consultants, academics, freelance writers, artists as well as independent practicing doctors, lawyers and engineers doing the same.”

Noting that he includes artists in his list of portfolio lifers, a key question for a person working in the creative industries could be: Are you interested and geared up to participate in the cross-cutting multi-pronged mix of a portfolio life or do you rather prefer to drill down and work as a super specialist in your chosen field?

## To be or not to be... a portfolio lifer?

If you already are a portfolio lifer then this is one question you luckily have the answer to.

For other participants in the creative industries this might be a vexing question that

you, together with Shakespeare's Hamlet, could find yourselves having to deal with sooner rather than later, especially as adverse economic circumstances with its prevalence of job losses might force you to rethink and reframe the way you are currently managing your career.

Some of the important imperatives to consider when reflecting on the pros and cons of a portfolio life are:

- > Do you long for a greater sense of fulfillment in your life and career?
- > Are you brave enough to take more control over your life and career and design your own tailor-made sustainable job description?
- > Are you innovative and multi-skilled and not currently utilising all your skills, talents and resources?
- > Do you enjoy simultaneously working on various projects drawing on cross-cutting skills and experience or do you prefer to work, and be regarded as, a super specialist and concentrate on one project at a time?
- > Are you comfortable to work on a freelance/independent contractor basis and manage the associated risks thereof, i.e. irregular income?
- > Do you have good networking and self-promotion abilities and are you sufficiently organised to keep several balls in the air?

## Is there a definitive answer then?

Only you can decide. Having a portfolio approach to life, and especially towards one's career, is arguably not for everybody but there is ample proof of the substantial benefits for those people who do choose this lifestyle and get it right.

In the creative industries, more than in any other industry, there exists a powerful blend of creativity, innovation, knowledge, technology and entrepreneurship. It is exactly in these industries, which are populated with creative people who have the ability to think outside of the box, that major beneficial portfolio opportunities could be waiting.

Whilst *Die Antwoord* is still rapping, flapping about and shrewdly leaving people guessing as to whether itself has discovered yet what the question is to which it purports to have the answer, you might already have made a strategic lifestyle choice and could be winging your way to a flourishing portfolio life.

But remember that wise old saying, "The choices you make dictate the life you lead."

## Successful Portfolio Lifers in the Creative Industries

There are great examples of successful people from within the creative industries who have bought into the allure of living a portfolio life.



For a start, Leonardo da Vinci was a portfolio lifer except that he did not know it. This creative genius who lived 500 years ago was a scientist, artist, architect, engineer and inventor.

Some modern-day South Africans are clearly also enjoying the diversity of their careers and appear to be living fulfilled portfolio lives.

Take Alf Kumalo, the well-known South African media photographer. In an interview with the *Sunday Times Lifestyle Magazine* (10 October 2010), Kumalo stated, "There's never just one job a person could do."

The 80-year old veteran went on to explain that he started out as a freelance photo-journalist whilst simultaneously working as a car mechanic (before being promoted to paymaster in the same business), prior to becoming a full-time photojournalist. He also opened his own museum in his old house in Soweto in 2002 and still harks back to the days that he enjoyed playing the clarinet. Therefore Kumalo is an excellent role model of a multi-talented individual who had the foresight and tenacity to pursue various gigs.

Musa Kalenga and Ashley Hayden, both working in the creative industries and both also portfolio lifers, were interviewed by *Carte Blanche*, on the show that aired on 26 September 2010.

Kalenga is 26 years old and has never been a traditional nine-to-fiver. He is a founding member of Monatefellaz, a company

that focuses on research, brand strategising and marketing and describes his job there as being an "idea jockey". Kalenga is also a non-executive director for EASI Human Capital and an ambassador for the International Organisation for Migration – which has numerous projects linked to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits both migrants and society. He hosts his own TV show, *Kalenga Touch*, and is a guest speaker at events from time to time. This multifaceted youngster is involved in youth development programmes and is a dancer and choreographer in his free time.

Hayden was as a continuity presenter on M-Net before becoming involved in voice-overs for commercials, radio, television and corporate videos. She is a business woman, master of ceremonies, brand ambassador and actress with a recent stint in the TV soapie, *7de Laan*. Hayden also manages her own company, Feature Perfect, which offers a diverse range of services ranging from broadcast presenting and hosting, corporate, audio-visual, MC services and product launches to radio, film and television production and development. She provides media training courses, presentation skills training and her Women Mean Business course. Viewers of M-Net's *2010 Survivor South Africa, Santa Carolina* will remember Hayden as a wily contestant. She actively supports charities, especially those dealing with animals and children. And still finds free time for her two children.

Are these people impressive, or what? <

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# INVESTMENT SOLUTIONS CONTINUES TO CRAFT ITS MASTERPIECE

While Investment Solutions continues to perfect its masterpiece in multi-management, the company understands that the world of investments is more than just research, technology and specialist – its, an art of skilfully blending these factors into a meaningful result.

With assets under management in excess of R150 billion in over 10 years, Investment Solutions is South Africa's largest multi-manager – an investment manager of equally skilful managers with diverse investment styles – providing a range of premium products and services.

Through the company's sophisticated in-house research systems and applied research models, investment managers are researched and monitored according to a mandate set out, ensuring an optimal blend of expertise. These systems are assessed frequently to ensure optimum effectiveness and relevance to the dynamic world of manager research.

Combined with its depth of intellectual capital and cutting-edge technological research systems, Investment Solutions has the capability to respond to its dynamic clientele by providing tailor-made investment services designed for the discerning investor. With an extensive range of investment portfolios, Investment Solutions has the ability to meet its client expectations and exceed on service excellence through value-add services in innovative investment reporting and technologically advanced administration.

Furthermore, the company monitors its competitors' performance rigorously to ensure it is always ahead of its industry counterparts.

Investment Solutions' ethics and client orientation, combined with world class systems and the largest multi-manager investment team in the country, provides all its clients with the peace of mind that their interests are being cared for above all else. The company continues to explore market opportunities for growth so as to remain competitive and relevant to the retirement industry.

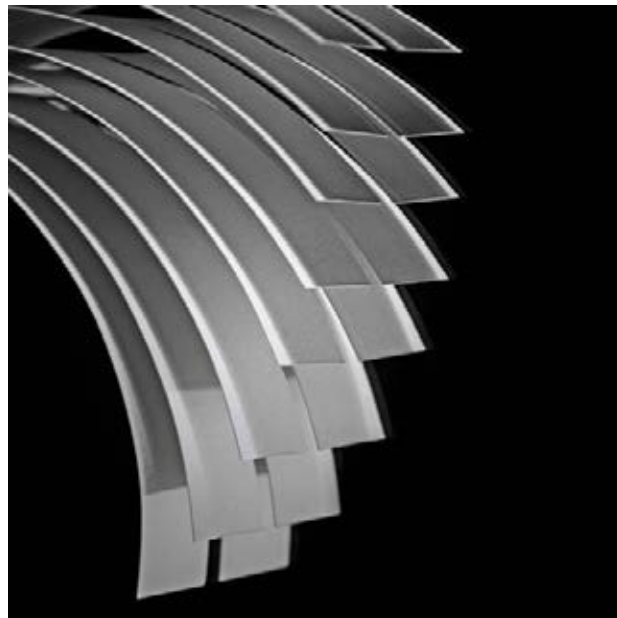
## MASTERING ITS ART

As a premier investment company, Investment Solutions continually seeks avenues of remaining contemporary and relevant to its stakeholders. To this endeavour, Investment Solutions embarked on a brand revamp in early 2010. The purpose of this undertaking was to develop a visual manifestation of the brand that drives recognition and relevance of Investment Solutions in South Africa and abroad; and also to communicate a positioning that illustrates the intelligent approach of the business.

Distinctive



Dynamic



Globally aligned





The rejuvenated brand was created through the careful blending of characteristics representative of the company's unique service proposition.

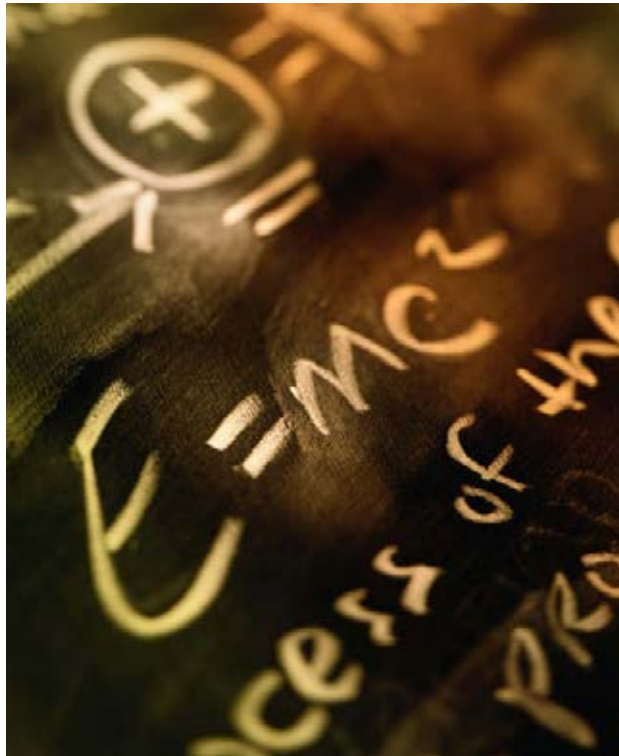
As the Johannesburg Art Gallery celebrates its 100 years of a diverse art collection, Investment Solutions acknowledges the immense contribution that this art gallery has made in bringing together a combination of artists with varying skills and passions. The existence of the Johannesburg Art Gallery gives opportunities to art lovers to appreciate and enjoy art pieces created with remarkable dexterity and talent. Investment Solutions believes art is a reflection of the rich tapestry of the South African society.

It is thus fitting that Investment Solutions associates itself with like-minded institutions, such as the Johannesburg Art Gallery, which not only complement, but enhance the company's ambitions of being an intelligent, contemporary and innovative industry leader.

**As each piece of artwork is an opportunity to perfect a skilful artist's craft, Investment Solutions is also well positioned to transform the world of investments with each brushstroke into a perfect masterpiece. <**

Intelligent

Sophisticated



# NESTLÉ

## THE ART OF GOOD BUSINESS PRACTICE

Nestlé is one of those rare companies whose products continue to touch people throughout their lives.

The company's origins stretch back to 1866 in Vevey, Switzerland, when pharmacist Henri Nestlé produced the world's first milk cereal for children.

Nestlé was a passionate and compassionate scientist who was driven to develop his Milk Food because of the high rate of infant mortality in his village. Indeed, Henri saved a dying child left in his care with this milk-based cereal. Once on the market, the milk was an immediate success, and is considered to be a major breakthrough in public health worldwide.

This success enabled the newly established company to develop further children's milk-based foods and expand first nationally, then internationally, from its base on the shores of Lake

Geneva. The famous Nestlé nest symbol dates from this early stage of the company's history.

Nestlé's expansion continued into and throughout the 20th century, as chocolate, instant beverages, culinary, refrigerated and frozen products, ice-cream, mineral water, pet food and more joined the children's food range.

Iconic brands that would go on to become household names globally include Milo (1929), the famous Nescafe coffee brand (1938) Nesquik, Cremora, KitKat, Bar-One, Smarties, King Cone, Purina and dozens more.

By 1971, Nestlé was officially the world's top-selling food company. As of 2010, the company has almost 500 factories in 80 countries.

### INTO AFRICA

Newspaper archives show that Nestlé dairy products arrived in South Africa long before the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Among the commodities listed in the *Cape Of Good Hope Commercial Report* of 3 April 1883, one finds:

"Milk (Nestlé's) 8/- per dozen – Supply Ample

Cream (Nestlé's) 7/6d per dozen – Supply Ample"\*

(\*8 shillings and 7 shillings & 6 pence respectively)

From there, sales quickly spread to Port Elizabeth and the diamond fields.





FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: Rich aroma. Refined taste. | The attractive façade of the Nestlé factory in East London. | Our East London chocolate and confectionery factory. | Assisting the youth through job creation – Magic on Wheels.

These products were imported into the colony, and distributed, by individual merchants until the mid 1880s, when a sole agent was officially appointed in Cape Town.

The discovery of gold in 1886 on the Witwatersrand saw Nestlé providing prospectors and diggers with a ready, safe source of condensed milk in the harsh, dusty conditions of the goldfields. At Kimberley's International Exhibition of 1892, Nestlé Swiss Milk was the only condensed milk to be awarded a Gold Medal.

In 1903, after The Anglo-Boer War, the Reparations Board ordered 60 000 cases of Nestlé condensed milk to be donated to families returning to their farms, while further shipments helped feed post-war babies in Johannesburg. On 15 July 1905, according to the *Cape Times*, the first shipment of "Nestlé Swiss Milk Chocolate" arrived in Cape Town.

On 7 July 1916, the Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company (Africa) Limited was registered as a South African company for the first time. The operation remained essentially an importer and distributor of Nestlé products until 1927, when local manufacturing began at Donnybrook, then in Estcourt and Franklin.

The company was re-registered as Nestlé (South Africa) the next year and in 1932 Nestlé Milk Chocolate began production in Pietermaritzburg, despite the Great Depression. Lactogen began production in Estcourt the same year "to be available to all Child Welfare Centres and Clinics, Pharmacists, and other sources..."



The first locally made Nescafe coffee was launched in 1939, and then Ricoffy in 1952.

Factories and depots continued to be built, bringing valuable employment to Bethal (1956) and Mossel Bay (1957). Today, Nestlé has 9 factories and 4 distribution centres countrywide. Head office moved from Durban to Zambesi House in Johannesburg in 1967, by which time Nestlé was one of South Africa's largest companies.

Expansion and new product launches continued and, in 2006, the company celebrated 90 years in South Africa. Today, in its 94<sup>th</sup> year, Nestlé is one of South African consumers' most treasured brands.

Nestlé's continued success and high standing, as of 2010, can be attributed not only for its top quality products, but also to the trust it has built up with South African consumers.

## COMMUNITY MATTERS

Thanks to Henri's original ethos, a culture of social investment has always been entrenched at Nestlé South Africa.

Upliftment projects have included health, education, the building of clinics, food gardens, nutrition programmes, construction of reservoirs and bore holes for safe water and funding for resource centres and housing. Financial support was channelled to teachers in order for them to upgrade learning skills for schools and the buildings and classrooms. Financial support was also channelled for adult learning

FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: Youngsters participating in the Nestlé Community Nutrition Programme. | Through the AGRI-BEE: Maluti Window Project, Nestlé contributes to the development of a sustainable dairy industry. | Young children benefitting from our Eco-Schools Programme | Nestlé runs initiatives in conjunction with local government, education departments, school governing bodies and environmental development organisations.





centres, rehabilitation programmes, business skills, cottage and home industries, small businesses, informal traders and spaza shops.

Nestlé's development and support of the black business sector was acknowledged with the NAFCOC Plaque in 1988, that organisation's highest honour.

South Africa's positive transformation in the 90s saw Nestlé continue to ramp up and widen its social investment.

## TODAY: CREATING SHARED VALUE – HENRI NESTLÉ WOULD HAVE APPROVED

Today, the company presides over a sophisticated, overarching corporate social investment programme underpinned by its founder's original mission in 1866: "To positively influence the social environment in which we operate as responsible corporate citizens with due regard for those environmental standards and societal aspirations which enhance quality of life."

This mission dictates that Nestlé plays a positive role in local socio-economic development and that it creates sustainable value, not only for shareholders and staff, but for South African society at large. It's a fundamental part of their business that Nestlé calls *Creating Shared Value*.

Like its predecessor programmes, *Creating Shared Value* depends on building the long-term trust of the public and it touches every part of the company's activities.

The key focus areas are *Water, Nutrition* and *Rural Development*. The framework of each area is aligned with national priorities and Millennium Development Goals, with sustainability being a vital factor.

The flagship programmes entail AGRI-BEE (aimed at emerging black farmers in Harrismith), the Nestlé Community Nutrition Programme, Magic on Wheels and MILO Champions.

Under the Water initiatives, are Econolink and WWF – Eco-Schools, while Nutrition is covered by WARMTH, Food & Trees and Zimisele. Rural Development comprises Project Head Start and The Haven Wellness Centre.

Further projects include Safety, Health and Environment, covering Occupational Safety and Health Management, Energy and Water Conservation and Environmental management, to name but a few.

In line with Nestlé's Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment vision, the company achieved a milestone by reaching a Level 4 status in 2010.

**As an established and deeply involved South African corporate citizen, Nestlé South Africa is proud to be associated with JAG. <**







# Johannesburg Property Company commemorates the Freedom Charter with the development of Walter Sisulu Square

On 25 June 1955, a gathering was held in Kliptown, Soweto that came to be known as the Congress of the People. The outcome was a visionary document that became a beacon of hope for the liberation struggle and a primary source in framing the new South African constitution, adopted in 1996. This document became known as the *Freedom Charter*. "People were declaring openly that political rights could be available to all regardless of age, colour, sex, wealth or education. The joy was as if a baby had just been born," said Rev Meebesi Xunda, 1955.

On the day of the Congress of the People, 2 884 elected delegates from far and wide, many of them avoiding police to get there,

as well as 7 000 spectators attended the proceedings. These included Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela, who could not address the Congress because he was banned at the time. The meeting was initiated by Professor ZK Matthews of Fort Hare and members of the African National Congress (ANC).

The Kliptown gathering was, and still is, unique in South African history because the people had come to hear about a document to which they themselves had contributed. The Congress of the People became, in the words of Chief Luthuli, President of the African National Congress (ANC) at that time, "a people's parliament".



It is on this site in Soweto, south of Johannesburg, where the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication has been constructed. It is located at the heart of the Greater Klip-town area in Soweto and is one of the most historically significant and vibrant places in Johannesburg. The site is the birthplace and foundation of South Africa democracy. It is an area where identity and historic

roots are located in intense commercial activity and has always been the economic hub of Soweto.

## The Old Square

The Old Square is built on the site where, the Congress of the People took place. It





Views of Walter Sisulu Square. Old Square is featured left, New Square top right and the Footpath and Freedom Charter Monument bottom right.

is a space that commemorates past struggles and pays tribute to heroes and heroines who sacrificed their lives to fight for freedom and equality. The grid pattern in the paving of the square signifies the unyielding nature of the regime against which the struggle was waged. A footpath that once existed when the meeting took place is commemorated by an irregular red brick

line that runs across the grid; and suggests the integration or fracture of the rigid geometry of the paving and symbolises the collapse of the political order against which the struggle took place.

## The New Square

The New Square celebrates the ideals of a new nation – democracy, equality and Freedom. It is an utilitarian space with trees, where people can meet, trade, play or rest. It is subdivided into nine smaller squares that represent the South Africa's nine provinces. <

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**SAS**

# TURNING DATA TO GOLD

BUSINESS IS NOTHING WITHOUT  
THE TOOL OF INSIGHT

The art of business lies in understanding your organisation, its offerings and its solutions. It is about understanding your customers, their needs and their desires, and then combining these to create a mutual relationship that meets in the middle to produce the desired outcome.

At SAS Institute we have been working with customers since 1976 to bring solutions to them that will assist them in accessing relevant, reliable and consistent information throughout their enterprise. The goal of this is to give them the power to make the right decisions and achieve sustainable performance improvement. In short, it is turning data into useable information.

## THE FIRST COAT

For any business to remain competitive in today's environment they need to have a key understanding of who they are, what they are, who their customers are, and what they need in order to achieve certain things. Whether this is fattening the bottom line, providing services to citizens as a government agency, or offering healthcare to patients as a medical house – the outcome is all the same.

But how does business manage to achieve this and what is the base coat for their decision making processes? Data is the single element that binds your company. It provides

you with the information you need to know to fill in the gaps, as well as the knowledge to take you into the future. Data offers insight in a proactive, reactive or preventative environment and gives you not only a view of your customers, but a view of who you are as a business as well.

At SAS we take this data and process it, creating an informative picture of your organisation as well as your customers. Our vision is to transform the way the world works, giving customers the power to make the right decisions, **THE POWER TO KNOW.**

## THE SECOND COAT

No business is an island and without a stringent set of guiding principles that govern its actions with its customers and its employees it is a blank canvas.

At SAS our values guide us. They are intrinsically interwoven into our belief system, our customer interactions and our day-to-day business. It is with this that we believe we need to be...

- **Approachable** – accessible to customers and business contacts, making it easy for them to do business with SAS.
- **Customer driven** – working closely with customers to understand and solve their business issues, exceeding their expectations and delivering exceptional value.
- **Swift and agile** – responsive, flexible and action-oriented, reducing complexity in a constantly changing world.
- **Innovative** – championing excellence by creatively and constructively challenging the status quo.

- **Trustworthy** – acting with transparency and openness, keeping all promises and inspiring confidence and respect.

## THE THIRD COAT

Through more than 30 years of operations we have created a global network in which we operate. Our philosophy is to provide a global reach with a local presence. This means that if you are a SAS customer you can take advantage of learning and benchmarking against our some 45 000 sites in more than 100 countries.

Or you could take a leaf out the book of one of the 92 of the top 100 companies on the 2009 FORTUNE Global 500 list whom we serve. With more than 11 000 employees in over 50 countries and 400 SAS offices, we are there to help you develop more profitable relationships with customers and suppliers; to enable better decisions; and to move forward with confidence and clarity.

## THE SAS CANVAS

When we are asked, "Why SAS?" our answer is made up of a number of components. We are a global company, which has been in business for more than 30 years, we have tried and tested solutions that change to match the business environment, and as an independent company we are answerable to only ourselves and to you, our customers.



## WE OFFER...

### AWARD-WINNING CUSTOMER SUPPORT

SAS customers receive a full suite of support services at no extra charge, including skilled telephone technical support and unlimited, around-the-clock, online technical support.

The online customer support centre provides continual access to a wealth of technical support, reference information, educational resources and communities. Knowledge sharing is continuously available through regular seminars, webcasts and an expansive selection of training courses.

### FINANCIAL STRENGTH

SAS' record of revenue growth in every year of existence makes it a stable business partner, enabling us to reinvest a substantial percent of revenues in R&D each year to continually improve products. This commitment to innovation is one reason why the overwhelming majority of customers renew their software licenses with SAS every year.

### CULTURE

SAS believes that a healthy workplace environment is critical for employees and for the business. Focusing on people and relationships leads to more productive, satisfied and dedicated employees. A healthy work-life balance is critical to this success. As a result of this commitment, we were named No. 1 on the *2010 FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For in the U.S.* list and have

also been recognised for our workplace culture in 12 other countries.

### SUSTAINABILITY

More than being "green," sustainability means that SAS takes a long-term view when making business decisions, whether this involves attracting, retaining and motivating the best employees; serving customers; or caring for the physical environment. From LEED-certified buildings to a solar farm generating energy for the region, SAS strives to meet the sustainable demands of doing business.

## OUR PICTURE

SAS and our solutions have an impact on everyone, every day. From the roads you travel and mortgage loans you purchase, to the brand of cereal you eat and cell phone plan you select, SAS plays a role in your daily life.

We have helped companies, organisations, and governments across all industries to realise the full potential of their greatest asset, their data. We allow you to transform data about customers, performance and financials, among others, into information and predictive insight that lays the groundwork for solid and coherent decisions.

## A DAY IN YOUR LIFE WITH SAS

### MORNING

- Read the morning newspaper – Your local paper knows which stories and ads to include based on SAS analysis of reader demographics in your area.
- Take your medicine – The pills that lower your blood pressure spent years in testing and FDA approvals – with help from SAS – before being deemed safe and effective.
- Get ready for work – Using SAS, the manufacturing process for your razor was tested and analysed with 3D computer models before the first razor was ever produced.
- Drive to work – Your local government uses SAS to determine which roads to repair and expand in your area.
- Log in to your desktop dashboard – SAS monitors and displays all aspects of your business performance with hourly updates.
- Make travel plans for a conference – SAS provides your travel department with real-time access to travel data to maximise savings for all corporate travel.

### LUNCH BREAK

- Stop to get cash – Your local bank uses SAS to develop an efficient system for stocking ATMs.
- Mail a package for your sister's birthday – Your delivery service developed its competitive price lists using SAS.
- Pick up lunch – The restaurant's supply chain is optimised with SAS to deliver fresh ingredients exactly when they're needed.

### BACK AT WORK

- Discuss career goals with your supervisor – SAS forecasts gives your boss a long-term projection of the opportunities for someone with your skills and background.

### AFTER WORK

- Pick up auto parts for your weekend project – Because the retail display has been optimised with SAS, the parts you need are in stock and located side by side on shelves.
- Call cellular provider to upgrade your calling plan – Instantly analysing your phone usage with SAS, the customer service rep chooses the best calling plan and saves you \$15 (IN RANDS) a month.
- Relax after dinner with a glass of wine – Using SAS software, grape growers determined the ideal time to pick wine grapes.



## CUSTOMER STATISTICS

- Number of Countries Installed
- SAS has customers in 118 countries.
- Total Worldwide Customer Sites
- More than 45,000 business, government and university sites
- SAS Customers or their Affiliates Represent:
- 92 of the top 100 companies on the 2009 FORTUNE Global 500® list

## FINANCIAL STATISTICS

- Worldwide Revenue
- 2009 Revenue: \$2.31 billion
- Reinvestment in R&D
- 2009 R&D investment: 23% of revenue

## EMPLOYEE STATISTICS

- Worldwide Employees
- 11,189 total employees
- Breakdown by Geography
  - United States: 5 710
  - World Headquarters (Cary, NC): 4 384
  - Canada: 279
  - Latin America: 301
  - Europe, Middle East and Africa: 3 137
  - Asia Pacific: 1 762

## OTHER STATISTICS

- Year founded: 1976
- SAS is the world's largest privately held software company (pre-packaged software).
- SAS has more than 400 offices globally.
- SAS has more than 600 alliances globally.

# Visual Arts As A Tool

## FOR ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Encouraging critical discourse and promoting artistic freedom of expression in the visual arts is central to the mandate of the Department of Arts & Culture. Thus in 2010 it came as no surprise when there was a whole lot of brouhaha following the sentiments expressed by former Minister, Ms Lulu Xingwana in which she challenged the depiction of black women.

The Minister was not only exercising her own right to freedom of opinion but genuine concern about what she misunderstood to be the degradation of black womanhood.

Of course, what transpired was heated national discourse which refocused attention not only on the status and opportunities for black female artists but how they defined their own roles and responsibilities. Particularly concerned about the impact of art on children's sexual morality, Minister Xingwana suggested that the works were 'pornographic.' This view sent shock waves throughout the visual arts sector which interpreted her personal views as anti-freedom of expression and prescriptive.

But there is no doubt that this ignited a national discourse on what constitutes art and, at the same time, placed the DAC as pivotal in the development and definition of art. What needs to be stressed is not the personal opinions of a minister but how that not only affirms freedom of expression but forms the basis of critical inquiry and discourse into the role and responsibility of artists in a transforming society.

Significantly, the exhibition was sponsored by the DAC to highlight and mainstream the works of black female artists in portraying their own lives, history and aspirations. The efforts to define art continue as part of



nation-building, nurturing a new spirit of patriotism and, of course, encouraging artistic freedom of expression.

One can define, in a simple explanation, the visual arts as creations that we can look at, such as drawings, paintings, sculptures, photography, and printmaking.

There is no doubt that South African cultural industry plays a significant role economically, socially as well as politically. The Visual Arts sector, in particular, is a substantial part of art that contributes to the wellbeing of our society.

The DAC will continue to play a pivotal role in the development of arts in the country. In the last few years, it was involved in programs and exhibitions which included the Innovative Women Exhibition that took place in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. The theme of those exhibitions was multi-faceted and addressed questions like:

**“What are women's goals for the future?” and “How empowered do we, as women, feel?”**

The aim of those exhibitions was to promote work of contemporary black South African female artists in a manner that exposes them as being unique, innovative and cutting edge. DAC supports these initiatives because most emerging black female artists are under exposed and, due to financial difficulties, are never given an opportunity to exhibit their art pieces or works in galleries or to be part of exhibitions that expose them to a broader audience.







There is a perception that there are few black female artists in our country. These exhibitions prove that there are indeed a number of very talented black female artists in our country. These exhibitions showcase the art pieces of a number of young black females that are producing high quality innovative art work and are breaking new ground with their work. The artists that participate in these exhibitions work with different media, ranging from paintings to performing art and drawings, as well as photographs and mixed media.

One such exhibition took place at Museum Africa in Newtown, Johannesburg on 9 August 2009 and coincided with Women's Day. After two months the exhibitions went to Kizo Gallery in Durban and proceeded to Bell Roberts Gallery in Cape Town. The controversial but innovative woman exhibition falls within the objectives of the DAC as it was not only about promoting women, but also contributing to the economic, social and political growth of the country and growth of the artists that participated. DAC funded the project to the value of R300,000.

DAC was also involved in the Visual Arts Research Project that started on 1 July 2008 and was supposed to be conducted on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009 but was completed in September 2010. Unfortunately, the HSRC (Human Science Research Council) is yet to present their findings as they did the research. Then the report will be presented to the new Minister Paul Mashatile.

**The objectives of the research were as follows:**

1. The development of an authoritative picture of the visual arts sector in South Africa, addressing questions of definition, scope, size, structure and internal dynamics.



2. The development of an informed analysis of the current situation of the visual arts sector, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
3. The development of a set of recommendations relating to public sector support. These recommendations will offer a strategic framework that will identify needs in respect of policy, legislation, institutional framework, programmes, and options for resourcing.
4. The development of a database of role-players in the sector, including a register of artists, which is based on a collation of existing data and new data created by the project.

**The DAC remains committed to promoting arts and culture in South Africa as an artistic tool for self-expression and economic self-reliance. Visual Arts is amongst some of the priorities that are taking concern in the department.**

There are some projects that the department successfully engaged in. During 2010, which is known as the Soccer World Cup year, the DAC participated in the Shanghai World Exposition of Arts in China that took place from the 6 May to 31 October 2010.

Visual arts were among the activities that took place and we had visual artists who participated as demonstrators in the exposition, showing the people of China and the world how the South African visual artists make their art works and pieces.





# Arts and Culture Ministers

## Paul Mashatile, Minister of Arts & Culture

**M**ashatile was the last minister to be sworn-in following the recent cabinet reshuffle. He had to be sworn in as a member of parliament before he could actively take up his new responsibility as the man to lead arts and culture on behalf of both the government and the country.

In his new position Mashatile will lead the government-wide program to not only unite all south Africans under the new mantra of 'inclusive citizenship' but will bring the role of arts and culture to the fore on national economic development.

Mashatile is a widely known and respected political figure who is an influential personality in provincial politics as the chairperson of the Gauteng Provincial Executive Committee. Also, he is the former Premier of the Gauteng Province, a position he held until he was appointed to serve as deputy minister of arts and culture.

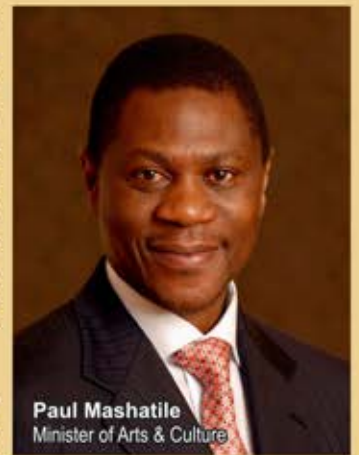
Significantly, his profile is poised to undergo a radical transformation as the new minister of arts and culture. The job will require that he not only be the voice and face of national arts and culture but forge closer relations with the artistic community to redefine national identity and build a new spirit of patriotism.

In the last 17 months the Department of Arts & Culture has re-invented itself to play a leading role in nation-building that will unite all South African citizens across background, race, class or religion. The observation of National Days like Freedom Day and Heritage Day, for example, have provided a glimpse of change in how government desires to use these to inculcate new values of inclusivity that give everybody a sense of belonging.

Mashatile's is a product of the Mass Democratic Movement. He participated and led many United Democratic Front campaigns that forged closer ties

among people of all races in the land. He is the co-founder of the non-racial South African youth Congress and playing a pivotal role in re-establishing the structures of the African National Congress and the SA Communist Party in Gauteng after the unbanning in 1990.

His appointment as Minister of Arts & Culture has been widely welcome by all stakeholders and promises to bring the role of arts and culture in society, especially economic development, into sharper focus.



**Paul Mashatile**  
Minister of Arts & Culture

Dr Joe Phaahla is the new Deputy Minister, The new Deputy Minister of Arts & Culture, Dr Joe Phaahla is no stranger to the portfolio. He brings with him a wealth of practical wisdom, insight and knowledge that was garnered when he was the MEC for Arts, Culture & Sport in Limpopo in the late 1990s.

In fact, from 1997 until 2000 Dr Phaahla played a pivotal role in the arts, culture and sports sector when he was one of the leading figures in the sector. He was a member of the Executive Council of Art, Sport & Culture from 1999 until 2000.

Since the reshuffle of the cabinet by President Jacob Zuma, he now returns to be the right hand man to Minister Paul Mashatile. He will serve as the deputy minister of arts and culture.

Although he is a medical doctor by training, Dr Joe Phaahla is an activist who is passionate about improving the lot of the ordinary people at heart.





He was born and bred in the village known as Ga-Phaahla Makadikwe in Limpopo and has served on many high profile positions in both public and private sector but remains a humble man. But beneath his humility lies a sharp mind and formidable personality that has seen him selected to hold powerful positions in both the public and private sector. In fact, he has served as a board member in various organizations including National Lottery Sport Agency, Limpopo Development Corporation, National Health Laboratory Service and the University of Kwazulu-Natal Council.

He brings with him extensive medical background, having completed his bachelor of medicine and bachelor of surgery from the University of Natal. Also, he holds a diploma in Health Service Management from the University of Haifa in Israel.

He also acquired certificate in General Management, Marketing and Finance. These achievements led him into becoming a Senior Medical Officer and Superintendent at Mapulaneng Hospital between 1987 and 1990. He subsequently moved to St Ritas Hospital in 1990 as a Medical Superintendent - the position he held until 1994.

Dr Phaahla was long identified as a mover and shaker who was destined to go beyond his chosen field. His scroll of achievements includes being Director of Medical Services in the Department of Health in 1993 and 1994 at the former Lebowa homeland. Significantly, he was the Director-General in the National Department of Sport and Recreation responsible for organizing the 2010 FIFA World Cup until 2009.

Although raised in Black Consciousness philosophy, he is a loyal member of the African National Congress. He played a key role in contributing towards struggle against

apartheid and the development of the country. This has endeared him to many people who have been moved by his commitment to transformation.

His political highlights include being a founding member of BC-inclined student movement, Azanian Student Organization at its inaugural Conference in Wilgespruit, Johannesburg, in 1981, where he was also elected National Correspondence President.



**Dr Joe Phaahla**  
the new Deputy Minister

The advent of democracy saw him in 1994 become a member of the Northern Provincial Legislature until 1997. Within the same period, he was appointed the MEC for Health and Welfare Northern Province.

He is no stranger to the seat of deputy minister which he occupied previously in the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform since May last year until October 2010.

But, now, Dr Phaahla, takes over from Paul Mashatile who has since been elevated to the higher portfolio as the Minister of Arts and Culture.

**Together, the two have promised to do more.**



**arts and culture**

Department:  
Arts and Culture  
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