

DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ART

2021

BA (Hons) VISUAL ART

JESSE SHEPSTONE - KERRY-LEIGH CAWRSE - ALEXANDRA McTAGGART
CARLO GIBSON - TLOTLO SEREISHO - SHARON PETERS

BA VISUAL ART

RETHABILE CHEKA - NOMBUSO DOWELANI - KAGISO GUNDANE
AYESHA HUSSAIN - GUSTAV KRANTZ - NALEDI MABOEE
NONDUMISO MKHIZE - ORATILE MOSIMANEKGOSI
SHALOM MUSHWANA - JACKIE NAIDOO - ABIGAIL NEL
WILMA MUTIZE - TREVLIN OLCKERS - LIAM THOMAS
TSHEGOFATSO TLATSI - MICHAEL VICKERS



Jesse SHEPSTONE



My intention behind this body of work is to create an exhibition space that allows for viewers to explore their own memories. I want this exhibition to engage with the viewer on two levels. I want the viewer to become aware of the photograph, how it operates and is connected to memory. Secondly, I want the viewer to retrieve memories that they are not conscious of at the time. I aimed to do this in various ways and many artworks were inspired by Christian Boltanski. I have used various mediums and modes of display to engage with the intricacies of the theories I have focused on during the year.

Using the found photograph as my main mode of presentation does not require much practical work, however the manner in which I manipulate the subject of these photographs is where my challenge came this year. Although not without intervention, each outcome in my exhibition has been photographic. Reading and understanding how the photograph operates as an object has also influenced my compositions and presentation.

I have attempted to create an exhibition that allows viewers to engage with images that allow them to project and explore their own memories and experiences while viewing my work. I have done this through various modes and mediums, selecting specific content and images to encourage different reactions. The main reactions I wish to elicit from my viewers is that of remembering something which they have forgotten, and for them to realise how inauthentic some of the stories and tales I tell through these photographs are.





Kerry-leigh **CAWRSE**



My current practical and theoretical research predominately focuses on the nature of decay as a modality of death and its inherent implications on morality.

This interest has developed through my unique relationship between death and myself. Like most people, I fear the unknown and that which I cannot control, and death encapsulates both of these concepts.

The COVID 19 pandemic only magnified these fears. Death no longer became the concern of only the older generation. It assimilated itself into every aspect of our lives both directly and indirectly.

As a means of coping with the implications of death, I began to explore my own conclusions of life after death. What happens after we die?

The simplest and most pragmatic resolution to this potent question is that we decay and decompose. This practical depiction of death, although evocative and disgusting provides a logical conclusion and ultimately a way to come to terms with death.





Alexandra McTAGGERT

I reflect on the artwork I have created during this year and how they are associated with Art therapy and the making of art as a beneficial coping mechanism for individuals who struggle to cope with their mental health disorders. The artwork I have created ranges from Linocut installations to Perspex drawings.

I have been grappling with my mental health disorders this year and have not always been on the better side of it. To try evade my mental health disorders and intrusive thoughts that plague my headspace, I distracted myself by creating repetitive pieces of art. I do feel great pressure from that statement because I do not want to fail this degree or my parents, but I find it difficult to even comprehend a single creative thought towards my final exhibition because of such a negative headspace.

This creates a paralysing panic that my mentality cannot fix. These are my intrusive thoughts. The definition of intrusive means something that irritates a person or makes them feel unpleasant (Cambridge University Press: 2021). In my case the intrusion is in the form of distasteful thoughts. Kimberly Holland explains that Intrusive thoughts are thoughts that interrupt ones thinking process and can be 'upsetting' and 'disturbing' (Holland: 2020).

There are four series of artworks that are on display for my final exhibition. *My Progress wall* is a collection of my original 'distraction' artworks which are the foundations for my ideas for the rest of the pieces. *Under Pressure* is a series of flora monotype prints that depict a stressful state for myself that I reflect onto the prints. *Overwhelmed, 2021* is a series that incorporates multiples upon multiples of linocut prints that fill a room for which the viewer can step into as an installation and to feel as overwhelmed as I do. *The Difference You Made* are Perspex drawings made from pictures I have taken of people (with their permission) that have improved my mental health or thoughts on certain days when I was not in a healthy place.





Carlo GIBSON

I am a maker of things! This started at an early age for me. I remember my first project: I attempted to crochet my baby sister a pair of booties. Thanks Mom for the lessons! Sorry sis for the trauma! Clothing has always been a part of my genetic makeup. I spent my early years in all kinds of uniforms - from camo military outfits, to traditional Zulu skins and Asagai. Then there was my dad who made everything from hang-gliders to sailing boats and caravans. From the age of about 4, I was always tinkering with him on some project or the other. I remember these times so fondly. Thanks Dad for teaching me how important it is for me to use my hands. This journey of making things has taken me to some interesting places. I have taught at the Institute of Art in Chicago, won trips to Fashion Week in New York and in Paris, and I have been sponsored to visit Athens with the South African Olympic team. I have also done extensive touring with talented local choreographer and dancer, Nellie Zaba. Along the way, I have been fortunate to meet many interesting people. I clearly remember the day that Roger Taylor from Queen stopped by my shop in Parkhurst – Strangelove - and commissioned me to make him some clothing. Then there was the day that a friend of mine told me how impressed he was to see the lead singer of ZZ Top in one of my outfits. I also dressed James Small from the 1995 Rugby World Cup fame. However, my favourite career highlight was selling a work of art to Steven Cohen, who wore it for one of his performances! This journey of making things has been a consistent friend to me, and I get the feeling that this friendship is only in its infancy. I hope that it is a mutually beneficial relationship!





Tlotlo SEREISHO

As a “misrecognition of economic exchanges” that manifest through the act of ‘gifting’ in relationships. When, in 1994, the black majority was gifted freedom (after their long struggle(s) against white domination), perhaps they misrecognised the said economic exchange and how visual culture is used in advancing ideas of cultural dominance and ultimately the reemergence of a subtle form of white hegemony. As an artist who is influenced by counter-monumental approaches in art, my work is thus an exploration of how the past continues to persist and continues to have influence in contemporary South Africa. In my work, I mainly juxtapose the then and the now, creating a visual tension that, at first sight, comes across as being ambiguous. Upon a closer look, it becomes clear that themes I explore in my own work include class dynamics, class-based exclusion, power dynamics, and social order. I am interested in raising these often overlooked or dismissed experiences of blackness in contemporary South Africa. I am also interested in representing, visually, the contentious relationship black South Africans have with the present by virtue of the persistence of the past. As established in the previous parts of this paper, based on my lived experience and existing literature, it is my contention that the persistence of the past manifests itself through arbitrary objects like equestrian statues or their strategic geographic positioning.

As a young black South African artist, my practical work is greatly informed by context. I argue that the continued nurturing of the ghosts of imperialism/ colonialism and apartheid receives, through a culmination of factors like the presence of monuments that publicly commemorate these pasts, can be said to enable the emergence of a backlog in contemporary South Africa’s transformation project. Pierre Bourdieu’s writing (in Forest and Johnson 2002:526-528) on the concept of “symbolic capital” will be helpful at this juncture. One of the observations Bourdieu (in Forest and Johnson 2002:527) makes about symbolic capital is how, in the process, it also facilitates what he describes





Sharon PETERS



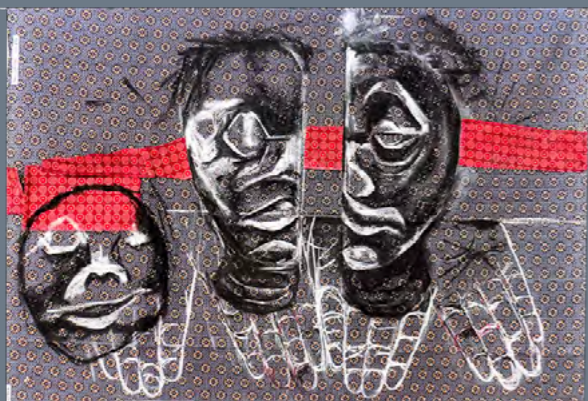
My practical body of work titled Democratic Hypocrisy is a response to the Clifton beach protest that had occurred in Cape Town. This protest has prompted the development of my body of work, which was inspired by my grandmother's memories. As a painter, it was critical to incorporate many forms of painting – not just through the traditional use of paint and canvas, but also through documenting the experience of so many South Africans by incorporating another layer of painting - videography and photography. My grandmother has been responsible for the lives of others and forced to find work around the house upon reaching adulthood. Regardless of how hard she worked, the tiny RDP home was never hers; it was government property. The inhumane reality of living in the township, has had a tremendous effect on my body of work. This is my continual frustration and anger with the current condition of the reality in South Africa, which is that my grandmother, I, and my future children will have no compensation in our lives. Thus, I've chosen to utilize the imagery of the sheep and myself to personify the metamorphosis between flesh and wound, sacrifice and appropriation, pain and offering, and ability and disability. My objective is to make a clear statement about the pervasiveness of prejudice and its cruel and immoral foundations. This perception is far from unique, and indeed, the inequality is not only racial but also based on class—while apartheid's beneficiaries and a new elite reaped enormous harvests from the post-apartheid era, conditions for the poor – the overwhelming majority of people in our country – have not improved, in fact, have deteriorated in some areas.





Rethabile CHEKA

My creative practice and processes focus on producing mixed media drawings and paintings. Her art draws inspiration from black body issues, themes surrounding womanhood, identity, photography, and text. My concept is primarily centered on the notion of negotiating one's existence and identity. I am drawn to the concept of prevailing identity issues concerning the black body and womanhood. My artworks are collaged mixed media paintings and drawings on shweshwe fabric. They visually explore the culture of the Basotho identity and customs; and personally reflect my identity as a South African Mosotho woman. These relatively large-scaled drawings and paintings act as my source of communication to reinterpret personal experiences based off these themes. An unidentified, mysterious world has been created through my use of distorted figures to comment on the methods of negotiation. My distorted creations have not only allowed me to communicate the necessary but has also allowed me to physically engage with the process of negotiating the look of these figures as she moves them around to create them. Negotiating the look of these creatures is representative of how we negotiate our own existence and identity, thus the compositions are deliberately impractical to exaggerate the distortion.





Nombuso DOWELANI

Insika is a zulu word meaning Strength, trustworthy and selfless. The body of work I have produced this semester are created to honour the lives of black women, and to acknowledge the adversities they constantly have to battle with. I have chosen a very personal approach to this body of work by using my grandmother uMaZikode aka Mam'VR Nene as my muse. All the works I have created this semester are based on her and her life. At a young age uMaZikode was widowed and had to raise her four children during the pinnacle of Apartheid she had to deal with the discrimination of being black and being a women and look after her family. MaZikode worked as a domestic worker in the northern suburb and later ventured into other endeavours, she became a taxi owner and later opened shops and is now a successful businesswoman.



I have created a body of eleven pieces that consists of drawings and paintings, but I mostly combined these mediums. I created this body of work with various techniques and colour pallets, I shifted from my usual colourful compositions to more subtle compositions and restricted colour pallets. Most of the pieces were created with MaZikode's images from her photo album and were altered with Photoshop to created these peculiar compositions.





Kagiso GUNDANE



This body of work is inspired by my experiences in the spirit world anchored in African culture. KwaNguni liminal spaces attempts to capture these experiences in a visual sense, which are faced by a few individuals, the turbulence and adversity, the space between the physical and spiritual. Throughout a person's existence they experience hardships, in the form of depression, illness, death etc. Despite the hardships of these issues, they enable a new trajectory, one that leads them towards a relationship with a higher power, in a sense transcending into transcendence which is the definition of spirituality. In African culture when a person dies, they are not completely erased from existence, instead they occupy the spirit realm which is considered as another stage of life and become ancestors. This body of work does not exoticize, commercialize or fetishize African spirituality but attempts to navigate experiences alien to most. The use of the colour red in the drawings symbolises a period of pain and suffering which experienced by diviners. The drawings are dynamic and translucent, which in a sense represent the spirit realm and rituals thereof. The sizes of the drawings are equivalent to the Dutch wax fabrics which are worn by diviners and serve as objects of communication. Thus, the size also explores the practice of healers in the contemporary South African space. This theme is also explored in printmaking, through different techniques, such as cyanotype, silkscreen and drypoint. KwaNguni liminal spaces explores the definition of spirituality within the context of an African culture, in this case, South Africa.





Aysha HUSSAIN





Gustav KRANTZ



The initial concerns informing this work are to do with Transparency, Dismissiveness, and Borders.

The process allowing for the end products was directed by three segments:

1. Material Process
2. View Stops
3. Movement

Material Process played out through the means of toilet paper/toilet tissue. Engaging this material allowed its properties to speak to the initial concerns of Transparency, Dismissiveness, and Borders.

Allowing perception to come to rest i.e. stopping the viewer's attention on a specific object took the form of toilet paper sculptures as well as processed found-objects. Addressing Movement took the form of directing the viewer through Site-Engaged works offering the chance to move through, observe, and recognise a visual language whilst allowing yourself to follow it. and drypoint. KwaNguni liminal spaces explores the definition of spirituality within the context of an African culture, in this case, South Africa.





Naledi MABOEE



Thematically, this body of work is a cathartic response to African Spiritualisms and my relationship to this theme. African Spiritualisms is a theoretical framework used in the study of African Spirituality and its practice. My interest in this theme comes from my discovery that I have a spiritual gift – inherited from my paternal grandmother- that requires me to nurture it in a certain way to develop it through certain rites and rituals. Rites and rituals which often fall outside of my current environmental capabilities. As a result of this problem, I have been trying to draw out the potential of art to be my mode of spiritual expression. True to the sacred and secretive nature of African Spirituality and its practice, this drawing called for a curation of a visual language that would dismantle the romanticized canonical discourse of African Spirituality. I approach the space of ‘African Spirituality’ with caution because of the area of uncertainty which constitutes the question of whether I am approaching this sacred space I revere, appropriately. Using the sacred element of water as a proverbial matrix, I locate the omnipresence and omnipotence of spiritualities in a vessel that has a multitude of taxonomies. The catharsis is experienced in the intimate figural drawings in this matrix induced by the textural media used in constructing an overarching portrait of my paternal grandmother - floating in a body of ‘water’.





Nondumiso MKHIZE



Let it be known are my current artworks in which I explore my identity through interrogating my religious beliefs. I include embroidery and household materials into the artworks to establish a connection between myself and my upbringing.

I paint and sculpt fragmented portraits of myself and family members who are linked to the church where I used to spend most of her childhood due to my father being a pastor.

In the series I investigate the relationship I have with the church and my father where the fragments are the commitments to the church while being in my life. These responsibilities he had to take on caused a lack of his presence in my life, due to his obligation to the church. The use of embroidery and orange sack is to piece what was lost together and coming to terms what Christianity means to me. I include household items in my artwork because my identity stems from childhood and the biblical teachings bestowed on me from a very young age. I navigate my identity which was centred on Christianity, but as I continue to question these principles it not only alters me, but the relationships I have established with my family.





Oratile MOSIMANEKGOSI



This body of work titled *Strain and Discomfort* aims to explore materiality and emotionality of the subject matter and the relationship of the female body with clothes and my own body. My thought process throughout the making of these works was how can I translate frustration and strain into a visual narrative, how do the materials and end results speak directly to what I am trying to portray. After a while of thinking about it, I decided to print on cotton and stretch it onto skew and slightly distorted frames. The frame then becomes the body that the cloth then has to cover these so called bodies. Some of it tore, some of it was a little too short for the frame and some of it was too big so I had to cut and mend. I think it's interesting how clothes, more especially the bra, in this body of work, becomes a symbol of strain and multiplication thereof. I used the same bras over and over again to print from and in the process, I strained the surfaces I printed them onto. The objective of the process was to discover how much I can do with the bra and what it could really become. As I developed it further, it became a beast, a parasite. It bound itself to my face and it found its way onto my body. I think of clothes as a social parasite of sorts because of the way toxic fast fashion trends impose themselves on the bodies of women and how they strain these bodies to fit into.





Shalom MUSHWANA



The world in its current state is awash in information. Accessible at a variety of fidelities. The internet has provided a necessary democratization of information, and access to wisdom once unattainable through thorough and strategic research. Technology plays a key part in how we access information. Its seemingly boundless permeation through all aspects of society has had an unprecedented amount of influence on how we see, what we choose to see and how we contextualise these complexities. *Lossy Bodies* attempts to draw lines between the multiple dimensions of reality I wade through. Those being physical and digital dimensions. In a sense these works attempt to poetically debunk of linear conceptions of time, history and the way they effect the development of identity. Amorphous and cropped shapes and bodies aim to evoke the isolationist paradigm we live through, where isolated curatorial environments allow individuals to pick and choose, to stitch and in a sense, retrofit one's self to the social realms that one chooses to reside within. Increased security and the flattening of culture in favour of a more Global (nefariously Euro-American) world view invoke a certain degree of fear, a palpable fear, that in recent times has replaced hope as the vision for the future. Perhaps this fear is more hypothetical than it is real? Perhaps this fear is simply the result of a perpetually saturated network of ideologies, feelings, opinions and phenomena in sometimes incomprehensible ways.



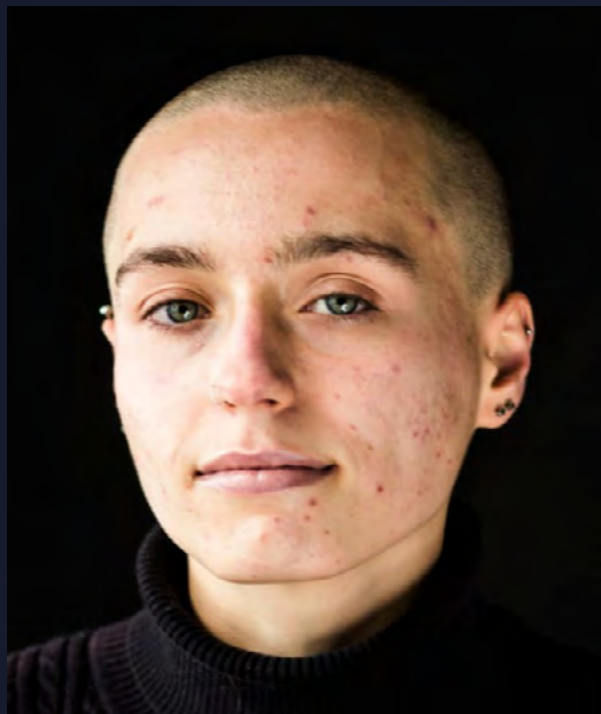


Jackie NAIDOO



A national coat of arms is a heraldic accomplishment that signifies the independence of a state. Unlike a national flag, which is usually flown outside and on ships by the general public, a national coat of arms is usually regarded as a symbol of the government or (especially in monarchies) the head of state personally, and is used in print, on heraldic china, and as a wall decoration in official buildings. Arms of dominion or weapons of sovereignty are terms used to describe national arms. The primary symbol on the covers of passports, the document used globally to establish a person's citizenship, is an essential usage for national coats of arms. National coats of arms are also used as a symbol on general circulation coins of the associated state. For a symbol to be called a "national coat of arms", it should follow the rules of heraldry. The artwork, coat of arms is a panel of three, consisting of a combination of the South African and Botswana coat of arms. The artwork is to symbolise my hybrid identity as a South African and Botswana nationalities. The work is also to mock the idea of sovereignty and patriotism that is associated with the coat of arms. To my belief, patriotism is an underlying factor that contributes to Xenophobia, a conflict some foreigners or immigrants experience in a foreign country.





Abigail NEL



Re-vita, a compound term describing my 3rd year body of work, marks my investment to explore the construction, de-construction and re-construction of the shadow self. This is an ongoing process of self exploration with the intention to dig under the surface and engage with the life-spiral processes realisation and learning. Re-vita is a visual documentation of prodding urges and restless feelings - to engage in shadow work. Psychologist Carl Jung coined the term 'the shadow self' in the 20th century, informing Jung's theories on Western psychology. The RE:vita body of work considers possible conceptions and perceptions of EDAN the avatar, who is the visual representation of my shadow self.

The body of work is intended to be an ongoing exploration of EDAN's real-world manifestation as an approach to shadow work. Ambiguity, inconsistency, and contradiction are evident in Unsettled Cosmic Soup; the first of 7 bodies of work, comprising of corresponding responses in drawing and sculpture, that marks the re-vita investigations. Cosmic Soup, an intriguing term borrowed from visual artist Colleen Winter, is understood as metaphor for a fluxing liminal substance during the process of psychological transformation.



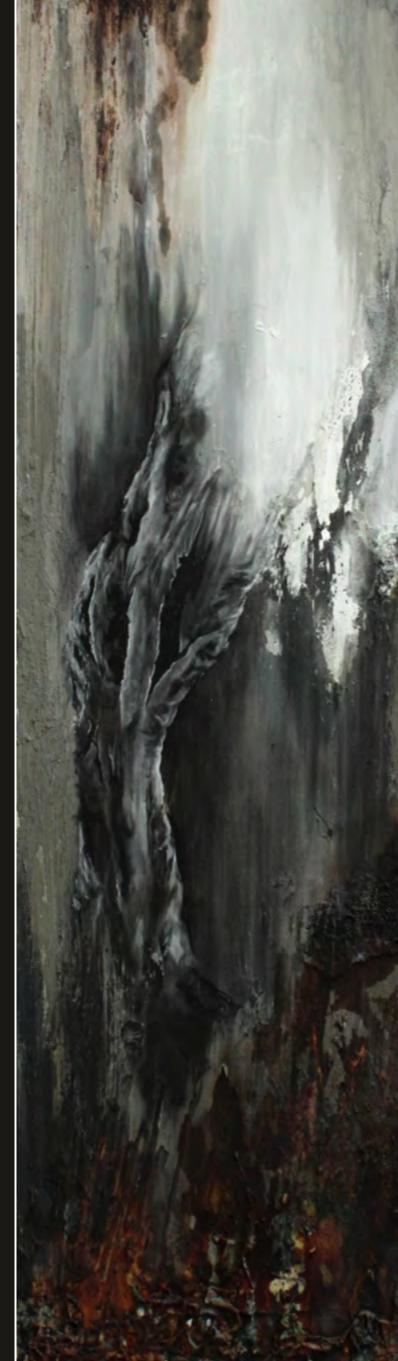


Wilma MUTIZE

Wilma is an up-and-coming visual artist interested in exploring the world of Anthropocene, looking at human influence on the environment. 'I have grown up on different soils in the Southern part of Africa experiencing different cultures.' She likes the colour purple and as well the book 'The Colour Purple' and she would like to become a curator in the long run, as well as, an Art Director among many other things. Wilma's motto in life is "you will rest when you die", so work until you cannot work anymore.

The drawings' contexts are inspired by the idea of capturing human impact on the environment. The use of dark tones and colour creates depth and contrast. The use of various textures is almost identical to the textures found in nature. These drawings take on the role of activism in the preservation of the natural world.

The paintings are taken from a memory context. Based on first-hand experience with negative human impact on the environment. Within these works, direct references to existing places become the driving force of activism. To preserve nature, one must be in tune with nature, inviting others to take action in order to recognize our co-existing natural counterpart on which we rely.





Trevlin OLCKERS

Broken Kids Become Beautiful Things

My work focuses on the effects of domestic violence on children. It speaks to the 'brokenness' of the home and the ultimate brokenness of the child that has lived in a household where toxic masculinity and patriarchy rule viciously. Through my work, I try to find different ways of putting children (myself) back together again using cut up limbs of children and also tell short stories through childlike drawings. I consider these 'children' a physical representation of the mental disturbance that occurs in the minds of children who experience childhoods like these. These children are growing differently, uncomfortably and painfully. And this is what I try to communicate in my work. The installation "Broken Kids Become Beautiful Things", is set in a preschool. I decided on this because preschool is a place where children learn the very basics of language, thinking, how to socialise, make friends; It sets a foundation for upcoming education. The idea being juxtaposed to how children learn the very basics of life, at home. A child not only learns when they are told to (like at school), but they also take in information at home. Scary information. Such as the constant threats, shouting, arguing, fighting, beating up and screams in the middle of the night. In a place where one should feel safe, but eventually begins to feel afraid for their life. To such a point where school starts to feel like home and vice versa.





Liam THOMAS



My body of work centers on the production and reconstruction of my identity. Legs stand as a repeated motif through my drawings and sculptures. Legs are used to personify and suggest the presence of a being. This being may be associated with myself, however the legs are meant to hint at the relationship between a body and the space it inhabits. This may be directed towards the shadow which may essentially be rooted at ones feet. The shadow is re-imagined as a new way of perceiving ones position and the comfort that comes with the claim to such a position in space. One may even take a Jungian approach to understand the shadow as a representation of a 'collective unconscious.' Therefore the shadow tends to exist outside our own bodies yet may still be seen as an extension of the self. As a South African white male born after the end of Apartheid, I've found it difficult to locate a reliable sense of comfort to situate myself within. This is aimed at the way I may be understood or identified by myself and by others. One may essentially understand this as a form discomfort felt within my identified space. Therefore the need to question and understand how on my surrounds may have an effect on my identity becomes necessary. The use of industrial structures, spaces and machinery introduces a sense of environmental pollution. One does not necessarily need to understand this as a reference to environmental pollution alone, but rather as a form that may exist within the minds of those who are victims to such structures in society.





Tshegofatso TLATSI

My work explores the uncertainty of existing. How moments of confusion and chaos have helped build my character or rather build this character.

I believe that monsters are created and not simply born as monsters. The frustration that comes from not knowing. This unspoken conflict I feel within myself.

I say unspoken because it feels like one of those things you're too afraid to talk about. I manifest my emotions into these monsters that are able to express what I cannot.

I have always been fascinated by the relationship between things; how one needs the other to exist. How light cannot exist without the dark.

Peace cannot exist or be understood without experiencing chaos and discomfort. These have been two themes in my life that I can honestly say that I completely understand.





Michael WICKERS



About a month ago, I was taking close-up images of my dark, non-representational landscapes that I had been working on, which were largely unresolved and conceptually uncertain. Whilst exploring the possibilities of the small fragments of my drawings, I realised that the textures within these mini landscapes were far richer than I could achieve with my pen, charcoal, or ink in terms of finding a fresh approach to depicting these gentle moments of revelation in the uncultivated spaces. I was discovering endless landscapes within landscapes. And as I worked through this new approach to drawing, I rediscovered my campfire, with placid smoke rising to the top of the composition, and a mass of black ink that signifies burning wood at the bottom of the smoke. The ground is textured and gritty, like the harsh wilderness of the Karoo or the semi-arid portion of the Eastern Cape towards the coast, where I sat and worshiped the Lord beneath his clear night skies in Baviaanskloof. The depth that occurs in the lighter areas from the ink that seeps into the paper reminded me of these moments. It is as though I had drawn this image from the exact imprint of my memory, despite my absolute lack of control in the process. Perhaps the gestures of my identity with ink and brush always reflect personal memories in the landscape, which form such an important aspect of my being, and situate themselves in the microcosm of my work, waiting to be discovered and explored.



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