

LYNETTEBESTER  
JUSTINFISKEJONATHAN  
FREEMANTLENICHOLAS  
HALESRUDI LEHANE  
LUKE KAPLAN  
NIN ALIEBENBERG  
JABULANIMASEKO  
MITCHELL GILBERT  
MESSINABONGANINJALO  
LAURENPALTEGALEN  
PINNOCK GABRIELLE  
RAAFFCHADROSSOUW  
BUHLEBEZWESI WANI  
MARLENE STEYNSIMEON  
NELSON & MOFFAT  
TAKADIWAJOVOYSEY  
6.11-13.12.2014

# Scintilla: An Alchemy Show

6.11 – 13.12.2014



# CONTENTS

7	Curators’ statement
	<b>Exhibiting Artists</b>
10	Lynette Bester
12	Justin Fiske
14	Jonathan Freemantle
16	Nicholas Hales
18	Rudi le Hane
20	Luke Kaplan
22	Nina Liebenberg
24	Jabulani Maseko
26	Mitchell Gilbert Messina
28	Bongani Njalo
30	Lauren Palte
32	Gaelen Pinnock
34	Gabrielle Raaff
36	Chad Rossouw
38	Buhlebezwe Siwani
40	Marlene Steyn
42	Simeon Nelson & Moffat Takadiwa
44	Jo Voysey
47	Thank you

To view the full colour catalogue please visit [www.commune1.com](http://www.commune1.com)

# Curator’s statement

We claim the present as the pre-sent, as the hereafter  
We are unraveling our navels so that we may ingest the sun  
We are not afraid of the darkness, we trust that the moon shall guide us  
We are determining the future at this very moment  
We now know that the heart is the philosophers’ stone  
Our music is our alchemy, we stand as the manifested  
Equivalent of three buckets of water and a hand full of minerals  
Thus realizing that those very buckets turned upside down  
Supply the percussion factor of forever, if you must count  
To keep the beat then count  
Find you mantra and awaken your subconscious  
Curve your circles counterclockwise, use your cipher to decipher  
Coded Language, man made laws, climb waterfalls and trees  
Commune with nature, snakes and bees let your children  
Name themselves and claim themselves as the new day, for today  
We are determined to be the channelers of these changing  
Frequencies into songs, paintings, writings, dance, drama  
Photography, carpentry, crafts, love and love, we enlist every instrument  
Acoustic, electronic every so called race, gender and sexual preference  
Every person as beings of sound to acknowledge their responsibility  
To uplift the consciousness of the entire fucking world

Saul Williams

Extract from *Coded Language*, 2001

Mapping the terrain of the concept of Alchemy – considering its obscure historical origins and its ubiquitous modern-day associations – is a complicated task. Firstly, there is the shrouded and allegorical veil covering the practise of the past and, secondly, the term has been variously adopted and misappropriated by recent new age movements. Alchemy, where does one begin? Simply following the gold may result in blind spots.<sup>1</sup> An alternative approach to a task of this nature is rhizomatic<sup>2</sup> and visual: provide artists with an inspired concept and curate the responses that arise. This is the approach that guided this exhibition. It began with a broad interest in process-driven approaches to creation – tinkering artists, artists as scientists, artists as magicians – and resulted in a collection of works that thematically unite under the rubric of alchemy. In this approach, one cannot expect an exhaustive survey of the concept of alchemy; all bases covered. Instead we find a nuanced and eccentric, perhaps off-tangent, personal and context-specific collection of works that point in the general direction of the philosopher’s stone and to what this might be.

By elevating process-driven and intuitive approaches to creation there is also an implicit acknowledgment of the role that the creative impulse has played in human

<sup>1</sup> *Aurum nostrum non est aurum vulgi* (our gold is not ordinary gold), according to medieval alchemist, Gerhard Dorn.  
<sup>2</sup> Following the philosophical concept developed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1972–1980). Their concept is loosely based on the properties of the botanical rhizome and encourages spontaneity and multiplicities.

development. This refers to both social and cultural spaces and within the natural world; the connection between the creative impulse and alchemy can be found in many places...

In a publication in 1907 the philosopher Henri Bergson connected the term emergent to the evolutionary theories of the time through the concept of *élan vital* or “vital impetus”.<sup>3</sup> For Bergson, the creative impulse – pervasive throughout nature and human development – was the ‘mechanism’ or the ‘scintilla’ for an evolution towards more complex life forms. Similar ideas have appeared in other periods: whilst the Stoic thinker Posidonius postulated the sun as the life-giver and Schopenhauer placed the will-to-live as the driving force. More recent incarnations can be seen in Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, which seemed to take another of Bergson’s phrases, the ‘current of life’ quite literally.

The concept can also be found in the name of a partially sentient machine in the anime series *Melody of Oblivion*, or the title of an album by *Pretty Girls Make Graves*, where in the song ‘The Magic Hour’, awakening and the will to mobilize takes on wild and magical implications:

Tigers, vipers  
Deadly is the strike  
Hidden out of sight  
Open up your eyes!  
Animals awake and rise

<sup>3</sup> *Creative Evolution*, Henri Bergson, 1907. English Translation, 1911

It is the striking time  
There is no taming lions  
For there is will amongst our prides  
But oh no  
We’re coming from the cracks  
Crossbow  
One more caught in the hatch  
Oh sleeping giants  
Wake and rise  
To alchemize  
Open up your eyes  
This hates eating me alive <sup>4</sup>

So we see in its conception and appropriation in popular culture a connection between the vital force or the *scintilla* and the idea of awakening the soul or of consciousness.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, the alchemical quest can be understood as the search for true consciousness, the Philosopher’s Stone (the awakened self). In the history of alchemy we find two interpretations of the philosopher’s stone that at some point blur together. In Western Alchemy, initially thought to be the purview of metallurgists, goldsmiths, jewelers and miners, we find in the pursuit of gold an obsession with quick-trick-riches: the philosopher’s stone was the name for the secret substance that could transmute base metals into gold. In the Eastern tradition we find a focus on the elixir of life – a substance that could provide great power, vitality and longevity. Both of these seemed to be

<sup>4</sup> Track 7 from the album *Elan Vital*, 2006  
<sup>5</sup> There is risk here in raising the spectre of vitalism. However, in the realm of art there is no debate between science and spiritualism rather an emphasis on individual experience.

based on values and aspirations relevant to the physical world. However, over time we see in both traditions the development of the more pervasive psycho-spiritual associations with the philosopher’s stone, towards a view of the transformation being an inner one. In order to transmute *materia prima*<sup>6</sup> the alchemist needed to undergo his/her own inner transformation, at which point the material pursuit of gold and its egoic attachment fell to the side.

From this development – the co-option of the chemistry-bound language of early alchemy towards a symbolic quest for awakening – we see the inspiration for much of the imagery that persists to this day. Contemporary spiritual thinkers, sages, new-age writers, evangelical church leaders, esoteric business gurus, artists and psychedelic theorists amongst others have co-opted the language of alchemy into their practice. When we focus in on local discourses and contexts we find they have their own histories, agendas and associations. This exhibition is informed, in this respect, by the selection of artists who are predominantly southern African. Within this context alchemy extends to traditions and practices within African spirituality; in the shamanic practises of the San people, in the healing mysticism of Khotso Sethunsa in Lusikisiki<sup>7</sup> or Credo Mutwa in Kuruman.

The internet too has played a significant role in circulating and connecting the myriad of ideas around alchemy and this show thus also resides in a global context where the persistent understanding is that artists have unique access to the realm of

intuition. This is the assumption behind the show and implicit in the statement issued to selected artists:

“Practise-led and oriented towards intuitive connections, artists reveal an encounter with the creative impulse (the scintilla) in whichever form or guise it may take. Through the creative act, the artist-as-alchemist manifests aesthetic forms of discovery and magic.”

### Exhibition Overview

Starting with a general concept of art-as-alchemy, common themes emerge. The first, well-known association, is concerned with the aesthetic results produced by the actual **transmutation of chemicals**. These works are predominantly process-led and open to the ways that substances-in-play behave: as predictable or random. **Jo Voysey** paints with found medicinal remedies; each painting becomes an experiment born of an unpredictable chemical reaction. **Lauren Palte** dissolves oil paint in solvent, which is then poured onto pieces of copper, brass or aluminium. The surface of the metal causes the paint to slide and stagnate at random, she then ‘pulls’ the image out of the wet paint. **Jonathan Freemantle’s** abstract paintings are borne from his recent excavations for iron oxide ochre during a residency at Nirox in the Cradle of Mankind. He grinds the pigment with linseed oil, beeswax medium and turpentine, applies the mixture, removes it and repeats in a process replicating soil and rock erosion.

The inspiration behind **Justin Fiske’s** negative-sized contact prints can be traced to a nostalgic road trip to Malawi in the early 1990s and an encounter with photographic alchemy in this unlikely

context. Re-enacting his experience, Fiske’s photographic process consists of a single role of film, a carry-bag or a geyser cupboard and a desk lamp; far from the safety and control offered by the darkroom environment or the convenience of digital technology. Contrastingly **Luke Kaplan** manipulates his hand-printed photographs of clouds in a darkroom to resemble spirits or mist figments. Kaplan’s practice is centred on the relationship between people and the natural world, and more specifically the transition between inner and outer ‘landscapes’. **Gabrielle Raaff** is similarly concerned with transforming the external landscape into the internal. Her watercolour renditions of landscapes at night are products of a relay between the loose wateriness of pigment and the artist’s subconscious.

The ‘Citadel Series’ by **Gaelen Pinnock** is alchemic in its expert digital combination of elements. Like an alchemist mixing elemental compounds in a laboratory, the artists’ raw ingredients are photographic imagery taken at the ports and docks of Cape Town which are compiled into a composite ‘island’. **Lynette Bester’s** project *Midas and Me* (2013-2014) began with 700 silkworms placed on cardboard circles. The fickle nature of both silkworms and their food supply resulted in a random amount of 58 golden yellow raw silk circles. This work is about the evolution of physical form and of consciousness. In place of chemicals Bester uses silkworms; in amongst the hatchings and life cycles of the silkworm she waits for her own baby to be born.

From chemical transmutation to **spiritual transcendence**, instead of the former process concerned with the transformation

of matter, we shift into the realm of the transformation of soul and mind. **Bongani Njalo’s** installation investigates the shift in consciousness said to occur at the moment of death. He visually illustrates this concept through the creation of a threshold one can look through from multiple viewpoints. Njalo posits a challenge to the overriding Judeo-Christian belief that we ‘live’ a one-directional and coherent narrative, as does **Marlene Steyn** in her uroboric large-scale paintings. Steyn’s figures seem to exist in a state between incarnation and reincarnation. Hung like ancient secular tapestries, her subjects teeter on the edge of becoming; frozen in an endless cycle of transformation. **Nicholas Hales’** painting uses the house or building as a metaphor for the self and an investigation into the transpersonal aspects of the human psyche. Through meditation, Hales has experienced a vast infinite self, a dropping away of the marked and faded walls (to continue the house metaphor) that are formed by a person’s personal history. **Jabulani Maseko’s** video installation, *Disruptive Patterns: Schizothymia* (2014) spans over three screens and highlights the disjuncture that occurs between perception and reality. Through the editing process Maseko illustrates how perception is a shifting intangible thing that can directly mold one’s lived experience.

The afro-gothic temple *All Our Ancestors* (2014) works to subvert traditional Western notions and symbolism by drawing from European devotional architecture and the geometry, fractals and patterns found in Zimbabwean crafts and architecture. **Simeon Nelson and Moffat Takadiwa** have conceived of a syncretic sculptural work that is singularly alchemic in its combination of elements:

monotheistic religions, spiritual plurality, collaborative practice and European and African traditions. **Buhlebezwe Siwani’s** performances deal with her personal journey as a sangoma and question aspects of southern African traditions, rituals and rites. She further considers the emotional, physical and mental strife that the body encounters in different environments, whilst believing herself to exist in a liminal space: between the living and an ancestral realm.

A third overarching theme that emerged in ‘Scintilla’ is the elevation of the everyday, or rather the **metamorphosis of the normal**. There is an explicit element of wizardry in **Chad Rossouw’s** faux artifact. *In Pale Horse (After the Klingon New Testament)* Rossouw transmogrifies the biblical text: ‘And behold, a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death’ into the fictional Science Fiction language of Klingon and then finally, into silver calligraphy. *Attempt #3*, as evinced by the title, is **Rudi le Hane’s** third attempt at the failure of flight. Using the idea of flight and employing ordinary materials, le Hane highlights the illusion of elevation or weightlessness. Standing in front of *Attempt #3*, one would be forgiven for thinking that the world has turned on its side or that gravity has decided to call it a day. In *I was told it would wear itself out* (2014) **Mitchell Gilbert Messina’s** plays with the idea of conceptual and formal transformation. A noiseless revolving power drill is rendered completely useless by its new role as performance artist.

**Nina Liebenberg’s** *Second star to the right and straight on ‘til morning* (2014) is a cyanotype of the stars as observed from Scottish novelist J.M. Barrie’s window

on the night of his death (19 June 1937) at Adephi Terrace, London. The map pinpoints the ‘second star to the right’ as per Barrie’s instructions on finding Peter Pan’s Neverland. In this concise work, Liebenberg tinkers with the notion of the elixir of life. She shows the viewer a particular section of sky as seen in 1937 and thus for a moment, it is as if no time has passed. The viewer becomes the very same Barrie staring our into a starry night dreaming of a boy who refused to grow old.

-Conor Ralphs and Leigh-Anne Niehaus

<sup>6</sup> Also known as first matter, *prima materia* is the essential base material necessary for alchemical experiments. In other respects it refers to unobstructed consciousness once everything else has been stripped away.

<sup>7</sup> Intriguingly, it has been suggested that Khotso had access to the lost Kruger millions.



# Lynette Bester

## Artist Statement

The project began in the spring of 2013 with about 700 silkworms that were placed on cardboard circles with a radius of 10cm in an attempt to have them spin as many raw silk circles as possible. In the end a totally random amount of 58 raw silk circles were spun in various shades of golden yellow. From 2013 until September 2014 while the next generation of eggs waited for spring I embroidered the circles onto a backing cloth in a grid format in reference to Hirst's *Spot Paintings*. Where Hirst employed assistants to paint his spots, I similarly employed the silkworms, free of the artist's touch. Incidentally the project, intrinsically dictated by nature, coincided with my own pregnancy, a pregnancy fraught with pain, medical complications and emotional turmoil making each circle a struggle and sometimes a punishment to embroider. In the spring of 2014 the hatching of the next batch of silkworms and the birth of my child happened within days of each other. Suddenly I had not just one baby but thousands of worms to feed.

Six days after the birth of my son I was out picking mulberry leaves all over the suburbs from the trees in the gardens of kind strangers who responded over facebook to my desperate call to feed the increasingly ferocious worms. In 2014 the intention was to let the silkworms 'paint' their own paths as they struggled to spin cocoons and pupate, a process contrastingly different to the defined circles of 2013. A stop-motion animation was set up to not only document the process but to capture the exaggerated futility of the exercise. In the stop-motion animation the silkworms run like maggots across the surface as their golden thread is spun, wasted even, in the production of art. *Midas and Me* is a trace of effort, beautiful and futile at the same time. *Midas*, referenced a number of times

by Damien Hirst in the titles of his *Butterfly Paintings*, is also referenced by myself as a reminder that something which could be intrinsically beautiful and meaningful can also be fraught with adversity, futility, meaninglessness and even death.



**Lynette Bester's** sculptures are made from everyday objects that are often crowd-sourced through online social media and word-of-mouth. This method of production allows for a degree of unpredictability in the final product and further informs the accumulative nature of the work.

Bester completed both her a B.A. in Fine Art (1999) and her Masters in Fine Art (Cum Laude) in 2002 at the University of Stellenbosch. She has taken part in group shows both locally and internationally and has had three solo shows in Cape Town: 'Stalking the Familiar' at the AVA (2010), 'Heart: Dimensions variable' at Blank (2005) and 'Wholes Cut Out' at the Cold Room in 2002. Bester has participated in the THUPELO International Workshop in 2005 and 2008 and was selected to participate in the DWAYER International Visual Arts Workshop for Women in Alexandria, Egypt. In 2009 she was part of an international collaboration in Cornwall and in 2013 participated in a month long residency at 18th Street, Santa Monica, California, for which she was selected by the Africa Centre.

Bester is currently a lecturer and Head of Department of Theory at The Ruth Prowse School of Art in Woodstock.

LEFT:  
Lynette Bester  
*Midas and Me* Detail (2013 – 2014)  
Raw Silk, crochet thread, linen  
106 x 100cm

BELOW:  
*Midas and Me* (2014)  
Looped ttop-motion animation





# Justin Fiske

**Artist Statement**

Nkatha Bay, Malawi, early 1990s... The story begins before the democratization of image capture, before photography joined the digital deluge and the LCD viewfinder eclipsed real-life participation and observation; you may have forgotten, but the 90’s were documented on 35mm celluloid film. In all of my many “failed” degrees, I was allowed lavish vacation time.... Protocol of the day was to stuff three thirsty young men into a Volkswagen City Golf and belt across the northern border into the neighboring states. UCT campus was left a Ghost town for the socially terrified and the insanely diligent. From Cape Town we once made the Beitbridge Border in 24 hours. Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia, and Malawi.... passed by one beer, one pothole, one Larium pill, one vivid dreamlike image at a time. I was the photographer – at the time studying darkroom techniques in Observatory – twenty years and a trillion trillion “megabytes” ago.

I had handed over yet another pair of identical portraits of myself to cross the border into Malawi. Two small black and white identity photos of me when I still had my hair. Where they went to in the rubber-stamp bureaucracy was not clear, but they were required, and they were my last – the little wax paper packet that the South African Chemists sold them in, was empty. I had 5 odd border crossings before the next first world chemist, and they were not going to be fun without photo’s to barter. My oversight was going to be a big problem for the team. As we climbed further north on the shores of Lake Malawi,

things got more and more tranquil, beautiful, rural, and less likely to produce id photo’s. Inkatha Bay was a grass hut town on a hillside that overlooked a moonlit cove. It ran on burning wood, and dugout fishing canoes hollowed out of tree trunks with medieval adzes. There on one of the dust tracks up into the village was a sign daubed in paint: “I D FOTO THIS WAY” and a bent arrow into the shacks. It was my sign. I followed it, and I found a photographic studio of such pride and ingenuity that I couldn’t work out how it functioned until he had finished.

**He proudly sat me on a school chair, in front of a black wall.**  
**He adjusted two articulated desk lamps towards my face.**  
**He brought forward a simple SLR camera on a tripod.**  
**He framed and focused my face.**  
**He pressed the trigger.**  
**He turned on a safelight.**  
**He opened the back of the camera, and cut out a single negative.**  
**He developed the single frame in a series of tin plates.**  
**He dried the negative.**  
**He exposed several contact prints of the same negative... in the sun.**  
**He developed the paper in the tin plates.**  
**He cut the portraits out to the standard ID size.**  
**They were beautiful.**

The process took roughly an hour, in the spirit of the “one hour service” – the benchmark of instantaneity from the 80’s. By snatching a useful glimpse of light, chemically teasing the information out onto film, and burning a record onto two

dimensions, his alchemy is what many are grappling to remember or re-access today.

**Justin Fiske** was born and raised in Cape Town. He had a varied educational career, embarking on many unfinished but life- and art-informing degrees. Initially, with the view of becoming an art director or graphic designer, he learned skills such as typography, layout, photography, printmaking and life drawing. Losing motivation in this direction, and with a strong aptitude towards Mathematics and 3-dimensional perception, he began a Bachelor of Science degree that over time degenerated into a curriculum of philosophy, politics, literature and maths. Importantly, he learned about rotational momentum and the mathematics of sinusoidal oscillation, key concepts behind his kinetic sculptures. Leaving tertiary education behind, he became a bicycle courier, which led to an interesting career in industrial access; abseiling on ships, oil rigs and buildings around the world. He spent five years as a production manager on art and design projects whilst maintaining a studio to keep his own personal process progressing. For nearly a decade he has channeled his energy into practicing art full time.



Justin Fiske  
*Strangely Illuminated* (2014)  
Contact print of 35mm framed in museum glass, Japanese cedar, copper. Camera: Rollei 35mm  
All negatives and prints were hand-developed and printed with no timer, thermometer, dark room or enlarger. The artist counted in his head, used a developing canister and a bedside lamp was used for exposing the prints.

# Jonathan Freemantle



'Der Heilige Berg' (Nirox series) translated as The Holy Mountain, is a continuation of Jonathan Freemantle's ongoing search for the perfect mountain that has spanned Northern Scotland and Southern Africa.

**Acting on the same urges as many an explorer, artist and poet before him, Freemantle embarks on this devotional inner and outer journey into the unknown in search of the majestic sublime.**

The paintings made at the Nirox Foundation in the Cradle of Humankind mark a deeper investigation into the multi-symbolism of the mountain. By painting mountains with pigment he has collected from the surrounding rock formations, Freemantle brings an element of shamanistic ritual into play. Here the

mountain is painted with base substances that make up the mountain. Natural oxide pigments and Acacia charcoal are applied, washed off and then reapplied; this process is repeated again and again replicating soil and rock erosion.

---

**Jonathan Freemantle** was born in Cape Town in 1978. At 17, he was one of five students selected from around the world to study at St Oswald's Academy in London, an intensive five-year traditional apprenticeship in drawing, painting, sculpture and geometry. Since then Freemantle has been involved in a number of projects. He set up and directed the painting department of The Art Academy

in London and has run outreach drawing programmes in Cape Town for the Talana Art Trust. He is also co-founder of the Edinburgh International Fashion Festival. Freemantle's work has been featured in a variety of publications and in 2004 he wrote and illustrated a book, *Anatomy made simple for Artists* published by Arcturus (UK). He has held solo exhibitions in London, Cape Town, Amsterdam and Edinburgh, and his work is represented in collections worldwide including SAB Miller and the private collection of HRH the Prince of Wales.



Jonathan Freemantle  
*Der Heilige Berg* (Nirox series) (2014)  
Natural oxide pigments and Acacia charcoal found at Nirox Sculpture Park and in the Cradle of Humankind ground in linseed oil and beeswax on canvas stretched over board  
90 x 90cm



# Nicholas Hales



## Artist Statement

Following Jungian dream analysis, this work utilizes the house (building) as a metaphor for self and investigates the personal and transpersonal aspects of the human psyche.

As starting points for this work I drew from two distinct 'views' of a house or building. The first, tiled sections were taken from shop fronts in Woodstock, and the second from computer 3D models of the basic wall structure of a house.

I was drawn to the worn tiled sections of these shop walls with their scratches, faded colours and marks developed over time – in a way that revealed a unique history. **In this work these surfaces are metaphors for an individuals' personal history: as we rub up against and interact with the world our personal history is formed.** I was also drawn to the individual square unit (tile/brick) that, multiplied with other similar units, creates a large body (house) or whole. Similarly, we as a collection of individuals form a larger body of consciousness (collective consciousness).

The second point of reference for this work was digital 3D modeling. In 3D modeling an object is first built using 'wire frame' which is a digital skeleton of the object. Then the outer skin or surface of the object is rendered to complete the object. In these works I wanted to create the impression of the solidity of the house dropping away. I have therefore reduced the house to two basic walls in wire frame and then bent them inward. During my own inward-focused meditation, I've experienced a dropping-away of the personal self to reveal a 'transpersonal' self. At times it is difficult to locate anything within my body; a vast infinite self is being revealed.

This work attempts to consider both the personal and transpersonal aspects of self and once these are both accepted a new sense of self is born that is inclusive of both.

---

**Nicholas Hales** is a contemporary artist living in Cape Town, South Africa. He

is primarily a painter but also works in a number of other disciplines including video. He has a Advanced Diploma in Fine Art from the University of Cape Town and a Diploma in Graphic Design from the University of Cape Town. He has held four solo exhibitions: Irma Stern Museum (1999) Cape Town, Association for Visual Arts( 2002) Cape Town and Joao Ferreira (2005 and 2007) Cape Town. Hales has participated in numerous group shows in South Africa and a number of exhibitions internationally. He has won a number of awards for his work.

Nicholas Hales  
*Untitled* (2009)  
Pastel and Acrylic ink on paper  
161 x 108cm

# Rudi le Hane

**Artist Statement**

My name is Rudi le Hane.  
I am a sculptor.

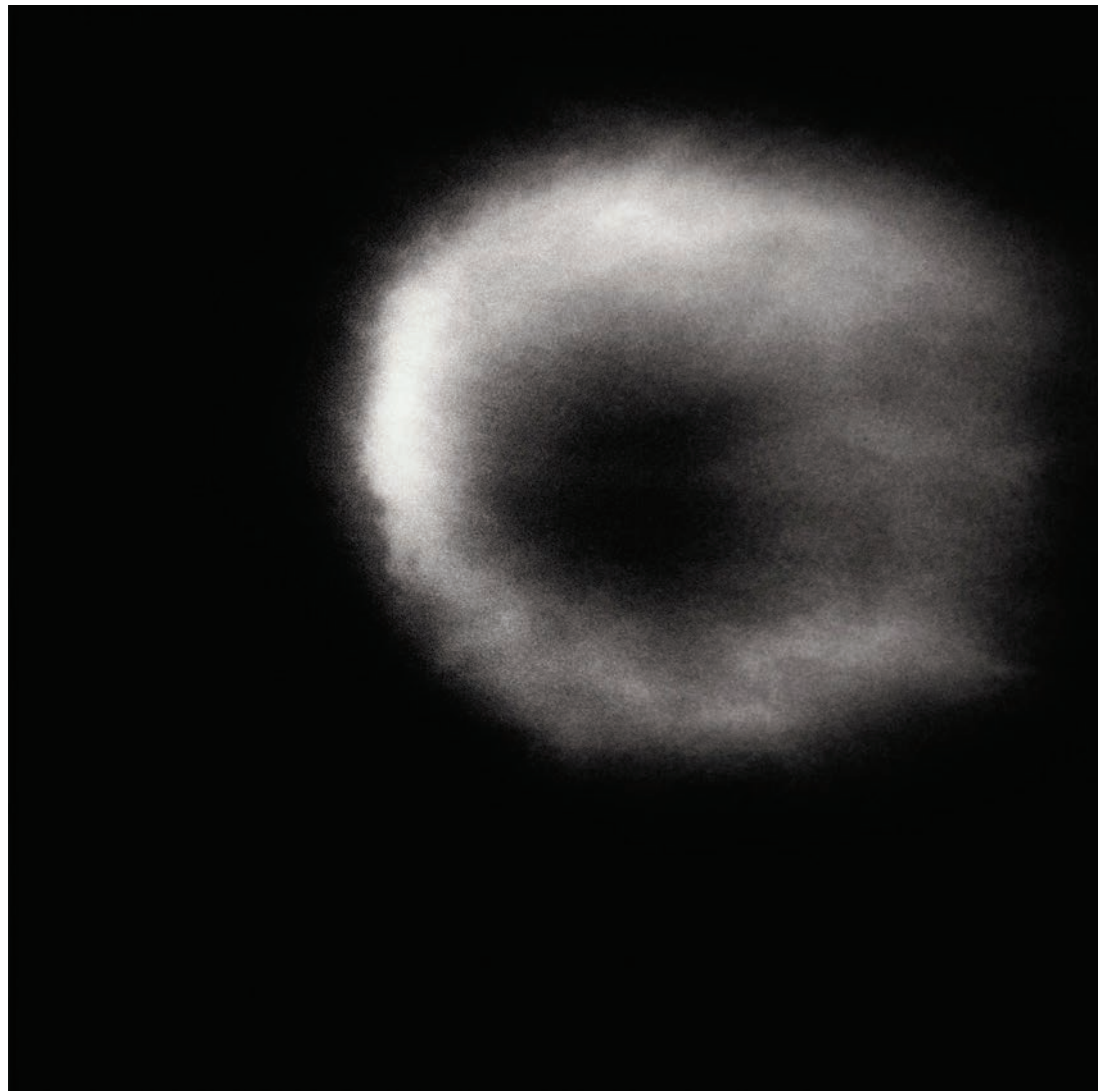
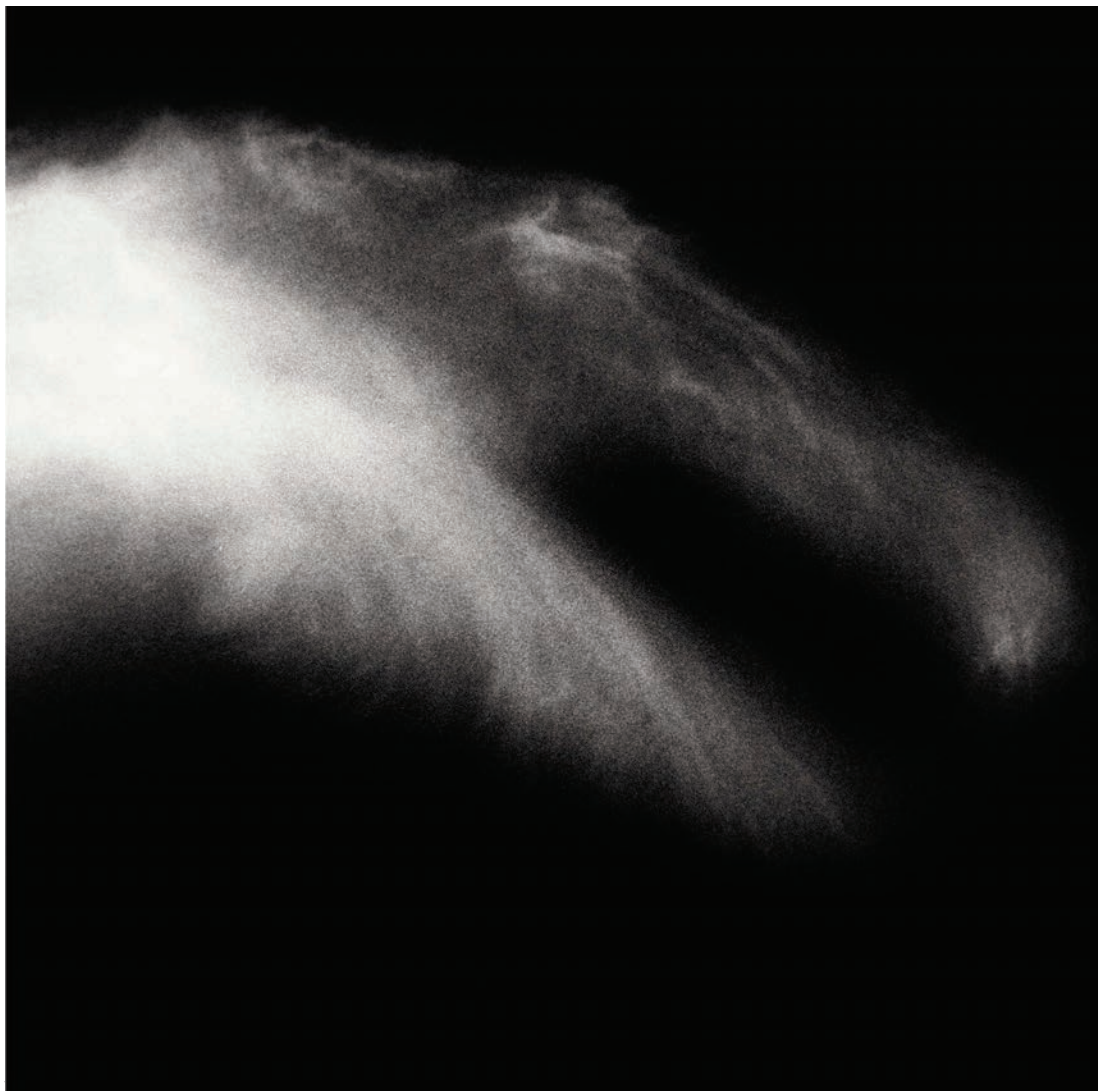
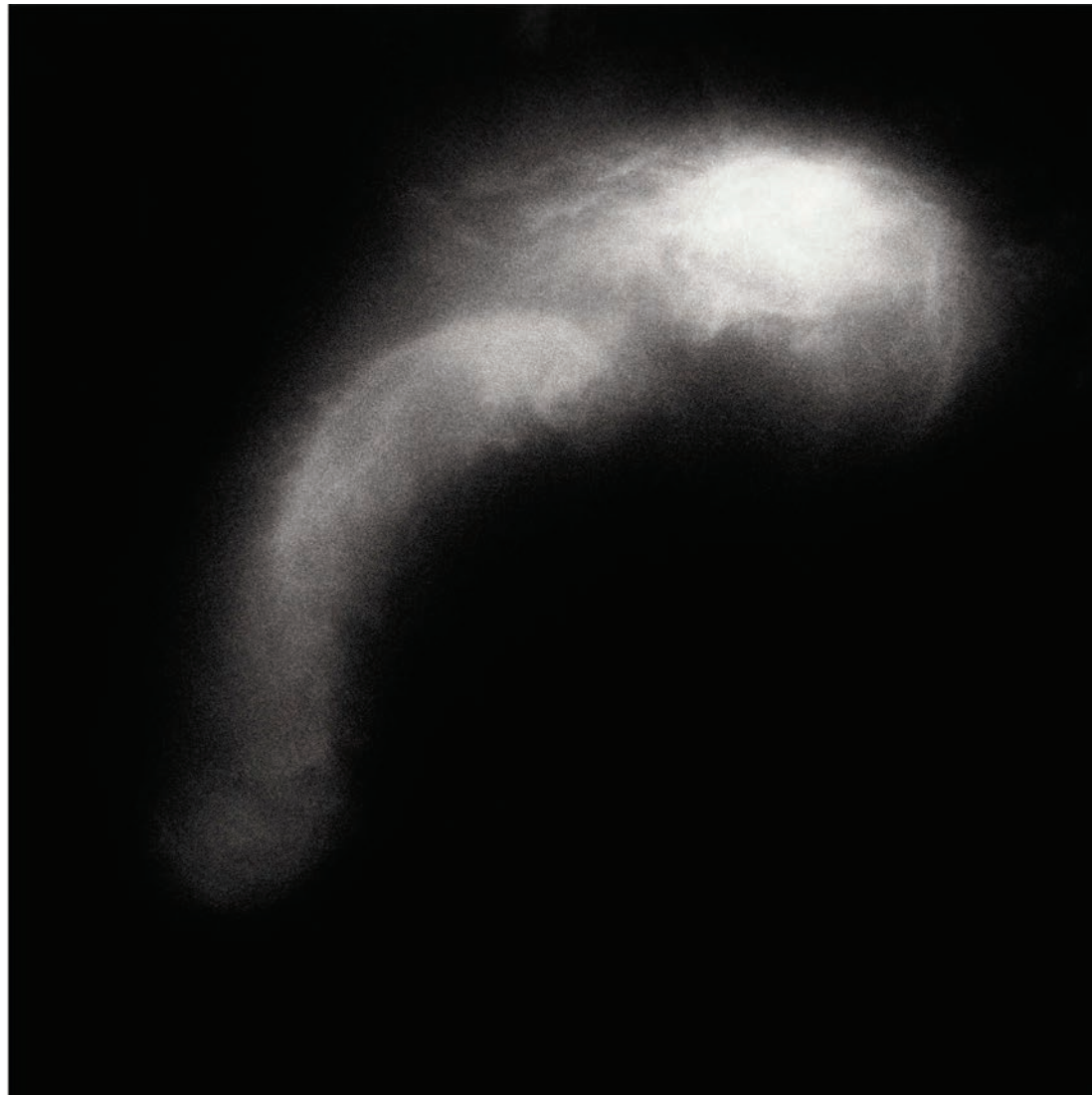
*Attempt #3* is the beginning of an unresolved ongoing project. The project serves to exhibit a relationship between conflicting forces with a particular focus on structure as a sensory reaction. **As the title suggests, this is the third attempt toward the failure of flight.** My aim in the project is to articulate an understanding of flight, in doing so this piece has explored instinctual reactions toward this theme.

---

**Rudi le Hane** (b.1991, Cape Town) received a BA(FA) in Sculpture from Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town in 2011. He is predominantly interested in timber and its structural form through an exploration of sciences and the seemingly impossible. Since graduating le Hane has been involved in a number of exhibitions across South Africa, to name a few: ‘Play’ at the Nirox Sculpture Park in Johannesburg (2014), ‘Vuleka’ (2014) at ART.B in Cape Town, ‘Sous les paves, la plage’s!’ at Post in Cape Town (2014), ‘About your full-time position’ (Johannesburg Fringe 2014 ) curated by Niklas Zimmer and ‘Greatest Hits of 2013’ at the AVA Gallery in Cape Town (2014). He is currently doing a BAS in Architectural Studies at UCT to further inform his interest in structural form.







# Luke Kaplan

## Artist Statement

The shifting, vaporous movements of clouds are condensed into almost solid forms: stark white against the dense black background of the sky. In pressing their liquid and infinite movement onto the paper's emulsion, they are transformed into almost impossible moments; a description of what they are not or cannot be – celestial bodies, totems, omens; a language on the periphery of our understanding.

The creation of the images requires an internalisation of those moments of looking up into a deliquescing sky through a camera lens. **The dark of the sky meets the dark box behind the lens, and meets again in the thick pitch of the darkroom.** Within that primordial darkness the images begin to appear: the forms of clouds pushing through the absence of light, the *fiat lux* announced again.

Hand-processed and printed from film in the darkroom, the process is a suggestion of ancient alchemical work:

the transmutation of spirit into matter, and back again.

---

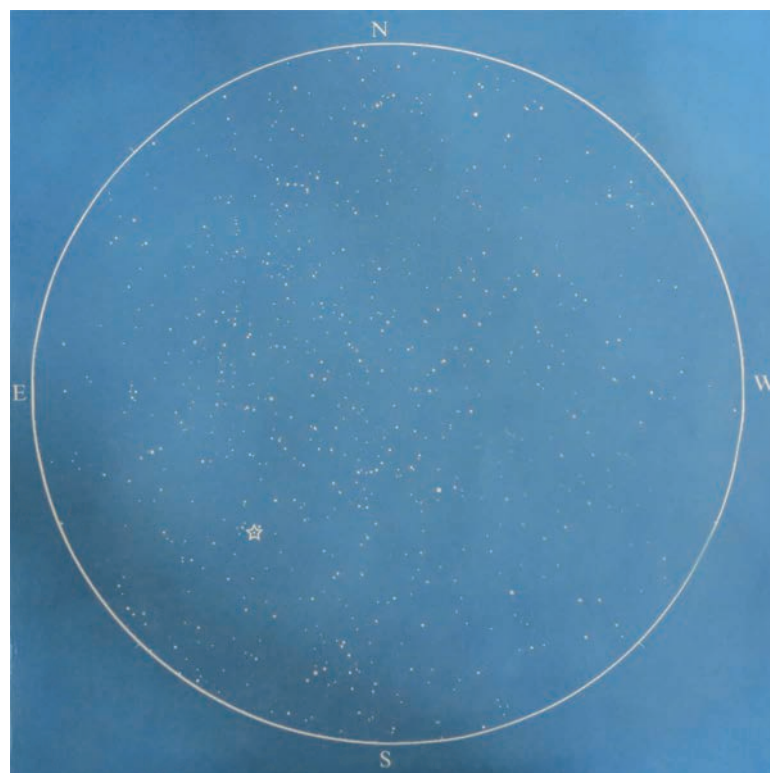
**Luke Kaplan** studied Fine Art at Rhodes University (Grahamstown) and was awarded a distinction for his Master's show, 'Refugium', in 2014. He works primarily in analogue, black and white photography and darkroom hand-processing and printing. Kaplan's photography focuses on the relationship between people and their natural world, and more specifically the transition between inner and outer 'landscapes'. His work reflects a fascination with investigating the places and moments where photographs fail to capture and 'fix' their subject matter; where the clear lines of representation begin to shift and blur.

Kaplan lives and works in Cape Town.

TOP LEFT: *Untitled* (Clouds I)  
TOP RIGHT: *Untitled* (Clouds III)  
BOTTOM LEFT: *Untitled* (Clouds II)  
BOTTOM RIGHT: *Untitled* (Clouds IV)  
(2012-2013)  
Black and white digital photograph  
Edition of 3 + 1AP  
33 x 33cm each



# Nina Liebenberg



## Artist Statement

The work shows the exact positioning of the stars from J.M. Barrie's window at 3 Adelphi Terrace, London (51°30'N 0°7'21"W), on Saturday, 19 June 1937 – the night of his death. Based on the direction of his window, I was able to locate the 'second star to the right' at the 45 degree angle he would have stood and viewed the night sky. **Hopefully, he reached his destination after departing the flat and traveling 'straight on till morning'.**

**Nina Liebenberg** (b.1981) currently lives and works in Cape Town. She has completed her MFA at the University of Cape Town (2011) with distinction and her BAFA at the University of Stellenbosch (2003). She is currently teaching and project managing the Honours in Curatorship programme at the Michaelis School of Fine Art (UCT), and practicing her art.

Liebenberg's practice involves drawing on the expertise of individuals from a variety of disciplines including botany, chemistry, medical imaging, physics and

engineering. She uses these scientific vocabularies to evoke feelings of 'what might have been', 'if only' and other yearnings of the heart. She has exhibited in numerous group including: 'Do it' at Michaelis Main Gallery (2014), 'Suspicious Minds: artists explore mind and matter' at Iziko National Gallery Annexe (curated by Fabian Saptouw and Nina Liebenberg) (2014), 'Post-Colonial Africa, Prince Vincent Building', Oudtshoorn Arts Festival (2013), 'Entre-Vues' at Camac Art Centre in Marnay-sur-Seine, France (2013), 'Re-Sample' at ABSA Gallery in Johannesburg (2012), 'Salvo' at Commune.1, Cape Town (2012), 'Threshold' at Michaelis Gallery (2011), 'Gross Examination', Rosedale Gallery, Michaelis and Pathology Learning Centre, Groote Schuur (2011). She had a solo show at Commune.1 (Cape Town), 'Point Counter Point' in 2011. Liebenberg has taken part in the CAMAC Residency in Marnay-sur-Seine, (France) in 2013, the AIR Residency (Caravanserai in Istanbul, Turkey) and Oppenheimer Memorial Trust Grant.

Nina Liebenberg  
*Second star to the right and straight on 'til morning* 2014  
 Positioning of the stars as seen from J.M. Barrie's window at  
 3 Adelphi Terrace, London, on 19 June 1937 - the night of  
 his death.  
 Cyanotype on paper, Ink on Perspex  
 42 x 42 x 3cm

# Jabulani Maseko

## Artist Statement

What one perceives is what helps to build one's reality. **What happens if you perceive or live something that others are not even aware of?**

Through this video and sound piece I have tried to highlight the disjuncture that exists between reality and perception when active agents are apparently invisible from display. Through the trickery and manipulation (editing) of a video sequence filmed in one long take, the edited material, which is crucial to the sequential representation of the narrative, speaks of a lost moment which might hold the answers to the overall understanding of a lived experience.

---

**Jabulani Maseko** (b.1977, Johannesburg) is currently completing his MFA FAM at Slade School Of Fine Art in London, UK (2014-2016). Before that he embarked on a BA Hons. in Media and Cultural Studies at the University of the West of England in Bristol, UK (2000-2003). Solo

shows include 'Breaking News- Memoirs of a Flâneur' at Testbed 1 in London, UK (2013), 'For the People by The People' at Camden People's Theatre in London, UK (2011), 'Art Enclosures' at Galleria di Piazza San Marco, Fondazione Bevilacqua la Masa in Venice, Italy (2010), 'A Lei Xô' at Galeria Por um Dia in Porto, Portugal (2009) and 'In Vivid Colour' at Circuito Cultural Bombarda. Porto, Portugal (2007). Maseko has taken part in numerous group exhibitions: 'Analogue Eye- Video Art Africa' at the Grahamstown National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa (2014), 'Will Alsop and A Few Friends' at Testbed 1 for the London Design Festival (2011), in 2010 the 2nd Luanda Triennial of Art in Angola. In 2010 he took part in the Art Enclosures residency at Fondazione Bevilacqua la Masa, Fondazione di Venezia in Venice, Italy.

Maseko lives and works in London.



Jabulani Maseko  
*Disruptive Patterns: Schizothymia* (2014)  
Video and Sound  
3 + 2AP  
Video loop



# Mitchell Gilbert Messina

## Artist Statement

I've recently graduated from Michaelis School of Fine Art (UCT), where my practice was largely preoccupied with producing humorous works that either played with the physicality and materiality of pre-existing objects, the potential narrative relationship between the art object and its title card, or riffed on and leaned into both the tropes of art production and of narrative structure.

In my final year I would mostly just make a work and sit on it until I figured out the title. The titles had a tendency to frame the works, and to finish them; much like the caption to a New Yorker Cartoon it gave the work its punch.

I always thought this process sort of resembled what Wayne Brady does when he gets handed an abstract prop on 'Who's Line is It Anyway' and has to perform a skit with it - his ability to keep returning to the stage with the same object and a different joke is pretty incredible. I think he does this, and all good jokes (and maybe some of my finer works) do this by providing just enough context - just enough to set up the hypothetical situation, just enough to hint at the pre-existing tropes, and just enough to see themselves through.

I'm interested in this kind of stuff.

Lately, I've been working very hard on putting in minimal effort. **On subverting the functions of inanimate objects. On giving power tools part time jobs as performance artists.** There's a scene in *Fantasia* (1940) where Micky puts on a wizard hat and gets a broom to do his chores for him, and then he falls asleep - if you stop watching before things go awry, that's more or less a summation of my current practice.

---

**Mitchell Gilbert Messina** (b.1991) graduated from a BA Fine Art at Michaelis (UCT) in 2011 with a first class. He has since shown in numerous group exhibitions in Cape Town including 'Do It' (2014) at Michaelis Gallery, 'BYOB' I and II at Brundyn+ (2014), 'Bazaar III' (2014) at Atlantic House and 'Greatest Hits 2013: Industrial Harvest' at the AVA Gallery (2014).

Messina currently lives and works as an artist in Cape Town.



Mitchell Gilbert Messina  
*I was told it would wear itself out* (2014)  
Artist's drill and plinth  
130 x 40 x 40cm



# Bongani Njalo

## Artist statement

The installation for ‘Scintilla’ is part of a series that visually responds to Deepak Chopra’s book, ‘Life After Death’, which opens up the notion of death as a transcendental shift in consciousness. The works reflect on the repetitive natural cycle of death and life as experienced in our bodies and as a microcosm of the universe.

The aim of the series is to question why the soul/spirit cannot reflect on what happens to us physically as well as cosmically. If the human body possesses millions of microorganisms that naturally die to make way for new cells everyday and the universe can generate a new galaxy from the “deaths” of preceding galaxies then why can this not be emulated in the spiritual form?

Scientists working in the realm of Quantum Physics propagate the idea that we “live” in a state of projected consciousness which is very similar, in fact almost identical, to the beliefs documented in the scriptures of Vedic teachings (referenced in Chopra’s text). This thinking has lead me to the conclusion that ‘life is a dream and death does not exist’ but it is failed by the over-riding Judeo-Christian beliefs held by society which have hindered the evolution of collective consciousness by way of making us believe that we “live” in a one-directional tunnel.

**The installation investigates the shift in consciousness one experiences at the moment of death.** This site-specific

installation is the first of it’s kind and will act as a precursor to my developing body of work. It is to be viewed from either side of the ‘threshold’ with the red cloth guiding one’s path to the port of entry or exit between the two fields of consciousness.

---

**Bongani Njalo** (b.1987) obtained his National Diploma in Fine Arts from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University where he majored in Stained Glass. In 2011 Njalo curated ‘200 Eastern Cape Artists’ for the National Arts Festival Fringe programme at the Port Elizabeth Athenaeum and the ‘Large Works’ exhibition at the same venue in 2012. In the same year Njalo was commissioned to produce collaborative projects for Route 67, a public art journey flowing through the inner city of Port Elizabeth. In 2012 the South African Centre for Photography invited Njalo to curate ‘Beehive’, a group exhibition included in the Cape Town Month of Photography Festival. He currently serves on the curatorial panel of the State of the Art online gallery.

Njalo has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth. His work can be found in local and international private collections. He is one of the 2014 David Koloane Award Winners.



Bongani Njalo  
*Leap* Installation view (2014)  
Wool and glue  
270 x 337 x 21cm





# Lauren Palte

## Artist Statement

"I adore the act of painting, it's so extraordinarily subtle. To paint the expression of a face and to change that expression, from happy to sad by one miniscule change in the shadow of an eye, makes one never want to do anything else." (Glenn Brown quoted in Charlotte Mullins' *Painting People*)

Glenn Brown brings our attention to an exciting aspect of paint – its mutability. His thinking about paint as a fluid, shifting substance offers a useful point of entry for reflection on my work. In this project, oil paint that is dissolved in solvent is poured onto a horizontal sheet of metal – copper, brass or aluminium. The non-porous surface of the metal causes the paint to flow, pool and disperse across the surface. The figures are coaxed out of the wet paint.

**At the same time, the forms threaten to disintegrate and dissolve back into their dark grounds.** The luminous metal ground shines through the thin layers of paint to expose the fragile surface of the painted figure.

The formal concern of light and

transparency that is offered by the metal surface ties into my interest in x-rays of paintings, in particular recent autoradiographs of works by Dutch Masters, Vermeer and Rembrandt. X-ray images of such paintings reveal things that would otherwise remain invisible to the unaided eye. These images present an opportunity to engage with the changeability of technique present in paintings.

This interest in x-rays; in particular the use of light passing through a surface to generate an x-ray image, is further explored in a series of paintings on glass. These images are rendered in oil paint in the negative on glass. They become photographic positives by making contact with light sensitive paper. Here, the image is created through a process analogous to an X-ray. In this way, it offers an imaginative diagnosis of the surfaces and dissolving images of my paintings.

Across the different media, this project brings together x-ray images of paintings with fragments from well-known paintings

and personal images from my family album. While diverse in their origin, the activity of painting seeks a moment of recognition or empathy with the painted figure; searching for lost moments, hidden in memory or behind new layers of paint.

---

**Lauren Palte** (b.1982) is a Cape Town based painter, teacher and Community Arts facilitator. She completed her undergraduate degree (2005) and her Masters in Fine Art Degree (2011) at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, UCT. Palte was selected as one one of the 40 finalists for the SPI National Portrait Award in 2013. Her most recent work uses metal plates as an oil painting substrate.

Lauren Palte  
*After Cameron I* (2014)  
Oil on copper  
24 x 16cm



# Gaelen Pinnock

Composed of numerous collaged photographs, these images form part of a series that looks at the South African urban landscape with specific reference to the control of port access and egress.

Since 9/11 the US has focused on “playing the away game,” i.e. meeting terrorist threats at their overseas sources. This has involved lobbying the UN into drawing up a strict new security code for containers and ports worldwide and pressurising foreign ports to upgrade security in favour of US interests. This has meant that South African harbours, through massively increased security, have become outposts of United States paranoia.

Pinnock has gathered imagery from this realm, and through an intuitive distillation process, created a series of floating citadels. **These mysterious menacing objects seem part organism, part machine... like dystopian ecosystems that defend their true purpose, but whose intricate workings lure the viewer in.**

These guarded enclaves are imaginary interpretations of real urban issues about control, security and the free-market

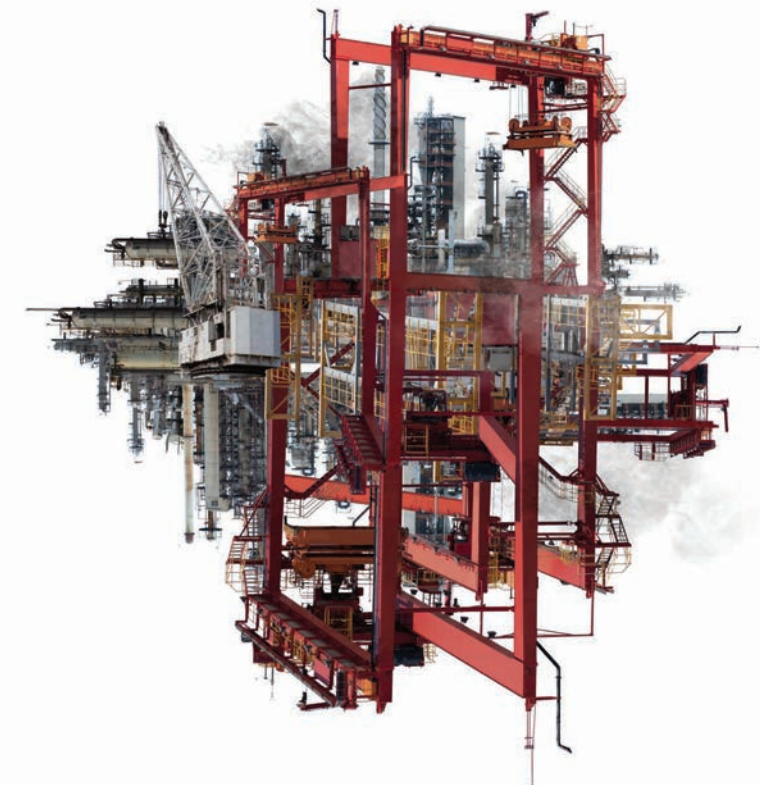
economy, rendered into the threatening essence that underlies such systems of power.

---

**Gaelen Pinnock** (b.1980) is an architect and artist. He primarily uses photography to explore cities, structures and landscapes. He looks at the legacies of failed utopias and the shadows cast by laws, systems and urban development trends. He has a preoccupation with alienated landscapes, abandoned spaces and dystopian environments.

“The South African landscape is fundamentally shaped by the legacy of colonial and apartheid legislation and spatial planning. More recently, the developments and policies of an increasingly fearful elite are entrenching class separation even further. I am fascinated by this trend and its implications for how people live and move and how urban landscapes are shaped.”

Earlier this year he was selected as a finalist for the Absa L’Atelier awards.



Gaelen Pinnock  
TOP: *Citadel #9* (2014)  
BOTTOM: *Citadel #11* (2014)  
Giclée print on archival paper  
100 x 100cm  
Edition of 5 +2AP



# Gabrielle Raaff

## Artist Statement

I have been preoccupied for many years with the ethereal interpretation of the urban landscape in watercolour. These new ink works are a return for me, to the inner landscape of the subconscious.

**A re-kindling of the mysterious chemistry of the artist, the paint, the surface and intuition.**

*The garden is in full moon light.  
A place of dreams, for dreams that  
sometimes become nightmares.  
Waking to the sound of my own fears.  
Waking to the sound of the sea.  
Not quite a comfort but an anchor for  
thoughts that have no discipline.*

---

**Gabrielle Raaff** (b.1970, Johannesburg) graduated with a BAFA (HDE) from the University of Stellenbosch in 1992. Her first solo show, 'In Our Midst' was in 2009 at The Muti Gallery in Cape Town. Recent two person shows in Cape

Town are 'Periphery' at These Four Walls Gallery (2008), 'Realm' at Salon 91, and 'People' at Chagan Contemporary, London (2011). Previous group shows include 'Unplugged' at Rembrandt Van Rijn Gallery, Johannesburg (1998) '20 Artists 20 Portraits' UCA Gallery, Cape Town (2009) and 'Spier Contemporary' at Spier Wine Estate and The Johannesburg Gallery (2007/2008). Raaff was a finalist in the Spier Contemporary Art Awards in 2007.

Working with the ephemeral qualities of watercolour and ink, Raaff explores certain spatial conditions of figurative and architectural form within the urban realm. Her latest works see a return to oil and a more intuitive, visceral exploration of the internal landscape of the subconscious.

Raaff works and lives in Cape Town.



LEFT:  
Gabrielle Raaff  
*Night Sweats No 5* (2014)  
Ink on Fabriano  
48 x 66cm  
55.5 x 75 cm framed

RIGHT:  
Gabrielle Raaff  
*Night Sweats No 6* (2014)  
Ink on Fabriano  
48 x 66cm  
55.5 x 75 cm framed

# Chad Rossouw



**Artist Statement**

*Pale Horse (After the Klingon New Testament)*

This work consists of fine silver wire inlaid into panga-panga. The silver outlines letters in a mock-medieval font, which spells out the following words:

‘ej ‘eH, chIS Sargh, ‘ej tlhejmeH Hegh

These words are a rough translation into the fictional, but functional, language Klingon. The English original is a verse from Revelations in the Christian Bible:

**And behold, a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death.**

The work plays with two opposing transformations. The first is the translation, which is absurd. It takes something ostensibly sacred and prophetic and translates it into the epically nerdy Klingon language. The second transformation is that of words into material, in this case silver calligraphy. This gives precedence to the form of the words, lending a sense of weight and seriousness.

and examples of his work reside in the IZIKO South African National Gallery’s collection, The New Church Museum and the University of Cape Town’s collection. He heads the Photography department at the Ruth Prowse School of Fine Art in Cape Town.

**Chad Rossouw** (1982), is an artist, writer and a lecturer, based in Cape Town, South Africa. He has had two solo shows: ‘The Planet’s Wake’ in 2014 and ‘A History of Failure’ in 2012 at Brundyn +, Cape Town. He has been on numerous group shows,

Chad Rossouw  
*Pale Horse (After the Klingon New Testament)* (2014)  
Silver and Panga-Panga  
11.8 x 118 x 2.5 cm  
Courtesy of the Artist and BRUNDYN+, Cape Town

# Buhlebezwe Siwani

## Artist Statement

*Uthengisa unokrwece elunxwemene* (translated as 'he sells sea shells on the seashore') is inspired by personal dreams and the stories of those returning from the ocean after approximately three months in order to complete their training to become a traditional healer in the Ubungoma tradition. The performance is about life inside the masses of water that surround us, as having both life affirming and destructive qualities, hence the magic that they embody. **Water in my own development as a traditional healer is something that I cannot enter without permission.** If I do, it is at my peril. In this piece I aim to connect my dreamscape to the seascape.

## Ukwaba

In 2012 Lonmin mine workers in Marikana, many of whom were shot and killed, were found to have consulted a traditional healer who gave them muthi he said would make them invincible. The direct translation of 'umuthi' is medicine, however the miners were painted as barbaric and using witchcraft. This performance explores the divide between belief and human nature and related themes of desire, hope and desperation.

**Buhlebezwe Siwani** is a performance and installation artist who is currently doing for her MFA at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, UCT. In 2010 she received her BAFA (Hons.) at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Siwani's practice focuses primarily on journeys that resonate with her personal journey, questioning aspects of Southern African traditions, rituals and rites. She further considers the emotional, physical and mental strife that the body encounters in different environments, whilst believing herself to exist in a liminal space: between the living and an ancestral realm.

Siwani has taken part in numerous group exhibitions and events, including: 'Revisiting Sites' at The Hostel in Cape Town (2014); a site-specific exhibition, 'Just do it! Creative Strategies of Survival', in partnership with Apex Gallery (New York) in Alexandra, Johannesburg (2012); 'Vessel' at Substation, The University of the Witwatersrand (2010) and 'Domestomorphosis' at what is now known as the Wits Art Museum (2007). She was both a panel member and participating artist for 'Between Subject and Object, Inzilo; Ngoba Ngihlala kwabafileyo' at the Michaelis Galleries and Gipca Live Arts Festival, Cape Town (2014). Siwani won the Martienssen Prize Award in 2010.





# Marlene Steyn



## Artist Statement

The subject, deriving from the Latin *subjectum* and *suppositum*, literally means “that which is thrown under” and it is also connected to Aristotle’s use of *hypokeimon* as “that which underlies.”<sup>1</sup> S-he is the subject. S-he partially emerges whilst being thrown onto the canvas carpet (because it is extremely slippery), drowningly dancing underneath- and between layers of paint and gestures and glazes (Throwing someone usually results in falling).

*Falling*  
*in-testine;*  
*Falling like Oedipus*  
*backward into the womb*  
*forward into the tomb;*  
*Falling like Salamacis*  
*into you*  
*intrauterine;*  
*Falling In love in Narcissus’s pool*  
*falling over her feet*  
*on her face into*  
*and through your arms;*  
*Will she ever stop falling?*

## An island for mouthsharing

Salamacis is the painted subject. S-he  
 1. Miles 2010: Oedipus and Inwood 1992: 280

is slippery and sticks to whomever s-he touches. S-he, pushed away by Hermaphroditus, threw herself upon him and clinged on to him so intensely that a “partial, dually sexed creature” was produced.<sup>2</sup> S-he androgynously awoke in a face-to-face amnesia, forgetting where her face once ended and his began. Now, s-he has four eyes and two noses, but shares a mouth. In Salamacis’s leap and collapse into Hermaphroditus, an “inseparable, contaminated, condensed”<sup>3</sup> and pulverised unity was (com)pressed into becoming. A body without organs, who according to Nancy, “still has a hundred organs, each of which pulls and disorganizes the whole.”

In X-O-X-O-kissing, s-he becomes; >> more than herself: inviting a gallant guest a little inside her outlines (tongue tied in a kissing knot, sharing a mouth, momentarily forgetting her separate-seamless-self). This forgetting makes her a little less than herself. <<

2. Perella 1969: 223  
 3. Kristeva 1982: 18

A self and other contaminated and parasited in the trespass of lip-lines: “O trespass sweetly urged!” The kiss smudges; lips sticks, lipstick smears, beards scratch. There is paintbrush hair on the painted (hairy) figure, because it brushed too intensely.

Paint-strokes can kiss too (with saliva-turpentine). It can be woven, plaited, braided and knotted. The knot does not signify a point of closure, but rather opens up to a conception of knots. It is a knot that is turned inside-out, that slips at the moment when one attempts to pull it tight and needs to be knotted again.

S-he bites her lip, trying to figure out where s-he begins and the world ends? Is she biting her lip or merely securing her face from slipping off? Her outlines have become entangled with her inlines as her kidney stones collide with meteorite rocks.



## In face outfits

The body, like the head, consists only of orifices and holes (the head is very holy) Holes in the body and psyche are hollow ovular passages, conduits through which migration can occur opening up to a multitude of possibilities to re-imagine the subject.

S-he can be plugged into a forest, or s-he can become a flower vase (holding a bouquet with jasmine flowers erupting from the eyes-, ears-, nostrils-, and mouth orifices) (and its not even Valentine’s day).

Orifices are located in-between an inside and outside where a subject can leak-out or over-flow. Following Bataille’s motif of the eye morphing into the egg (blinking sunny-side-up-sunny-side-down), I often depict subjects plugged into other subjects: becoming a tower becoming a braid; becoming hetero. **The visual play, interlinking and penetration of orifice allow me to further render a subject**

## who is in excess of herself (linked to doubles, mini-me’s forests, and sometimes furniture).

**Marlene Steyn** (b.1989) studied at the Royal College of Art in London, where she received her MA in Painting in 2014. Prior to this, she attended the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, where she graduated with her BA Visual Arts in 2011. Her works depicts fantastical worlds, inner turmoil, and conflict, with recent group exhibitions including ‘Inoperative Mythology’, Blyth Gallery, Imperial College in London (2014) and ‘Bloomberg New Contemporaries’, Spike Island, Bristol and Institute of Contemporary Art, London (2013). She recently had a solo exhibition, ‘How Cannibals Cuddle at The Art Cabin’, London (2014). Steyn was recently awarded a fellowship for the Vermont Studio Centre for in the USA for 2015.

LEFT:  
 Marlene Steyn  
*An Island for Mouth Sharing* (2012 )  
 Oil and mixed media on unstretched linen  
 157 x 197cm

RIGHT:  
 Marlene Steyn  
*In face-outfits* (2013)  
 Oil and mixed media on unstretched linen  
 212 x 212 cm.



# Simeon Nelson & Moffat Takadiwa

### Artist Statement

This demountable cardboard work was fabricated over two intense weeks from initial research, conversations, drawings and models. It hovers between architecture and sculpture in scale and structure; it synthesises pattern and ornament from European Christian traditions, African Shona, Ndebele and other traditions into a style we dubbed “Afro-Gothic”.

*All Our Ancestors* was inspired both by the sacred architectural geometry of the European gothic and the complex mathematical patterning of Zimbabwean and Zambian traditional crafts and architecture. It was conceived of as type a shrine or temple, it seemingly floats over the floor and surrounds an inner sanctuary with its semi circular wings. It has an implicit social function, drawing people to it as an enigmatic object of many possible readings and functions.

Christianity and the Shona/Nbebele religions are monotheistic.  
-Mwari “He who Is” Shona  
-Amadhlozi “He who Is” Ndebele  
-YHWH “I am who I am” Judeo-Christinity

Self existent Creator and Sustainer of the universe.  
*All Our Ancestors* meshes spiritual and humanistic values of two cultures, which share a colonial and a religious past. An

aim of the proposal was to rehabilitate Zimbabwean tradition from the stigma of Christianisation enabling establishment of a peer-based dialogue and relationship on the basis of shared monotheistic worldview, spiritual plurality and traditions acknowledged and validated through art.  
**The sacred is to unify, to be in a state of unity with the mystery of being, it is a universal human experience and this sculpture reflects on this shared spirituality and common ancestry of all people.**

**Simeon Nelson** is a sculptor, new media and interdisciplinary artist interested in convergences between science, religion and art, complexity theory and relationships between art, architecture urban sites and the natural world. After establishing himself as an artist in Australia and Asia in the 1990s, he moved to London in 2001 and is currently working on projects in Africa, Australia, Europe and the UK. He was a Finalist in the National Gallery of Australia’s National Sculpture Prize in 2005 and a Finalist in the 2003 Jerwood Sculpture Prize.

Nelson has received numerous arts council grants in Australia and the UK, two Pollock-Krasner Foundation Fellowships, two Wellcome Trust arts awards, Leverhulme Trust and EU funding. In 1997 he was the

Australian representative to the IX Triennial India, New Delhi. Projects include: ‘All Our Ancestors’ (an Arts Council England/British Council funded residency and exhibition in Harare, Zimbabwe); ‘Anarchy in the Organism’ (commission by Wellcome Trust); ‘Plenum’, a computer generated real-time architectural light projection which is part of an EU Culture Fund supported project, Lux Scientia; ‘Paratekton’ (Social Sculpture System), the Melbourne Art Fair, 2010; ‘Cryptosphere’, at the Royal Geographical Society, London and Plataforma Revolver, Lisbon (2008-10); ‘Desiring Machine’, a public sculpture on the outskirts of Melbourne (2008) and ‘Flume’, a large-scale site-embedded commission for Ashford, Kent, UK, 2005-8.

Nelson’s work is held in the collections of the Art/Omi Foundation, New York, the Jerwood Foundation, London, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, The National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne and the Cass Sculpture Foundation, UK.

Nelson is currently professor of sculpture at the University of Hertfordshire (UK)  
**Moffat Takadiwa** (b.1983 Karoi, Zimbabwe) is one of the most geographically widely exhibited and collected of the ‘born free’ (post-independence) generation of artists in Zimbabwe. Takadiwa takes every day, discarded objects, easily recognisable parts of our daily life and utility and

breathes into them magic and spirituality, transporting viewers into the realm of imagination, meditation and wonder.

Exhibiting since 2007, Takadiwa’s works have been shown and collected as far as Thailand, Hong Kong, Australia, France, UK, Germany and The Netherlands. Recent exhibitions include ‘WARP & WOOF’ at The Hole in New York (2014), ‘No Limits’ (HIFA) and ‘Chiso’ at First Floor Gallery Harare (both 2013), ‘Good News’ in 2013 at New University (Lisbon), ‘Harare Beyond Words’ at Gallery H in

Bangkok, Thailand and ‘Harare’ at Galerie Pavé d’Orsay (Paris, 2011)

Takadiwa lives and works in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Simeon Nelson & Moffat Takadiwa (collaboration)  
*All Our Ancestors* (2014)  
Cardboard, bolts, thread, bottles  
260 x 260 x 200cm  
Courtesy of the artists and First Floor Gallery Harare





# Jo Voysey

**Jo Voysey** focuses on the expressive potential of medicinal remedies as a medium for painting. **For Voysey, painting with medicine has often felt like a type of alchemy.** She transforms the contents of the nondescript looking small bottles she procures from medicine cabinets and pharmacy shelves into vast, vibrantly coloured expanses of 'painted' surface. The unpredictable nature of the medicine's chemical make-up is central to her work and reflects on the organic nature of bodies, both

human and animal. Her exploration is concentrated on ideas of loss and healing and relates to aspects of human relationships with animals in captivity.

---

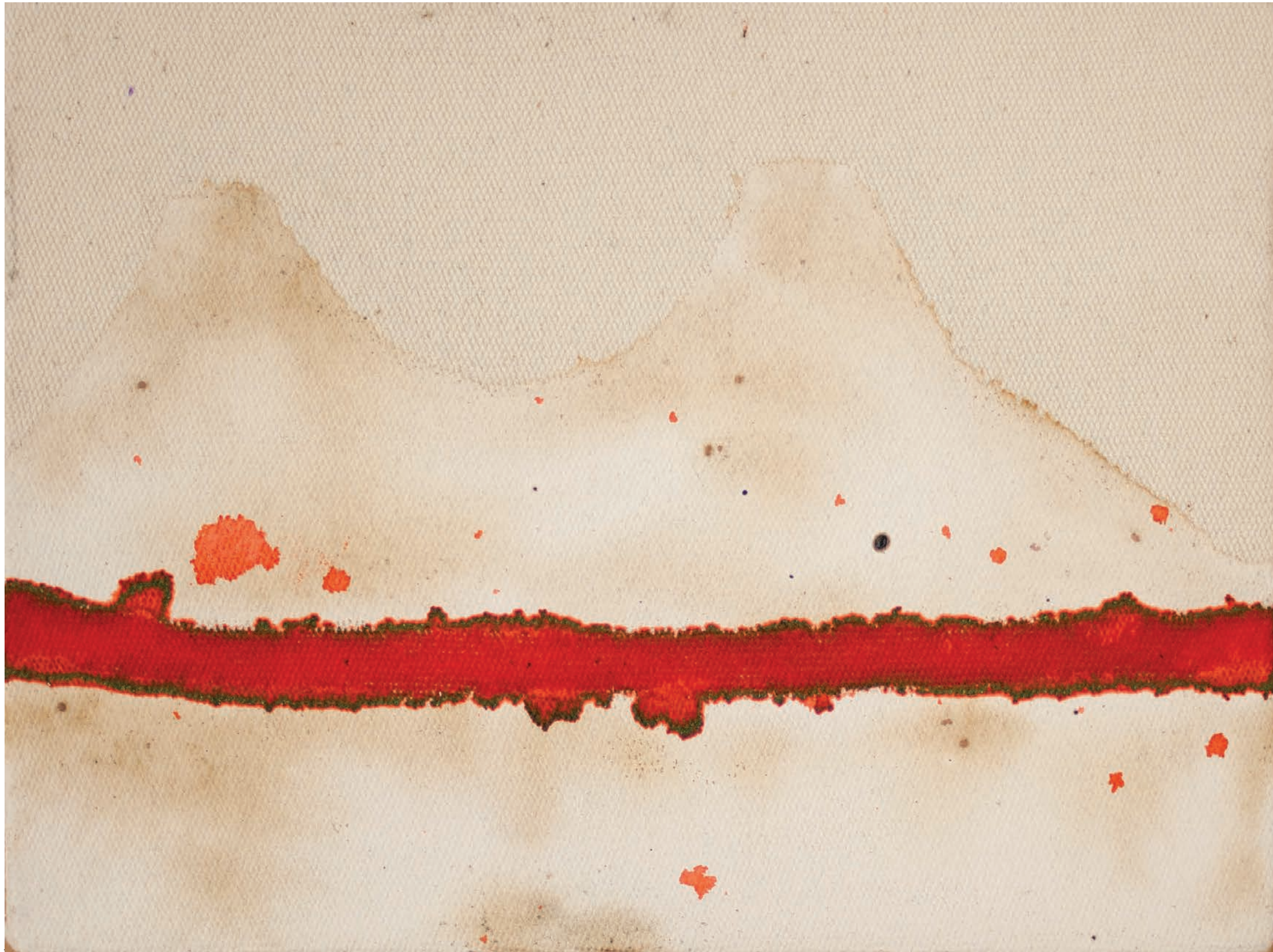
**Voysey** (b.1987, Johannesburg) completed her MFA at the Michaelis School of Fine Art in 2013 after obtaining a BA Fine Art degree at the University of the Witwatersrand (2010). Since graduating Voysey

has exhibited works at the Cape Town Art Fair and had a solo show, 'Remedy', at the AVA Gallery in Cape Town (2014).

Voysey lives and works in Cape Town.

LEFT: Jo Voysey  
*Tent* (2014)  
Gastropect, Friar's balsam and Mercurochrome on canvas  
15.5 x 20.5cm

RIGHT: Jo Voysey  
*A Little Walk* (2014)  
Potassium permanganate, Supradyn effervescent tablets and Friar's balsam on canvas  
20.5 x 15.5cm





To view the full colour catalogue please go to:  
[www.commune1.com](http://www.commune1.com)

Special thanks to:  
First Floor Gallery Harare  
BRUNDYN +

...And to all the participating artists who exist in a world of self-imposed magic.

This catalogue is published on occasion of the  
exhibition at Commune.1

**Scintilla: An Alchemy Show**  
**6 November - 13 December 2014**

© 2013, Commune.1 and the artists.  
No part of this book may be reproduced without the written permission of the  
authors and the gallery.

# COMMUNE.1

64 Wale Street, Cape Town, 8001  
t: 021 423 5600  
e: [info@commune1.com](mailto:info@commune1.com)  
w: [www.commune1.com](http://www.commune1.com)



LYNETTEBESTER  
JUSTINFISKEJONATHAN  
FREEMANTLENICHOLAS  
HALESRUDILEHANE  
LUKEKAPLAN  
NINALIEBENBERG  
JABULANIMASEK  
MITCHELLGILBERT  
MESSINABONGANINJALO  
LAURENPALTEGALEN  
PINNOCKGABRIELLE  
RAAFFCHADROSSOUW  
BUHLEBEZWESIWANI  
MARLENESTEYNSIMEON  
NELSON&MOFFAT  
TAKADIWAJOVOYSEY  
6.11-13.12.2014