

Unbroken wilderness

29 February – 26 March 2020

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12:00 at The Viewing Room Gallery



John Coumbias



Inanda Page



Laurel Holmes

We are as much part of Mother Nature as it is part of us, and often we enjoy long walks by massive quantities of water or hiking in forests. Come and explore the artworks inspired by the landscapes, clouds, sea, trees, dams, rivers, mountains, foliage that is Mother k

Featuring artists:

John Coumbias, Natali Downing, Viola Greyling, Laurel Holmes,
Matla Kheola, Danielle Malherbe, Merline Mengwai, Andre Naude,
Inanda Page, Ariana van Heerden and Wayne Vivier.

John Coumbias



John Coumbias

I see photographs everywhere, even in my sleep...

Photography is my passion, my hobby and even though I am extremely dedicated and I don't miss any opportunities to shoot, I never want it to become a career. Too many photographers lose their passion when it becomes a job and they need to earn a living from their images.

I am an engineer by profession and still manage my clients daily but always endeavour to find a healthy balance in all I do.

Earning a club award is just as special an accomplishment as winning an International medal in a recognized salon. Every moment is important and I will continue to strive to keep being patient and practicing my art. I don't have one favourite genre but enjoy them all, landscape, portraiture, street photography, nature and travel – any image with good light is beautiful when it captures that magic moment.

My photography has taught me many lessons and my advice to new photographers is to be patient, enjoy your hobby and any awards that follow are a bonus. I am always learning, always wanting to try something new and I admire all photographers for their dedication and love of the craft. If I had to go back in time, I would not change anything – it has and continues to be, a wonderful, creative journey.

John Coumbias



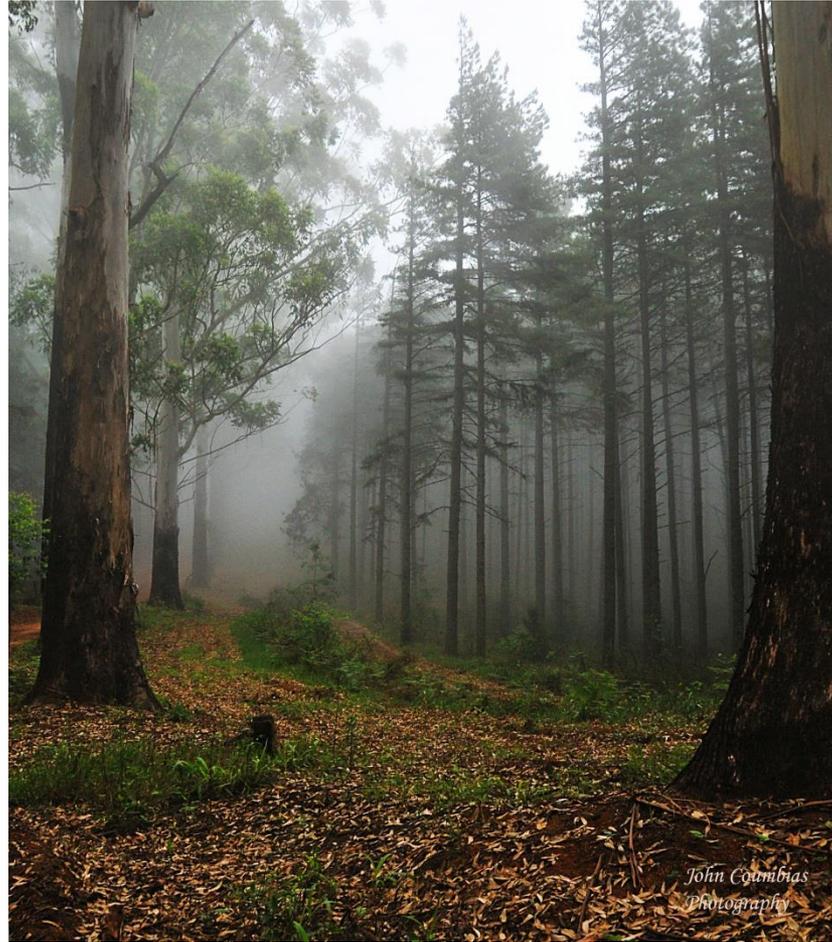
John Coumbias
Autumn Colours
Photograph
48 x 60 cm (framed)

John Coumbias



John Coumbias
Poplars Splendour
Photograph
48 x 60 cm (framed)

John Coumbias



John Coumbias
Misty Forest
Photograph
54 x 60 cm (framed)

John Coumbias



John Coumbias
Golden Colours
Photograph
48 x 60 cm (framed)

John Coumbias



John Coumbias
Morning mist
Photograph
48 x 60 cm (framed)

Natali Downing



Natali Downing

Two unusual women are shouting at each other across the beach. Floating in the water are Campbell Soup cans. From a distance, a heavy storm is approaching. The ocean, an unbroken wilderness, is a body of water filled with contradictions. At times it is a place of delight and tranquility, at other times it becomes a place of mayhem and tragedy. In the artwork, *Tranquil Tempest*, artist Natali Downing attempts to visually explore the contradictions not only filled in this body of water but also its relationship with humankind. For the artist, the destructive qualities of this large body of water is parallel to the harmful behaviour that humankind has portrayed toward it.

Through collage and mixed media, she investigates the tension found this relationship between man and sea. The landscape behind the figures have been transferred onto the canvas and this process creates an intentional worn and weathering down of the environment the figures find themselves in. By layering, deconstructing and reconstructing images from various media sources she creates a scene. The cutting, tearing and construction of several elements aim to create a deconstructed narrative to critically investigate ambiguities that originate from consumerism, consumption and the large environmental crisis we currently find ourselves in. A notion of the comical is used to further questions the absurdity the artist has observed in the behaviour of the conflicting parties in the current situation.

Natali Downing



Natali Downing
Tranquil Tempest
Mixed Media on Stretch Boxed
Canvas To remain unframed
101 x 51 cm

Viola Greyling



Viola Greyling



Viola Greyling
Overgrowing the wilderness
Ceramic
48 x46 x 13 cm

Viola Greyling



Viola Greyling
Pressed into our wilderness I
Ceramic
37cm

Viola Greyling



Viola Greyling
Pressed into our wilderness II
Ceramic
37cm

Viola Greyling



Viola Greyling
The wilderness will win
Ceramic
37cm

Laurel Holmes



Artist statement

“For whatever we lose (like a you or a me), It’s always our self we find in the sea.”

— E.E. Cummings

This body of work aimed to take a single moment and show the movement of water in that second.

Water is in constant motion so it’s that moment of capture, never-to-be-the-same-again glimpse that I have tried to set down here, by focusing on a small section of the subject matter and examining it. There is a hoping to get past the obvious to develop a sense of the cadence of water but I also found a lack of consistent rhythm. A little like life, where we are wanting things to stay the same but they never do.

Water’s patterns are actually not repetitive, rather random and almost erratic forms of motion, depicting chaos and seemingly randomness but which are organised forces and laws in nature where order and seeming disorder abides. Like the movement of water, life is largely uncontrollable, and unpredictable. It takes the path of least resistance, a characteristic of human nature. These works are the subject matter made more physical, wanting to retain that sense of absorption with the subject that led to the works. Being in the presence of a body of water, be it ocean, river, mountain stream, one can just ‘be’ as one becomes absorbed by the ebb and flow. It stills the mind and eventually it seems that the present moment is all there is, with no attachment to the shadow of the past or the future. My hope that those who see these works may look more carefully at the world around them, to discover beauty, daily, in unexpected places.

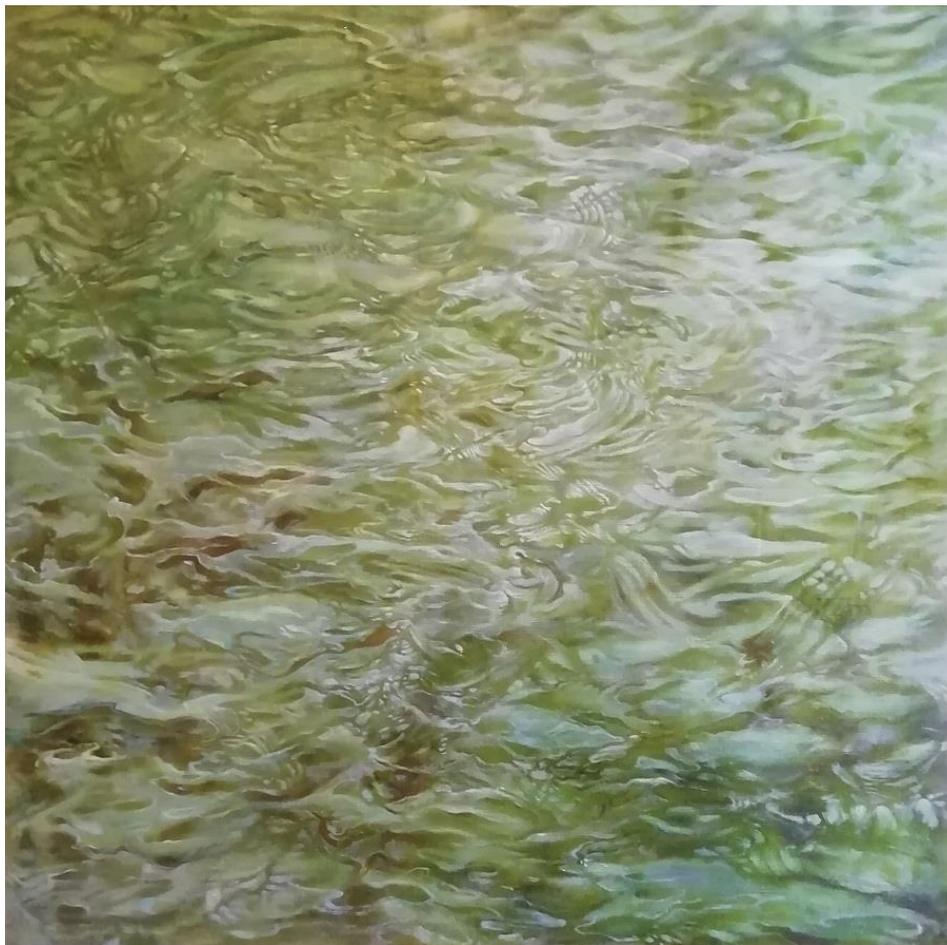
Much is written on the (vital) role of natural environments and natural beauty on the human psyche. Rachel Carson captured this intuitive sense stating that “there is in us a deeply seated response to the natural universe, which is part of our humanity.”

Laurel Holmes



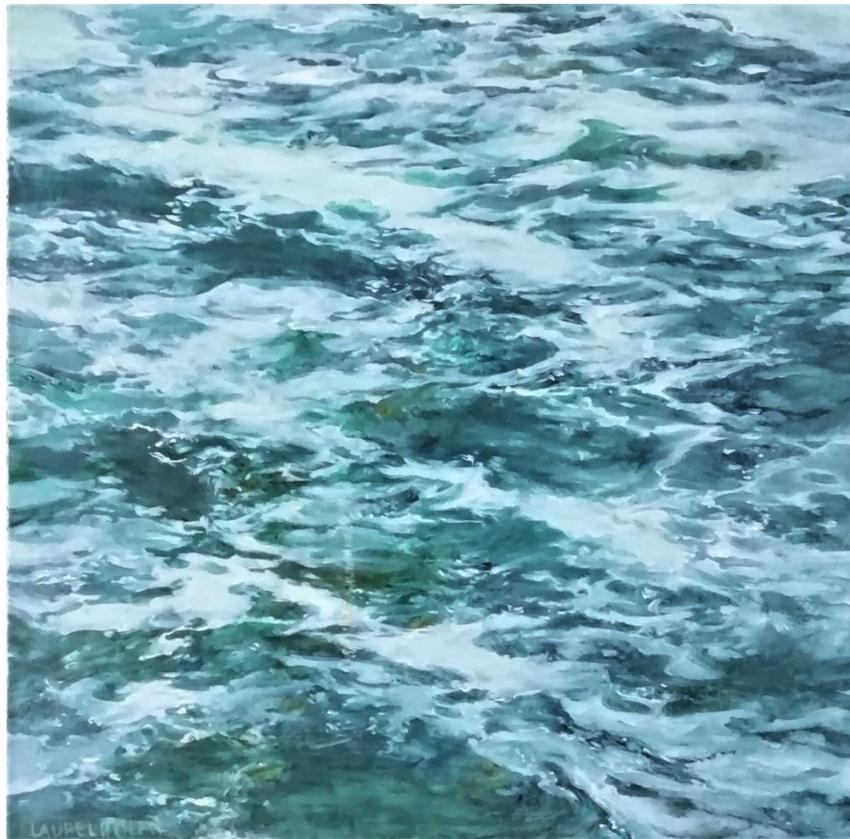
Laurel Holmes
Departure
Oil on linen
80 x 80 cm

Laurel Holmes



Laurel Holmes
Elemental
Oil on canvas
80 x 80 cm

Laurel Holmes



Laurel Holmes
Surface matters IV
Oil on canvas
30 x 30 cm

Laurel Holmes



Laurel Holmes
On the evening tide III
Oil on canvas
30 x 32 cm

Laurel Holmes



Laurel Holmes
Surface matters V
Oil on canvas
30 x 40 cm

Matla Kheola



Artist Statement

My art is the depiction of the landscapes from my mother and father born country called Lesotho and places which I happen to visit for leisure; fortunately Lesotho, it is just a 5hours drive form where we reside in Daveyton in the Eastern Gauteng region.

These views of landscapes captured in my artworks are experienced when man and boys are going to harvest or to marshal cows in the land often as it is a lifestyle the rural areas of Lesotho. Further people do go visit some place for hiking in Lesotho Mountains.

In the process of producing my art I used oil paint medium, using impasto and realistic style. Impasto style it is an expressive way of painting which of it allows me used thick paint on canvas. In my realistic style I try to bring some reality in my art.

Matla Kheola



Matla Kheola
Bokong Nature Reserve
Oil on canvas
91 x 91 cm

Matla Kheola



Matla Kheola
Sterkfontein Dam
Oil on canvas
42 x 59 cm

Matla Kheola



Matla Kheola
A walk with my Dad
Oil on canvas
91 x 91 cm

Matla Kheola



Matla Kheola
Maletsunyane Falls
Oil on canvas
90 x 90 cm

Danielle Malherbe



Unbroken wilderness

The suburban landscapes that I paint don't fit neatly into the theme of this exhibition, "Unbroken wilderness". After a period of procrastination, I then realized that the Arcadian (Paradise lost) nature of my work is in fact concerned with nostalgic longing for unspoiled nature.

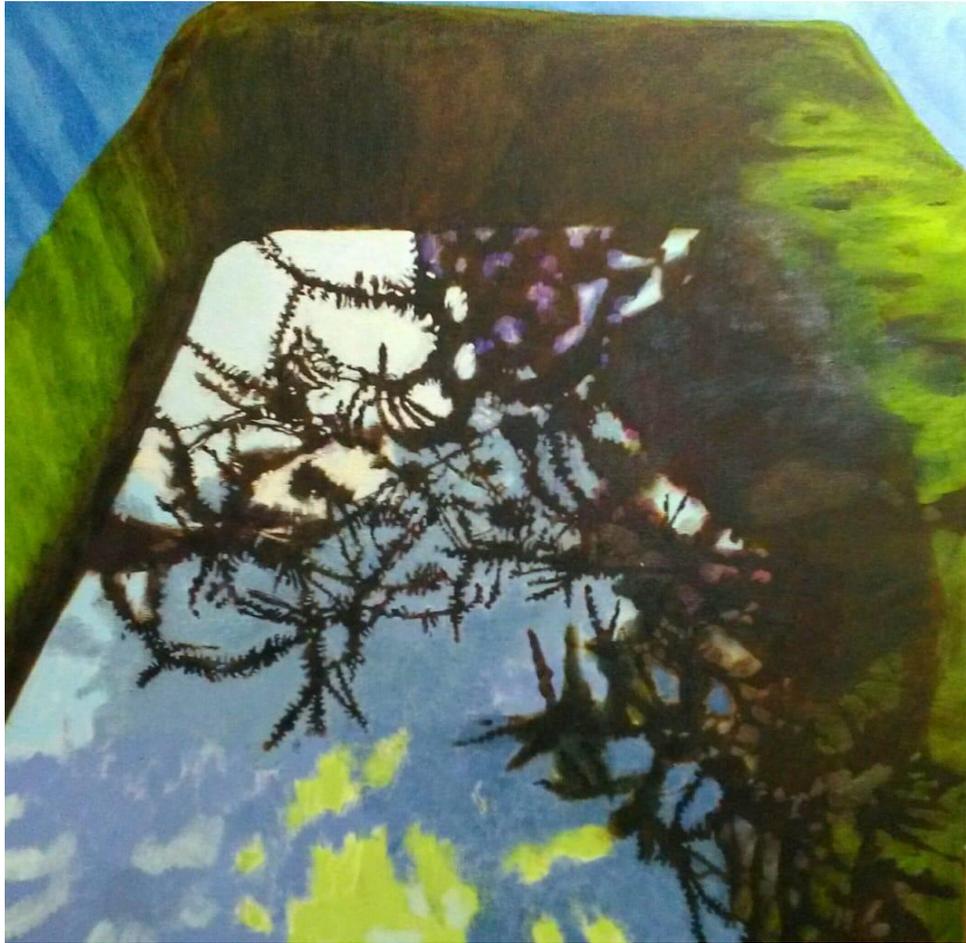
Satisfied with the thematic connection, I went ahead and painted three derelict, suburban pools that are in a process of being encroached upon, weathered, reclaimed by, and returned to, nature. It is as though, given enough time and "neglect" man made environments inevitably return to a state of wildness.

Danielle Malherbe



Danielle Malherbe
Overgrown and tangled garden
Oil on canvas
70 x 25cm

Danielle Malherbe



Danielle Malherbe
A slow assimilation back into nature.
Oil on canvas
100 x 100cm

Danielle Malherbe



Danielle Malherbe
Picturesque decay
Oil on canvas
100 x 100cm

Merline Mengwai



Merline Mengwai
Bowela Kalana Alter Piece
Acrylic and Oil on canvas
21 x 29.7 cm each

Merline Mengwai



Merline Mengwai
Sunrise
Acrylic and Oil on canvas
21 x 29.7 cm

Andre Naude



Broken Landscape

At the time in which I did this painting, South Africa was plagued by water shortages.

As a result of infrastructural incompetence, the municipalities were facing challenges of supplying water to small rural areas such as DELMAS and several other regions. Unbeknown to me, several sinkholes, were occurring in this area.

This work, focuses on red, barren soil. Looking intently at the painting, one might observe this phenomenon of sinkholes in my work.

Andre Naude



Andre Naude
BROKEN landscape
Acrylic on canvas
117 x 92 cm (framed)

Inanda Page



Artist Statement

Most of the works I create are pure imagination and intuition. I was trained as a decor artist and painted murals and tromp l'oeil for years but I quickly learned that to paint in the same manner in art did not satisfy me or give an outlet to any of my creative impulses.

Through my development, I have found that sky and water are the best elements for me to translate my inner thoughts which I am unable to translate eloquently in words. I can be as abstract in the execution as I like and only use colour and tone and line to speak without being hampered by the burden of trying to accurately capture a 'scene'.

My work generally will have no man-made objects or people in because I am creating spaces for the viewer to step into and complete with their own memories and experience and not dictate beyond a basic tone. Yet, I feel these spaces are strong and overwhelming in its elements to satisfy the senses without the viewer having to do any 'work'. They can simply just step in and feel. Water and sky also fascinate me as it is ever changing. The use of brushes to soften lines and palette knife to add movement and accents are done intuitively. To overthink a mark and plotting lines 'just so' ruins the spontaneity and freshness of the work for me. I feel if I make a mark loose but sure and leave it, it will still have a sense of moving ever changing as water and sky would. The work will not trap anyone in any one moment but always give the sense of being in motion.

My preferred medium is oil paint as I love the texture and luxury of a slower drying medium that affords me the time to explore glazing and impasto techniques with my trusted palette knife and brush. On closer reflection, I would have to say that my work is a subtle and maybe sometimes expressive mix of tonalism and luminism. Colour fascinates and sometimes frustrates me and exploring the different pigments and manufacturing results is an added passion for the hours spent in my home studio. "in times when one can produce no great effect in the outer world, one should seek to shape the expression of one's being in small ways" I 'Ching 9, the image

Inanda Page



Inanda Page
Energy blush
Oil
100 x 100 cm

Inanda Page



Inanda Page
Reflectings
Oil
91 x 61 cm

Inanda Page



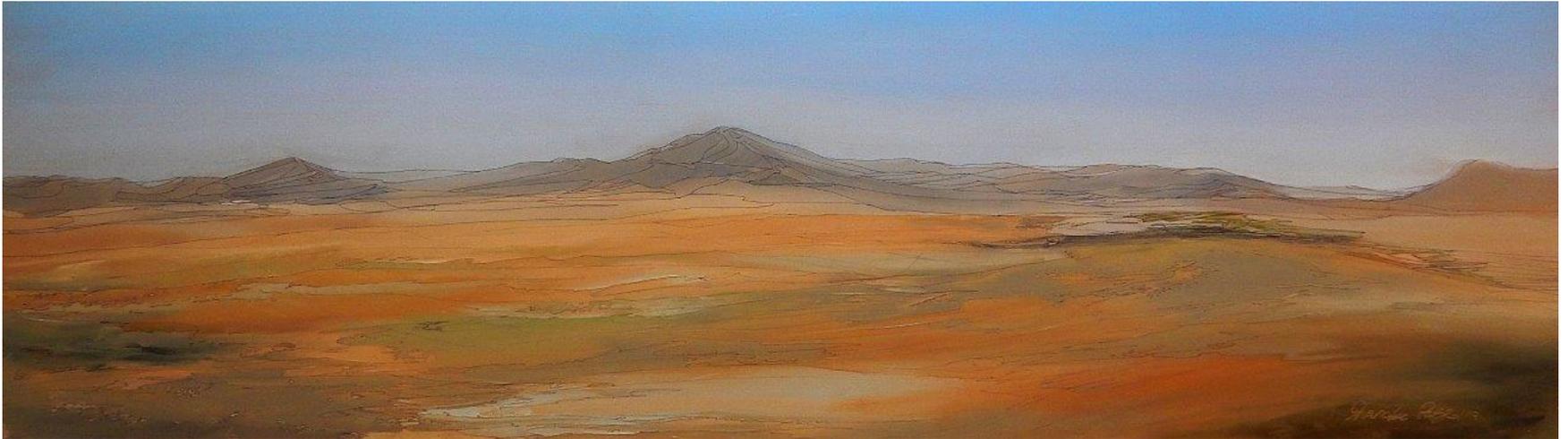
Inanda Page
A thousand hills
Oil on PVC foam board
120 x 35 cm

Inanda Page



Inanda Page
Surge
Oil
80 x 60 cm

Inanda Page



Inanda Page
Hope
Oil on PVC foam board
35 x 120 cm

Inanda Page



Inanda Page
Through veils
Oil on board
23 x 90 cm

Inanda Page



Inanda Page
Rain
Oil
150 x 54 cm

Ariana van Heerden



UNBROKEN WILDERNESS

My art theme has, over decades, been about wilderness. The way that I have expressed this has changed at times, from imaginary and sybaritic Edens to post-apocalyptic wastelands, usually in tandem with my perspective of how the earth has been affected by anthropocentric dominance. In these oils on canvas I have engaged a type of Magic Realism and allowed myself to be seduced by the beauty of plants which lend themselves extremely well to the melding of both horror and fantasy.

Recently I was inspired to return to paintings that I had started decades ago (and set aside as incomplete) after becoming aware of how nature has a tendency to create new ecosystems and even sometimes (seemingly) revert to wilderness, when the human element has been removed. In 1986, due to reactor design flaws the Chernobyl Nuclear Reactor Plant in the Ukraine experienced a disaster rated at seven (maximum). A mere five years after the event the walls of the reactor began to be covered by fungi that were rich in melanin, the same element that protects human skin from the ultraviolet radiation of the sun. The presence of the melanin allowed the absorption of radiation and changed the fungi into a type of energy which encourages its growth. Fungi types which contain melanin are able to absorb the high amounts of energy in ionizing radiation and are able to convert it into something more useful for its own propagation, similar to photosynthesis.

In 2011 a massive tsunami wave slammed into a nuclear reactor in Fukushima, Japan, creating another high-radiation environment. Here too, radiotropic fungi, behaving like chlorophyll as an energy-harvesting pigment, have been found. Moreover, wildlife once again appears to be thriving in restricted areas or zones following the evacuation of humans. The debate among scientists over the effects of low levels of ionizing radiation on wildlife is heated and political. In the two mentioned disasters the most dangerous of the radionuclides released were plutonium and cesium-137, but the former has already passed its half-life; the latter has decayed into barium-137m which is relatively harmless.

I have entitled works related to this theme as "Restricted zone #1, 2 and 5" - the presence of radioactive peril as a trade-off for the absence and even the outright banning of humans as an imagined recovery of wilderness. But this is merely a 'stay of execution'. It is an indictment of the human race that when, against all odds, wilderness organizes itself due to the absence of humans and becomes prolific as in these restricted zones, there is evidence of poaching in what have now become designated wildlife reserves.

Whereas the proliferation of wildlife and the commensurate recovery of wilderness in restricted zones does not exclusively imply that those are better off, it offers a window of opportunity for wilderness to create novel eco-systems and to, transiently perhaps, even seem unbroken.

Ariana van Heerden



Ariana van Heerden
Restricted zone #1
Oil on canvas
122 x 91 cm

Ariana van Heerden



Ariana van Heerden
Restricted zone #2
Oil on canvas
122 x 91 cm

Ariana van Heerden



Ariana van Heerden
Restricted zone #5
Oil on canvas
138 x 117 cm

Wayne Vivier



Wayne Vivier

Artist Statement

I have been using repetition as a device lately. It highlights the subtle differences between the copies and the contingency within the artmaking process. When taken together, I wonder if these repetitions reveal the truth more? Is this a way of seeing in more dimensions? Do I get a better sense of what is real?

The pervasive vertical pattern on the surface is like a text that speaks some unknown language. It speaks of a language that precedes and shapes our thought. This meta language, that functions mainly beyond our consciousness, precedes and shapes our reality. This pattern on the surface speaks of a text that makes all other text possible.

Wayne Vivier



Wayne Vivier
Film image #40-42 (triptych)
Acrylic on board
40 x 120 cm

Wayne Vivier



Wayne Vivier
Local image #27-29 (triptych)
Acrylic on board
40 x 120 cm

Wayne Vivier



Wayne Vivier
Local image #30-31 (diptych)
Acrylic on board
50 x 100 cm