

SURREAL SYNTHESIS



**Group Exhibition-Curated by Celia de Villiers,
22 September 2013**



St. Lorient
fashion & art gallery
est. 1979

St. Lorient Fashion & Art Gallery, 492 Fehrsen Street, Brooklyn Circle, Pretoria
www.stlorient.com • e-mail: stlorient@iafrica.com

Tel: 012 460 0284

PRESS RELEASE

“Surreal Synthesis”

Exhibition venue: St Lorient Fashion and Art Gallery

Date 22 September – 03 November 2013

Surreal Synthesis celebrates the weird and wonderful love affair between fashion and the Surrealist movement, which began in the Paris in the 1920s. Dreams and the subconscious were at the forefront of artistic inspiration in the early decades of the 20th Century. The artists contributing to this show are inspired by this phenomenon. Surrealist artists radically plundered fashion imagery for their art, raising style and costume to an important expression of culture.

Surrealist elements of surprise and unexpected juxtapositions inspire this exhibition. This strategy was first seen in the eccentric dresses of the Italian born designer Elsa Schiaparelli, who was influenced by the Dadaists movement in her incorporation of avant-garde materials like wood, vinyl, waterproofing and cellophane. However, she mainly became known for her close collaboration with the artists Salvador Dali and Jean Cocteau, when she printed and embroidered their original sketches onto her garments and made wacky hats featuring birds and lobsters. The artists in turn incorporated fashion imagery into their paintings and sculptures, and the dramatic silhouettes and exaggerated shoulders and lapels of Schiaparelli's design are found in many of the sculptures of her friend Alberto Giacometti as well as in Dali's paintings. For his Rainy Taxi installation in 1938 he used a fashion mannequin and live snails and filled one side of the lobby with mannequins dressed by various Surrealist artists. Some of the artists participating in the Surreal Synthesis show are taking their cue from this event.

Photographic experiments with Surrealist techniques by the artist Nicole Reyneke follow in the footsteps of photographers Horst P. Horst, Cecil Beaton and George Hoyningen-Huene who have stimulated the work of contemporary fashion designers, including Yves Saint Laurent, Issey Miyake, John Galliano Alexander McQueen and Vivienne Westwood, who have all brought Surrealist imagery into post-millennial clothing and accessories. During a recent Dolce & Gabbana fashion show, there were rousing references to Jean Cocteau, Salvador Dali and Man Ray when handbags were worn as hats and gloves were used around the necks of models instead of silk scarves.

The advent of the digital age has encouraged the Surreal Synthesis artists Tanisha Bhana, Karin Miller, Nicole Reyneke and Thelma van Rensburg to incorporate extraordinary techniques and evocative psycho dramas such as imaged in the later surrealists artworks of Rene Magritte, Lucian Freud and Francis Bacon. The contemporary participating painters Debbie Morris, Zuanda Badenhorst and Jennifer Kopping explore bizarre imagery and innovative presentation. The sculptors Bongani Njalo, Retha Buitendach, Celia de Villiers and Hester Viles have referenced the surrealist's obsession with shoes, hats and mixed media. There are also imaginative biomorphic figures in the exhibition to echo surrealist dreams as well as contemporary post-human imagery.

The sources consulted by curator Celia De Villiers and the gallery owner Lucy Anastasiadis in researching the show are Fashion and surrealism by Richard Martin (1988), a history from the 18th to the 20th century by Akiko Fukai. These books reveal the extravagant and ingenious creations resulting from the synthesis between fashion and art.

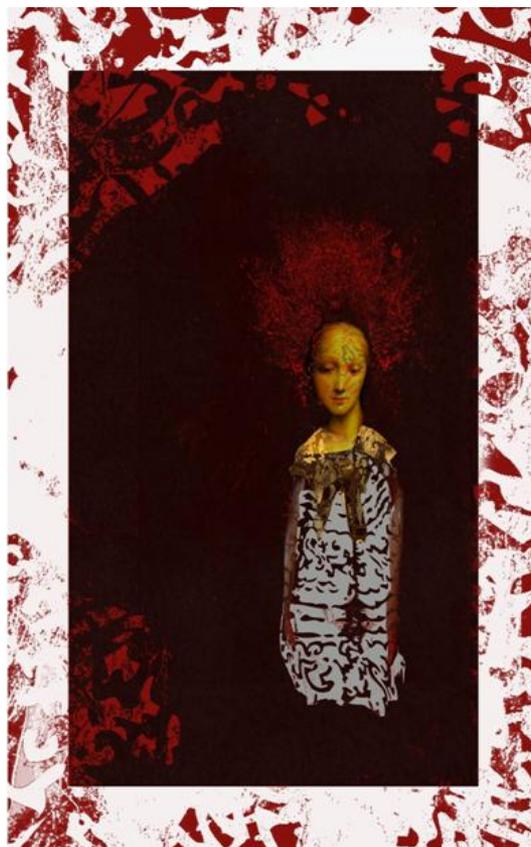
THELMA VAN RENSBURG



In 1990 - Ba. Human movement studies-University of Pretoria. In 1992 - Ba. Hons. Recreation – University of Pretoria. In 2000 - Ba. Hons Physcology- UNISA, South-Africa . Completed her Btech. Fine Arts- Thswane University of Technology, Pretoria, Thesis completed cum laude in 2007.

Artist Statement

My surreal synthesis manifests as a synthesis of my own watery pen-and-ink renditions of women from fashion magazines and the digital layering thereof onto fashion photography images of women from these same magazines.



“Veil of death”

Digital collage on German etching paper,

60 X 84 cm

ed 25.



Grotesque Femininities I
Digital collage on German
etching paper,
23cm x 50cm
ed.3.



"Grotesque Femininities II"
Digital collage on German
etching paper,
23cm x 50cm
ed.3.



"Grotesque Femininities III"
Digital collage on German
etching paper,
23cm x 50cm
ed.3.

CELIA DE VILLIERS



The artworks of Celia de Villiers are derived from environmental triggers and cultural conventions. They address the concept of the human body as a site of agency, idiosyncrasy, subjection, and postmodern identity politics. Her artworks are a comment on contemporary social issues.

She has a Masters Visual Arts (UNISA, Cum Laude), BA Fine arts (UNISA with distinction) and a Higher Education Diploma (Johannesburg College of Education/Wits). The artist's work has featured in fourteen solo and sixty six group exhibitions worldwide. She has curated and adjudicated numerous exhibitions locally and abroad of which the most recent are National and regional judge for the ABSA L' Atelier Awards, adjudicator for the Thami Mnyele National Fine Art Awards and the PPC Cement sculptor's Award. Curatorships include the UNESCO endorsed African Mêleé in France 2009 and the corporate collection of the SA Military Health Service 2013.

Artist Statement

Salvador Dali had a keen interest in diverse topics such as fashion, art and science. Dali once declared that "Artists scarcely interest me at all. I believe that artists should have some notions of science in order to tread a different terrain, which is that of unity". Therefore Dali devoted many hours to the analysis and study of physics and catastrophe theories. The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 had an enormous impact on Dali and he was one of the first artists to recognise that the nuclear age would bring about a different world-view. After 1945 he produced dozens of paintings depicting dystopian shifts in equilibrium, fractured electrons and exploding or melting objects. Like Dali's abovementioned works my sculpture (Atomic Baby) was created in reaction to the nuclear disaster at Fukushima in 2011. The surface patterning on the pregnant figure evokes Lois Vuitton designs however it consist of lethal emblems such as nuclear radiation and toxic chemicals which have dire effects on innocent unborn children.



“Atomic Baby”
Perspex and resin
Life size female figure, shoes size 5

BONGANI NJALO



Bongani was born on the 13th December 1987 in the city of Port Elizabeth where he obtained his Fine Art qualification at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Majoring in Stained Glass, Bongani easily shifts between disciplines - working with clay, installation, glass, photography or whatever else he can obsessively 'make' something with.

Artist Statement

Bongani Njalo makes installations and drawings. By choosing mainly formal solutions, Njalo makes work that deals with the documentation of events and the question of how they can be presented. The work tries to express this with the help of physics and technology, but not by telling a story or creating a metaphor.

His installations sometimes radiate a cold and latent violence. At times, disconcerting beauty emerges. The inherent visual seductiveness, along with the conciseness of the exhibitions, further complicates the reception of their manifold layers of meaning. With Plato's allegory of the cave in mind, he seduces the viewer into a world of ongoing equilibrium and the interval that articulates the stream of daily events. Moments are depicted that only exist to punctuate the human drama in order to clarify our existence and to find poetic meaning in everyday life.

His works are an investigation into representations of (seemingly) concrete ages and situations as well as depictions and ideas that can only be realized in installation art. By emphasising aesthetics, he tries to develop forms that do not follow logical criteria, but are based only on subjective associations and formal parallels, which incite the viewer to make new personal associations.

His works are based on formal associations which open a unique poetic vein. Multi-layered images arise in which the fragility and instability of our seemingly certain reality is questioned. Bongani Njalo currently lives and works in Johannesburg.



**“Untitled I”
Porcelain**



**“Untitled II”
Porcelain**

TANISHA BHANA

Matriculation Exemption (1994) – Lyttelton Manor High School, Centurion, South Africa. Completed the BProc law degree (1999) at the University of South Africa, service of Articles in terms of the Attorneys Act 53 of 1979 (March 2001) and attended the School for Legal Practice (June 2000 to February 2001) with The Law Society of South Africa

Admitted and enrolled as an Attorney of the High Court of South Africa (Transvaal Provincial Division). Completed an MBA with Milpark Business School; a fully accredited MBA school by the South African Qualifications Authority

Tanisha Bhana is a largely self-trained fine artist based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Artist Statement

Listening to the silent voices of life's landscape, I imagine a future legacy and enjoy seeing what's left behind and what lies ahead. My images aim to thrust one to a subconscious core, prompting memories of our chosen voyage, while looking back towards a future in progress.

When present in life's quiet places, I listen to the whispers of trees, veld, soil and bones, and share their stories in my images. In sensing the undertones of the soil that we walk on do we sometimes reconnect with our inner soul. My works invite the viewer to remember their innermost pieces gone astray.

We live in a time of immense social and environmental upheaval, fundamental change, deep-seated fears and fragmented structures. And we bear witness to some of the environmental penalties of our distracted human goals and short-term economic achievements.

We live in societies where collective paradigms often define our life paths and sometimes inhibit our capacity to be intellectually free to take the fearful decisions that may lead to achieving our true potential.

By using paradoxical symbols, I depict the simultaneous beauty and disgust in life's experiences. Synchronizing the pleasure and pain of life's choices and chains, my works ignite a subconscious repulsion and connection to common associations that tie us together.

My work shares a perspective that is drawn from a deep connection with my ancient heritage, and a grounded conduit to the core that binds us. They are the mirror that is left behind when the imprint of our footsteps remain.

I record the human trail; so that we may look at ourselves and remember who we are.





Tsego's Ballet
Archival pigment print
84 x 61 cm
270gsm paper



Tsego's Playground
Archival pigment print
84 x 61 cm
270gsm paper

DEBBIE MORRIS



Education

2010: BA – Global University

2011 Bachelor of Fine Arts Honours, UNISA

Solo Exhibitions: The Bridge -2013

Venue: Parc Ferme restaurant @ Michael Angelo Towers, Sandton.

Commissions: 2007: Access Health South Africa Call centre

2007 : Private commissions for various clients, including Dr J Joubert ex- CEO of Access Health South Africa,

Competitions: 2013: Participated in the Thami Mneyele Fine Art competition

Artist statement

Combs, in all their various shapes and sizes are basic instruments used for the creation, maintenance, and decoration of hair-styles for both men and women. In the twentieth century combs have taken on a wider political and cultural message. The portrayal of combs being 'hung out to dry' like laundry, allows viewers to explore the personal and cultural meanings that they ascribe to these objects and it allows them to 'air' their views with regards to those meanings.



“Combs on a washing line- ‘Hung out to dry’”
Acrylic paint on Canvass board
24x36cm

RETHA BUITENDACH

Retha Buitendach born , 12 May 1968, Transvaal, South Africa. She attended at Verwoerdburg High School and Matriculated with 6 distinctions in 1986 BA (Fine Arts) University of Pretoria in 1990 - 1993 (Majoring in Sculpture, with distinction).



EXHIBITIONS

Participated in various group exhibitions in South Africa since 1993 till present

Solo Exhibition - 'Terra ingocnita', Tina Skukan Gallery in 2001

South African Artists – Soan Studio, Fulham, London in 2003

Nine dragon heads –International Environmental Art Symposium 2004

Exhibition in Cheong-ju Art centre, South Korea

Duo Exhibition 'Sanctum' with M du Toit, Tina Skukan Gallery 2004

Trio Exhibition 'Drie' with Diek Grobler, Michele Nigrini, Gallery 88, Sasolburg, 2004

Various Group Exhibitions 2005

Various Group Exhibitions 2006

Trio Exhibition 'Succulent' with Gina Waldman, Bronwyn Findley, Artspace, Jhb, 2006

Various Group Exhibitions 2007

Solo Exhibition 'Sandsuiker' Association of Arts,Pta, 2007

Solo Exhibition 'Insectorum Mirabilis' Gordart Gallery, Jhb, 2007

Various group exhibitions, 2008 -2010

Solo Exhibition 'Vergesigte en ander Pierneef Apokaliptieka' Trent Art, Pta 2011

Solo Exhibition – Farground foreseen, Trent Art, waterkloof Pta : Julie 2012

Group Exhibition – This Place/ Displace, UJ Art Gallery, Jhb : Oct 2013

Group Exhibition – DIGI RE-ENGINEERING, UNISA Art Gallery : Mrt 2013

Artist Statement

Found objects, including Caterpillar™ leather shoes, golden stilettos and a fake snake-skin belt , were recycled to produce an atavistic mask for a pseudo-tribal ritual to challenge the spirits of consumerism.



**“Mask of the Inner Sole”
Old shoes ,belts and bones**

ZUANDA BADENHORST

Zuanda Badenhorst obtained the M Tech: Performing Arts Technology (Cum Laude) in 2006 with the title of the dissertation: South African Puppetry for the Theatre since 1975 from the Tshwane University of Technology. She initially obtained the BA Fine Arts from the University of Pretoria in 1970 and the Post Graduate Diploma: THED in 1971 from the Pretoria Teacher's Training College.

After lecturing Painting, Drawing en History of Art at the Potchefstroom University for CHE (1972-1980) she lectured Properties and History of Costume at the Technikon Pretoria from 1983 and in 1995 became the Head of the Department then known as Entertainment Technology at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), where she retired at the end of 2008. Zuanda Badenhorst served on various Committees for the Arts Faculty and TUT as well as on professional bodies. She is a member of the Pretoria Association of Arts and served on the board (2002 – 20012). She served on the Kanna panel for the KKNK in 2010 and currently on the Fiesta panel for KYKNet since 2011.

Artist Statement

Zuanda Badenhorst' current work is her interpretation of landscape metaphors. Her work in mixed media is typified by strong lines and rhythmic qualities, portraying flotsam entangled landscapes. The calligraphic use of line as well as the expressive quality of watercolour brush strokes is utilized to convey entangled floatage flotsam, scum and driftwood. This refers to matter coming to or floating on the surface.

The conservation of South Africa's natural resources and the environment is of the essence. Other concerns regarding fashion fads, consumerism at the cost or risk of destroying the earth's resources and the consequences regarding health, can be seen in her work. This is manifested by danger signs like red flags, red and white poles and ribbons, depicted as if in landscape art.

Metaphors referring to a lifetime spent in the theatre and an interest in puppetry also represents itself from time to time.

The recent work in acrylic paint on canvass deals with South African landscape images intermingled with elements from the artist's daily life, remembrances, cultural inheritance including some favourite household objects. The origin and development of life on earth as specifically found in South Africa from the cretaceous period on to the rich heritage of prehistoric paintings is of special interest to the artist.

She echoes the surrealist artist's delight in things not being what they at first appear to be. Not that she sees herself as a Surrealist artist. Perhaps we need a degree of fantasy and humour to take our minds off the worrying and confusing realities of finance, politics, the environment, international tensions and health. It is a function of art to upset the apple-cart: to snatch things from the security of their normal existence, put them where they have never been before, except in dreams or the unconscious, in order to convey a symbolic vision.





Swygende verbruiker
250 x 250 mm



“Sien jy nie die skade nie”,
250 x 250 mm



250 x 250 mm

JENNIFER KOPPING



Jennifer Kopping is a practicing artist, craft maker, researcher and an art and design educator. In August 2013, she co-curated a seminal exhibition entitled “Pointure” at the Gencor Gallery at the University of Johannesburg. She has exhibited extensively and has works in various corporate and private collections such as Telkom, UNISA, MTN, Absa and Liberty Life. She is also a past winner of the Sasol New Signatures art competition. Much of her artworks explore the narrative thread of the archetypal and mythological. She holds a Masters degree in Fine Art from the University of Witwatersrand. She has presented workshops on various craft and media and has undertaken numerous mosaic projects for the design industry.

Art Statement

Surreal and Synthesis

Thread, colour and mythological narrative form the synthesis of a universal and collective consciousness.



“Birdsong”
Oil pastel, metal, collage.
1,2 m x95 cm.

KARIN MILLER



Karin Miller obtained a Diploma in Graphic design in 1980, and a diploma in Adobe Photoshop at Unisa in 2002.

Her medium -Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator. She worked as information designer for years after which she started pursuing a career in fine art. “My work is a visual lay between beauty and tragedy, rhythm and interruption – searching for a Sense of order in the overwhelming chaos of life.”

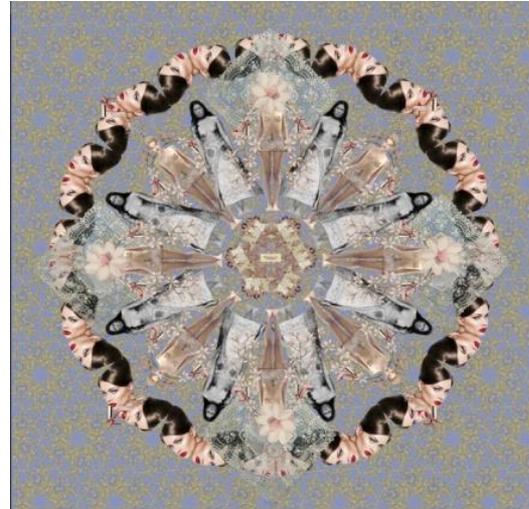
“South African artist, Karin Miller, creates the most amazing collages. She combines scraps, digital art, photographs and all sorts to put together her pieces. What’s so amazing about them is their detail – you have to literally squint into each image to catch a glimpse of all the details, each of which carries in-depth meaning. What’s more, Miller uses her art to speak about social, political and historical issues – from war, AIDS, slavery to culture.” Muse Origins –showcasing African creativity.

Artist Statement

Fashion Is a dangerous cyclone, Revolving around the body of the woman. It is constantly evolving around her and at the same time sucking her in, and she has no choice but to surrender to the forces.



**You have to love it
Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.**



**Fashion Mandala 2
Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.**

HESTER VILES



Hester Viles completed a BA (FA) and exhibits regularly and have taken part in various exhibitions locally and internationally. A work in needlepainting and lead was shown on the Fibreworks Exhibition at the International Quilt Convention in 2013. She is experienced in various media both two- and three dimensionally and have work in local and international private collections. She is currently involved in commissions for the South African Military Medical Corps.

Artist Statement

Elsa Schiaparelli was the first fashion designer to combine art and couture and became well known for her use of shocking pink and her collaborations with the Surrealists. This work is a tribute to Ms. Schiaparelli.



Tribute to Elsa Schiaparelli
Mixed Media
870(H) X 700 mm (W) X 620 mm(D)

CIARA STRUWIG

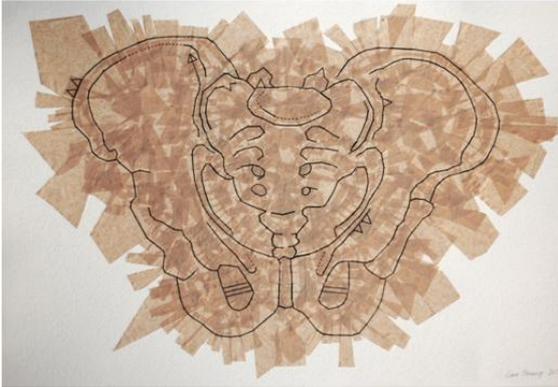


Ciara Struwig was born in 1983 in Johannesburg. She completed the Bachelor of Visual Arts, (UNISA) graduating cum laude in 2009. Her work has been shown in several group exhibitions both locally and internationally. She was selected for the Thami Mnyele National Fine Arts Awards in 2008 and 2009 and was a Sasol New Signatures finalist in 2010. She has an intense interest in the use of forensic methodologies in art making and the construction of the post-aftermath identity.

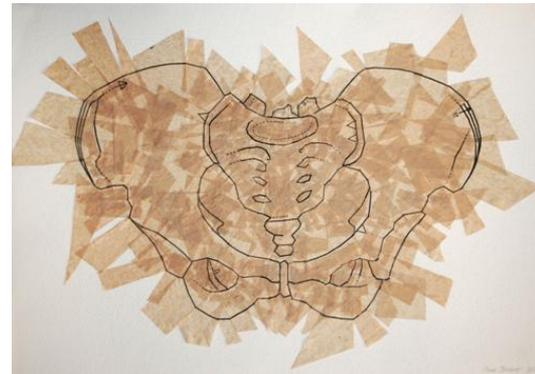
Ciara has worked as a co-curator and technical advisor for several exhibitions and has been extensively involved in facilitating several community development projects in the craft sector. She is a keen carpenter and enjoys restoring antique furniture in her spare time, this skill has proved invaluable in situations where she has had to design and construct medium and large scale custom installations. Ciara is currently working towards her Masters in Visual Arts.

Artist Statement

The notion of identity is tied to the innermost core of our bodies, the skeleton. The tailoring of the pelvis is an intelligent and complex indicator of physical identity. The act juxtaposing the specific differences in the male and female pelvis with sewing patterns highlights the intricate relationship between our internal and external concepts of self.



Pelvis: Type Male
Mixed Media, Men's Suit Pattern
380 x 260 mm



Pelvis: Type Female
Mixed Media, Woman's dress Pattern
380 x 260 mm

NICOLE REYNEKE



Nicole Reyneke, born on the 05/02/1992

Hometown: Johannesburg

Current residence: Pretoria

Matriculated: St Teresa's High School in 2010. Currently she a third year Fine Art student at the University of Pretoria

Group Exhibitions

Amalgamation, First Year Fine Art Exhibition, Van Wouw, 2012

Telkom Art Space, 2012

Cuzn, Bronze Sculpture, ROOM, 2012

Work Experience

Community engagement project for RE: VIVE, 2011

Client based painting project for Telkom, 2012



Pursuit to Perfection
Digital photography