

10 May 2021 – 21 May 2021



Sweet Little Nothings



Sweet Little Nothings

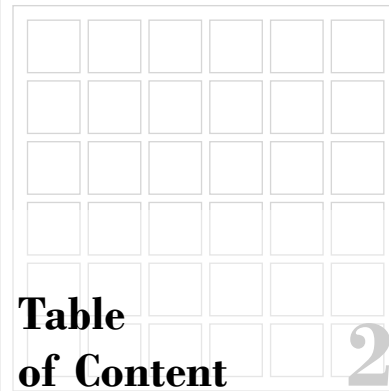


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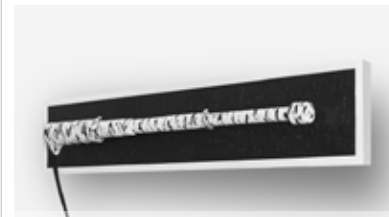
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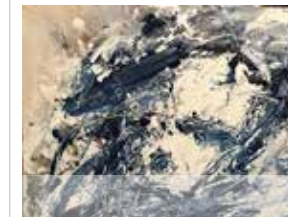
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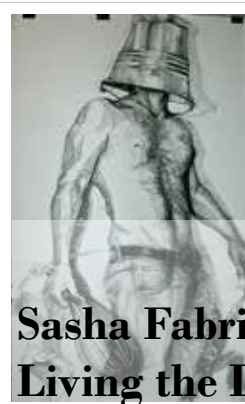
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According to the Cambridge Dictionary online : “post-truth is relating to a situation in which people are more likely to accept an argument based on their emotions and beliefs, rather than one based on facts. For example: ‘his lecture was entitled “Fake News in a Post-truth World’.”

According to John Tompkins in his article Post-Truth and Philosophy: “We live with truth all around us and yet some people readily embrace lies. Everywhere you turn among the academics and pundits, we constantly are fed a stream of rhetoric about how we live in a ‘post-truth’ world. Somehow, as the narrative goes, we have given up on the notion that words can mirror reality. There have been many attempts to define what ‘post-truth’ actually is. Some simply describe it as the new era where truth just doesn’t matter or that people can spread lies without being called to task. I think, however, it’s more nuanced than that”

However, I personally believe that most people do care about truth. It is veracity of supporting facts that some people have abandoned. Adherents to either side of the political spectrum will often point to biased sources of information (whether it’s Fox News, MSNBC or various Facebook pages) and use them to support what they feel is the truth. “Truth does still matter, but for some, it remains only an idol. The argumentative value of that idol is priceless for those peddling propaganda. And sometimes, especially today, a person convinced that a lie is actually true can be more effective than the person selling the lie.” (TOMPKINS. J. 2018, Post-Truth and Philosophy, <https://blog.apaonline.org/2018/06/25/post-truth-and-philosophy/>, 25 June)

In the light of the above concise conceptual background, please respond to the following questions/ challenges in your work:

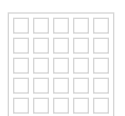
- Do you value “truth” in your own life and creative practice?
- What is the difference between a “fact” and an “opinion”?
- Did you encounter “post-truth” on especially social media during the Covid-19 pandemic? If so, did post-truth influence your creative practice in any way?
- Do you believe that we are “all in the Covid-19 pandemic together”?
- What is wrong today in our discourse, whether it’s a “debate” among pundits on a cable show, arguments with online outrage warriors or a spirited conversation with relatives? When we have an opinion about a particular topic, do we try to bolster that opinion with what we believe are facts?
- Do you ever fact check your personal research before creating a new artwork?

With the abovementioned questions in mind, I would invite all the participating artists to express their views/voices by creating a new (or entering an existing artwork) in any preferred style (painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, or any other 2D medium) addressing the pressing issues of “post truth” and fake news in the world at present. Sculptors are also invited to submit 2D archival pigment prints of their sculpture if they so wish. All the works submitted should preferably be for sale. For curatorial purposes, each submission should include a concise one-paragraph artist’s statement.

I personally hold the opinion that the human race is in dire need of truth, compassion and tolerance right now, at this point in our history.

Best wishes,
Christiaan Diedericks

Curator: Christiaan Diedericks (Cape Town, South Africa)
Location: Online Exhibition



Josef F H Madisia: Fishrot Aquarium Cleansing



Art No: PP0881

Artwork Dimensions:

w 595 cm (238 inches)

h 480 cm (192 inches)

Year Created: 2021

Medium: Other

Surface: Paper



I am inspired by the legends and stories of Mami Wata, as the muse that has also been the spirit in many contemporary artists from Africa, the Caribbean and the diaspora.

This artwork of mine titled: "Fishrot Aquarium Cleansing" depicts cleansing the entire Namibian landscape from the international marine resources scandal that went hand in hand with the Covid-19 pandemic as if it is the anger of Mai Wata Spell that fell over the Namibia and the rest of the world. Here all the symbols, signs and images in the artwork explains everything to the viewer.

At once beautiful, protective, seductive, and potentially deadly, the water spirit Mami Wata (Mother Water) is celebrated throughout much of Africa and the African Atlantic worlds.

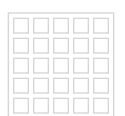
Sacred waters bathe the histories of African peoples, sometimes as tears of deep sorrow, sometimes as drops of soothing and cooling liquid sustaining life and hope. Water connects—world with otherworld, life with afterlife — for many African and African Atlantic

Peoples. This is the abode of Mami Wata, Simbi, Olokun, Yemoja, La Baleine, La Sirene, Watramama, Maman d'Eau, River Maids, and all the water divinities of Africa and the African Atlantic. Their names are regularly invoked to maintain, refresh, and strengthen the spirit needed to endure the hardships and challenges of lives scattered and shattered by the avarice, arrogance, and brutality of those who would enslave others for their own benefit.

Like the unfathomable depths of the world's oceans, the imag(in)ing of Mami Wata and other water deities in Africa and its Diasporas appears limitless. Over a five-hundred-year period, Mami has surfaced in the guise of a mermaid, snake charmer, Hindu god or goddess, and African Catholic saint, as well as other intriguing and magical characters. She has seduced and charmed many, who have given visible form to this spiritual entity as an integral part of the process of self-definition, self-realization, and empowerment in countless cultural worlds over time and space.

The unique understandings and involvements of contemporary artists with water spirits also allow them to employ Mami Wata and other underwater denizens to address issues of gender, race, morality, identity, economics, politics, and the environment.

She is both a benevolent force for good fortune, health, and endless riches—or is she a jealous force for evil, unleashing trouble and wreaking havoc on those that cross her?



Lize Krüger: Exploring My Resilience



Art No: PP0886
Artwork Dimensions:
w 65 cm (26 inches)
h 85 cm (34 inches)
Year Created: 2021
Medium: Other
Surface: Paper



Popular
Vote Award

During a time that I initially found comforting, because of my need to be on my own, I made an almost 180 degree turnaround. I never realised how much i actually DO need people, touch, interaction etc. I quite often now have to work even more to enrich my inner world in opder to survive being without loved ones. The world is falling apart around us. Systems are being challenged, but at the bases of all these external noise, is the golden lifeline of human care and connection. With this work I am trying to remind myself of that.



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Verna du Toit: The Herded

Art No: PP0976
Artwork Dimensions:
w 107 cm (42.8 inches)
h 84 cm (33.6 inches)
Year Created: 2020
Medium: Other
Surface: Paper



**Honorable
Mention**

Each body of work represents various stages of my evolution. Each character reflects an intricate layer of my existence. Paradoxically it holds a universal message, and at the same time instigates an extremely personal dialogue. Words truly cannot define, and the mind cannot completely comprehend. The true essence can only be sensed individually through the experience, assimilation and creation of your own life. With the limited expression of words, the intention behind my latest artwork titled 'The Herded' is an embodiment of self. The main character sheds all old beliefs of conformity, and disillusionment of the false self, which is expressed through the flock as well as its keeper, the wolf. The true self emerges from the old way of thinking into the new way of being. She embraces her strength symbol, which is the power of the dragon. This element which is feared and believed to be destructive, actually holds the fundamental key in finding her strength to break free from old restraints and beliefs.

In reality, it is to embrace all aspects of herself, even the sides which are perceived as negative.

Understanding and embracing her power, allows her to transcend her victim mentality. For the first time she has the ability to stand up for herself. She places her trust on her own inner wisdom, which she now places above any form of indoctrination, outside judgements and futile warnings.

The bold new self is fiercely determined in her desire to shed her old skin. She is eager to spread her new wings. Her greatest strength is her awareness and the ability to See the truth. She finally realizes the importance of all contrast, and that she is the creator of her own existence. She understands that Life and death are part of the same continuum. Ultimately there is no real death but only more life...



Amador: Looking for Sun



Art No: PP1000

Artwork Dimensions:

w 72 cm (28.8 inches)

h 52 cm (20.8 inches)

Year Created: 2020

Medium: Other

Surface: Fiberboard



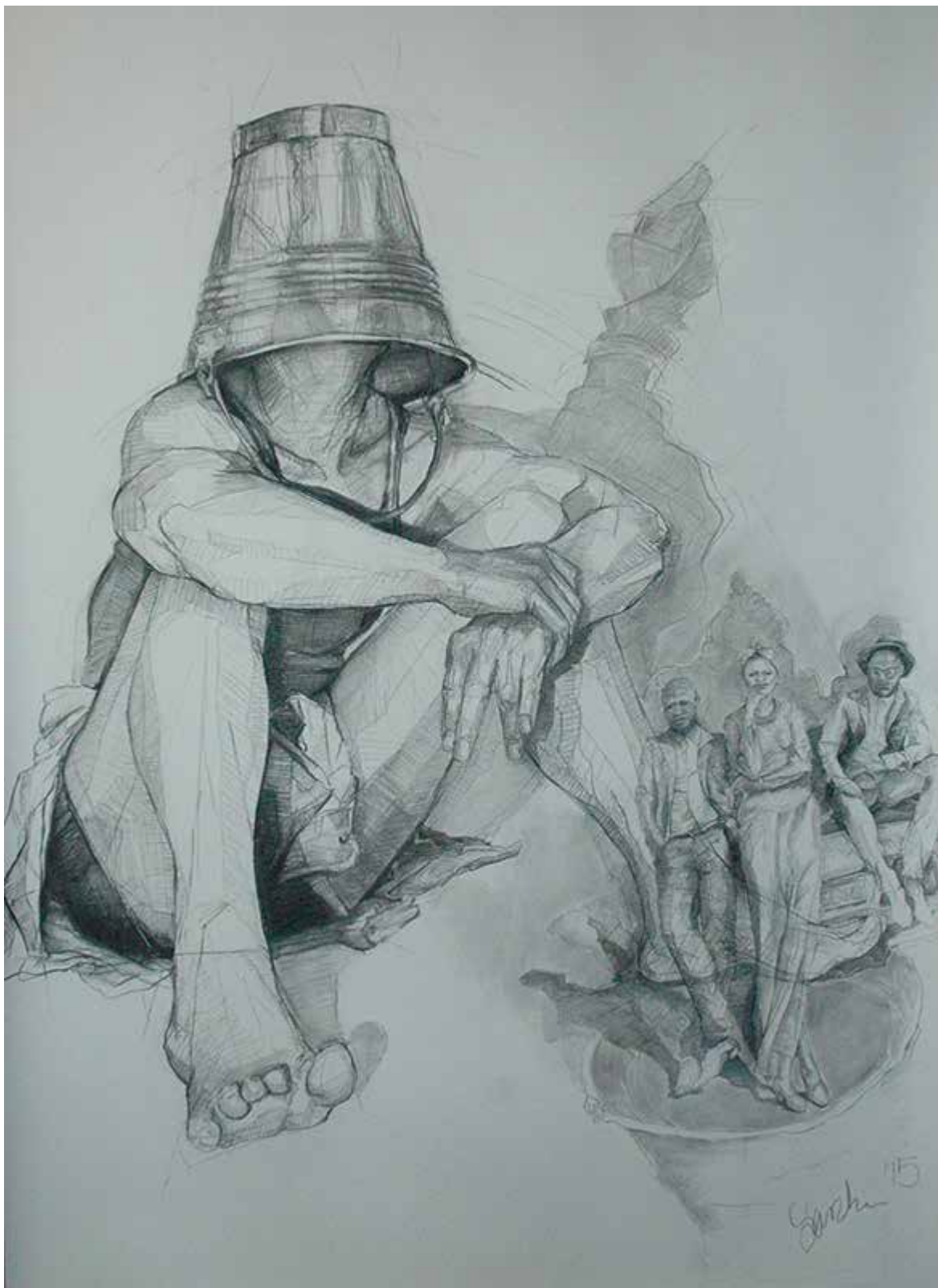
PEOPLE & PAINTINGS
GALLERY

Sweet Little Nothings



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Sasha Fabris: Seretonim Depletion



Art No: PP0902

Artwork Dimensions:

w 102 cm ((40.8 inches)

h 150 cm (60 inches)

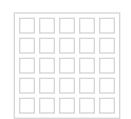
Year Created: 2015

Medium: Charcoal

Surface: Watercolor Paper

This is a portrait of a friend — a ceramicist and an expert in ADHD therapy. She and her family were active freedom fighters all their lives. The dream like images surrounding her depicted with a bucket on her head in a pose of exhaustion, are of people she fought with — acclaimed musicians who have found their places in very successful fortunes.

Our ceramicist fighter struggles daily to put bread on the table and educate her children. My comment here is a certain post truth reality — those who gave the fight for freedom their ALL are not necessarily recognized or rewarded for their sacrifice and commitments.



Alla Kosteleckaya: Mind Games



Art No: PP0909
Artwork Dimensions:
w 60 cm (24 inches)
h 50 cm (20 inches)
Year Created: 2021
Medium: Acrylic
Surface: Canvas



Sometimes our mind takes us to places from where we cannot or do not want to free ourselves. Our brain is just an instrument of our physical body and a product of the information that we fill it with. Even when "playing" by the rules of this world, we can remain free from the noise of other people's opinions, vanity and fear.

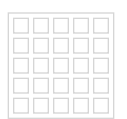
The real You is your eternal Soul, that is temporary living in your human body. And we have the strength and the power to just be observers of this informational game without getting involved in its manipulations.

The contrast between informational chaos and the serenity of a baby, whose mind is still free, inspired me to paint this picture. I would like very much for you ,when looking at this abstraction to remember your true essence, filled with love and light ...

The play of gold paint and gold leaf enlivens the picture with a slight shimmer, depending on how the light falls on it.

Materials used: gold and silver leaf, texture paste, textiles, protective acrylic varnish, mixed media.

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Vitaliy Gonikman: Theater of Life



Art No: PP1002

Artwork Dimensions:
w 35.56 cm (14 inches)
h 43.18 cm (17 inches)

Year Created: 2014

Medium: Ink

Surface: Paper

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Shui-Lyn White: You Are Because I Am Not



Art No: PP0899
Artwork Dimensions:
w 70 cm (28 inches)
h 90 cm (36 inches)
Year Created: 2021
Medium: Ink
Surface: Paper



Curator's
Award

This work is part of series called What Lies Beneath. 'What lies beneath' is a double 'comprendre' where the word 'lies' plays the role of both noun and verb. It is both a statement and a question. As a noun, it asks us to consider the complex web and weave of lies that form the basis of a philosophically discriminatory view of the world through the creation of the other. What are the lies told over long periods of time that become embedded in the psyche and emerge as 'truths'? As a verb, it asks us to look beneath the surface of things — opinions, news, history, culture, religion, philosophy — to see what is really there, to uncover the truth that lies beneath.

In each monotype, the process is symbolic of the way women have been disappeared from the human story. The image begins with an under-drawing, in this case Camille Claudel, over which is rolled a layer of ink, obscuring the drawing completely, symbolic of the way Claudel herself has been assigned to obscurity due to her gender. This layer of black is then removed by running the plate through the press, leaving behind a grey background which is then worked on to create the final image. Here the grey that is left behind when the 'truth' of black is taken away is symbolic of the shades of grey generated by our shadowed post-truth eras. The figure of a young girl forms the cutout, speaking literally to the exclusion of many girls from participating freely in expressing their potential. The space of the cutout is

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cut and stitched with red thread, for the wound of the unattainable dream. Here, the three stitches mark the three decades Claudel spent in an asylum, a sculptor of genius barred from doing the work she loved.

You are because I am not, is a subversion of the African term ubuntu, meaning “I am because you are.” The title alludes to the unspoken ‘truths’ and unconscious assumptions that lie beneath the post-truth histories that inform doctrine, laws, behavior, attitudes and philosophies. The post-truth history such as the role of women in society, or for that matter, of men and how each gender treated by society as a whole. Camille Claudel’s art and impact on the art world has only recently been fully recognized. For a long time, she was more famous as the muse and lover of Rodin, yet remained unacknowledged for her part in creating his most successful works. In a deeply patriarchal world, her struggles cannot be dissociated from her gender. Her affair with Rodin, her eccentric behavior while tolerated by society in male artists, was ultimately punished by her own family who committed her to an asylum where she remained in obscurity for thirty years until her death at 78.

Addressing the Post-truth Era: Post-truth is an adjective defined by the Oxford Dictionary and named as its word of the year in 2016 as ‘relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief’.

The question I ask myself, as a human being — especially as a female of the species — is this, When has the human world not been subject to post-truth histories, philosophies and politics. As Ari-Elmeri Hyvönen argues, post-truth is a predicament in which speech is increasingly detached from the factual infrastructure, proposing we approach post-truth as a crystallization of a longer trajectory of devaluing the truth. The term may be new, but its practice is an old one.

By framing post-truth as a new era — where the truth is manipulated more quickly, dismantled and disseminated; is more opinionated and less concerned with factual correctness; with more opinions shared on a wider scale than in previous eras — is to leave unacknowledged the impact of a human story that is post-truth. Mankind, not humankind, has written a post-truth history — a story of empires, conquest, war. Or as Jared Diamond puts it — Guns, Germs and Steel. There is no ‘herstory’ or ‘ourstory’. We have arrived at this particular post-truth era by way of thousands of years of silencing, exclusion and the manipulation of both rational and factual truth to suit societal institutions of power.

Post-truth versions like so many sweet little nothings recur in the human story, each time in a new guise. It is this that fools us into forgetting its deep roots in our various civilizations. It also denies all that has been purposefully suppressed, and ultimately, excised to produce this exclusionary version of the human story we call history.

In the documentary *Feminists: What Were They Thinking* women were asked what they would do if men disappeared from the world for a day. The answers were surprisingly simple: to go out and walk the streets without fear. Without fear of what I’m wearing, how I’m walking, how loud I am, what I’m saying and who I am with, or on my own. I’d be safe. Recently, a female friend of mine in a small town, walked to the pharmacy to get some medicines, and received untoward and threatening attention related what she was wearing. Leggings and an over-shirt. I didn’t feel safe, she said on arriving back at the house. In a world without post-truth history, she would.

Our post-truth history has normalized and psychologically embedded discrimination: an attitude towards gender and race, sexuality and nature that is deleterious to the well-being of human species and our planet. Camille Claudel’s story is particularly poignant because in spite her wealth of talent, vision and originality, of her support from her father (not her family), from a patron of the arts and even from Rodin, to whom she might have well uttered the words of the title, she was broken by the relentlessly dominating attitudes perpetrated by the post-truth of patriarchy.

These works specifically address the post-truth history that excises women’s presence from the human story. The sweet little nothings that move through our consciousness unquestioned yet maintain the exclusionary status quo. Women are not the only targets of a post-truth history, but they are targeted across the globe: across time and civilizations, race and culture, women have been prohibited from participating fully in life — in art, philosophy, sciences, literature, politics, the workplace. If we are concerned today about the acceptability of lies parading as truth, then we may need to ask, If the story of half of our species is not told, is disappeared from the record, then what is a half-truth world? For this is what we have, half the truth. We are left to live the lie. The rest is silence. The post-truth story.

My final question prompting this work, can we restore the truth without restoring the past? And as an act of restoration, do we as individuals have the courage to see what lies beneath?

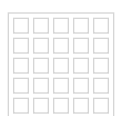
Sources and References

The film *Feminists: What Were They Thinking* is a Netflix documentary released in 2018 directed by Joanna Demetrakis.

Ari-Elmeri Hyvönen is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Tampere.

The quote used here is from his article *Defining Post-truth: Structures, Agents, and Styles* published by *E-International Relations* in 2018.

Many sources were used in researching Camille Claudel, most notably *The Art Story*.



Evgenia Klimenko: Carrying the Flame



Art No: PP1016

Artwork Dimensions:

w 70 cm (28 inches)

h 50 cm (20 inches)

Year Created: 2020

Medium: Oil

Surface: Canvas



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Ramy Alfy: Bearded Dragon



Art No: PP1010

Artwork Dimensions:

w 50.8 cm (20 inches)

h 40.64 cm (16 inches)

Year Created: 2019

Medium: Oil

Surface: Canvas



Sweet Little Nothings

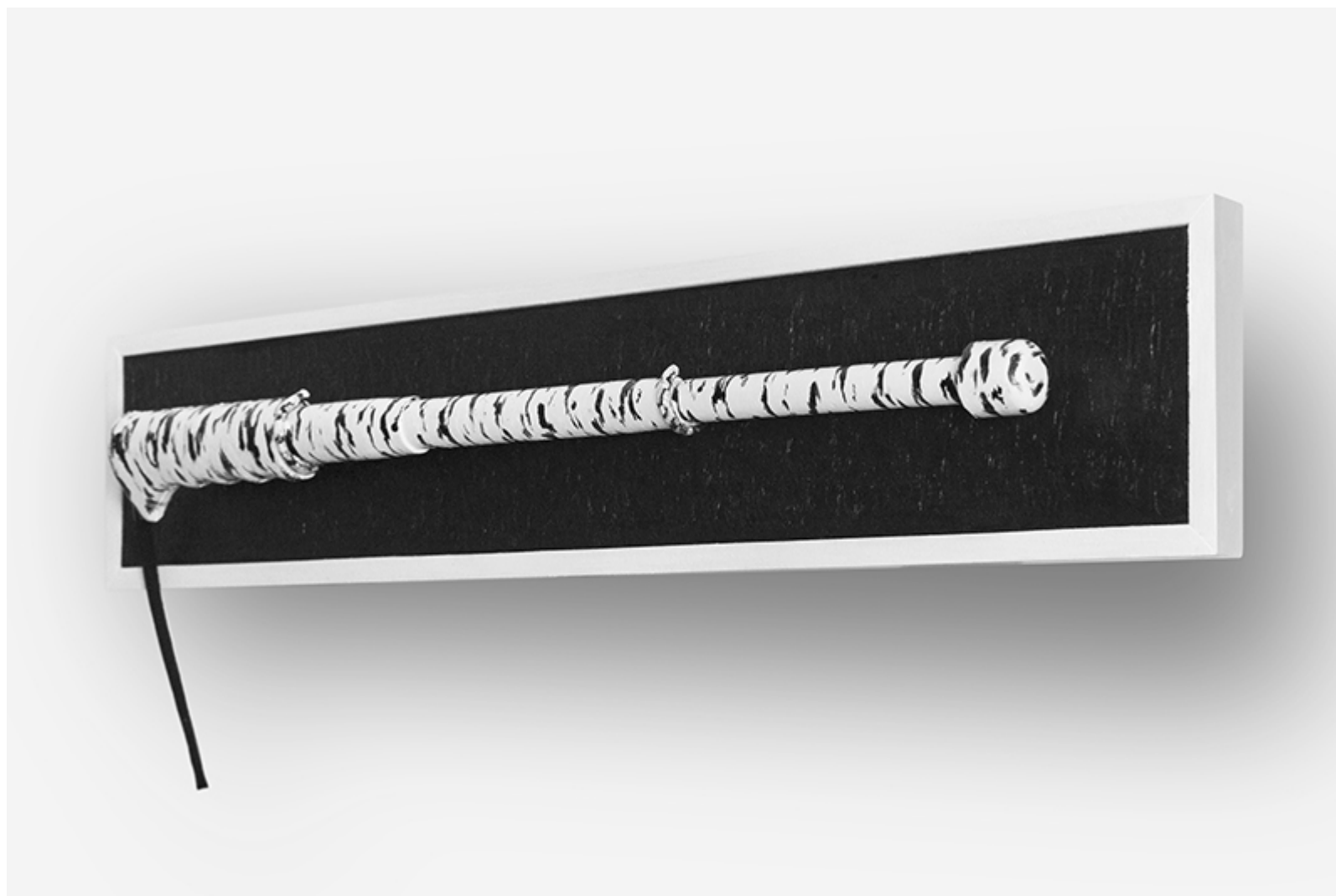


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Aurucom: Dubinochka Baton



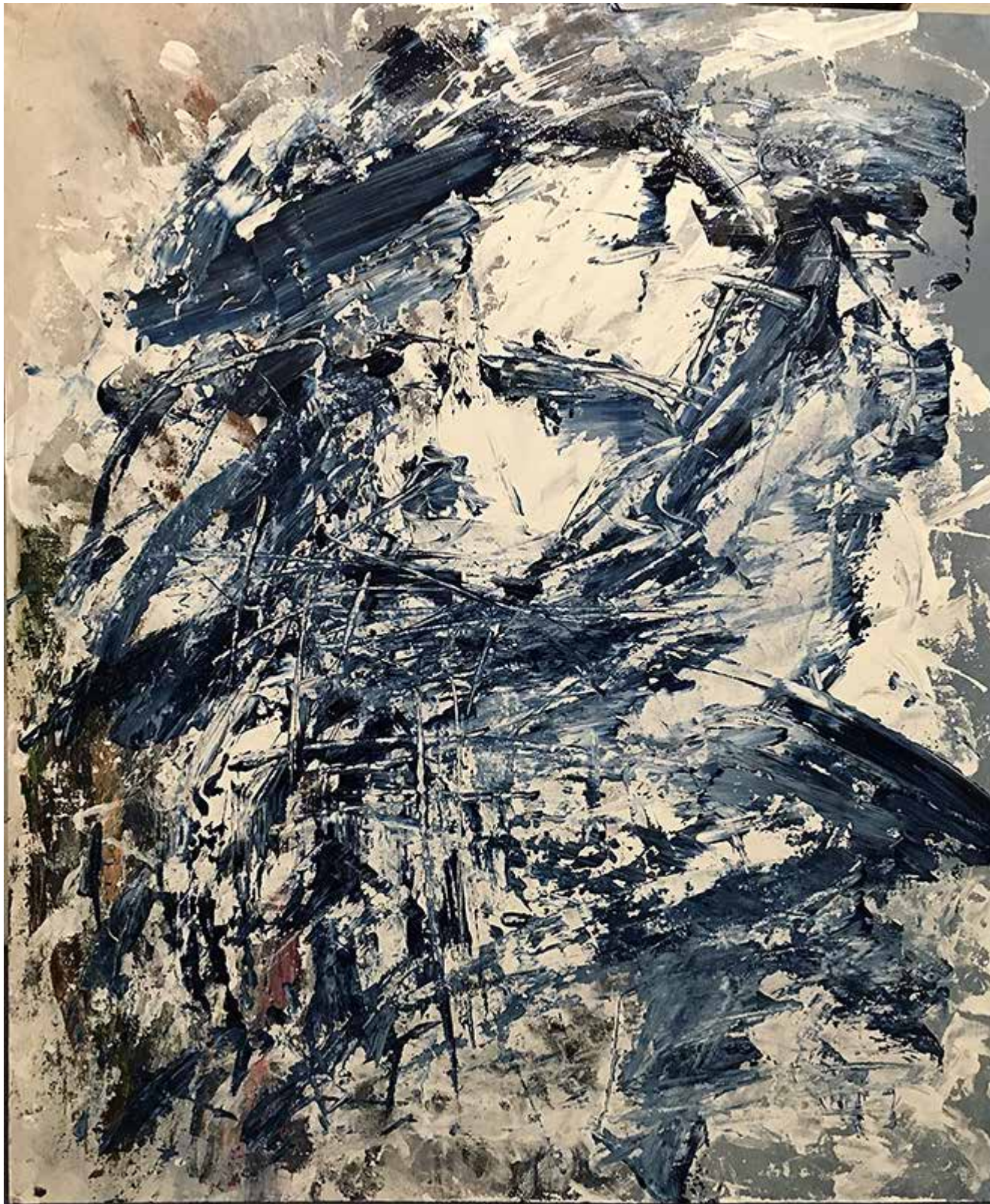
Art No: PP1008
Artwork Dimensions:
w 61 cm (24.4 inches)
h 12 cm (4.8 inches)
Year Created: 2019
Medium: Other
Surface: Wood



The main idea is that birch is one of the symbols of Russia. Along with a bear, balalaika, vodka, and so on. And, unfortunately, police brutality is gradually becoming the same symbol in Russia. At rallies during the dispersal of peaceful demonstrations and prisons, people are tortured, raped, and killed by police. The series of works "Birch" dedicated to showing what sad national symbols are gradually creeping into the foreground.



Womanwithstick: Women, eh?



Art No: PP0955
Artwork Dimensions:
w 53.34 cm (21 inches)
h 24 cm (60.96 inches)
Year Created: 2021
Medium: Acrylic
Surface: Fiberboard

Women, eh

difficult women
women with a mind
shroud in bandages,
mummify them,
bury them alive

she's still talking

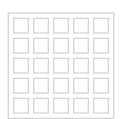
Mummification not creation
more a living death
stuff their mouths,
cover their ears
desecrate, suffocate

is she talking now

penetrate, denigrate,
ridicule and patronize
bind her and blind her
stab deep into her eyes
humiliate, castigate,
pickle her brain in bile
stitch her lips together
in a semblance of a smile

she's not talking now

Women in 2021 are assured we have achieved equality of opportunity. Legislation is there to prove it. In post 1970s feminism, concepts like "girl power" and "laddism" became accepted constructs designed to encourage women to believe their fight for recognition was over. Media images and narratives perpetuated myths of female empowerment even while proving time after time these were socially constructed lies and whilst the female eunuch might look different, she was just as powerless as her sisters from centuries ago. Different methods in 2021 but same result — we are silenced, blinded, mummified, vilified. The term post-feminism is a clever device used to perpetuate patriarchal power systems; a sexed up, fucked up lie masked as a truism.



Josef F H Madisia: Covid-19 Tsunami – Namibia



Art No: PP0880

Artwork Dimensions:

w 530 cm (212 inches)

h 635 cm (254 inches)

Year Created: 2020

Medium: Other

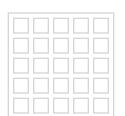
Surface: Paper

Gallery
Award

The artwork depicts that Covid-19 have come to change our world in Africa, beauty and ugliness hidden behind the corona mask. This pandemic is also a stark reminder of our dysfunctional relationship with nature and reminds one of the power of tsunami's, earth quakes, eruption of new diseases as nature's defense response against human destruction.

The necklace and chain around the neck symbolize a new kind of slavery for with immediate ramifications for the traveling hustling African individual surviving day by day on a hand to mouth basis, because the lockdown have distanced and disturbs them from their bread and butter business connections. The high sea waves symbolize the disturbing anger of nature towards greediness of mankind as we damage the ecosystems. The fish depicted in the artwork clearly express its resentment towards human race as their aquatic habitat is messed up by us as their fellow earth dwellers. The large coin in the ominous dark sky reminds African countries that our leaders have recklessly negotiated our natural resources left and right as bounties for large financial debts loans, with both the eastern and western powers, with no hope or possibilities that any international debt will be written off in the near future.

It is against such a background that my awareness as an artist grew over the last months, and so systematically enabled me to embrace the absurdity of our paradoxical world, wherein we as humans of this planet are striving to co-exist. To the extent that such awareness also harnessed and inspired my artistic vocation, to ultimately create value and meaning through my artworks, as to why we need have the will to live on. ... As said by Friedrich Nietzsche: "art exists so that reality does not destroy us".



Miss Margaret: It Takes the Atom and the Star



Art No: PP0911

Artwork Dimensions:

w 45.72 cm (18 inches)

h 45.72 cm (18 inches)

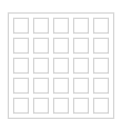
Year Created: 2020

Medium: Oil

Surface: Paper



Sweet Little Nothings



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This monoprint is inspired by a poem by WH Auden called "The Hidden Law," a law which "takes the atom and the star/and human beings as they are/ and answers nothing when we lie."

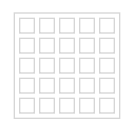
This is a poem I feel speaks to the artist especially — that if one has lied to oneself as an artist, or if you have put lies into your work, there is a hidden law will deprive it of value. The universe will simply not respond to the lies — one's creative work will come to nothing. So I have reminded myself of the importance of being true to one's vision by writing part of the poem as a kind of frame, and writing the major message of the poem within the body of the picture.

Sasha Fabris: Living the Dream



Art No: PP0901
Artwork Dimensions:
w 85 cm (34 inches)
h 150 cm (60 inches)
Year Created: 2015
Medium: Charcoal
Surface: Watercolor Paper

Sweet Little Nothings



19

A playful yet poignant statement in the 'Bucket Series'. This piece is the portrait of a beautiful man who relocated from Italy to stake out a career for himself in South Africa. He makes ice cream magnificently. At the time, everyone and their goose was making this gorgeous ice cream in Italy but nobody in South Africa had entered that market. He and his partner Mauro went from busking at the Maboneng flee market to owning factories and shops country wide. Their story is packed with experience of Johannesburg and it's challenges with a marvellous Italian flair. I represent the ice cream maker with a bucket on his head – a metaphor relating to the 'head n the sand' concept, armed with a whisk to defend himself from the JHB Challenges.

Amador: The Timeless City



Art No: PP0999

Artwork Dimensions:

w 50 cm (20 inches)

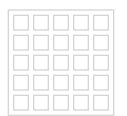
h 70 cm (28 inches)

Year Created: 2019

Medium: Other

Surface: Wood

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20

Jean Lampen: In this Together



Art No: PP0988

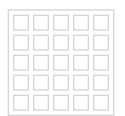
Artwork Dimensions:
w 30 cm (12 inches)
h 42 cm (16.8 inches)

Year Created: 2021

Medium: Ink

Surface: Paper

Sweet Little Nothings



21

By looking at "in this together" we see a cage embroidered with glass beads and white thread, keeping the parrot and girl locked in the same zone. The parrot whispering SWEET LITTLE NOTHINGS in the state of capture (like in lockdown) connections and their energies are maintained.

Igor Dubovoy: Light



Art No: PP1018

Artwork Dimensions:
w 38 cm (15.2 inches)

h 56 cm (22.4 inches)

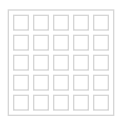
Year Created: 2018

Medium: Watercolor

Surface: Paper



Sweet Little Nothings



22

Anina: Perception is Reality



Art No: PP0979
Artwork Dimensions:
w 165 cm (66 inches)
h 95 cm (38 inches)
Year Created: 2019
Medium: Oil
Surface: Canvas



**Honorable
Mention**

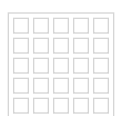
The philosopher and ethicist, Lee McIntyre, has described post-truth as “a rejection of the idea that some things are true irrespective of how we feel about them.” In a climate of post-truth, what is accepted as fact is trumped by our feelings about the world that we prefer, not the world as it is. Thus, people are tempted to treat the findings of scientists selectively. They choose the truth when it supports their preferences and dismiss it as “fake news” when it does not. Paradoxically, they trust their mechanics to follow the scientific method to fix their cars and their doctors to identify and treat their illnesses, but they reject this method of truth-seeking when it contradicts their feelings.

Thanks to the confluence of a variety of factors—the global reach of social media, the growing commercialization of human activity, and a new wave of populist politics in western democracies — the allure of putting feelings ahead of facts is now even more widespread. One of the most profound examples of post-truth thinking is the rejection of the scientific consensus the existence, the causes, and the dangers of global climate change. In the October 2018 assessment report of the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a group of 1,300 independent scientific experts from countries all over the world came to four sobering conclusions. First, the scientists affirmed that the evidence for global warming is unequivocal.

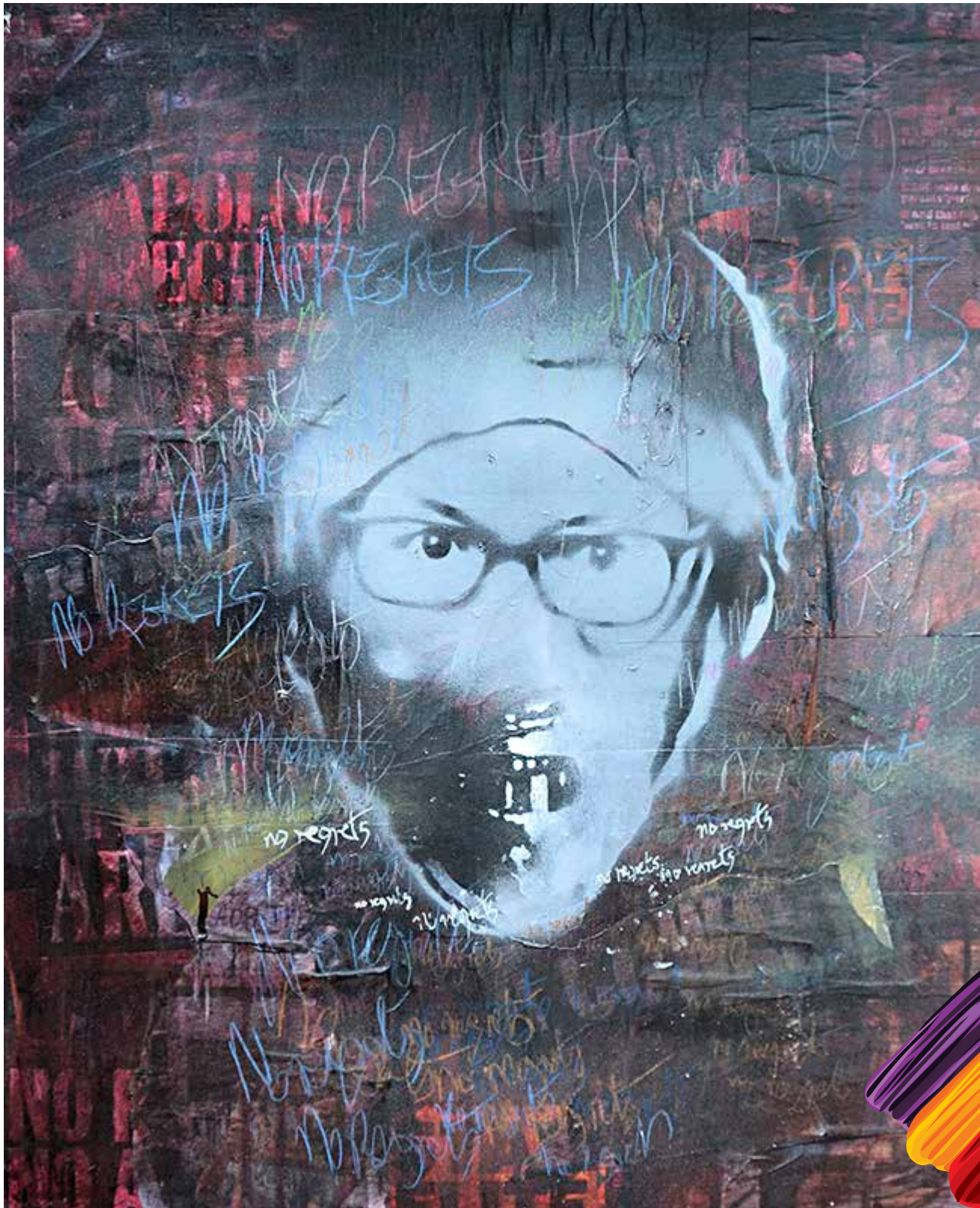
Second, they stated that there is more than a 95 percent probability that human activities over the past half century have played a major role in bringing about these changes. Third, they listed scores of examples of the breadth and depth of these dangers. Among these perils, they pointed to vast impairments to people’s health, their livelihoods, and their personal security; the growing frequency and intensity of natural disasters, such as floods and wild fires; and the extinction of numerous forms of plant and animal life. They also acknowledged the profoundly destabilizing impact of climate change on social stability. To cite a prominent example, global warming has played a central role in the mass migration of peoples from the countries of the South to the North. As we now see in Europe, this exodus has had significant political ramifications. Finally, the panel made a dire prediction. Unless we take drastic steps now, we have only twelve years before global warming will exceed 1.5 degrees centigrade and these threats to our well-being become irreversible.

Although we have little more than a decade to take drastic steps based on above mentioned facts, we, as a post-truth society, choose to, for short term gratification, create a ‘mythical world of endless resources.... instead of facing the undeniable facts and seeing the dire, very real world we are living in.

In this work ‘Perception is Reality’ I question the society future generations will be living in due to the “post truth” choices of past generations.



Tedk: No Regrets

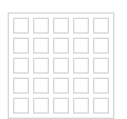


Art No: PP0998
Artwork Dimensions:
w 50 cm (20 inches)
h 60 cm (24 inches)
Year Created: 2020
Medium: Acrylic
Surface: Canvas



Honorable
Mention

At a time when the world is in the grip of a major pandemic, we need doctors. Unfortunately, we often find spin doctors massaging figures, constructing narratives and offering a version of the truth. This painting draws on the iconic image of Hannibal Lecter's face mask and superimposes it over a face that became vilified in British popular culture for having "no regrets" over his deception and distortion of facts. The abuse of power is often the distortion of truth



Curator's Note

It was a pleasure to be invited and act as guest curator for People and Paintings Gallery in NYC recently. With my curatorial brief entitled ***Sweet Little Nothings***, addressing the alarming issue of "post-truth" in our contemporary world, I have challenged artists internationally to respond to my curatorial brief in any medium of their choice. Thank you and well done to all the artists who entered my exhibition! The brief was definitely not an easy challenge to respond to, and I hence required a solid artist's statement for each submitted work. Many artists did not understand, ignored and/or forgot to submit an artist's statement for their works. For a more academic exhibition call such as ***Sweet Little Nothings***, it is hugely problematic to only judge an image. As an academically educated artist and curator, holding a MA(FA) from the University of Pretoria (2000) in South Africa, I believe that strong works of art in the contemporary art world should always be accompanied by a well-written artist's statement. I am pleased to share that we have received many international entries from 12 countries. I was so convinced by a few of the works submitted that I have decided to not only award the curator's award but as the curator, also award five more works with honorary mentions. The honorary mentions are awarded to Joseph Madisia (Joey) from Namibia for his work **Covid-19 Tsunami**, Lize Krüger from the UK for her work **Exploring my resilience**, Verna du Toit for her work **The Herded**, TedK from the UK for his work **No Regrets** and Anina Deetlefs from South Africa for her work **Perception is reality**.

However, I would specifically like to discuss the curator's award for ***Sweet Little Nothings*** awarded to the work: **You are because I am not** by Shui-Lyn White from South Africa. This artist did not only create a large, rather complex multi-plate monotype, but she has also written a brilliant artist statement. A monotype is essentially a "printed painting" and requires great skill and craft(woman)ship. It is a great pity that the work may only be viewed as a tiny image on a computer screen, the detail in this work is breathtaking. The work addresses critically important persisting issues in contemporary society such as patriarchy, toxic masculinity, the persisting practice of exclusion, silencing and/or selective inclusion of minority groups (especially women) not only in the art world but also in the contemporary world in general. What hit me in the stomach was White's statement: "When has the human world not been subject to post-truth histories, philosophies, and politics. As Ari-Elmeri Hyvönen argues, post-truth is a predicament in which speech is increasingly detached from the factual infrastructure, proposing we approach post-truth as a crystallization of a longer trajectory of devaluing the truth. The term may be new, but its practice is an old one." This statement is undeniably true and from the beginning of human history, Lies, deceit, and "post-truth" were indeed a part of our human history. Shui-Lyn concludes her artist's statement by posing a massively important question: "can we restore the truth without restoring the past? And as an act of restoration, do we as individuals have the courage to see what lies beneath?" I hence think it is important to share Shui-Lyn's full artist's statement in the conclusion of my own remarks. Lastly, it was also very clear to me that this artist's statement and work were specifically written/made for this specific exhibition.

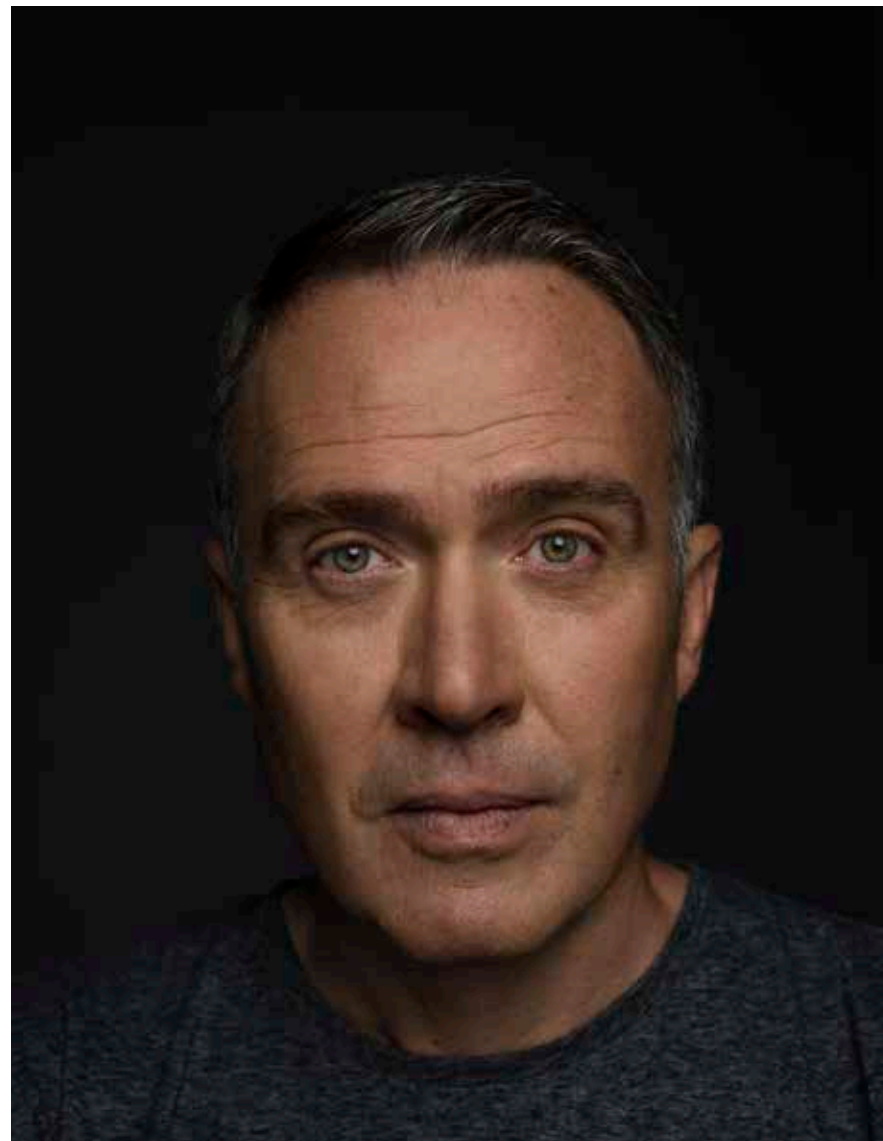


Photo credit: Antonia Steyn



Gallery's Note

Set by the brilliant South African artist and curator Christiaan Diedericks, this exhibition dedicated to post-truth issues in the contemporary world went far beyond pictorial art and unfolded into a full-scale philosophical discussion between the artists. Reading the artworks' descriptions, we can follow their arguments and form our own opinion on the matter. Christiaan allowed all media to participate in this show, which adds even more variety to the artist's approaches. Many powerful works were submitted which made it extremely difficult to select the winners. This explains why in addition to the three awards, the curator requested an unusually high number of Honorable Mentions.

As the Gallery, we decided to present our award to Josef F H Madisia (Namibia) for his work "Covid-19 Tsunami – Namibia". By confronting issues of the African continent, this work, in reality, refers to the world issues, including the "post-truth". The work is very detailed and full of symbolism. Each reference is well explained by the author in the artwork description.

The winners of the contest are:

Curator's Award – Shui-Lyn White from South Africa for work "You Are Because I Am Not"

Gallery Award – Joseph Madisia (Joey) from Namibia for work "Covid-19 Tsunami"

Popular Vote Award – Lize Krüger from the UK for work "Exploring My Resilience"

Honorable Mention – Verna du Toit from South Africa for work "The Herded"

Honorable Mention – Ted Kennedy (TedK) from the UK for work "No Regrets"

Honorable Mention – Anina Deetlefs from South Africa for work "Perception Is Reality"

