

# *The Power of 35!*

Catalogue

**L'Atelier**



**absa-arthotspot.online**

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# Foreword

## The Power Of 35!

From recycled materials and intricate rope figures to smoke drawings and diseased human organs ... the Absa L’Atelier has established itself as the window to these exquisite visual pieces created by some of Africa’s most talented young artists.

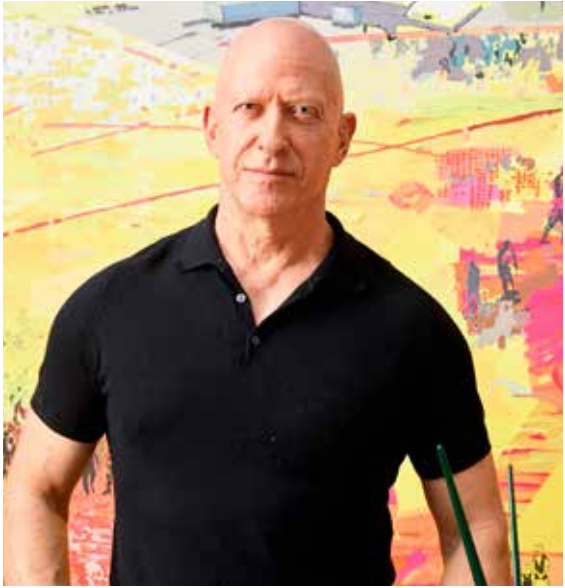
In 2021, the Absa L’Atelier looks to celebrate The Power of 35! 35 years of poignant masterpieces that showcase the talent of artists in Africa and the powerful impact they have had in shaping the landscape of art on this richly diverse continent.

The Power of 35! An exhibition that looks to take individuals on a journey to reveal these artists in their truest form. Original works from previous Absa L’Atelier winners from across the African continent, will give exhibition goers a glimpse of how art has grown and emerged over the past three decades.

It is the celebration of individuals who are **Brave**, who are **Passionate**, who are **Ready** – they are the Power of 35!

*\*All artwork  
pricing is based  
on framed works*





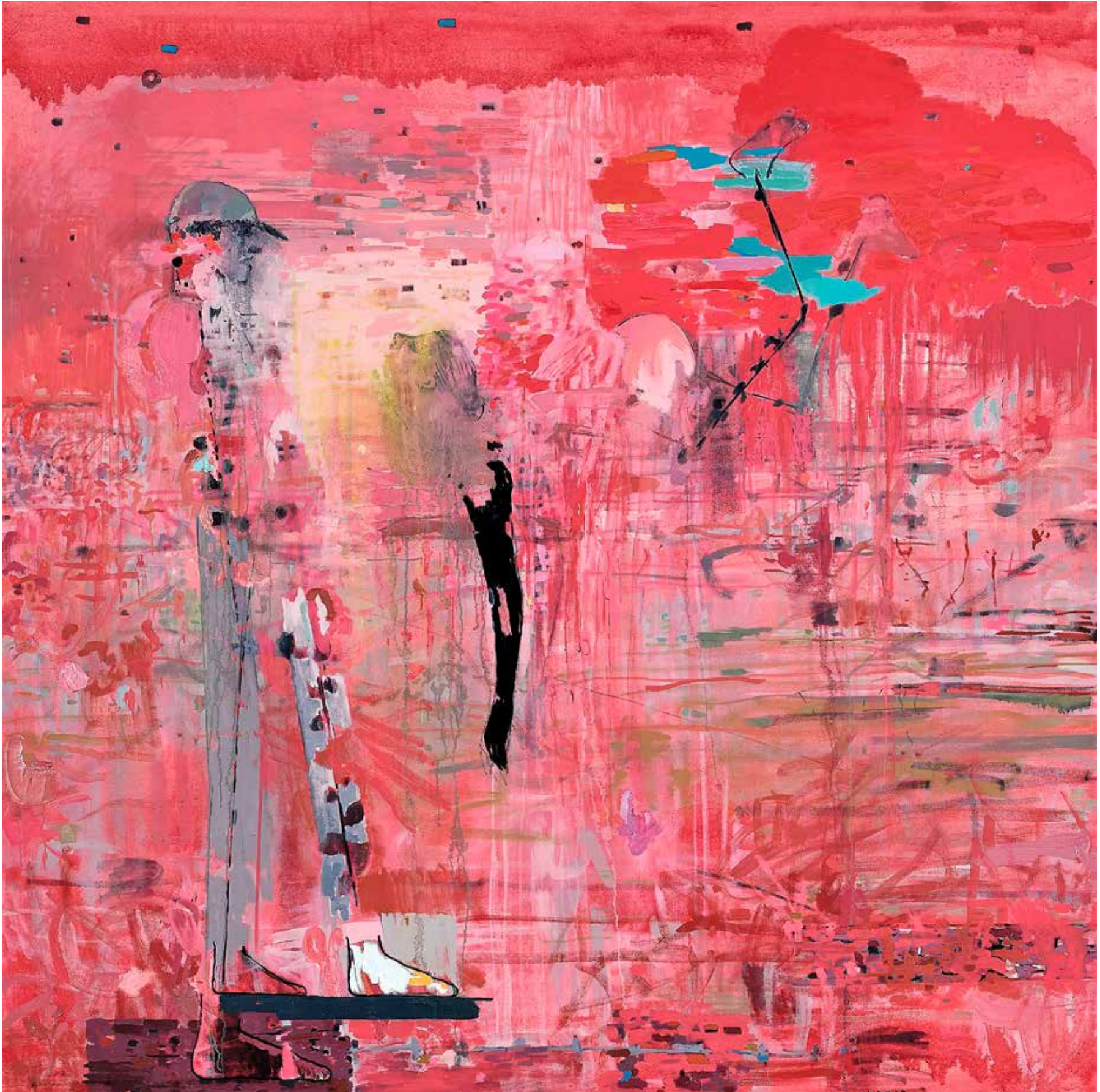
**Clive van den Berg**

*Discover more about the artist on page 21.*



**Meeting in Limbo** (2019)

Etching  
38.5 x 29cm  
**R 6 325**



**Meeting in Limbo** (2018)

Oil on canvas. Edition 2/10.  
200 x 200 x 5cm  
**R 431 250**





**Virginia MacKenny**

*Discover more about the artist on page 22.*



***Pool*** (2016–2017)

Oil on canvas  
200 x 160cm

**R 75 000**



***Desert Cavalcade*** (2016–2017)

Oil on acrylic on canvas.  
160 x 200cm

**R 75 000**





## Ilse Pahl

*Discover more about  
the artist on page 23.*

### ***Pink Shadows*** (2021)

Oil paint on cotton canvas.  
223 x 105cm

**R 35 000**

### ***Landscapes and portraits, Johannesburg*** (2021)

Oil paint on cotton canvas.  
193 x 60,05cm

**R 20 000**







## Ilse Pahl

*Discover more about  
the artist on page 23.*

### **Bronze woman kneeling African origin** (2018)

Print silkscreen mono ¼ 2018 on cotton paper.  
100 x 70cm

**R 10 000**







**James Webb**

*Discover more about  
the artist on page 24.*

***There is a voice other than  
the one you are hearing*** (2020)

Brushed aluminium (Sculpture).  
90cm diameter

**R 150 000**







## Stephen Rosin

Discover more about  
the artist on page 25.



### ***Birds of a Feather...*** (2020)

Bullet lead, gunpowder residue, ink, coloured  
pencil, antique watch face and cotton thread on  
hand-cut paper.  
71 x 54cm

**R 8 600**



### ***Ta-da!*** (2020)

Ballpoint pen, drafting ink and acrylic ink on paper.  
72 x 101cm

**R 18 900**



### ***Drive by Night*** (2021)

Bullet lead and ink on paper.  
42 x 35cm

**R 3 600**





Ilka van Schalkwyk

Discover more about the artist on page 26.



Throwing Stones: Paradoxical Freedoms (2019)

Digital Print on paper Installation.  
5 x 1m

R 60 000





**Ian Grose**

*Discover more about the artist on page 27.*



***Me looking on my laptop screen at what I thought was the Gare St Lazare, but wasn't*** (2020)

Oil on paper mounted on canvas (tryptic).  
129.5 x 107.5cm

**R 210 000- R 80 000 each**





**Elrie Joubert**

*Discover more about the artist on page 28.*



***Lepidoptera collection*** (2018)

Mixed Media  
81 x 42cm  
**R 6 000**

***Behavioural genetics*** (2018)

Mixed Media  
81 x 42cm  
**R 6 000**





**Elrie Joubert**

*Discover more about the artist on page 28.*



**Free State Fix** (2019)

1000 found objects in clear gelatine capsules,  
displayed on laser cut plexiglass.  
124 x 46 x 80cm

**R 15 000**







**Pauline Gutter**

*Discover more about the artist on page 29.*



**Crevette** (2017)

Charcoal drawing  
191 x 138cm

**R 40 000**



**Sire** (2019)

Oil painting  
107 x 177cm

**R 95 000**



**Fluffy Structure and the finger of judgement** (2021)

Lithography  
100 x 85cm

**R 8 000**





**Liberty Battson**

*Discover more about  
the artist on page 31.*

***This Hard To Give Up*** (2020)

2K Automotive paint on canvas.  
124 x 124cm

**R 50 000**

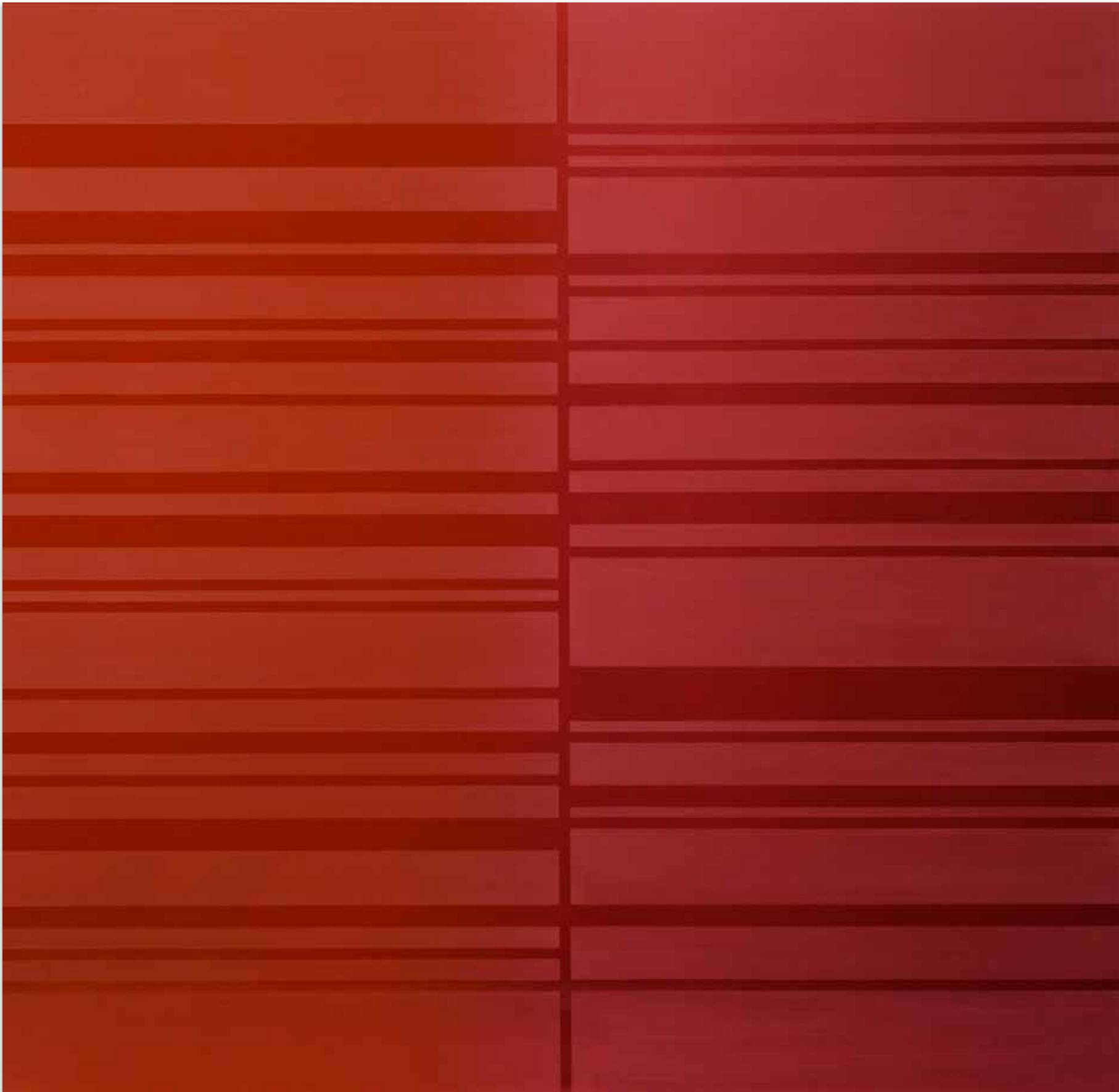






**Liberty Battson**

*Discover more about  
the artist on page 31.*



**Truth about April 2017** (2017)

2K Automotive paint on canvas.  
122 x 125cm

**R 48 000**



**Truth about December 2017** (2017)

2K Automotive paint on canvas.  
122cm x 125cm

**R 48 000**





## Nourhan Maayouf

*Discover more about  
the artist on page 33.*

On March 11th 2020, **Covid19** has been declared by WHO  
as a global pandemic

Governments have imposed **lockdowns** to control  
the spread of the virus

Half of humanity has stayed home, and has maintained  
**social distance** even with close ones

**Video calls** have replaced real life meetings

### **Wanna Squeeze** (2020)

Video

45 min

**R 14 800**





**Maral Bolouri**

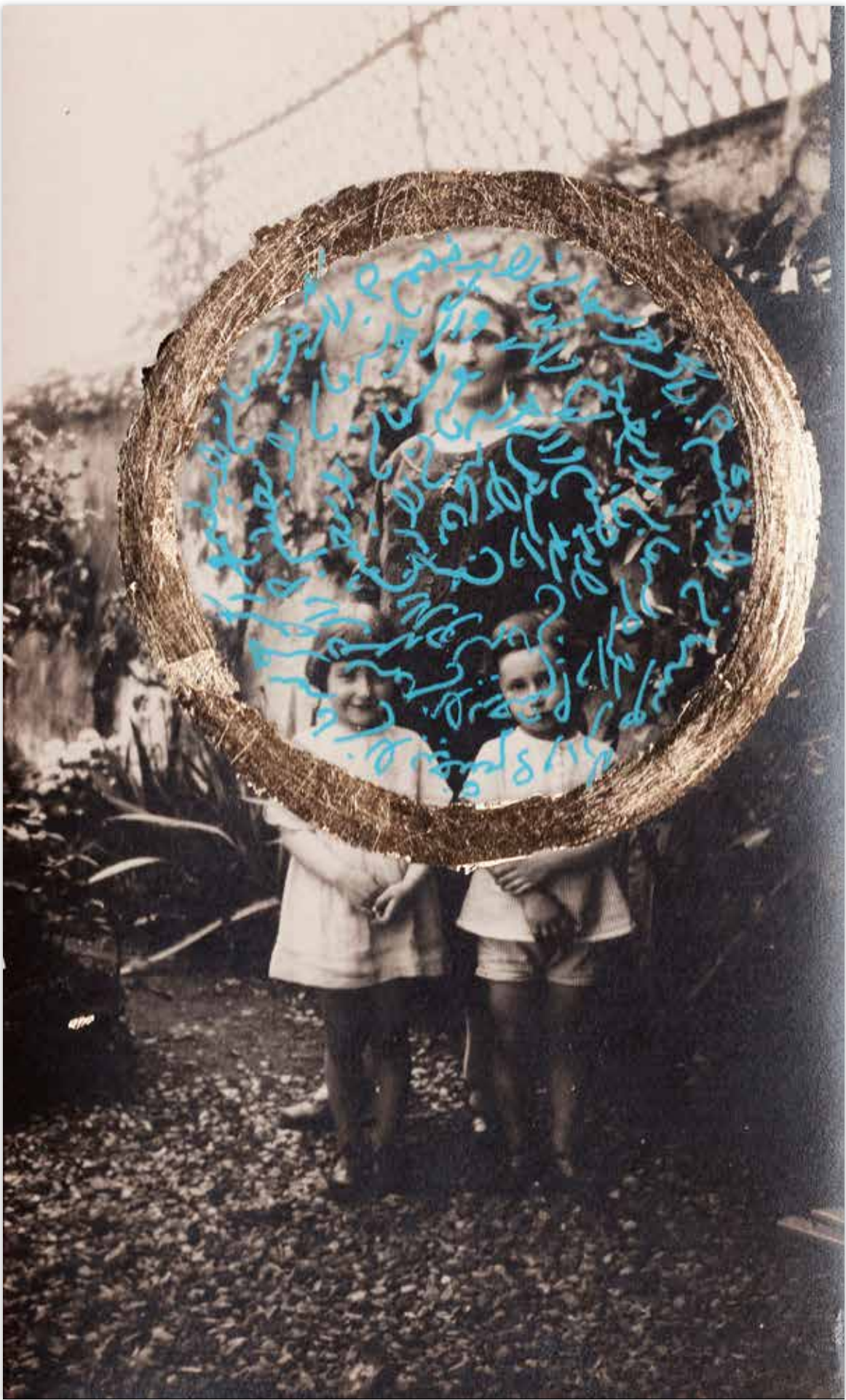
*Discover more about  
the artist on page 34.*



**What if I forgive both of us?**  
**Un-mothering series.** (2021)

Pen and gold leaf on found photography.  
9 x 13.3cm

**R 2 970**



**What if I forgive the three of us?**  
**Un-mothering series.** (2021)

Pen and gold leaf on found photography.  
6.4 x 10.9cm

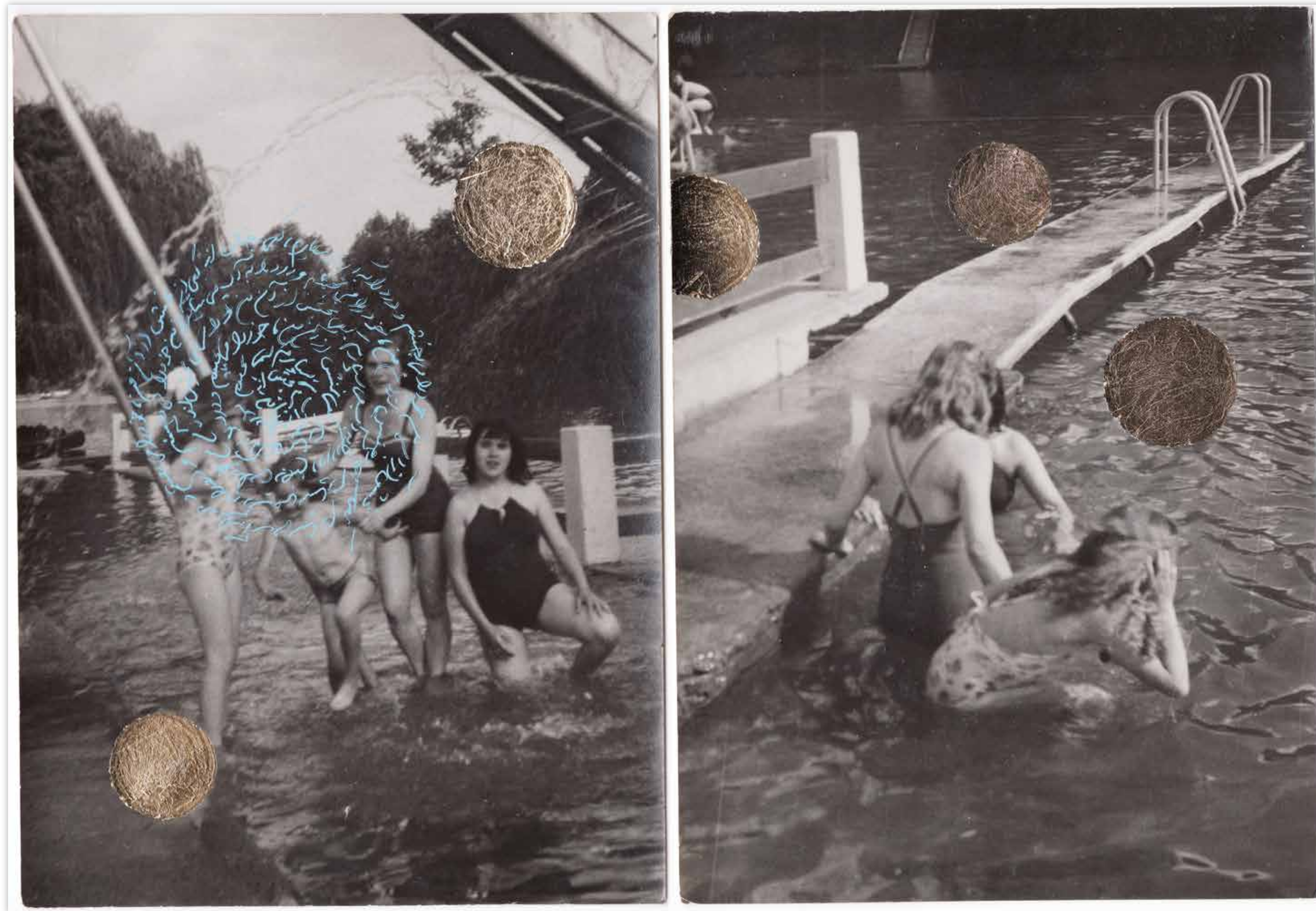
**R 1 800**





## Maral Bolouri

Discover more about  
the artist on page 34.



***I forgive myself and pass the pain to the water.***  
***Un-mothering series*** (2021)

Pen and gold leaf on found photography. Diptych.  
12.8 x 17.8cm

**R 14 600**





**Nkhensani  
Rihlampfu**

*Discover more about  
the artist on page 35.*

***Dream on My Sweetheart  
and Never Stop Going for it*** (2020)

Woven Calico Rope and Wood.  
84 x 46 x 46cm

**R 42 000**







**Raji Bamidele**

*Discover more about the artist on page 36.*



**IBEJI – OMO MI (1)** (2020/2021)

Charcoal and 24kt Gold leaf on Acid Free Archival Paper.  
120 x 90cm

**R 75 000**



**IBEJI – OMO MI (2)** (2020/2021)

Charcoal and 24kt Gold leaf on Acid Free Archival Paper.  
116.5 x 82cm

**R 75 000**





**Winifrid Luena**

*Discover more about  
the artist on page 37.*



***Metamorphosis I*** (2020)

Satin Photographic Paper.  
50 x 76,2cm

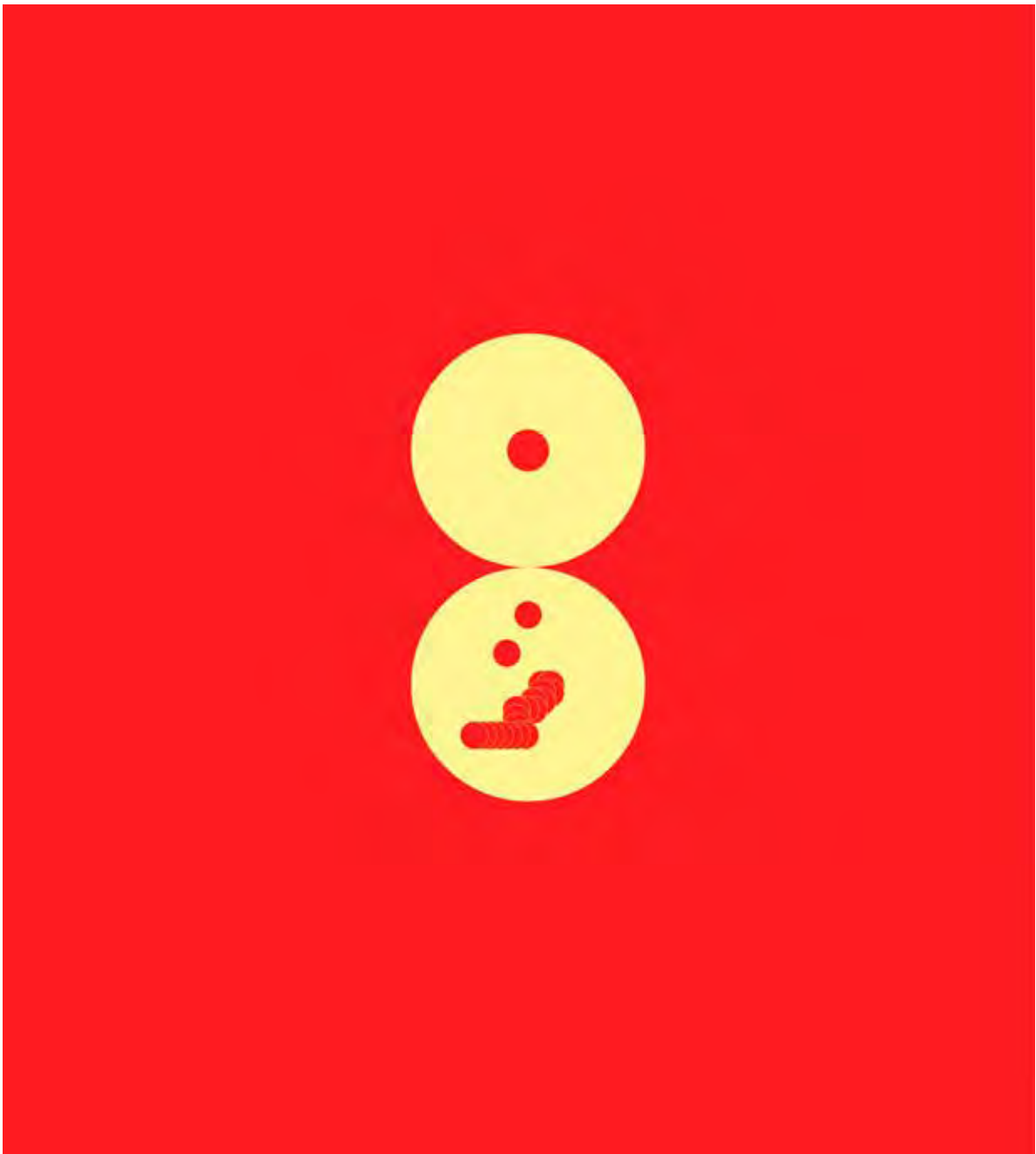
**R 30 000**



***Metamorphosis II*** (2020)

Satin Photographic Paper.  
50 x 76,2cm

**R 34 000**



***Metamorphosis III*** (2020)

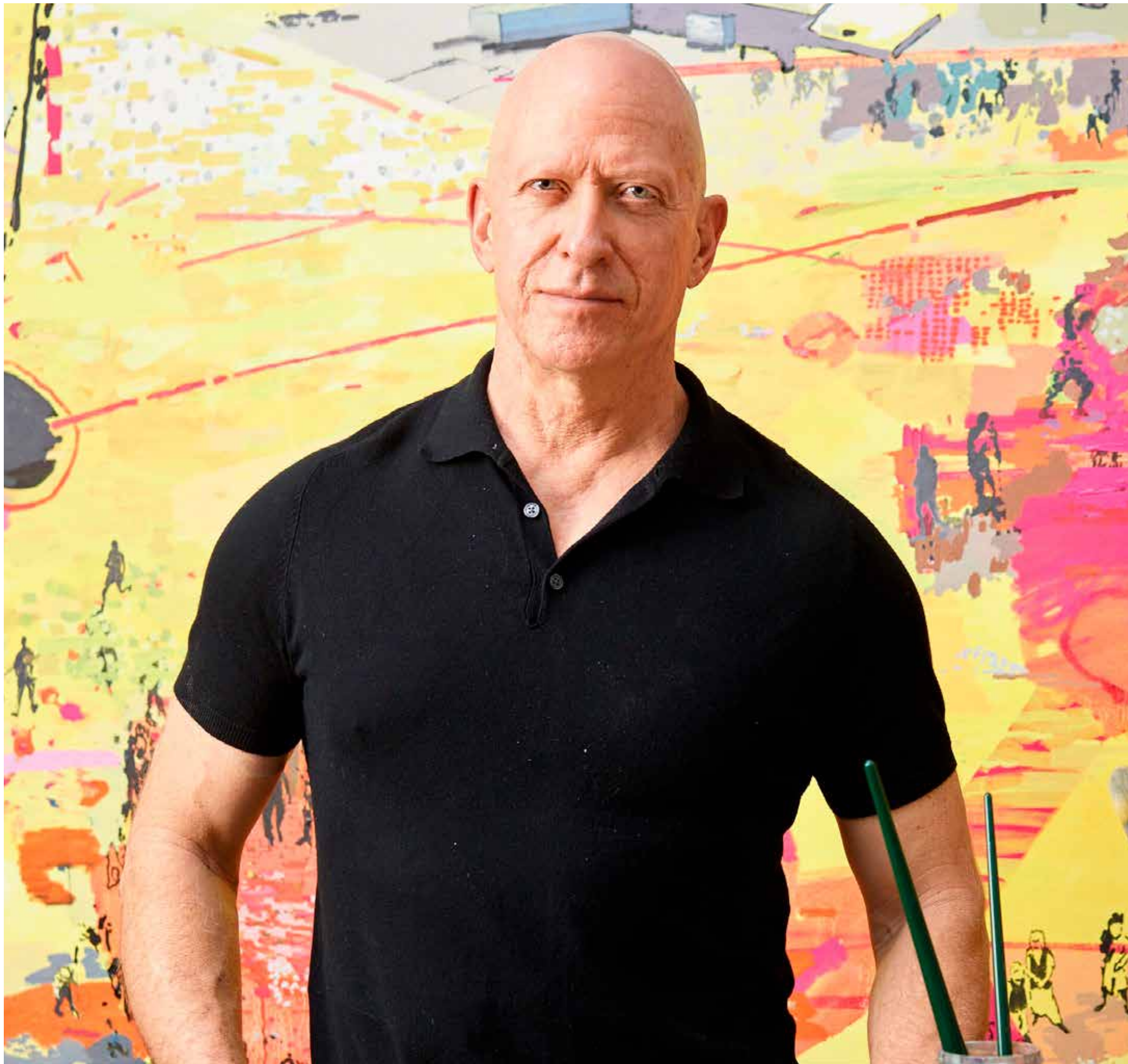
Satin Photographic Paper.  
76,2 x 101. 6cm

**R 30 000**



# Artist ***info***





## Clive van den Berg

Born in 1956 in Zambia, Clive van den Berg is an artist and designer now based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

His works range in size and format, including paintings, prints, sculpture and drawings. Various addressed to body, eros, memory and land his art is showcased and collected around the world.

In tandem with his studio practice, Clive works to develop public projects as a designer and curator. These include the permanent exhibitions around South Africa including the Holocaust and Genocide Centre in Johannesburg, Freedom Park in Pretoria and The Nelson Mandela Foundation in Johannesburg.

He is the recipient of several international awards, including a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, Rockefeller Fellowship, and the prestigious Absa L'Atelier competition in 1987.

**Artist statement** • This is one of a series of paintings by Clive van den Berg made for his solo exhibition in Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa eighteen months ago. In the series,

Clive confronts the tradition of South African landscape painting. Historical depictions of land were primarily filtered through Western perception and sought to possess the territory by recording its surface image.

In such works as *Meeting in Limbo*, Clive peels away the surface of the land. In this work, the fleshly pink landscape seems porous. To blur the passage of time and the physical surface of the land, Clive presents both surface and underneath, past and present, simultaneously on the canvas. That complex relationship of what is on the surface and what lies beneath or inside, is one of the complexities of vision ... and that is a political vision: What is on the surface and what does it conceal?

The painting contains various figurative elements – ghosts or witnesses? A single figure and shadowy suggestion of a group behind, below, and perhaps hidden from that figure. Clive's interest is in the state of flux between past and present and the conscious and unconscious minds.

The land surface has always been important in South Africa; contested, commercialized, seeing settlement and migrations, but the heart of unresolved history lies below that ground surface while many South African try to create a modernist state and a landscape which denies that trauma and past.





## Virginia MacKenny

Virginia MacKenny completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Natal, South Africa, in 1980, and her master's degree in Gender Studies in 2001, at the University of Kwazulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa. MacKenny has received numerous awards, including the Volkskas L'Atelier Award (1991), the Ampersand Fellowship in New York (2004), and a Donald Gordon Creative Fellow Award (2010). She is an independent curator and critic. She co-curated, in 2006, with Gabi Ncgobo, 'Second to None' – an exhibition celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the 1956 Women's March on Pretoria to protest the pass laws – at Iziko South African National Gallery. A former Kwazulu-Natal editor for [www.artthrob.co.za](http://www.artthrob.co.za), the first internet site on contemporary South African art, she was also an invited writer for Sophie Perryer's 10 Years 100 Artists – Art in a Democratic South Africa (2004). She is an avid supporter of the contemporary visual arts discourse in SA by writing catalogue essays and for the quarterly Art South Africa. She has presented papers on aspects of South African contemporary art production at the Tate Modern, London, and in conferences in Mumbai, Paris and Madrid. Often a judge on national competitions she was a selector for Spier Contemporary 2007.

MacKenny is interested in contemporary South African art with a special emphasis on painting, video art and performance art with specific reference to gender and environmental issues. In 2010 she was a co-founding member of COPART, an artists' initiative concerned with raising awareness for climate change at COP17 (the UN Conference of the Parties for discussion on climate change held in Durban that year). Recent solo exhibitions include 'Foam Along

the Waterline' (2008), at UCT's Irma Stern Museum, 'Crossing' (2009) at David Krut Projects, Johannesburg and 'Waymarker' (2012) David Krut Projects, Cape Town, South Africa. 'Waymarker' was the culmination of a 700km walk across France along the Chemin de St Jacques and embodied a literal act of grounding in an act dedicated "to the Earth and all living beings on her". MacKenny has created an artist's book based on her walk, as well as researching for a book on artists in Southern Africa engaged with environmental issues.

**Artist statement • Virginia MacKenny makes art to better understand her relationship to the world in which she finds herself, of which she is a part and to which she contributes. Inextricably entangled and implicated she is an itinerant carrying the baggage of European culture on a continent, and in a world, profoundly damaged by it. Virginia makes art to examine from whence she comes, what she values and how she might usefully engage. Living in what often feels like 'End Times' socio-politically and environmentally Virginia attempts to engage contemporary landscape painting in a manner that acknowledges a shift in the way land is viewed or may need to be re-viewed. Undoing our self-imposed binary of nature / human necessitates a practice that is responsive to, not imposed upon, the world within which one exists. For Virginia art making is a way of noticing the extraordinary within the mundane – it is a way of paying attention.**





## Ilse Pahl

Ilse Pahl was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1972. She majored at the University of Johannesburg in sculpture, printmaking and drawing, completing her Master's degree in 2005.

Pahl lectured part time at the University of Johannesburg in the Multimedia Department until 2016. She has exhibited both locally and internationally in Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, New York, Australia, and Nairobi.

In 1997 she won the Absa L'Atelier Award, spending one year in Paris at the Cite des Arts Internationale. She was granted a residency in 2001 at the Thami Mnyele Foundation in Amsterdam.

In 2003 she won the SASOL Wax in Art award. Her works are both in private and public collections, locally & internationally, including the Smithsonian and The Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

Public commissions include the David Webster memorial mosaic in Troyville, the BRT bus station and Hillbrow Orientation sculpture. Pahl currently teaches at the Artist Proof Studio in Johannesburg, and is studying to obtain her post graduate certificate in education.

**Artist statement** • Ilse Pahl is presently exploring how to represent the female figure in her work by looking at her collection of objects that represent the female form in various narratives. The pose, physical features, material and colour of the objects have influenced the works. Ilse has developed a female character that has evolved from being passive and submissive into an aggressive nightmarish or monstrous woman. Her physical features resemble a combination of the objects in her collection which are African fetish figures, curios and ceramic ornaments or images of woman represented in various poses over different periods. Often the features are distorted not in proportion and alien like, because they are bad reproductions.

Ilse often wears make-up that is painterly and heavily applied on her lashes, eyes and lips. The medium of paint for Ilse has similar material qualities to make up and flesh. Sometimes, the fluidity of the paint and the materiality of the paint takes over her paintings and subject resulting in an abstract, undefined form. The feminine colours – pink – are intense in tone and scale magnifying the smears and smudges in paint. Thinking about lipstick and eye shadow, Ilse is interested in how she can use feminine elements to make work that reflects the violent and chaotic world she lives in.





## James Webb

James Webb is an interdisciplinary artist, known for his site-specific interventions and installations. His practice often involves sound, found objects, and text, invoking references to literature, cinema, and the minimalist traditions. By shifting objects, techniques, and forms beyond their original contexts and introducing them to different environments, Webb creates new spaces of tension. These spaces bind Webb's academic background in religion, theatre, and advertising, offering poetic inquiries into the economies of belief and dynamics of communication in our contemporary world.

Webb has had solo exhibitions at, amongst others, the Art Institute of Chicago, USA, 2018; SPACES, Cleveland, USA, 2018; Norrtälje Konsthall, Norrtälje, Sweden, 2018; Galerie Imane Farès, Paris, France, 2016 and 2019; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, United Kingdom, 2016; Hordaland Kunstsenter, Bergen, Norway, 2015; blank projects,

Cape Town, South Africa, 2014, 2016, and 2020; CentroCentro, Madrid, Spain, 2013; Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2012; and mac, Birmingham, United Kingdom, 2010.

Major group exhibitions include the 13th Biennial of Dakar (2018), 4th Prospect Triennial of New Orleans (2017), Documenta 14 (2017), 13th Biennial of Sharjah (2017), 12th Bienal de la Habana (2015), 55th Biennale di Venezia (2013), 3rd Marrakech Biennale (2009), Melbourne International Arts Festival (2009), and the 8th Biennale d'Art Contemporain de Lyon (2007). Other notable group shows include those at spaces such as Wanås Konst and Historiska, Sweden; MAXXI Roma, Italy; Darat al Funun, Jordan; Théâtre Graslin, France; and the Tate Modern, London.

### **Artist statement •**

**A remake of a symbol seen in a house of worship.**





# Stephen Rosin

Stephen Rosin, born in 1975, is an award-winning multidisciplinary artist working with ink, beeswax, gunpowder, bullet lead, digital photography, and a variety of other unusual mediums.

The winner of the prestigious Barclays Bank L'Atelier award in 2009, Rosin's artistic practice is characterized by a conceptual approach to socio-political commentary and subtle satire which he achieves through intricate and detailed imagery. His work is held in the Sasol, Telkom, and Absa corporate art collections, to name a few, as well as in the permanent collections of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum and the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Rosin lives and works near Plettenberg Bay in South Africa.

**Artist statement • 'Birds of a Feather'** is intended as an ironic reflection on the complexities of human identity. We are all unique individuals, made up of elaborate and convoluted characteristics which conjoin to form our distinctive personalities. A cacophony of discordant elements united somehow to sing a remarkable song.





## Ilka van Schalkwyk

Living in Johannesburg, South Africa, Ilka van Schalkwyk obtained her degree in Fine Arts from the University of Pretoria in 2009, with a distinction for her practical component.

In 2010 she won the coveted Absa L'Atelier prize with her work Reading Colour. The prize included a six-month residency at the Cite Internationale des Artes in Paris from July 2011 to January 2012.

In 2012 she held her first solo exhibition entitled Yesterday at the Absa Gallery in Johannesburg.

She has an Honours degree in journalism and completed her master's degree in art at the University of Johannesburg in 2018. Ilka participated in the Booknesses Colloquium in 2017, not only exhibiting in both exhibitions held at the colloquium, but also presenting a research paper on synaesthesia and art.

Ilka often uses her own grapheme synaesthesia, where she associates letters of the alphabet and numbers with colour, as code in her artworks. Her work combines issues of freedoms and othering as well as historic references particularly to the music and lifestyle of the 1960's and 70's.

Ilka is a book and installation artist, and her works are represented in the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Jack Ginsberg Collection, as well as several University collections in the USA.

**Artist statement** • The paradoxical nature of freedom, where one person's freedom is not another's freedom is the theme of the work. Being a grapheme synaesthete, associating letters of the alphabet with colour, Ilka van Schalkwyk encodes the work with synaesthesia: the coloured images are placed in a particular sequence spelling out 'Throwing Stones'. The accompanying speeches relate to each other in pairs, but also upon further examination reference the counterpart coloured image. The work is inspired by counterculture, artists from the 1960s and 1970s, particularly musicians. Although rock music represents the anti-establishment and the leaders of freedom the establishment, they share a commonality in their belief in fighting for freedom. Politics and history are also referenced as well as the circular structure of human nature, causing the work to relate to our time as well as historic time. The title of the exhibition 'Throwing Stones' is a pun not only on the saying that people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones, but also on the Rolling Stones.





## Ian Grose

Ian Grose was born in Johannesburg in 1985 and lives in Cape Town, South Africa. He completed a post-graduate diploma in painting at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town, in 2010, and in 2011 received the Tollman Award for Visual Arts and the Absa L'Atelier award. He spent six months in residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris and works produced during this residency were exhibited at the Absa Art Gallery in Johannesburg in 2013. In 2019, Grose completed a three-month residency at SP ACED OU T, an institute located on an organic farm north-east of Berlin, aiming to help artists enter into dialogue with contemporary art far removed from the urban rush.

Grose held his first solo exhibition with Stevenson in Cape Town in 2013. He has participated in group shows including Gold at Yutaka Kikutake Gallery (2018); Exchange at Galerie Hans Meyer, Düsseldorf (2016); Home Truths: Domestic Interiors from South African Collections at the Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town (2016); I Love You Sugar Kane at the Institute of Contemporary Art Indian Ocean in Mauritius (2016) and Thinking, Feeling, Head, Heart at The New Church Museum, Cape Town (2014).

Two catalogues of Grose's work have been published by Stevenson, Some Assumptions in 2014 and Small Paintings in 2015.

**Artist statement** • These works depict a moment when Ian Grose was looking through his laptop at digital pictures of the trip he had made to Paris. In the photographs in question, Ian had found himself in a train station which he recognised from Claude Monet's pictures of a station filled up with smoke from the departing trains. Ian imagined himself to be standing metres away from where Monet must have painted what for him would have been a very new, modern spectacle. Years later, Ian was thinking about the sudden visual changes happening in his own city, owing to the arrival of new technologies -- specifically, the food ordering apps that led to small armies of motorcyclists gathering near restaurants, and the taxi apps that thinned out the number of pedestrians. Ian found the images he had taken of the Paris station (mingling with his reflection in the laptop screen), but soon realised that the station he had been in wasn't in fact the St Lazare from Monet's paintings: the ironwork, although similar, is distinctly different. Ian still does not know what station he had been standing in.



# Elrie Joubert

Elrie Joubert is a Bloemfontein-based, South African visual artist, and obsessive collector of miniature natural objects. Joubert completed her BA Fine Arts (cum laude for painting) at the University of the Free State in 2006 and went on to receive her MA (Fine Arts) in 2010 from the same institution.

Joubert won the Absa L'Atelier in 2012 and as part of her prize, received a six-month residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France in 2013. She has also participated in various group exhibitions, notably *The inquisitive mind: science and imagination* (2014) at the Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, and *Small Objects* (2013) with artist Brian Collier in New York, USA. Joubert had her first solo exhibition in 2014, entitled *For Keep's Sake*, followed by *From Crane Flies to Cameos* in 2016.

Joubert is currently working as a Lecturer at the Central University of Technology in Bloemfontein.

**Artist statement • Behavioural genetics—linking Elrie Joubert's daughter's childhood memories of collecting with her own. Eighty-nine bottles are filled with feathers. All feathers were collected in the span of one year by Elrie's then three-year-old daughter. This collection raises questions about why one will be fascinated by a particular object, and whether collecting can be linked with behavioural genetics (nature vs nurture).**

*This installation consists of a thousand miniature found objects collected, labelled with a number corresponding with a date and*

*location using @what3words. What3words is a geocoding system that encodes geographic coordinates into three dictionary words; for example, Bloemfontein City Hall is located at liberty.mugs.windows. The encoding is permanently fixed and used to communicate specific locations. Each collected object is preserved in a size 0, clear gelatine capsule and individually displayed on a specifically designed laser-cut plexiglass. Inspired by different objects found in the Bloemfontein urban environment, in contrast to the well-known rural Free State landscape, each object represents a memory and moment in time. Exploring themes of creating "time capsules", reviewing our idea of landscape art, and more obviously reflecting on how addictive the collecting process is to Ilse.*

*All the wings are from Elrie Joubert's childhood butterfly collection (one of the first things she ever collected and linked with endless childhood memories). Proof of passing of time is evident as Dermestidae insects destroyed most of the collection. The fragility of life, the inevitability of death, and the living endeavours that continue regardless become apparent in how Elrie desperately attempts to preserve what is left of the delicate collection.*







## Pauline Gutter

The Free State-based, South African painter and intermedia artist, Pauline Gutter, was born in 1980. She obtained her B.A. Degree in Fine Arts (cum laude for painting) at the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa, and was awarded Honours Colours in Arts and Culture from the same University. She is the winner of the prestigious 2013 Absa L'Atelier competition and was also awarded the Helgaard Steyn Award for painting in 2011. In 2012 she received the Mail & Guardian 200 Young South Africans Award.

Gutter's work forms part of the following museum and corporate collections: V&A Collection London, UK, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (France), Luciano Benetton Collection (Italy), Oliewenhuis Art Museum, University of Stellenbosch, North-West University, University of the Free State, William Humphreys permanent collection, MTN Foundation, Absa Corporate Collection and the ATKV Collection, to name a few.

"On close perusal the gestural texture of painterly marks is an immediately apparent feature of

the dense impasto of Pauline's paintings. In the loving struggle and constant battle she wages with her materials certain local areas in the texture of marks appear almost like amorphous flurries and chaotic skirmishes. Yet they also manifest an emergent dynamic of escalating movement, rippling muscles, vital and monumental bodies. Ambiguity and uncertainty permeate this gestural texture. Suspended between revealing and concealing, visible and invisible, it attracts and absorbs our imaginative attention. The indeterminate and ambiguous macchia of painterly marks in fact primes the artwork for iconic augmentation in the spectator's imagination, where this eventful fictional world's imaginary figures of bull, cow and calf unfold and come alive in all their brute energy, raw vitality, ungainly power and mythical enchantment." Professor Dirk van den Berg (excerpt from Purgatorium)





**Artist statement • Sire:** In stark contrast to the ancient myth of a nursing she-wolf providing the famished twins – Remus and Romulus – with mother’s milk, this work, entitled Sire, portrays the Afrikaans concept “uitgesuip” (sucked dry). The legs of the young sire is aggressively thrashed outwards, denoting a shared but desperate and conflicting claims to the South African natural landscape. The image of a familiar South African animal is contorted to represent the familiarity of a current South African occurrence. The struggling animal allows for multiple and contradictory allegorical inferences.

**Crevette:** Expressive of a responsive journey of becoming present in, and close to, a site, its people and their lives in dwelling, making, cultivating, feeling, talking, drinking and tasting, “Crevette!” reveals a moment in time spent as an ambassador of the artist-in-residence-programme in Saint-Emilion, France. This artwork relates Pauline Gutter’s sensual narrative in bracketing the rural contexts of Saint-Emilion, different and similar to the Free State landscape where she grew up. Through gentle, sweeping charcoal strokes and forceful lines and markings, “Crevette!” relates Pauline’s corporeal process of grafting recollections and meditations onto new experiences: imaging her embodied self instantaneously here and there.

**Fluffy Structure and the finger of judgement:** The Covid-19 pandemic has many structural changes to the world we are living in. We have become social monkeys, confined to social media, walking virtual gallery spaces, experiencing visceral artworks. This most recent work is a play on drawing, painting and Pauline Gutter’s love for the lithographical medium she encountered during a sojourn in Paris, as part of a residency award. This work was completed at LL Editions and forms part of her upcoming solo exhibition entitled “Regeneration” at the University of Johannesburg Art Gallery.

“Fluffy Structure and the Finger of Judgement” expresses the spatial and emotional relationship between two extreme events we are enduring within the current phase of the Covid-19 pandemic: being subjected to tactile distancing while at the same time being haptic human subjects ourselves. This recent work produced at LL Editions portrays a Rorschach-like creature: potentially inviting experiential association through touch, and equivalently socially constructed to evoke the anxiety of touch. Both reaction may be engraved by the image, and yet the perceptive gap, or even bridges which narrow and dissolve the perceptive gap, reside within the observer’s preconditioned or reconditioned world. Alluding to two judgements concurrent within our present spatial and emotional state, the image simply asks: how do we simultaneously discern physical presence and physical absence? Related to Pauline’s real and virtual framework, the question diverges into questions of reflective simultaneity: Can we judge the subject-type which finds solace in absence of touch in the new normal of social media, virtual spaces and visceral artworks, different or the same as the type of subject which needs attentive closeness to the physical depth, texture and reflection of light from an artwork?





## Liberty Battson

Liberty Battson is a conceptual artist born and raised in Benoni, South Africa. She matriculated from St. Dunstan's College in 2009 and obtained her BA(Fine Arts) with distinction for her work with automotive paint on canvas in 2013 from the University of Pretoria.

Battson has most notably won the 2014 Absa L'Atelier competition, is a 2013 Sasol New Signatures Merit Award winner and a merit award recipient for painting in the 2012 Thami Mnye Fine Arts competition.

Battson was a featured artist at the 2015, 2017 KKNK National Arts Festival (KKNK) and 2016 Clover Aardklop National Arts Festival. Battson featured as part of the Cool Capital initiative at the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale, has

participated in numerous group exhibitions and is solely represented by Everard Read/CIRCA since 2016 where her debuted solo traveled from The Absa Gallery to CIRCA Cape Town.

Battson's artworks are in the Telkom, Sasol, Ellerman House, Absa, University of Pretoria, Nando's Corporate collection (London), Imago Mundi Luciano Benetton collection (Italy) as well as numerous private collections. She participated in a two-month residency in Paris at the Cité Internationale des Arts (2013) awarded by the University of Pretoria and returned for an additional seven months as part of her Absa L'Atelier award in 2015. Battson curated a three-week residency at Mas de Gravieres, Provence, France 2019 awarded by the organization.





**Artist statement** • It is not easy being an artist. The idea of art as a career baffles many and yet, every day, millions of people visit museums, attend music concerts, pour over Instagram and consume art, unquestioningly. Fine art seems to be one of the hardest careers to justify, and abstract art has to be the toughest sell of them all.

Unfortunately, the unfathomable, esoteric quality of abstraction has always provoked and inspired Liberty Battson. Abstraction creates a gap between the viewer and the artist; the artist retreats behind the formalities of colour, texture and line and the viewer is left to decipher what they see. The experience of the viewer when looking at an abstract artwork could be a moment of complete enrapture, it could also be a moment of extreme infuriation. This is the space in which Liberty begins to play.

The arrogance of abstraction, that one can only “get it” if one is smart enough, or educated, is something that Liberty vociferously rallies against. Liberty’s works are easily decipherable, in fact, she has created an entire index of meaning, a dictionary of colours with which a viewer can decipher her striped paintings. Liberty has also used the codified nature of abstraction to hide flippant and acerbic commentary in her

work, written in Morse code which can be deciphered using Google.

Liberty’s work pokes fun at the high-brow intellectualization of art, using its own language against itself by conforming to the Modernist principles of abstraction, colour, and non-traditional materials. Liberty’s earlier work relied on algorithms and data to dictate the overall composition of her artworks. Slowly she has shifted towards aesthetics, rebelling against her own systems and rules established over the years of her practice, asserting her creative freedom over the dictates of the data, and has finally arrived at a body of work in which there is no data at all. There is colour.

In letting go of the formal qualities that typified her practice, Liberty has created a body of work that is a pure expression of freedom. There is no code, there is no index, there is no caveat. There is colour and there is line and that is okay.

(Complements of Everard Read- Grace O’Malley)





## Nourhan Maayouf

Nourhan Maayouf is an Egyptian visual artist, her work is mostly autobiographical, representing her generation of middle-class Egyptian females under socio-political influences. In the form of self-portraits, performances, and installations, she explores issues of gender and home, covering topics such as displacement, dreams for independence and contemporary relationship issues.

Maayouf has participated in many local and international group exhibitions such as Addis Foto Festival in 2018 and Cairo Video Festival in 2019. As well as winning local and regional awards, most prominently is Absa L'Atelier award in South Africa, topping one hundred African artists in contemporary art in 2016. She is currently studying Arts in Public Spheres MA program in EDHEA (école de design et haute école d'art du Valais), in Switzerland.

**Artist statement** • An online interactive performance, calling young emerging female visual artists in quarantine from around the world to join for an hour video call to squeeze lemons and

chat. Discussions have been opened about how artists spend their time during quarantine, how they see the future of art during the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak and for how long they think the situation shall last. Participating artists are from Egypt, Lebanon, Iran, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

The online performance calls for solidarity and connection despite isolation; this is due to the shape of relationships having changed since the spread of Covid19 virus. Governments have called people to stay home, to limit the spread of the virus, as well as maintaining social distance even with close ones. Thus, our relationship with our family and friends have become digitized in the form of video calls.

The performance questions the effectiveness and the limit of online relationships. For example, to what extent can online video calls replace real life meetings? And how effective is bonding with people that we meet online for the first time?





## Maral Bolouri

Maral Bolouri was born in Tehran, Iran. Bolouri is a multidisciplinary artist based in Paris, France.

As a gender non-conforming person, their work previously reflected their experience as a marginalised subject in post-revolution Iran.

From 2009-2011 they lived in Malaysia to pursue a master's program which guided their practice towards a research-based pursuit.

They moved to Kenya in 2012. Living in Nairobi introduced colonial and post-colonial realities to their practice with a focus on human rights and representation of women in African oral traditions.

Since 2018 they are based in Paris, France where they currently explore gender and identity and the influences of identity politics on one's practice in the art world and beyond.

Their works can be found in several collections including world bank Washington and Absa's permanent collection in South Africa. They are the overall winner of Absa L'atelier competition 2017.

**Artist statement** • Un-mothering is an ongoing project that explores family history, female lineage, and separation. It questions the patriarchal expectations of women as mothers and nurturers that influences their rights to their own bodies and desires.

Inspired by the French philosopher, Anne Dufourmantelle's work and the artists own psychotherapy (focused on the mother-child relationship), Maral uses found photos that are reminiscent of her family archive lost during the Iranian revolution and the subsequent war. Maral draws on her family narratives, and the vernacular language that emerges through talk therapy to give a second life to the photos by writing one key phrase repeatedly on the photographed subjects. The phrases are written in her mother tongue, Farsi. The repetition evokes what Dufourmantelle refers to as an oath or a spell, unconsciously given to the child by the mother.

Maral emphasizes the power of the spoken word in an attempt to reimagine this bond and break the old patterns. The subjects in the photographs carry the texts like a vessel. Through this practice, Maral seeks to recreate a family archive aimed at healing, in commemoration and recognition of all living female bodies and those that came before her.





## Nkhensani Rihlampfu

South African based multidisciplinary artist, Nkhensani Rihlampfu, was born and raised in the country's northern province of Limpopo. He studied fine arts at the Tshwane University of Technology in Pretoria and obtained a B-Tech in Fine Arts.

Over the past few years Nkhensani has been involved in numerous art programmes. Amongst the many commissioned works that he has done is a unique sculpture created from shredded South African notes for the South African Reserve Bank, as well as a painting for Constitutional Hill, which is the seat of South Africa's apex Constitutional Court.

Nkhensani's works have been featured in several group and curated exhibitions in the Absa Gallery, Grahamstown Arts Festival, and Pretoria Art Museum, to name a few. His works have been acquired by many prominent corporate and private art collections, and Nkhensani continuously grows his reputation within the industry through these partnerships.

Nkhensani has worked at Workhorse Bronze Foundry, where they were involved in casting multiple artist's sculptures including William Kentridge's bronze pieces. In addition to this Nkhensani has also worked with other prominent South African artists such as Nelson Makamo, Nandipha Mntambo, and Louis Olivier.

In 2019, Nkhensani presented his first solo exhibition where he transported the exhibitiongoer through a margin of breadth between the world we perceive and the truth that remains unseen. Furthermore, RMB Turbine Art Fair honoured Nkhensani with the

Feature Artist exhibit at the 2019 fair, and he won the prestigious Absa L'Atelier 2019 award in Pool A.

**Artist statement •** Nkhensani Rihlampfu introduces us to his universe of woven realities; a space in which actuality is entwined with the idealistic and notional ideas birthed by our society. Nkhensani aims to expose the manipulation of communication through the gesture and assumption. By interaction with Nkhensani's fantastical figures we are immersed in a reality founded on our perception of the world. The figures coax us to the belief of movement and mass, where the is none. We "feel" the pressure and the weight of non-existent objects. The work exists in the overlapping margin between truth and ideology; it is in this space that we discover our identity and acknowledge the importance of communication. We are pressed with familiar structures and recognisable characteristics, but never definitive facts. This orchestration by Nkhensani encourages us to search for a new path to develop sturdy foundations for our communal evolution.





## Raji Bamidele

Born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria, Bamidele Raji, made a name for himself in the art industry through his unique artworks.

As a contemporary artist who merges Hyperrealism with figurative and conceptual creations, 'Afro-Contemporealism' is his unique style that he is known for.

Proudly Yoruba, an ethnic group that inhabits western Africa, Raji incorporates the traditional representation of his heritage by means of symbols that take the viewer back to the roots, either in contemporary times or centuries ago.

Nevertheless, Raji answers the global call that transcends his tribe, but skillfully brings it back home as he takes ownership of each piece and its elucidation. You would assume that this is the zenith, then comes the interplay of natural laws, mathematical and scientific principles, giving an exposé into his person.

The multi-disciplinary approach to his work, which weaves differing materials and methods belonging both to contemporary and modern art forms, calling into question the existence of time and being.

By creating an increasingly dark panels embedded with charred coal layers, sometimes in the form of symbols and intricate patterns, Raji regards these canvases to be the essence which provokes a philosophical commentary through material.

Raji is largely concerned with the contrast in texture, lighting, as well as with details, and creates individual pieces depicting a portion of his plane.

**Artist statement** • Both political and personal, critical and introspective, the work of Ndikhumbule Ngqinambi engages with social contexts and histories in subtle and unusual ways. His paintings seem to always be in motion, the figures captured within them always moving, departed but not yet arrived, running and tumbling in a vast no man's land between past and present, dream and reality. As noted by Fay Jackson of Art South Africa, "Ngqinambi successfully makes political comment without propaganda, and conjures spectacle without being histrionic" drawing upon the traditions of both 19th century European Romanticism and 20th century Soviet art to create a style entirely his own, one that resists easy categorization. ` His love of theatre and film is apparent in the strong sense of narrative evident in his paintings, and the dramatas incurred by his sweeping, broiling skies, fevered brushstrokes and striking use of colour.





## Winifrid Luena

Introducing Winifrid Luena, a Tanzanian visual artist, working across various mediums including photography, video art, digital design and illustration.

Based in Dar Es Salaam, Winifrid has been involved in various exhibitions across Tanzania and abroad, since 2016.

He has won numerous awards for his artworks, including the Absa L'Atelier award in 2019. Winifrid is particularly interested in the psychological and sociological application of art and uses art to explore different themes related to individuality, identity, and history.

**Artist statement •** Metamorphosis is about internal conflict. Internal conflict is a paradox. The reality of conflict cannot be contained except in the mind or body of something undergoing change. The circumstances or choices that push us to reach for something are also those that cause us to feel and witness the conflicts we hold inside. Call them desires, emotions, hopes, fears: the process of change cause all of these to exist in conflict. Yet inside there is a coherent truth and logic. There is a piece of true self growing larger and more complete with everything we go through. Change in progress is both a journey and state. Objects move blindly through one or the other. We are not objects. We hold both. Uncertainty is how we learn to see.



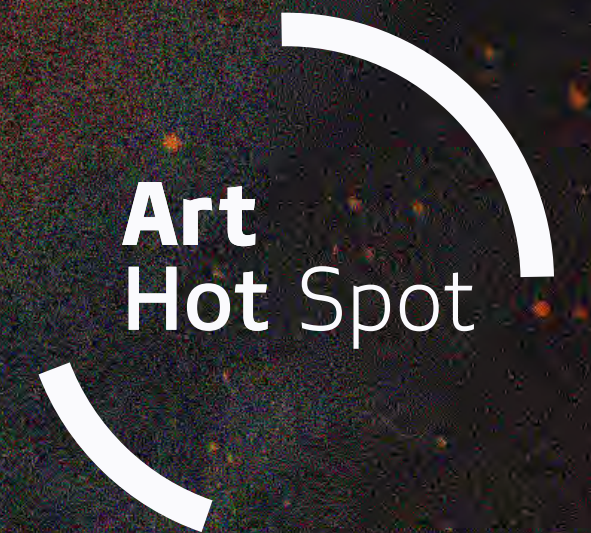
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Thank *you*

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