



# ROOTS

Vol. 1 Issue. 1

**ST(ART).**

I will become the Kree Grow / I will pay for the Kree Grow's past

I will only live with the Kree Grow

I will not trade the Kree Grow / I will turn in my pith helmet

I will invite the Kree Grow to dinner / I will not grow fat from consuming  
Kree Grow's anymore

I will love the Kree Grow

I will not fuck over the Kree Grow

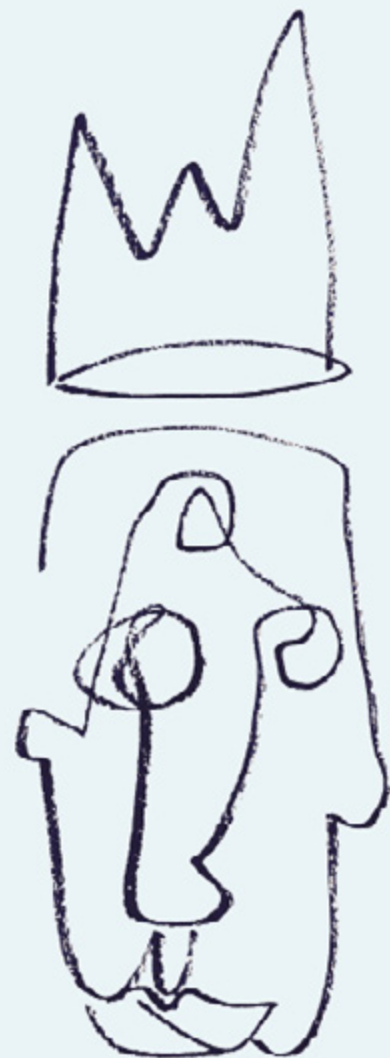
I will not imagine the Kree Grow fucking me

I will not take the Kree Grow woman home to my mother and  
make love to her / it on the kitchen table during dinner

I will not deny the Kree Grow in me

I will not tell Kree Grow's to go back to Kentifia or wherever the  
hell they come from

YOUR WHITE  
WALLS LOOK  
UGLY  
WITHOUT MY  
ART.



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We all require stimulation, authentication and affirmation. We gain these through various avenues, one of those being our engagement with art. However, this engagement has become obscured not only by our constantly busy lives but also by the art itself. We are increasingly bombarded with art that has lost its authenticity. Art that has become over-commercialized and relies heavily on contemporary trends, sadly which have now become solely consumeristic.

*Roots* attempts to move away from this current trend of consumeristic engagement by providing an avenue whereby you as the reader, can seek stimulation without being hampered by advertising and intellectually draining sales attempts. *Roots* provides a space for young artists to express themselves through explications of their work in an easy to engage with magazine.

Don't fight it, enjoy it. Be stimulated, be as Misheck Masamvu asks' still, our problems won't disappear, just root them for the moment.



**Already Grown:  
Simphiwe Ndzube's  
Inception.**

To Dream Without Land to Plough: Simphiwe Ndzube



## OPENING:



Inevitable Journey to Mars II: Simphiwe Ndzube

**WHATIFTHEWORLD** sits unassumingly out of place on the neglected Argyle street in Woodstock, Cape Town. One would not expect to find one of Cape Town's more prominent and auspicious art galleries in such a grubby and unkempt part of town.

**S**imphiwe Ndzube, the newly established Capetonian artist, grew up in Masiphumelele, a township situated between the picturesque and affluent seaside towns of Kommetjie, Noorhoek and Capri village. Originally titled "Site 5", the township dealt with the overflow of people from Khayalitsha and Langa which were formed as a result of the group Areas Act of 1950. "Site 5" was eventually renamed Masiphumelele by its residents which translates into 'We will succeed', which is exactly what Ndzube has done. Ndzube graduated from Michaelis with a BA in fine arts, majoring in sculpture, where he received the Simon Gerson Prize

as well as the Michaelis Prize.

To date *Becoming* is undoubtedly a showing of Ndzube at his finest, a true coming of age where Ndzube has slowly but surely acclimatized, cultivated and established himself as an efficacious artist in Cape Town. Ndzube's art is exemplified by his use of an eclectic mixture of artistic techniques and diverse materials. *Becoming* features a multiplicity of different artworks ranging from sculptures, to installations, to mixed media paintings and prints which all carry inherent messages of growth through experience and "becoming" something more than before.

Ndzube's prints and canvases are both two and three dimensional manifestations which dis-

play a multitude of artistic style and talent. He works intricately to sew tatty discarded neckties from a lost time in South Africa's history into painted canvas. He paints over perspex covered prints which have been collaged with different patterned and colored duct tape, creating a complex multi-layered effect. This vast complexity finds a comfortable seat at the table of South African society in general, where stark parallels can be drawn through the intricate and somewhat precarious political situation of the country in both the past and the present, even more so now with the current student uprisings across the country.

Ndzube's sculptures and installations also carry a similar narrative. These grotesque

figures attempt to maneuver the precarious landscape uncomfortably, trying to fit into their previous masters discarded garments. Some are too big, some too small, again highlighting their current dilemma, actively attempting to transform so as to fit into society. Only now do they feel like they are escaping from their previous restraints and becoming a part of a society in which they were previously disregarded.

Ndzube has always insisted that his work should be comprehensible, applicable and accessible to people that are from communities like his own. The domestic worker, the gardener, the security guard, the people who have dreams of their own, yet they have constantly been restrained by the ties that bind them. These very people were in their droves attending WHATIFTHEWORLD, including friends and family of Ndzube rubbing shoulders with artcollectors and gallery curators, effectively bringing them together in a safe space in the appreciation of one person's artistic creations. Ndzube has successfully elevated himself, not only from an artistic student to an artist, but to someone who uses his talents to bring people together and to break those ties and to allow for a space for all to become.

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“A true coming of age where Ndzube has slowly but surely acclimatized, cultivated and established himself as an efficacious artist in Cape Town”

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The Rain Prayers: Simphiwe Ndzube

# The Skinniest 'G'



**Dreaming Big in  
the Bigger City.**

## PROFILE:

Skinny G's studio lies hidden in a distinctively tall and ramshackle yet characterful building which seems out of place on the fitting Hope street in Cape Town. She shares a massive warehouse-like space with over ten different creatives, from leather craftsmen to jewelers to photographers. The atmosphere is abuzz with a diverse energy which is almost tangible. The space is littered with working artists creating an amalgamation of pleasantly alluring sounds which resonate deeply within each individual, establishing a space conducive to creative productivity.



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“I’ve had to changed my mindset from ‘produce merely to pass’ to ‘produce to live’ which has not been easy”

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Nicole McComb bounces enthusiastically around her studio space, showing off her wonderfully eclectic mixed media paintings. She is as her pseudonym suggests, skinny, but one can only speculate as to how the ‘G’ fits in. Her space can only be described as systematically controlled chaos. Her desk is besieged with a number of paintings, old and new, ideas spilling frantically onto the floor. Empty tubes of paint lie discarded on the floor, the space is entirely befitting of the gangly youth with a shock of blonde curly hair that embraces her self-inflicted structured anarchy.

Skinny G graduated from Stellenbosch University with a BA in fine art at the end of 2015. She admits that moving from Stellenbosch to Cape Town was a massive adjustment, “I felt like I was the king of the world, but when I moved to the big city I quickly realized that no one gives a shit about you”. Only recently has she managed to adjust to the Cape Town lifestyle and learn its trends, art-language and fashionable hang-outs.

Skinny G was a successful artist at Stellenbosch University. During the 2015 graduating classes’ GradX show she received the Muratie resi-

dency prize which entitles her to a one-month residency in October on the Muratie wine farm after which she will feature in a two-week exhibition. She sees this as an exciting opportunity to begin establishing her name and identity as ‘Skinny G’. “Artists are very worried about their image and their brand, but there is a fine line between art as a profession, art as a brand, art as a commodity and art as an identity”.

Skinny G’s somewhat structured yet chaotic demeanor lends it-self to her artistic mindset: “You can’t be too professional, be organized, but don’t look like you don’t need help”. Skinny G has to be moving all the time, she is comfortable with making mistakes as she believes those mistakes breed better work and better ideas. Ultimately she believes that “art is like dating, you have to pretend that you don’t care, but have to be available all the time”.

Skinny G focuses a lot of her visual work on the fact that she is a complete optimist and idealist, as a painter she does view her practice as somewhat archaic and “old-school” but she accepts the challenges that come with the territory. One of those challenges is the fact that painting is not very interactive. People want to experience emotion, and at times painting does not allow

for that added emotional experience, whereas short films and installations may provide that.

Skinny G believes that within modern society we are constantly bombarded with images, so much so that our processing of emotions has become distorted. Through her process of layering of images, using collage and painting, she attempts to take another look at previously disregarded images so as to further engage with them. “I want to reflect what is happening in visual society, I think we talk too much about art, too much conceptual nonsense”. By removing herself from a process which is based on perfectionism and realism, she is instead focusing on making art that breaks down those barriers of perfectionism and creating a process, where mistakes are accepted and appreciated. “Currently the thought process of normality has become nuanced and disregarded, but my thought process has focused more on my artistic process and has changed from ‘produce merely to pass’ to ‘produce to live’ which has not been easy”.

Skinny G plays around with the juxtaposition of solemn images with lighthearted, jockey and less-serious images so as to critique as well as criticize the fact that society has indeed become desensitized to topical



The Gentlemen game - Mixed media, acrylic on paper: Nicole McComb



A day at the baths - Mixed media, acrylic on paper: Nicole McComb



Skinny G poses with her latest series of portraits - Oil on canvas.

issues, while at the same time trying to remain aesthetically pleasing. “I’m nervous to be a young white south African artist, what do I really have to say? But I do believe that art can push through those boundaries. I don’t think my art is visually shocking enough to change the world, but I believe in it enough to keep making it”. Self-belief is an attitude which is essential to creating

a niche market, especially with the type of chaotically eclectic work that Skinny G produces. Skinny G has come into her own in Cape Town and has shown in a couple of group shows. Her unique, unruly but calculated artistic style both critiques and lampoons society’s increasingly brutish mentality based around the over-consumption of images and its subsequent

desensitization. “To survive is very easy, if you want to be successful, and if you want to be glam, then that is where the stress is, if you want to do that too much, then you won’t be successful”. Skinny G remains diligent, she understands that success won’t come over night, but if she keeps pushing the boundaries and keeps producing work of a high quality then eventually it will happen.

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“Art is like dating, you have to pretend that you don’t care, but have to be available all the time”



“You can’t be too professional, be organized, but don’t look like you don’t need help”



# FIRST THURSDAYS: A FARCICAL FALLACY

**First Thursdays has become a household name amongst well-off housewives, young professionals and snobby students in Cape Town and Johannesburg. What started as a minor cultural experiment has grown into an extremely successful and excessively profitable cultural mockery and more of a social escapade.**

**2**012, the Year of the Dragon, was when this beast of an evening was first envisioned and later in that year created. Initially, the idea was to keep art galleries open for an extended period of time so as to accommodate those who worked during the day so as to allow for a cultural experience outside of working hours, allowing the opportunity for people to explore the various nooks and crannies of the city center. This was majorly successful and inspired a cultural awakening for those who were exposed to the event. As it gained popularity First Thursdays grew from keeping open a meagre 6 galleries to getting restaurants, nightclubs

and shops involved with the evening. This, arguably, is when First Thursdays became the grotesque monstrous creature that it is today.

First Thursdays is by no means a cultural failure. Perhaps, amongst the hordes of trendily pretentious people who attend the evening, its purpose has become slightly lost. However, the art has not. It is an anchor amidst a sea of alcohol induced behavior and dialogue slurred from

pompous elites who pretend to appreciate its importance. There are, however, a few connoisseurs, mainly from the older generation, who attend the evening for artistic reasons and find delight in it.

Church Street, which runs opposite to Long, Loop and Bree streets, is one of the focal points for First Thursdays as it is home to a number of galleries which are open on the evening. The Cape Gallery, which is



The Sacrifice (and detail) - Mixed media, Jill Joubert



nestled comfortably in between Georgian and Dutch facades, houses a wide array of South African art produced by a number of South African artists. The petite gallery is overflowing with pieces of art, so much so that there is little room for one to move freely through the gallery. This excruciatingly tiny artistic space, which is severely overfilled, very quickly becomes brutally overpopulated with art-goers who are all trying to look the part, pay attention to, and make sense of the excessive amount of art that has been forced upon them. This unique combination, which is quite prevalent on First Thursdays, makes for a rather unpleasant viewing experience which ultimately detracts from the cultural attraction of the evening as well as from the gallery.

The Association for Visual Arts or the AVA Gallery as it is more commonly known is found directly opposite the Cape Gallery and is a much bigger space. It is quite delightfully not filled to the brim with art. This bigger, more accessible space makes a world of difference, and one does not feel judged for taking their

time when examining and engaging with the various art works. Its collection included works such as *Kapital* by Mark Wilby and *Kings on Paper* by Audrey Anderson, Isaac Zavale and Yael Feldman which featured a captivating wall decal as well as an enticing installation piece which places you, as the critic, as the main focal point. AVA ran a number of shows concurrently, this allowed for a certain range in palette which led to the amalgamation of an assortment of art-lovers and art-goers.

99 on Loop, which is on the corner of Loop and Church, is as irritating and uninspiring as the Cape Gallery. The small gallery is vastly overpopulated, however during the evening I visited there was a live show on for part of the evening. The show was done by artist Anastasia Pather entitled *Meeting You*. It was in essence trying to capture the meeting of the Johannesburg based artist and the city of Cape Town: "the work is a visual exploration into the architecture of memory and the politics of association". However, it didn't last long, and of course was almost impossible to watch due to

the throngs of people shoved into the 10 by 6-meter shoe-box sized space. What made it even worse was the fact that Bos, the relatively well known ice tea brand, was a sponsor for the event, so for the duration of the evening they were handing out free ice tea. The ice tea was tasty, but some of the people who entered the gallery did it merely to get a free ice tea this unfortunately detracted from the live show and the attractiveness of the gallery as an artistic space.

The Smith Gallery was the last stop on what had become an increasingly irritating evening, but hopefully the best was saved for last. Smith had quite ingeniously employed the services of a doorman, who controlled the amount of people who entered. Smith was running a single show by Jill Joubert entitled: *The Invasion by Stately Queens Come to Rescue Princesses Trapped in Four Impenetrable Towers*, which was a series of sculptures made of wood combined with an eclectic mix of found objects. The work at Smith was some of the best on offer for the evening as it intricately flirted with a coexistence folktales and a

lived experience, something that the artist Jill Joubert strives for. "A guiding principle in my work has been the possibility of a non-hierarchical coexistence between all sentient beings. Many of the sculptures freely amalgamate human, animal and plant forms suggesting the very nature of folk tales themselves. Likewise, san/bushman stories talk of a primal time when there was no separation between humans and animals. It was then that people were animals and animals were people, which my work also celebrates." It is easy to see this in her work as often the fine line between animalistic and human behavior is

blurred through the inter-relatedness and inter-reliability on one another in the sculptures as the wood is reliant on the found object to form a whole, just like humans are reliant on animals, for sustenance, and companionship, highlighting the fragile relationship between animals and humans.

First Thursdays is an attractive and popular concept which has been successful in both the mother city as well as Johannesburg. However, it has become vastly removed from what it was originally envisioned to be. Some would argue that this is not the worst thing to happen, socially it is an excellent opportunity to

get out of the house and meet up with friends and have some dinner while engaging with art. It is successful in getting vast numbers into galleries which at times hardly have any visitors, and in so doing providing a cultural experience. But some argue that it has become unpleasant, over-crowded and over-hyped. The trick is the management of the evening. Perhaps galleries should employ doormen to control numbers. Ultimately the evening has become a cultural farce, a living fallacy, fueled by cultural misconceptions and social arrogance solely based on the irreverence and behavior of some of the patrons of the evening.





No Reluctance - Live performance, Anastasia Pather.

# Behind the Lens.

**C**hristopher James Chandler or “CJ” sits at the kitchen table at his home in Grahamstown, quietly composed, eyeing me skeptically. He sips leisurely at his crisp bitterly cold Hansa pilsner, his stern and professional manner instilling within me a sense of uncertainty and discomfort. Eventually the silence is broken and he begins to speak. He informs me about his sometimes complex student life, balancing work and studies. How his 5 years at the University of Cape Town, his family, lecturers and friends have molded him into the well-practiced and skillful photographer that he is today. I decided to delve further into his love for photography and his subsequent career choice:

**Why did you chose photography as a subject of study and ultimately a profession?**

Photography seemed like it would lead to some kind of job security. If all else failed I could always photograph weddings.

**What drove you to select that art form above others?**

I am interested in the process of photography and I draw from photographic theory in my work. That said, my work isn't strictly photographic. Photographers have the ability to separate their personal work from commercial work. Pieter Hugo shoots fashion and other commercial work but keeps his artistic practice separate. I think that making commercial work as a photographer means that you end up visualizing someone else's idea but when making your own work you have complete control over the process, mostly.



CJ Chandler fires a Baby brownning .25mm

**Who was your main influence before choosing to study photography?**

Before Michaelis (UCT school of fine art) I was influenced by Peter Beard and Obie Oberholzer mainly through their documentary photography. To date though I have had numerous influences but Adam Broomberg and Oliver Chanarin have been integral to my practice.

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”Photographers have the ability to separate their personal work from commercial work”

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**When comparing photography to other forms of art, do you think that photography is potentially easier to be successful in?**

No.

**Do you think you will be successful in South Africa?**

Probably not in South Africa.

**Why not in South Africa?**

Photographs don't sell here. The market seems to be focused on painting, installation and video at the moment. The market for photographs seems to be in New York, and I think it will take some time before I show there.

**How much of photography is raw talent and how much is technical know-how?**

It's really all about being visual. Most artists can make a good photograph. In fact, anyone can make a good photograph. The technical side used to be very important but with the advances in technology high quality pictures can be made using camera phones. That said, knowing the processes can influence the outcome. So, the question is really what it means to be visual and how the artist wants to visualize their work.

**Other than studying photography do you often do other work as a photographer?**

Not often, some 21sts here and there.

**How much of that work has been exhibited?**

None, I hope.

**What work are you currently working on?**

Some secret work.

**Why that body of work? Why is it relevant now?**

It's a secret.

**What influenced you mainly?**

The idea of patriarchy and family in contemporary South Africa. How the Apartheid government influenced the way masculine relationships are formed. The passing down of moral ideas from father to son – that secret stuff.

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He dabbles in the idea of rarity hence why he refuses to elicit any information with regards to his latest work. He did show some work at the Michaelis Silent Auction and it was sold to a French collector for R5000, a minor but significant achievement for the young artist. I notice, by looking at some of his work, that he toys with the idea of repetition. A portraiture series captures this in its essence, it places three young men enveloped in tradition and institutional ritual together with only slight alterations in their clothing separating them. Under the Apartheid government these young white men would have been conscripted into the armed forces and sent off to then Rhodesia or Angola to defend their country. By featuring these portraits alongside his other “secret” work, essentially he asks pertinent questions as to whether or not there is still a place in South Africa for such traditions, and how much emphasis or over-emphasis is being placed on patriarchy and masculine relationships.

These are issues that worry him especially with the growing unrest in the country and in its higher learning institutions. But for now, he remains motivated, slowly sipping away at his Hansa, ruminating solemnly about what the remaining year holds in store for him.





Grey High School Cadets, Port Elizabeth, 2016. Art and Photo: CJ Chandler







Silence is  
**GOLDEN.**



There is a certain unheard of beauty in silence, something that is disregarded and overlooked on a daily basis. A golden silence, illuminating our time away from the chaos and anarchy of the brash, vulgar lives we live, where busyness, anxiety and discontent are the order of the day.

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**O**n the first Thursday of August, I visited the Eclectica contemporary gallery, an “African gallery with an international vision” which celebrates diversity and a complexity of art making on the African continent. It is here, at number 69 Burg street that I stumbled upon a silent auction held by the 2016 graduating students of the Michaelis School of Fine Arts, which highlighted that diversity.

Each and every year the graduating class at Michaelis organizes a fundraising event whereby the graduating students approach other students and the broader public alike to donate artwork to be sold at auction to raise funds for their graduation show. The class of 2016 aimed to raise R40 000. On the night, however, they managed to shatter that goal and reach roughly R85 000 which will all go towards the running of the grad show, come early 2017.

The silent auction is an interesting concept, through my investigation of the artwork and the gallery I noticed that each artwork, ranging from prints and photographs to sculptures, had a piece of paper next to them with a

reserve price, a bidding space and a buyout price. Therefore, bidders had an option to either bid above the reserve price, or, if they really wanted the artwork, they could “buyout” their competitors at the buyout price. There was no need for boisterous shouting or infuriating time consuming intervals for that one artwork to come on show. When asking some of the students how they felt about the success of the evening, one student said that if it was held separately to the event “First Thursdays” the auction may have been a bit more successful, with people more interested in buying and less interested in just looking at the artworks. Another student stated, however, that due to the amalgamation of diverse artworks the show lacked a unitary theme which may have caused buyers to be hesitant.

I was amazed at the plethora of high quality artworks available at the auction which were donated by some established artists like Michaelis alumni Berni Searle, who has showed her artwork on a global scale, Julia Rosa-Clarke who is represented by Whatiftheworld and Ed Young, who once donated a piece to the very same auction a number of years ago which was sold for R52 000. Other notable names were

Georgina Gratrix, Jane Alexander, who now lectures at Michaelis and Mitchell Gilbert Messina. Jessica-Anne Holdengarde, a graduating student of the class of 2016 stated that the beauty of a silent auction is that you never know what is going to sell or not. It is easier to sell at a silent auction because it is easier to buy. People and artists by nature are very private and often scared of speaking up, so a silent auction would appeal to that alluring thought of privacy.

Out of the 70 odd students in the graduating class only 10 of them donated work. Of the students who did not donate one stated that he wanted to be “rare”. As Holdengarde puts it “you donate for your own persona and fulfillment, you donate work that you are okay to let go of, because ultimately it will be shown with a weird but famous assortment of people who are all affiliated with Michaelis in some way”. However, she added that at the end of the day you can frame the work in any way that you want. But if you don’t show your work, you will never know if it is “a thing” or not. She also commented on the amazing support that the students received from the Michaelis alumni saying how special and appreciated it was.

Ultimately, if you look at



"Wish you were here 2" - Mixed media on paper: Tiago Rodrigues

タクシーグループ



This is my house.  
You're not wanted here.



"what you were left 4"

2009



the numbers the silent auction was a major success in terms of profit made by the graduating students. But the show was much bigger than that. It wasn't only about commercializing the students' work and selling it for the biggest profit margin. It was, as Holdengarde put it, about "building your self-esteem, creating a persona and exposing yourself to the Cape Town art scene, hanging your work with some of Cape Town's best". It was also a triumph for taciturnity, allowing for people to quietly engage with the artists' work, and if they felt like it, silently scribble their name, amount and payment method on a piece of paper, purchasing a whisper of that golden silence.

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“The beauty of a silent auction is that you never know what is going to sell or not”

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Buyers rights, Eclectica Moder, 2016. Photo: Alex Oelofse

# Performing for Free: Performing for Me

Andi Colombo performs "To the Bone"



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Andrea Colombo moves gracefully across the Bindery Lab stage at Michaelis, enveloped in her mesmerizing choreography work. She removes articles of wet clothing, disconnecting and unearthing the memories of younger days inhabiting such garments. She deserts them, saturated in experience, in a disheveled heap around an old plastic washtub, her memories now disrobed and unmasked for all to view.

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**A**ndrea, or Andi, as she is more commonly known, sits timidly, toying with her slice of cheesecake waiting to steal a nibble. Andi is a 21-year-old student at the University of Cape Town where she studies theatre-making. Andi has always wanted to perform; her earliest memory of acting was when she was 5 years old. She loved being on stage, as she thought live performance was unique in the way that the “human to human reaction transcends normal interaction, there is a deeper connection, it’s electric”.

Settling into drama school for Andi was not the easiest process. She describes herself as quite an introverted, stubborn and proud person. “The setting was intimidating for me, every-

one was extremely extroverted and I was particularly timid, but I got to know people on a very intimate level very quickly”. Her stubbornness sometimes hindered her, especially when working in groups. “I am either exceedingly outspoken or quiet, but I am slowly finding that happy median”. She confesses that group work is vital and learning to accept criticism is important to you succeeding and becoming a successful artist as there is always room for improvement. “In theatre, there is no room working exclusively solo, one cannot work in a vacuum as your work will lack relevance. The magic for me lies in the clashing and the collaborations of different artists within a space”. Andi places a strong focus on surrounding herself with people who are constantly chal-

lenging and pushing her so that she can further better herself, “It’s an emotional practice, but one in which you have to submerge yourself in entirely. The process is key”.

One such process took place last year, which ultimately awakened Andi’s love for performance art. Professor Erika Fischer-Lichte describes performance art as a shift away from texts and shrines to focus on image production and action, and the production of a “kind of cultural memory”. Andi builds on Fischer-Lichte’s description by adding that “Performance art focuses on less character driven work and more being present within a piece”. This is something that performance art helps Andi deal with, focusing on that presence, when in text-based incidents she finds her presence occasionally fleeting.

In 2015 Andi performed a provocative endurance performance art piece labelled “28”, which lasted 3 hours and 10 minutes and dealt with the natural process of menstruation, its uncomfortable connotation in society and the struggle South Africa faces with regards to the contentious topic. Menstruation and sanitary education remains a massive issue in South Africa, with an estimated 3.7 million young females missing school for at least 3 days per month due to the lack of access to sanitary materials and necessary sanitary education. The piece dealt with cycles of 28, similar to an average menstrual cycle, except it was fragmented and split into varying cycles of 28 minutes, 28 seconds, 280 seconds, 2 minutes and 80 seconds and so on, all of which were underscored by a soundtrack. Once a cycle began Andi would fill her mouth with fake blood and then place a tampon in her mouth. Once the cycle had ended she would spit the blood soaked tampon out of her mouth, wash it in disinfectant and then hang it on a washing line. “I wanted to return the gaze. I didn’t want to be a passive art-work, I actually wanted to force people to engage with my work, which must have been terrifying for them, but I feel like it was successful”. Fischer-Lichte describes return-

ing the gaze as an act of audience reception. Essentially, it creates a space for “critical discourse on the culturally conditioned gaze”, whereby returning the gaze allows for it to be dismantled.

Andi admits that the piece was extremely difficult for her, but as a young woman the issue was close to her heart and that is what drove her to finish the endurance piece. Being a “privileged” young female she chose to present this work so as to highlight the dire need South Africa has to effectively address the issue faced by the majority of underprivileged young females who go through menstruation on a monthly basis. By returning the gaze she effectively forced people to engage with the topic which is normally seen as a taboo topic in South Africa.

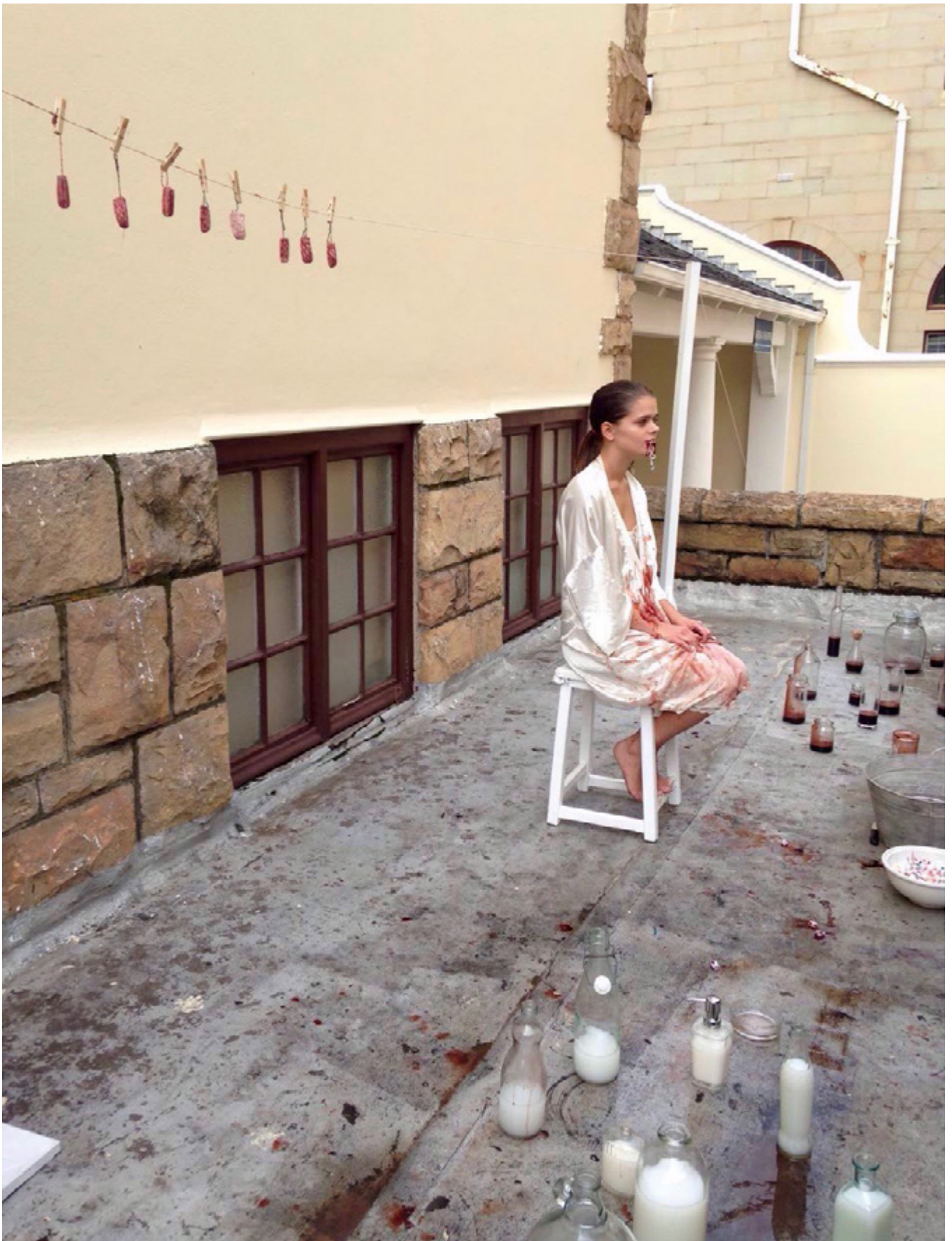
More recently, Andi was contacted by playwright and theatre director, Nicholas Ellenbogen to assist him in two productions over the course of the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown. Prior to the festival, Andi thought she was going to be stage managing the spaces, but about three weeks before, she was asked by Ellenbogen if she could perform in the shows. The one was *Raiders: The Moonrock Musical*, where she both danced and sang to a sold-out auditorium every day. The other performance was

called *Ebola*, which featured the famous South African actress Hilda Cronje, in the lead role. *Ebola* won a Standard Bank ovation award at the National Arts Festival and was extremely successful. “I was so privileged and grateful to be involved in both of the shows, it was an amazing process which was really special for me and an essential rite of passage”.

Despite being thrust into a minor limelight; Andi has an air of modesty about her. She remains exceptionally focused on her studies as she has never missed a lecture, “I have been offered jobs but I have turned down the majority of them due to my varsity commitments”. Andi understands the complexity of the industry, but she firmly believes in Cape Town theatre. “You have to make your work all the time, but also be open to other work all the time”. She believes that the more work you make, then subsequently more work is attracted to you, in the same way that if you are open to opportunities, the more opportunities come your way. However, she understands fully that making one’s own work is tough in terms of funding shows and attracting crowds, but the fulfillment is something she feeds off: “even if your show bombs, you have still made a show”. Andi knows how important it is to be professional and work hard. She stands firm-

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“Human to human reaction transcends normal interaction, there is a deeper connection, it’s electric”



Andi Colombo performs "28". photo: Fiona Macgregor

ly by her statement; “If you don’t want to be in a show for a particular reason, then don’t, you are just doing a disservice to the show”. Andi is also not scared to ask for work, and she will do it for free. She just wants to be exposed to different actors, their intricacies and different tendencies as well as different performance spaces. “If you are committed and passionate, you’re going to do it even

if you’re living in your parents’ house for a long time”, she says.

Andi describes herself as a “theatre-maker in training” where she is “proficient” in lighting, dancing, acting, singing, physical theatre, sometime puppeteering and as a stage manager. She unpretentiously states that she does not see herself as an established artist yet “I embrace the fact that I am still growing, I

am still working towards becoming established, and my body and my voice are the tools that will get me there”. She has undoubtedly developed an immense work-ethic with which she dominates every aspect of her theatre-making degree. This aspect of dominance shows in her work, allowing her to ooze confidence and proving that dynamite does indeed, come in small packages.

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“If you are committed and passionate, you’re going to do it even if you’re living in your parents’ house for a long time”



## OPINION:

# Woodstock Reawaken: Visiting Five of Cape Towns' Favorite Galleries.

**W**oodstock is one of, if not the oldest suburb in Cape Town dating back to the 1800's where it was a small fishing community, housing a vast array of different religions, ethnic groups, traditions and customs. This allowed w suburb to develop a unique tightly knit community with an immensity of cultural profundity. Perhaps this is why some of Cape Towns more prolific art galleries, a type of cultural temple, feel right at home wedged in between deep-rooted, dilapidated, derelict buildings.

Fete Galante 1, Oil on canvas. Deborah Poynton



## 1. Blank Projects:

Blank is a petite gallery which can be found next to the famous Woodstock eatery; The Kitchen. The gallery makes effective use of its limited space through expert curatorship. Despite being a compact artistic space, Blank is made comfortable and is not alienated in the recently gentrified suburb.

Igshaan Adams, a Cape Town local, uses an eclectic mix of materials such as; nylon rope, string, beads and found fabric to produce his artworks. His work engages with his struggles of being a Muslim child growing up in

a Cristian home. It also engages with the challenge he faces of balancing his faith with his sexuality. *Oorskot*, Adams' solo show was on for the month of September and in October for a brief period. The show made use of discarded studio surplus materials which were haphazardly thrown together in the corner of Adams' studio and they eventually lead to the birth of *Oorskot*. *Oorskot* constructs a narrative of acceptance and rebirth, much like South Africa after Apartheid. This narrative is as a result of the unification and

juxtaposition of the many discarded, and now recycled elements, in each artwork showing how items which previously were incongruent are now entirely reliant on one another to form a whole.

Where:

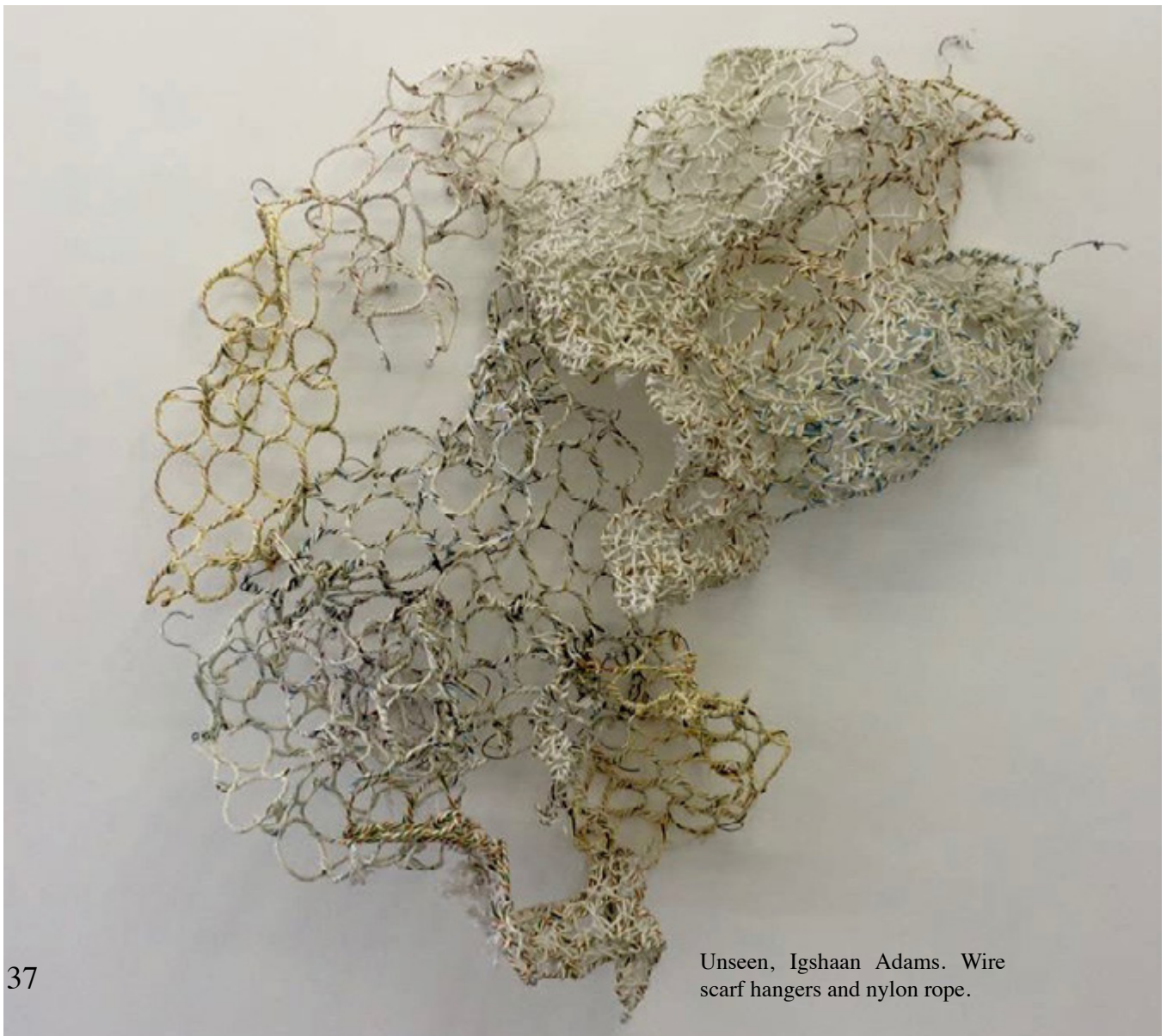
113 - 115 Sir Lowry Road,  
Woodstock.

When:

Tuesday - Friday: 09:00 - 17:00

Saturday: 10:00 - 13:00

And by appointment







Shahada, Igshaan Adams. Woven nylon rope, string and mild steel.



In the woods 1, Oil on canvas. Deborah Poynton

## 2. Stevenson

Stevenson sits just opposite Blank Projects, the gallery hidden only slightly inside the ultra-hip Buchanan building. The gallery opened in 2003 and has artistic spaces in both Cape Town and Johannesburg. The gallery itself is, immense. The enormity of the space lends itself to the work that is shown at Stevenson as it allows artists and their artwork the necessary room for the work to be shown without it being hampered and cramped. The gallery also allows for one to wander freely creating a space which is conducive to effective engagement with the artwork.

Deborah Poynton another Cape Town local presented a number of oil on canvas paintings in a show entitled *picnic* at the

Stevenson gallery. The show ran from the beginning of September until mid-October and dealt with the comparison of painting to picnics and their inherent fantasies of pleasure. Poynton states that “A picnic can be an allegory for a perfect, imaginary place where beauty and pleasure abound. A painting is the same; a self-conscious framework, a way of being contained, while also tasting a bit of freedom”. However, how free is a painting, it is in a sense confined to its boundaries, one cannot paint further than the limits of the canvas. The pleasure that is derived from both the action of painting as well as the engagement with the painting is constructed by the painter as well as the audience, therefore limiting that plea-

sure. Poynton's work carries an air of playfulness, through the combination of meticulously painted items juxtaposed with irreverent, intense strokes that add an aspect of realism to the painted fantasies. Poynton, at times, leaves space on her canvas allowing for the audience to mentally add to her fantasy and in a sense partake in the creation of a joint fantasy, allowing for the audience to essentially escape from the world and some of its harsher realities.

Where:

Buchanan Building  
160 Sir Lowry Road  
Woodstock

When:

Monday - Friday: 09: 00 - 17: 00  
Saturday: 10:00 – 13: 00

### 3. SMAC

SMAC is housed in The Palms, an eccentrically trendy lifestyle center. SMAC facilitates and organizes artist's residencies in Cape Town, as well as exchange programs which provide opportunities for South African and African artists abroad. While doing this SMAC also represents a number of important established and emerging South African artists. SMAC aims to provide a space for artistic discourse as well as becoming a hub for contemporary art in Cape Town. The gallery is decently sized and like Stevenson allows the audience to delve into a plethora of artworks unhindered.

Ed Young, a Michaelis graduate, has been inexhaustible since his break onto the art scene

in the early 2000's. Since then Young, the conceptual artist, has produced a plethora of art works ranging from sculpture to short videos. *Little*, Young's latest artistic work is a 4-minute-long video which has shown at SMAC for a month between September and October. Little carries a narrative of the inner child, that although we may be matured or seem to be matured, inside all of us there is an "inner child". The fight that takes place can be seen as both the fight of the inner child to express itself, as well as the fight between good and evil, red being evil and blue being good. What is interesting is that the two bodies start as separate being unacquainted with each other, they then fight and

then at the end of the video they leave as acquaintances. This comments on the fact that sometimes you have to fight, perhaps not physically, but fight for what you believe in so that you can reach a common ground. This is something that is pertinent to the current students and their various political movements and struggles in South Africa at the moment.

**Where:**

1st floor, The Palms  
145 Sir Lowry road  
Woodstock

**When:**

Monday – Friday: 09:00 – 17:00  
Saturday: 10:00 – 15:00  
And by appointment.



Ed Young: Little



Ed Young: Little



Ed Young: Little



Ed Young: Little



Ed Young: Little



Ed Young: Little



Ed Young: Little



Heavy Weight Champion, Misheck Masamvu.

#### 4. Goodman:

Goodman Gallery is one of the most distinguished and longest-standing international contemporary art galleries. It is housed in the extravagant Fairweather House building, another product of the gentrification of Woodstock. The gallery works with artists who are at once influential and contemporary. It strives to shift perspectives and stimulate social transformation. “Goodman represents artists who have shaped the landscape of contemporary art in southern Africa, while working with already eminent younger artists. Through global dialogue and exchange, Goodman Gallery has placed common histories at its core and has been instrumental in shifting perspectives through contemporary art”. Goodman’s main aim is to shape contemporary art and work with artists who challenge unequal power structures and affect social change.

Misheck Masamvu, a Zimbabwean artist, works tirelessly applying oils to canvas and ink to paper. His show entitled *Still Still*, is a continuation from his show *Still* which was on show at the beginning of the year. The show manifests ideas of repetition and addition, building on previous work so as to create something new and fresh. However, the constant repetition creates an idea of being stuck in a sort of limbo. His work reflects on the fact that Masamvu lives in a failed state where he is constantly reminded that on a daily basis the society in which he lives is corrupt, inefficient and both politically unstable and unchangeable even through legal processes. It is interesting to note the vast differences between his canvas works and his paper works. The canvases are a shock of activity, with every inch of the material covered in oil paint, due to the fact that a lot

of this work has been reworked and remastered. Sometimes these additions hide and remove attention from the theme of the painting. This, however, provides an essential comment on how busy we are on a daily basis. The ink works are less complex and provide a greater focus on the subject matter. All of the ink drawings are entitled *Ending*, Masamvu’s ink works comment on the fact that although we go through life, being shockingly busy as his oils depict at the end of our lives we are effectively alone.

Where:  
3rd Floor, Fairweather House, 176 Sir Lowry Rd, Woodstock.

When:  
Tuesday–Friday: 09:30–17:30  
Saturday: 09:30–16:00,  
Closed Monday.



Ending(s), Misheck Masamvu. Ink on Paper



Ending(s), Misheck Masamvu. Ink on Paper



## 5. WHATIFTHEWORLD

WHATIFTHEWORLD is well hidden in a decommissioned synagogue in Woodstock. “Originally the gallery identified a group of young contemporary Southern African artists whose practice was underpinned by both global and local contemporary art movements. These artists have, to a large degree, gone on to transform the South African art landscape”. The gallery continues to represent these artists and is now beginning to nurture its second generation of young African based artists. WHATIFTHEWORLD maintains that the first generation of artists they have represented, have allowed for the development of the previous generations resistance and conceptual based practice into something

beyond merely protest conceptualism, embracing both materiality and humor by using their social and personal identities.

*Dear Europa* is a group show which was on show at WHATIFTHEWORLD from the end of August until the beginning of October. The group show featured a number of different artists from around the African continent. The work, ranged from sculptures made out of disused toothbrushes to chalk written on a painted chalk board. The immensely interesting body of work all carried the same stimulating theme of questioning the effect and repercussions of colonialism in Africa. The artworks pose important questions, especially considering the current student pro-

tests in South Africa. However, the artworks also raised important questions relating to the issue of majority white capital and land ownership within South Africa and the role of the white male and female within South African society. Essentially, the work allows for pertinent questions to be asked of contemporary post-colonial society. It does this while providing a safe space for people to engage with the artwork.

Where:

1 Argyle Street  
Woodstock 7915

When:

Tues – Fri: 09:30 – 17:00

Sat: 09:30 – 14:00

Or by appointment



These galleries are undoubtedly amongst Cape Town’s finest. They all provide a space for established and emerging artists to show their work so that it can be easily accessed and engaged with. They all strive to produce a space to represent artists that create work which is influential and stimulating and offers a narrative that asks pertinent questions of society and its many difficulties.

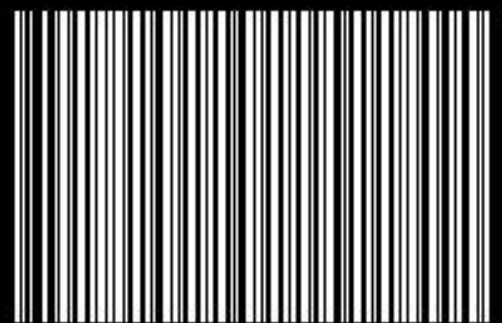


Plastic Smile. Moffat Takadiwa, Mixed media

**STOP.**



November 2016  
RSA: R35.00



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