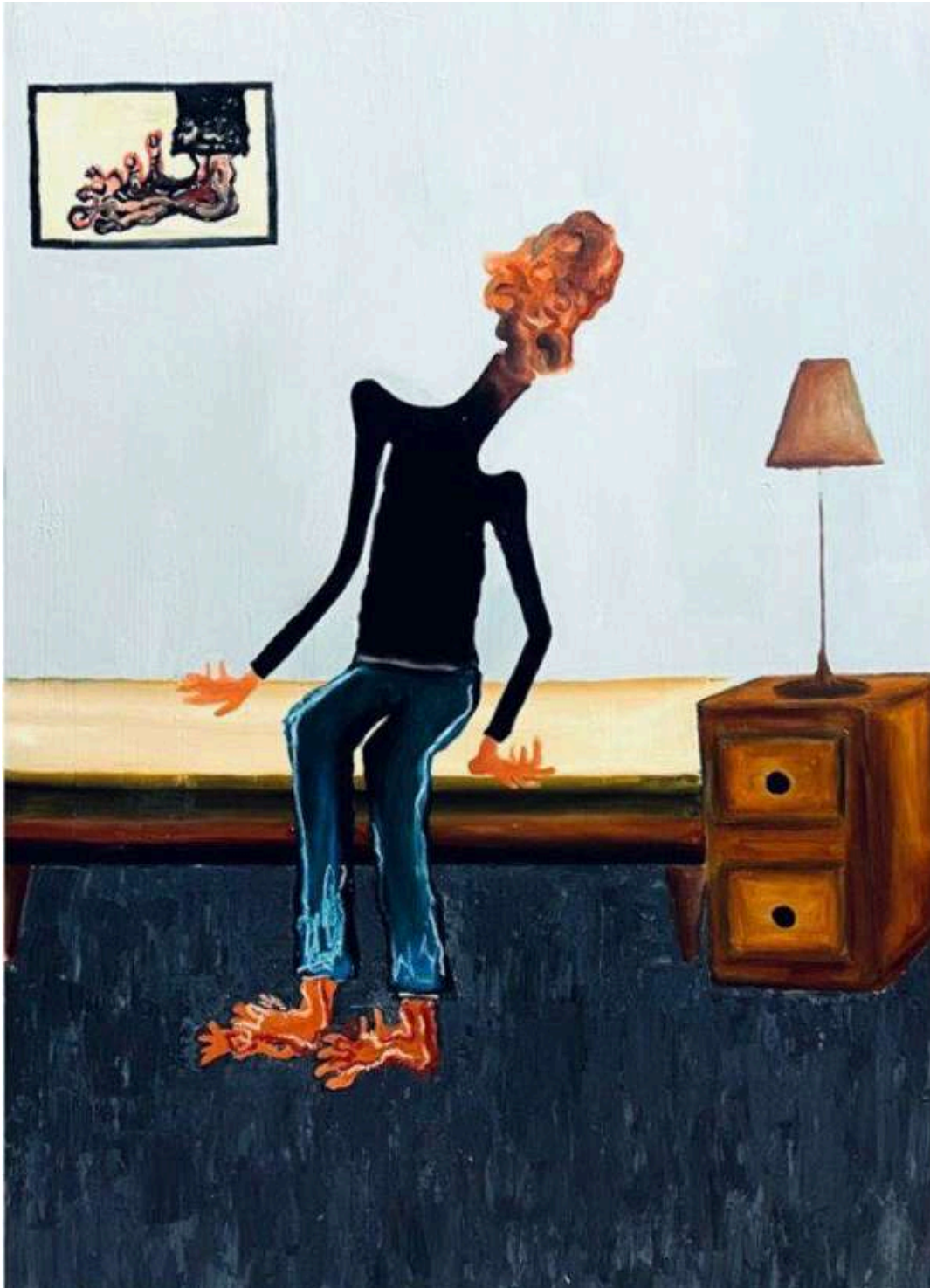


LAKRITZ

THE MAGAZINE

Issue #12 April/May 2026

Picture: Alfred Kitsi, Cape Town, South Africa



A Dialogue in ART

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From the

Editor's Desk:



You want to be an artist.

If that is your decision, you need to understand that it is not just a profession—it is a lifestyle. A choice that comes with uncertainty, resistance, and many unexpected turns. It is, at times, a lonely life. Those outside the art world often don't understand the way artists think, observe, or move through the world. Connection can feel difficult. That is why fellow artists are essential—not for validation, but for exchange. To talk, to argue, to reflect. To be understood without having to explain yourself.

An artist must stay exposed. To all art forms. You have to read books. Visit museums and galleries. Listen to music. Sit with poetry—even when you don't fully understand it. Especially then. How else can you create something meaningful? How else do you learn to read the world around you? How else do you develop the depth required to make work that is real?

The market, however, has shifted. It is often no longer about the art itself, but about money, visibility, and fitting in. Not only must the work fit expectations—the artist must too. Living in the right city. Moving in the right circles. Being seen with the right people. It goes so far that artists begin to create what they believe the market wants, mistaking trends for relevance.

But art must remain a real thing—perhaps the only real thing left.

Authentic. Imperfect. Honest.

Art should reflect reality, emotion, tension. It should form opinions, not chase approval. It should not aim for likes, emojis, or instant affirmation. Art should slow us down. It should invite pause. Reflection. Discomfort, even.

That kind of encounter does not happen on social media.

Not while scrolling at warp speed.

And that is precisely why spaces for real dialogue, real looking, and real thinking matter more than ever.

Claudine Hauke

Editor, Lakritz – The Magazine | Founder, Lakritz cONTEMPORARY aRT gALLERY

432 PENGUIN PLACE CHINTSA EAST 083 600 1596

EXHIBITION

IMPERFECT EVOLUTION



7th march - 2nd May

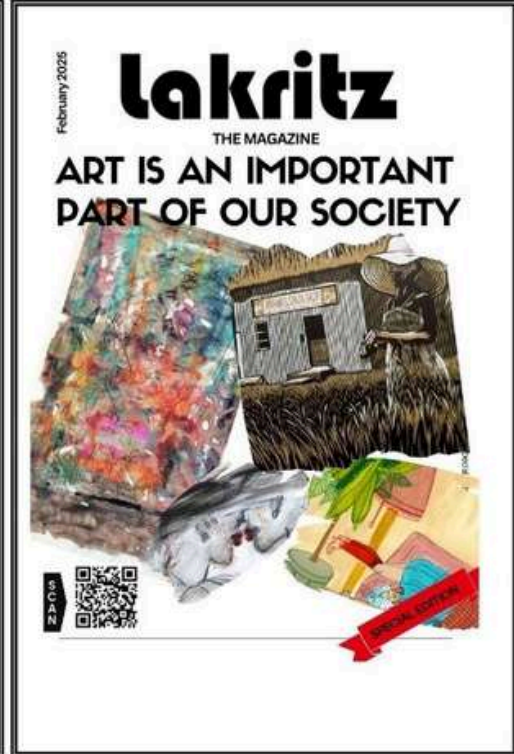
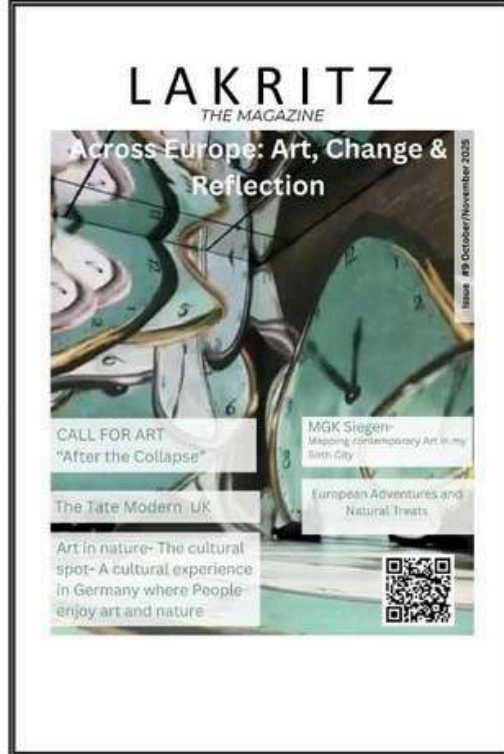
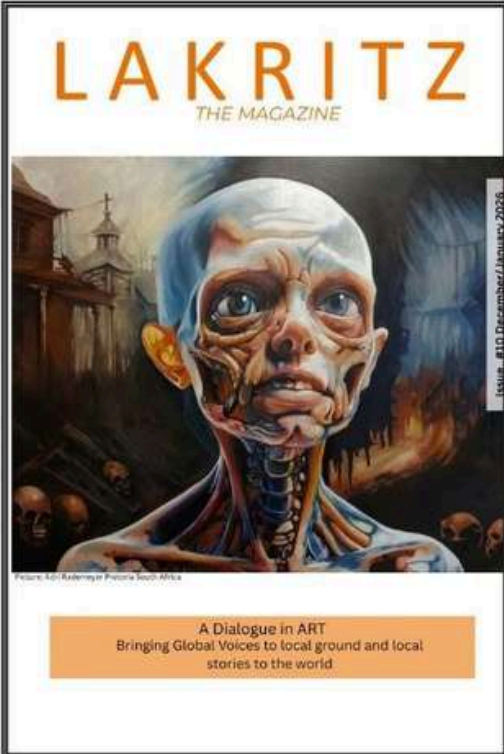
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Lakritz

THE MAGAZINE
online

A Dialogue in Art

Bringing Global Voices to local Ground, and local stories to the world



Call for Artists

online-publication

Lakritz the Magazine is a platform for contemporary artistic voices and thoughtful visual practice.

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www.lakritz.co.za/call-for-art



Alfred Kitsi

Caryn - le - Kay

Elke Rahn

Sabrina Coppola

Onke Nyushman

Andre Sabbagh

Aneesah Ismail

Khulekani Mkhize

Chris Thomas

Louisa Kruger

Zovuyo Pendu

Dawit Tamrat

Lavonne Mueller

Claudine Hauke

Thabang Makgakwe



Alfred Kitsi

South Africa



Corruption Medium: Oil on canvas

Statement

As a South African horror artist, I, Alfred Kitsi, create work that delves into human suffering, fear, and the darkness embedded in our shared reality. My art reflects the turmoil, violence, and emotional tension that shape our world, translating them into visceral visual experiences.

Growing up in Africa, I encountered a culture in which horror is often silenced or considered taboo, largely due to religious and social conventions. Yet it is precisely this suppressed darkness that I seek to bring to light through my work. I use installations, painting, and sculpture to confront viewers with uncomfortable truths, refusing to soften or aestheticize the harsh realities we would rather avoid.

In my recent work, I incorporate figures with childlike feet, an intentional exploration of new expressionism and abstraction. These forms symbolize vulnerability, fragility, and the contradictions of human existence. They are not literal representations but emotional and psychological embodiments of our fears, misunderstandings, and struggles.

My practice engages themes of oppression, alienation, and the search for meaning in a chaotic world. Through abstract and expressionist approaches, I aim to unsettle, provoke, and invite deeper reflection on the darker aspects of human nature.

I believe horror is a legitimate and necessary artistic genre that deserves recognition alongside movements like surrealism. As one of the youngest artists working within this field on the continent, I am dedicated to expanding the possibilities of horror in contemporary art and inspiring others to engage with its power.

I am Alfred Kitsi, a multidisciplinary horror artist committed to pushing boundaries, challenging perceptions, and exploring the depths of human experience.

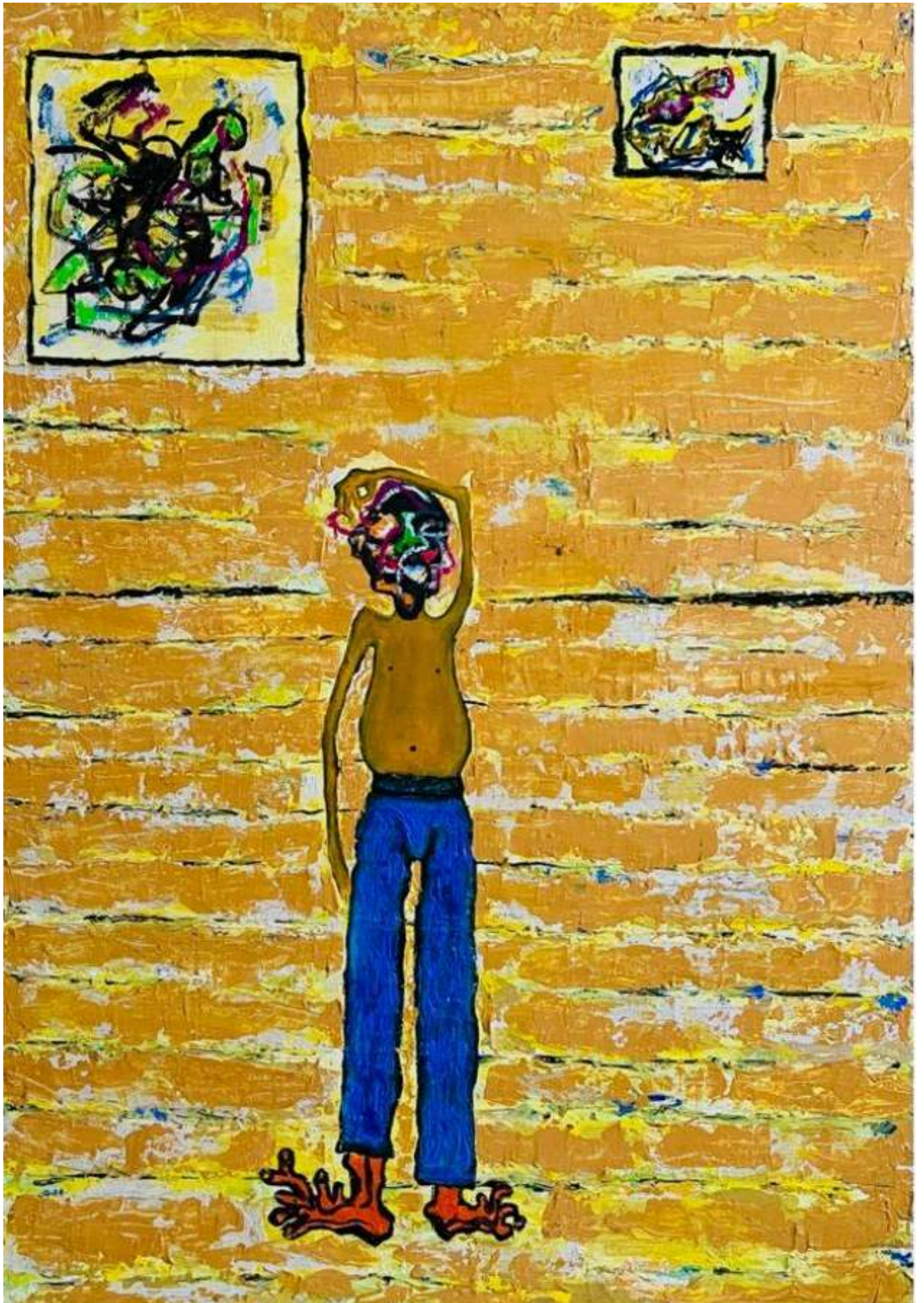


Afraid Of War Oil on canvas

Artist Bio

Alfred Kitsi is a South African multidisciplinary horror artist whose work confronts themes of fear, human suffering, and the darker aspects of the human condition. Working across painting, sculpture, and installation, he combines expressionist and abstract approaches to create emotionally charged, unsettling imagery that challenges viewers to face uncomfortable realities.

Kitsi has presented four solo exhibitions and participated in seven group exhibitions in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Los Angeles, Beijing, Sydney, Oslo, and Japan. He has completed art residencies in South Africa (2025) and Nigeria (2023)



Art Critics Mixed media on canvas



Discipline Decay Oil on canvas

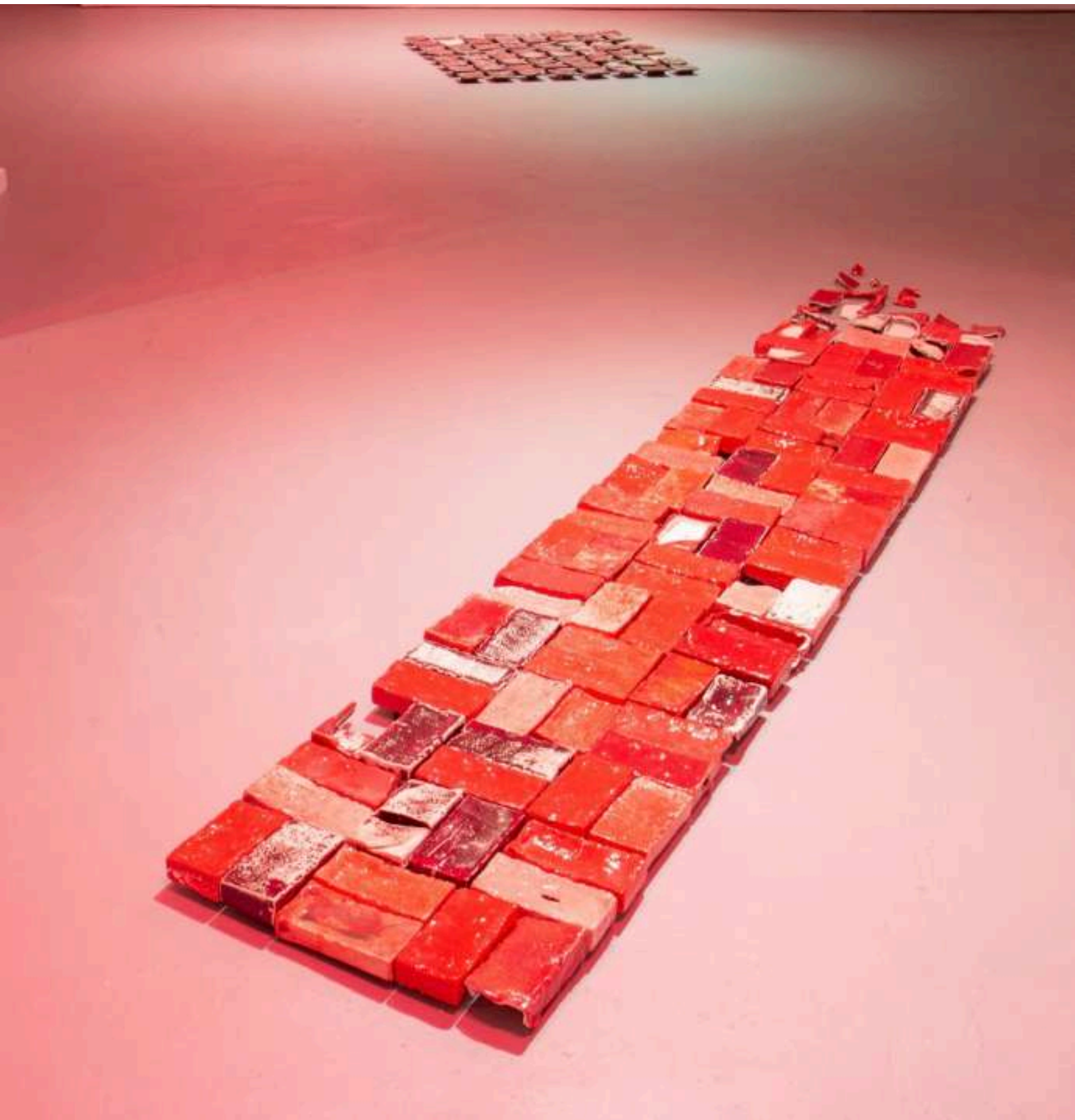
Caryn Britney Le Kay

South Africa

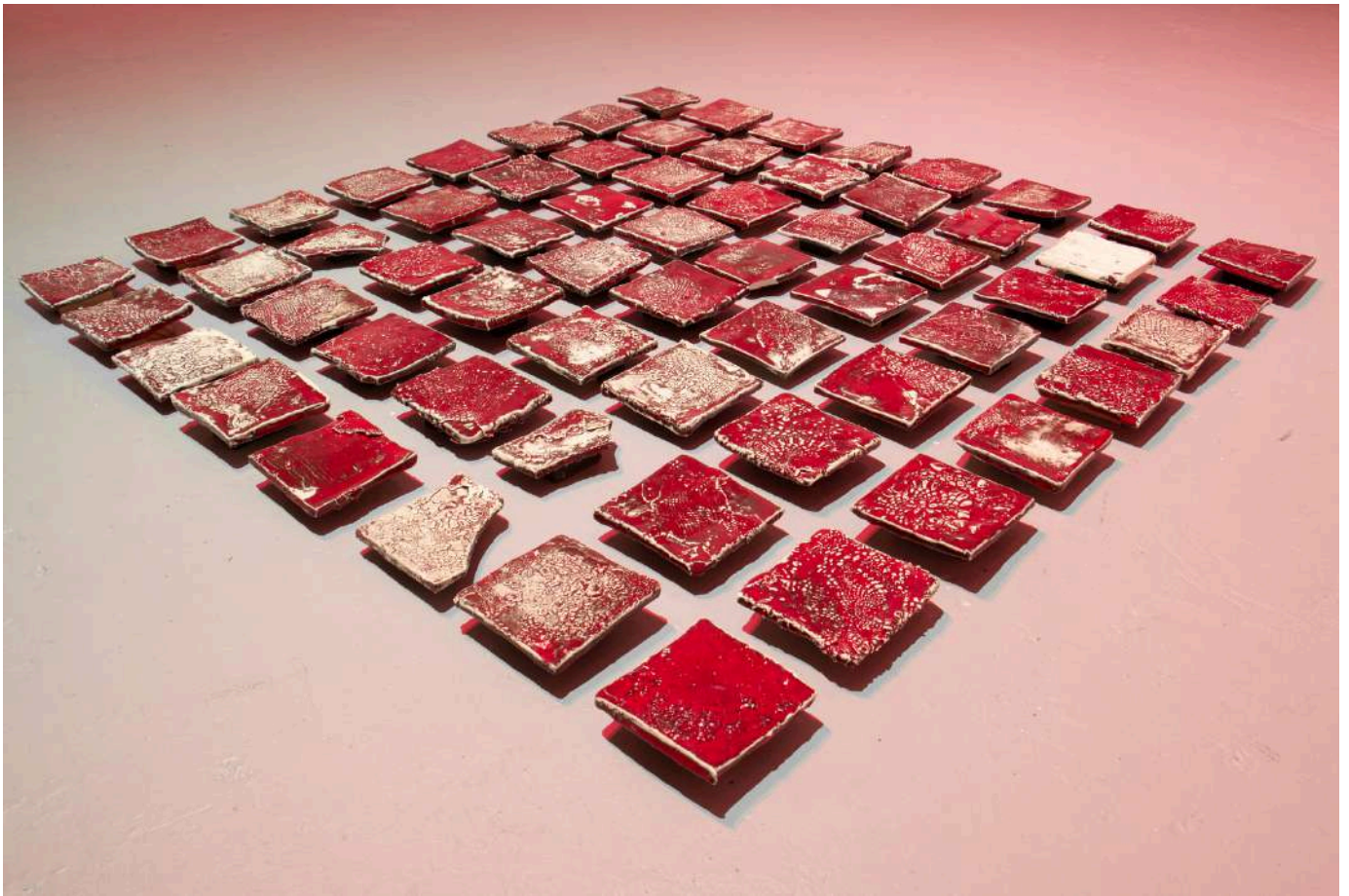
Artist statement

Remnants of Space investigates the tension between the latent potential of violence and the lived experience of female fear in everyday environments. Through sculptural practice, the work explores material traces, narrative inscriptions, and spatial memory, showing how ordinary spaces can quietly harbor threat and demand vigilance. The title reflects the idea that every space we enter leaves a trace—visible or invisible—shaped by experience, anxiety, and history. Rooted in the South African context of gender-based violence, the exhibition draws on personal and collective memory, capturing the reality of navigating spaces that are familiar yet unsafe, where movement is governed by caution, anticipation, and restraint. The installation invites a dialogue between presence and absence, stillness and disturbance, encouraging viewers to notice what is often sensed but rarely seen. Sculptural works occupy the floor, referencing architectural surfaces we habitually traverse yet seldom consider. Handmade porcelain forms echo floor tiles, brick pavers, and fabric textures, serving as metaphors for bodily vulnerability, feminine intimacy, and structural fragility. Slightly elevated on wooden blocks, the pieces disrupt spatial familiarity, allowing shadow to become an active element. Remnants of Space positions architecture as a quiet archive, preserving stories that remain largely untold.





Remnants of Space (2024). Porcelain Brick Paver



Caryn-Le-Kay-Remnants-of-Space-2024-slip-cast-porcelain-tiles-with-lace-imprint-floor-based-installation

Artist Bio

Caryn Lé Kay, born and raised in George, Western Cape, recently graduated with her Bachelor of Fine Art at Rhodes University. After completing her undergraduate studies, Lé Kay decided to further her studies by enrolling in the Masters in Fine Art Practice programme. Her research interest continues to examine the reality of gender-based violence, safe spaces and protest activism in South Africa. Most passionate about these discourses, Lé Kay looks at it from a place of understanding the hardship, fear and pain women in South Africa undergo, being a woman herself.

Lé Kay's practice encompasses mediums such as: found material, undergarments, clay and plaster of pairs. Having a background in sculpture and ceramics, she tends to challenge and subvert traditional forms of art production by shape-shifting them to appeal to an upcoming change-hungry generation.



Elke Rahn

Germany

In my work, the portrait stands at the centre. I predominantly paint women and use the face as a mirror of inner emotions. I am less interested in a realistic depiction than in what reveals itself through expression, gaze, or subtle gestures. The portraits emerge from an inner state and reflect feelings such as vulnerability, tension, closeness, or withdrawal. Emotions are not narrated but suggested. They remain open, leaving space for personal projections. A fish repeatedly appears as a motif – not as a narrative element, but as a symbol of depth, intuition, and the unspoken. It points to layers beneath the surface, to what remains hidden yet present.

My work moves between stillness and intensity, inviting the viewer to pause and engage with emotional encounters beyond clear explanations or fixed meanings.



Mila 100 x 100 cm



Arianna 100 x 70 cm

Artist Bio

Elke Rahn, born in the former DDR, trained as a nurse and now works in the central operating theatre of a hospital in North Rhine-Westphalia. Her professional everyday life is shaped by encounters with people and their intense emotions, which deeply influence her artistic practice.

She has always felt drawn to art, which ultimately led her to study at the Ibkk in Bochum, where she completed a diploma in painting and graphic art in 2020. Since then, she has run her own studio within an artists' workshop, where she works alongside and exchanges ideas with other creatives. Her works have already been shown in numerous exhibitions.

For her, art is not merely a form of expression but a bridge between inner experience and external perception – a way of sharing and making emotions visible. She feels profound gratitude for being able to pursue this path with such passion and freedom



Tiefer Blick 100 x 70 cm



In Gedanken 80 x 60 cm

Claudine Hauke

South Africa

Artist Statement

Like the philosophy of Kintsugi, where cracks are illuminated rather than concealed, my practice understands fracture as transformation and imperfection as a record of lived experience. I approach the surface as a fragile archive – layered, stitched, marked, and sometimes disrupted – where traces of memory, movement, and repair accumulate over time.

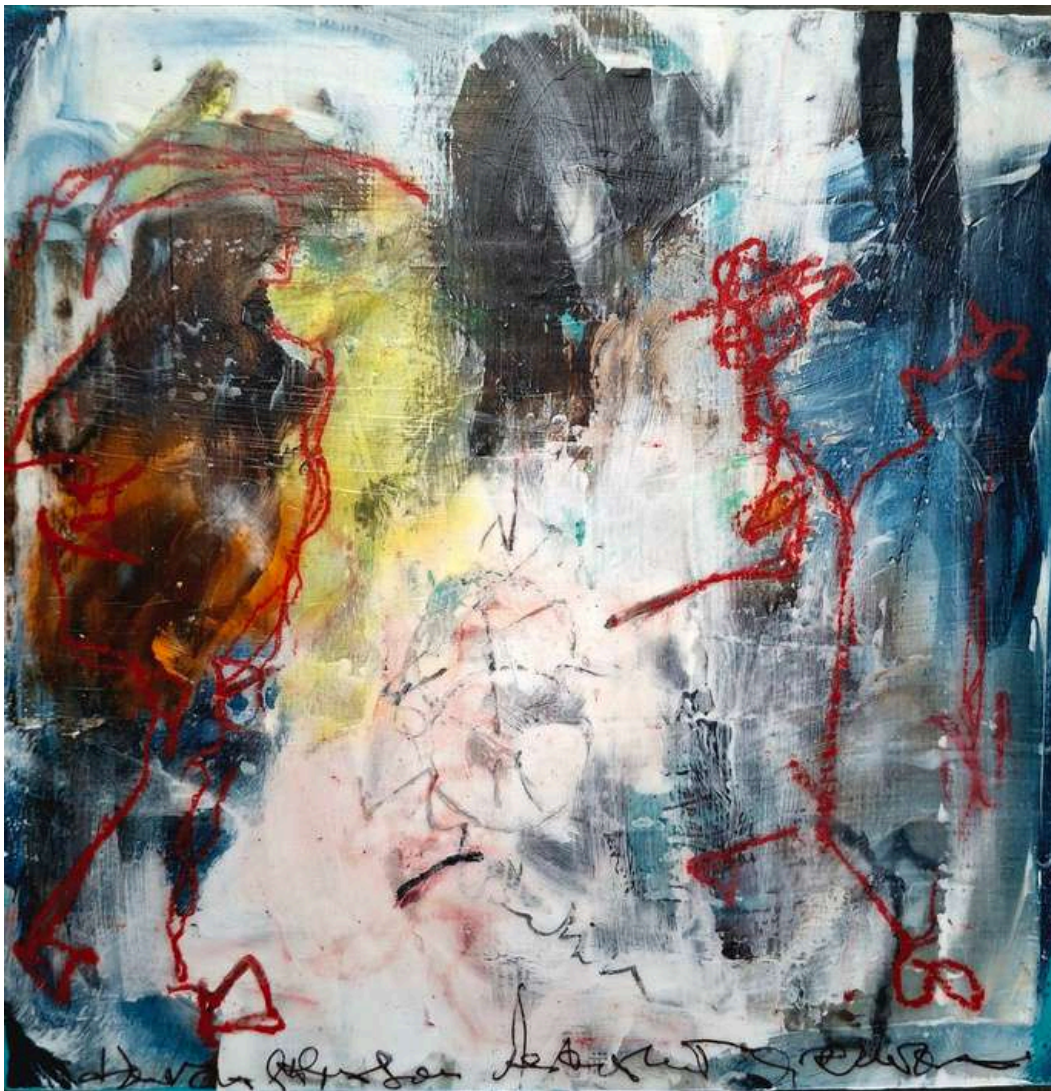
Working across photography, painting, textile, and sculpture, I treat material as a vulnerable skin that absorbs gesture and presence. Through layering, repetition, stitching, and intuitive mark-making, I explore how surfaces hold emotional and temporal memory. Color becomes a carrier of experience, while fragments of image and form suggest the shifting nature of identity and perception.

Acts of intervention – whether through erasure, duplication, or repair – become a way of listening to the material. In this process, repair becomes a form of drawing and repetition a method of recording time.

Imperfection is not corrected but revealed. Each layer holds traces of tension, resilience, and quiet transformation – moments where memory, identity, and material continuously unfold.



Where the city forget it's name 110 x 120 cm



Crowded but unwitnessed 20 x 20 cm

Artist statement

Here is a shortened, clean version suitable for Lakritz – The Magazine:

Claudine Hauke is a contemporary multidisciplinary artist working across photography, painting, sculpture, digital media, and video. Her conceptually layered, emotion-driven practice explores human interaction, memory, and the evolving relationship between people and their environment.

Originally trained as a photographer and largely self-taught as a painter, she has lived and worked across four continents, with these diverse contexts shaping a reflective and process-driven practice. She has exhibited internationally, with early solo exhibitions in Germany and, more recently, in South Africa at Ann Bryant Gallery and Limani Gallery, alongside participation in global group exhibitions.

Hauke is the founder of Lakritz in Chintsa East and editor of Lakritz – The Magazine, a digital platform connecting international contemporary art with local community discourse. She is a recipient of the WAA Woman Art Award (2026) and has presented her work at international art fairs including Monaco Art Fair, Red Dot Miami, and ART MUC.



Structural mutation - under continuous load



Streetlight confessoin 20 x 20 cm

Sabrina Coppola

South Africa

Artist Statement

My work examines how contemporary audiences perceive beauty, identity, and cultural icons through the lens of media memory. Working with digital collage, illustration, and stylised portraiture, I reinterpret familiar figures from cinema, pop culture, and historical image-making. These are not traditional portraits, but visual constructs that reflect how individuals become symbolic within the public imagination.

I am interested in the tension between nostalgia and modernity, and how past imagery continues to shape present aesthetics. Through layered compositions, bold colour palettes, and graphic precision, I translate cinematic emotionality—youth, vulnerability, intensity, and elegance—into a contemporary visual language that is both reflective and critical.

My process often begins with film stills, press photography, or archival references, which I transform and recontextualise to explore how meaning is projected onto public figures. Ultimately, my work questions how icons are built, idealised, and remembered, and what their images reveal about collective desire and perception. Positioned between graphic design and fine art, my practice seeks to expand the possibilities of digital portraiture and contribute to ongoing conversations about media and visual culture.



Leo DiCaprio's Romeo Pop Art

Artist Bio

Sabrina Coppola is a South African graphic designer and artist whose practice sits at the intersection of contemporary media, digital portraiture, and cultural iconography. Her work draws on cinema, fashion photography, historical portraiture, and pop culture to explore how media and memory shape identity—both personal and collective.

Coppola's art is characterised by refined digital textures, clean structural design, and visual warmth. She is interested in the tension between timeless beauty and shifting public imagery, and in how audiences emotionally connect to cultural icons across different eras. Grounded in graphic design, her practice values precision, structure, and visual hierarchy. Working primarily with digital collage and illustration, she transforms familiar imagery into portraits that feel both nostalgic and contemporary.

Her artworks often emphasise cinematic qualities such as youth, vulnerability, intensity, and charm, while reframing them through a modern visual language. Through this approach, Coppola questions how icons are constructed, idealised, and reinterpreted, and how shared media images influence the way we see others—and ourselves.



Constructed-Beauty



Reconstructed Beauty



Elemental rebirth

Mvuyelwa Onke Nyushman

South Africa



The Kings Beach

Artist Statement

The landscape mirrors society in many ways, in this instance you stand out when you are special. You can show individuality through the traits that make you unique. What makes you unique is what makes you a bold figure in whatever environment you are in. To be a bold figure you cannot let yourself be held back anything. To be bold is to face any given environment and to remain true to yourself in the face of adversity that says otherwise. The works make use of the landscape as a mirror to human society, specifically looking at being able to stand out in any environment. The ability to stand out so thoroughly in the given environments is like that of human society because historically conformity has always had rulebreakers and standouts. To be bold when you are the only one is a test of mettle, when you don't have likeminded individuals who are able to push you to be better then it all falls on your own shoulders to fight on be the boldest edition of yourself.

Artist Bio

Mvuyelwa Onke Nyushman (b. 1999) is a photographer born in South Africa and based in Gqeberha. His work shows a focus on the moments we have missed or have taken for granted. In this manner his primary style of photography is documentary. He is not limited by his chosen focus and will attempt different styles that capture something he is missing or wants people to take notice of. When he is not capturing these moments, he captures landscapes that seek to invite the viewer into the image. The landscapes he captures are seemingly easy to reach but are not often taken notice of. The two mediums he is most proficient in share the theme of looking at things we see daily and but do not take notice of because we see them so often. The pandemic is the reason he focuses on such moments in life because, for a whole year, they were taken away. The photographers who have influenced him are those who can capture a single moment and invite you in because of the familiarity of the image.



Marine Drive



Lifeguard Stand King's Beach

André Sabbagh

Guatemala City



Man of smoke - Clay, oils finish

Artist Statement

My work is an exploration of vitality trapped within the inanimate.

By manipulating the inherent rigidity of materials like clay, I seek to capture the fleeting essence of movement and emotion.

For me, sculpting is not just about form, but about the liberating transition from static mass to fluid energy



Wrapped woman - Clay, Single firing glaze

Artist Bio

Born in Guatemala in 1962, the artist began experimenting with sculpture at the age of 50. What started as a personal discovery quickly evolved into a liberating process, allowing him to explore art through various mediums, techniques, and finishes.

His work focuses on movement. The core challenge of his practice is to breathe life into inert materials, enabling traditionally heavy or rigid elements to express deep emotion. For the artist, transforming a mass of clay into something fluid and flexible is a way to feel truly free and in constant action.

Through his pieces, he invites the viewer to look past the static nature of the material and connect with the energy and flow projected by the form.



A man - Clay, engobe



Plural Woman - Clay, Single firing glaze

Aneesah Davids

South Africa

Artist statement

I create expressive realism drawings that focus on endangered species.

My preferred medium is charcoal on paper. My love and respect for animals and the natural world drives my work.

I aim to make viewers pause and truly see the species, highlighting their beauty and individuality. Through my drawings, I hope to create an emotional connection that encourages awareness and inspires conservation-minded action.



Bees are Punk!



Aneesah David

In silence

Artist Bio

Aneesah is a self-taught artist working primarily in charcoal. Her work is focused on conservation themes, exploring the delicate balance between humans and animals. Originally from the Cape Flats, she is a self-taught artist with over a decade of experience. She has enhanced her skills through a series of specialised courses, including painting courses at Ruth Prowse and digital photography courses at the Cape Town School of Photography.

Her recent work is featured in the "Our Wild World" virtual art exhibition (2025), curated by the Confluence Community. It is also published in Compassiviste Publishing's recent Anthology: "How to Save the World, Vol. 7: Uncaging the Animals." Additionally, she has exhibited at The SA Sendinggestig Museum during the City of Cape Town's Emerging Artist Pop-Up Exhibition on November 6, 2025.



Aneesh David

Cape Microfrog



Khulekani Mkhize

South Africa

Artist Statement

My work is driven by a desire to question and challenge the societal norms that shape our understanding of masculinity. Having witnessed how traditional ideals often prioritise strength over vulnerability, I seek to create art that encourages a more nuanced and empathetic perspective on what it means to be male today.

Through my practice, I aim to open space for reflection and dialogue, believing that honest engagement with difficult social issues is essential for healing and change. My use of everyday materials such as traffic cones and red tape underscores how these themes are embedded in our daily lives and shared environments.

In *The Lost Boys*, I reflect on how young males are socialised and how this shapes their emotional and social development.



Lost Boys 152 x 100 cm Oilpastels on Canvas

By depicting Black figures in states of vulnerability, I highlight the possibility of growth, transformation, and emotional openness.

Ultimately, my work invites viewers to reconsider their assumptions about masculinity and to empathise with those who are often marginalised or overlooked. I hope to contribute to a more compassionate, inclusive society in which emotional intelligence and understanding are valued as much as strength.



Izanusi 164 x 119 cm Oil on Canvas

Artist Bio

AKhulekani Mkhize (b. 9 December 1988) is a South African visual artist known for his contribution to the contemporary art scene in KwaZulu-Natal and his commitment to artistic collaboration and youth development.

Raised by a single mother in Barnabas, Umzimkhulu, Mkhize developed an early passion for art, drawing with charcoal on the walls of his home. He completed his schooling at Isibonelo High School before studying Art and Design at Thekwini College in Durban.

In 2010, he joined the Velobala Art Programme at Durban University of Technology. In 2015, he became a member of the Amasosha Art Movement and participated in their inaugural exhibition, Umhlabelo.

From 2019, he worked as a coordinator and facilitator at K-CAP Art Centre, collaborating with Zanele Muholi on the Ikhono Lase Natal project. He later established a gallery at K-CAP Ekhaya and opened his own studio in KwaMashu to mentor young artists.

Mkhize continues to work across exhibitions, murals, and community projects while actively supporting emerging creatives



Singamawele with hopses and dreams 150 x 150 cm Acrylic on Canvas

Dawit tamrat

Ethiopia



Artist Statement

Layered Dwelling

Dawit's works explore the complex interplay between contrasting ideas by using houses as a recurring motif. He juxtaposes depictions of opulent homes with those of dilapidated structures, highlighting the stark realities of both privilege and poverty. Through this approach, he aims to reveal both the positive and negative aspects of life, suggesting that these two sides often coexist within a single experience. As Dawit says, 'Homes are a reflection of upbringing and identity, and they often mirror our personalities and attitudes.' The artist prefers to use the theme of houses to create layered imagery, employing techniques like symbolic architectural elements and ambiguous spatial relationships to explore concepts of identity, belonging, and displacement

For example, he may depict houses teetering on the edge of a precipice or in a state of disrepair, visually embodying the precarious nature of home and the experience of being uprooted. By doing so, he challenges our everyday assumption that we can perceive subject and object simultaneously, suggesting that these perceived boundaries may be more fluid and unstable than we typically realize."



Artist Bio

After finishing high school, Dawit Tamrat pursued his passion for art and enrolled in the Teferi Mekonen (TMS) School of Fine Arts. He graduated in 2011 and went on to study printmaking at the Addis Ababa University (ALE) School of Fine Art and Design. His formal training provided him with the techniques and academic skills necessary to express himself as an artist. Dawit enjoys experimenting with various art forms, including paintings, graphic design, and cartoon animations. He has participated in several group exhibitions and had a solo exhibition at Fendika Gallery in 2024.

Dawit's works explore the contrast between different ideas by using houses as a subject. Through this approach, he aims to highlight both the negative and positive aspects of life. As Dawit says "Homes area reflection of upbringing and identity, and they often mirror our personalities and attitudes."The artist prefers to use the theme of houses to create layered imagery to explore concepts of identity, belonging, and displacement. In everyday life, we usually assume we can perceive subject and object simultaneously





Thabang Makgakwe

South Africa

Artist Statement

My art is a reflection of my journey rooted in Limpopo, shaped by Ubuntu, and inspired by the untold stories of my people. Through visual art, film, and poetry, I explore themes of identity, resilience, and social change. I believe that art is not only for galleries, but for communities, for healing, and for inspiring the next generation.

As a young African creative, I am committed to amplifying our voices, challenging injustices, and using storytelling as a bridge between tradition and innovation. My vision is to build sustainable solutions with my art.



Mokete wa Mebala

30 x 45 cm A3

Artist Bio

Thabang Makgakwe is a dynamic South African visual artist, filmmaker, Global Citizen Alumni, cultural activist, passionate about storytelling, youth empowerment, and the arts. Rooted in the spirit of Ubuntu and shaped by his upbringing in Limpopo, Thabang's creative journey reflects resilience, identity, and purpose. With a background in TV and Film from the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA), his work explores the intersections of art, social justice, and African storytelling. Thabang is an emerging voice redefining creativity as a tool for healing, expression, and empowerment across communities.



Leina la Setšoantšo: "Tlala ya Moya" ("Hunger of of spirit)

A1 – 594mm x 841mm



A former swings both with - m. 30 m

Ditshetšo tša Bophelo" (Rituals of Life)

30 x 45 cm A3



Bogale bja Tlhohlo" ("The Rage of Resistance") A1

Chris Thomas

Port of Spain Lowlands
Trinidad & Tobago



the Pandemic- acrylic on canvas 84" x 48"

Artist Bio

Chris Thomas, born in Trinidad & Tobago, is a contemporary Caribbean artist whose work captures the vibrant spirit, cultural depth, and evolving identity of the region. Raised in St. Augustine, Trinidad, Thomas developed an early passion for visual storytelling that would later define his artistic journey. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts from the University of the West Indies, where his practice began to merge traditional Caribbean aesthetics with modern conceptual ideas.

Currently serving as an art Teacher at Speyside High School in Tobago, Thomas continues to inspire young artists while deepening his own exploration of the visual language of the Caribbean. A personal philosophy guides his art: "Art becomes the voice that we cannot speak- the vision and ideas of tomorrow. The more you look the more you see."

Selected Exhibitions:

- . Rotunda Art Gallery (Red House Parliament, Trinidad)
- . Horizon Art Gallery, Trinidad, 2025
- . Think Art Gallery-Meraki 5&6-2022-2023
- . Environmental Research Institution, Charlotteville (ERIC) 2024
- . Tobago House of Assembly (THA), Shaw Park Art Exhibition - 2024
- . Virgin Atlantic Ltd - In Air Art Gallery -2021
- . Tobago Visual Art Association (TVAA) - President, 2015-2016



igenous - acrylic on canvas 24" 'x 36"

Artist statement

Art, to me, imitates life and all its social and cultural aspects. Nothing is taken for granted, there are no mistakes. "The more you look, the more you see" has been my mantra, as every brushstroke evokes emotion and passion.



woman no cry - acrylic on canvas 24"x 36"



please masa please - acrylic on canvas 24"x 24"

Louisa Kruger

South Africa



Grace - Printing on Felix Schoeller True Fibre Matt

Artist Statement

My work starts with feeling, not a plan. I step up to the canvas ready to play, letting colour, movement, and instinct guide me. The process is fun, messy, and intuitive – a space where I can be free and respond in the moment rather than overthink.

I paint with a childlike curiosity, layering, scraping, and rebuilding as I go. I trust my hands and my emotions, allowing mistakes to become part of the story. Each mark leads to the next, like a conversation I'm having with the canvas.

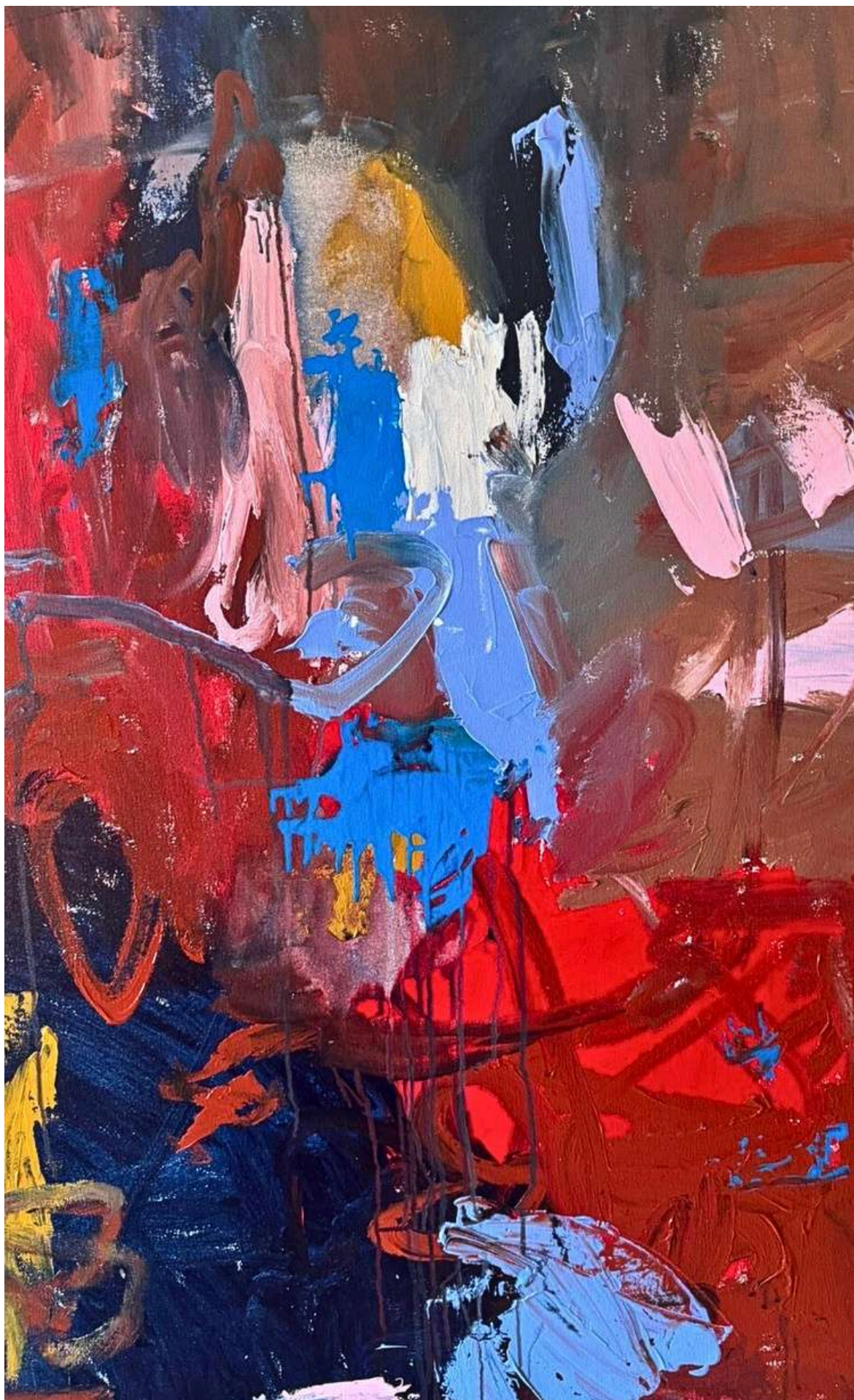
Through this way of working, I explore energy, memory, and the beauty of imperfection. These paintings aren't meant to explain themselves – they're meant to be felt. I hope viewers slow down, wander through the layers, and reconnect with their own sense of freedom and play.



King - Printing on Felix Schoeller True Fibre Matt

Artist Bio

“Born and raised in the Overberg, Louisa embraced her creativity, shy of formal training as a contemporary expressionist with almost immediate critical acclaim. Free of rigid conformity or criticism, her quiet confidence when faced with a blank canvas fills her with excitement at what will reveal with the boldness in her artistic form of expression, amplified and reflected in her rich use of colour and texture. Each piece is arrestingly vibrant, versatile, and free to be appreciated, interpreted, and relished, whether it is hung in South Africa or abroad.”



Whisper - Printing on Felix Schoeller True Fibre Matt



At Ease - Lithography

Zovuyo Pendu

South Africa

Artist Statement

I have always been fascinated by the 'first' identity of a person which is the center of my practice – the idea of spiritual identity and the sense of self that extends beyond the physical and into the unseen.

These cogitations stem from the persistent observations and lived experience that have reverberated through varying mediums where my art investigates these tensions between the ego and moral conviction, between the mind and the forces within myself that resist it, and between what

I intend and what my subconscious exposes. I create visual investigations of my own moral and psychological negotiations, using my body as the site and evidence. Through symbolic imagery and layered visual languages, I interrogate questions of faith, identity, and perception, translating intangible experiences into material form.

My work reinterprets both classical and contemporary traditions, reshaping stylistic and symbolic vocabularies to construct new dialogues between history and the present. The work functions as both a reflection and provocation; it challenges the predispositions we carry – moral and psychological disclosure.



Romans 7: 19-20 - (Diptych) 190 X 300 CM



I Proverbs 14:12 – There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end, it leads to death 80 x 100 cm

Artist biography

MZovuyo Pendu (b. 2003) is a South African figurative painter based in Johannesburg, whose practice is rooted in the investigation of the psychological moral struggle between faith, ego, and the unconscious forces that shape human behaviour. This ongoing inquiry into the metaphysical and psychological conditions of being lies at the centre of her artistic pursuit. She uses herself as the subject which serves as a visual mirror and evidence.

She reinterprets classical and contemporary visual traditions, reshaping symbolic vocabularies to construct new dialogues between history and the present. Her work is both reflective and provocative, challenging the assumptions we carry about identity and offering new ways to see the human condition.

Pendu's art reflects a persistent curiosity about how faith, perception, and experience shape identity. Through her work, she seeks to materialise the invisible and to stage questions that resist easy resolution, transforming her creative process into a site of reflection and revelation. Painting serves as the primary vessel for this exploration



Untitled 115 X 165,5 CM



Raw - (Diptych)

200 X 300 CM

Lavonne Mueller

South Africa

Artist Statement

These works consider evolution as a condition of survival shaped by constraint, interruption, and uneven endurance rather than progress. The desert landscape operates as a social metaphor, a space marked by scarcity, repetition, and adaptive resilience. Layered terrains suggest systems formed through historical pressure, economic, social, and environmental, where fracture is not exceptional but structural.

The presence of the bird introduces a fragile relational moment, foregrounding coexistence within contested space. This encounter reflects interdependence within environments where stability remains provisional and survival is negotiated rather than secured.

By resisting idealised representations of nature, the works echo South African realities in which adaptation is continuous and unresolved. Evolution is presented as an ongoing process, imperfect, relational, and shaped by persistence within systems that remain unfinished.



Conditions of Persistence



Negotiated Space

Artist biography

I am a South African artist whose practice explores endurance, adaptation, and relational survival through simplified forms, flat colour, and repetition. My work is concerned with systems shaped by constraint, where persistence emerges through pressure rather than resolution. Desert and cactus motifs function as metaphors for environments marked by scarcity, resilience, and uneven stability.

I hold a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and am an admitted attorney, former intelligence analyst, and current Doctor of Laws candidate. These parallel practices inform a research-driven approach to image-making that resists romanticised narratives of nature or progress. Instead, my work considers evolution as an ongoing and imperfect process, shaped by historical pressure, environment, and fragile moments of coexistence within contested spaces.

Art Without Walls

A Journey Through the Open Studios on the Rhine

Most people experience art in museums or galleries – quiet rooms where finished works hang carefully framed on white walls. But what if you could step directly into the spaces where art is actually created?



This is the idea behind “Open Studios on the Rhine” (Offene Ateliers am Rhein), an annual event that invites visitors into the working environments of artists along the Rhine River. Instead of viewing art in a formal exhibition setting, the public is welcomed into studios, project spaces and unusual venues where creativity is still in motion. On 13 and 14 June 2026, from 13:00 to 19:00, 22 artists at 12 locations will open their doors in Biebrich, Schierstein, Walluf and Eltville, offering a rare opportunity to explore artistic processes up close, speak directly with artists, and discover contemporary art outside the traditional gallery system.



Martina Hesse

Following a successful launch in 2023, the event has grown steadily. What began as a local initiative in the Wiesbaden districts of Biebrich and Schierstein now extends further along the Rhine into the Rheingau region, connecting studios, galleries and cultural spaces across several towns. For visitors, the experience is less like visiting an exhibition and more like embarking on a small cultural journey along the river. Using a simple map, guests can design their own route – travelling between studios by bicycle, car, public transport or on foot while discovering the diverse creative landscape of the region.



Petra Ehrnsberger



Florian Bachmeier

The artistic spectrum is wide. Visitors will encounter painting, drawing and caricature alongside sculpture, photography, material-based works, digital art, installation and video. Some artists work with traditional techniques, while others experiment with unconventional materials and conceptual approaches.



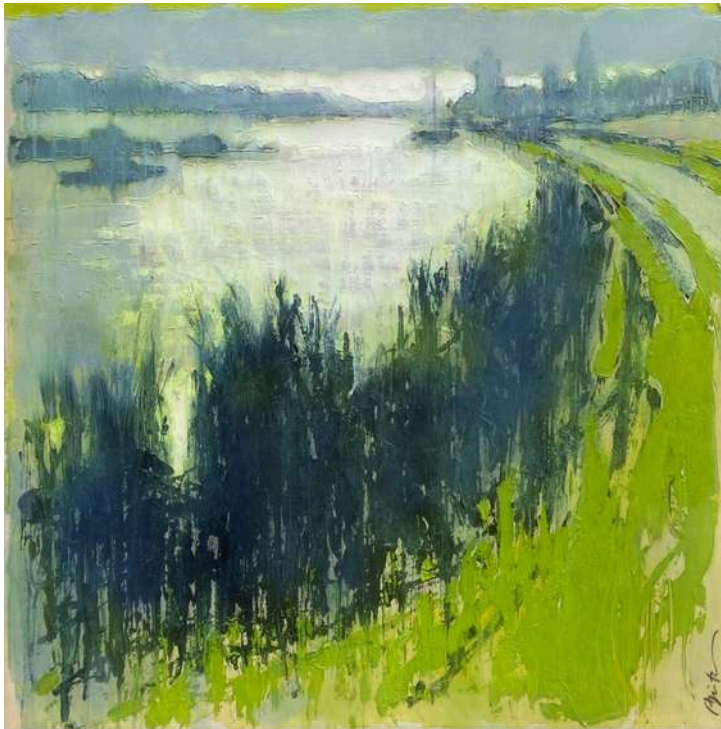
Annette Scharner



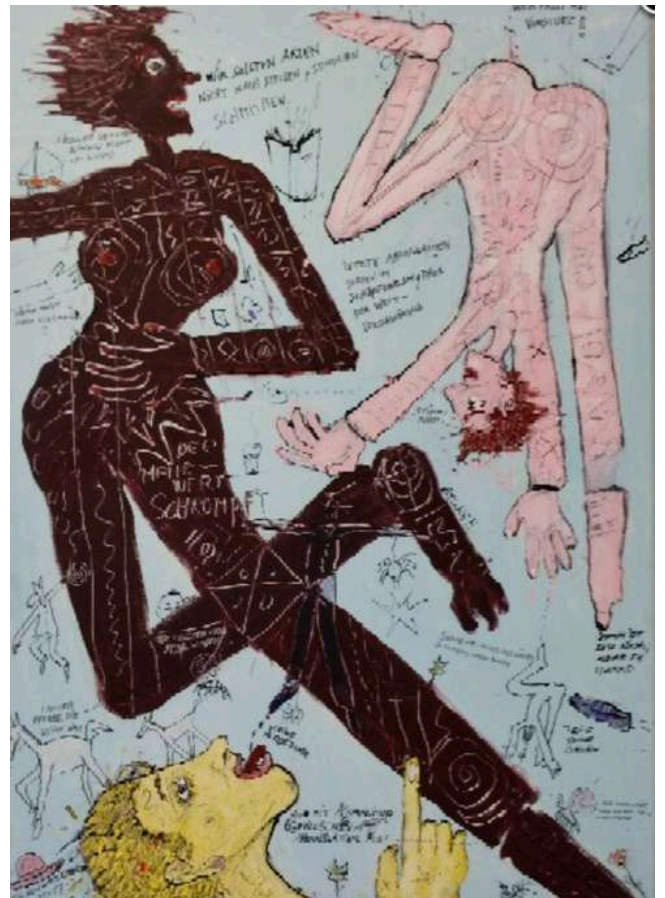
Birgit Helmy



Uta Gruen



Michael Apitz



Bernd Schneider



Florian Bachmeier

In ATELIEReins in Biebrich, several artists share a dynamic creative space. Painter Anna Bieler creates vibrant, symbolic compositions where human, animal and natural forms merge into expressive landscapes of colour. Mike Wosnitzka explores the tension between abstraction and figuration, transforming the human figure into energetic painterly gestures. Other artists in the studio, including Dr. Lisior, Bernd Schneider, Patricia Sant'Ana Scheld, and Roman Mikos, approach art through conceptual, experimental and narrative perspectives.

Nearby studios reveal equally diverse practices. Renate Reifert at Atelier FARBTUN investigates the emotional language of colour and surface, while Uta Grün draws inspiration from natural structures and landscapes. At Atelier Annette Scharner, working together with Martina Hesse, drawing and mixed media become tools for observing everyday perception and personal stories.

The historic Oranier Memorial Church offers a unique exhibition setting where Nicolaus Werner presents sculptural and conceptual works that respond to architectural space. Further along the Rhine in Schierstein, Wolfgang Blanke's Atelier am Hafen reflects the rhythm of harbour life through painting and graphic work, while Anke Rohde and Veronika Fass present experimental projects combining painting, objects and spatial installations. In Walluf, visitors can explore the APITZ Gallery of well-known painter and illustrator Michael Apitz, whose colourful works range from Rhine landscapes to his beloved comic character Karl, the Spätlesereiter.

The journey continues to Eltville, where guest artist Florian Bachmeier presents photographic works at the Mediathek. Nearby studios such as Atelier Weissraum, with Petra van Husen and Petra Ehrnsperger, and Atelier Leonhard with Daniela Schulz, Ann Besier and Birgid Helmy, offer intimate insights into painting, mixed media experimentation and sculptural forms.



Ann Besier

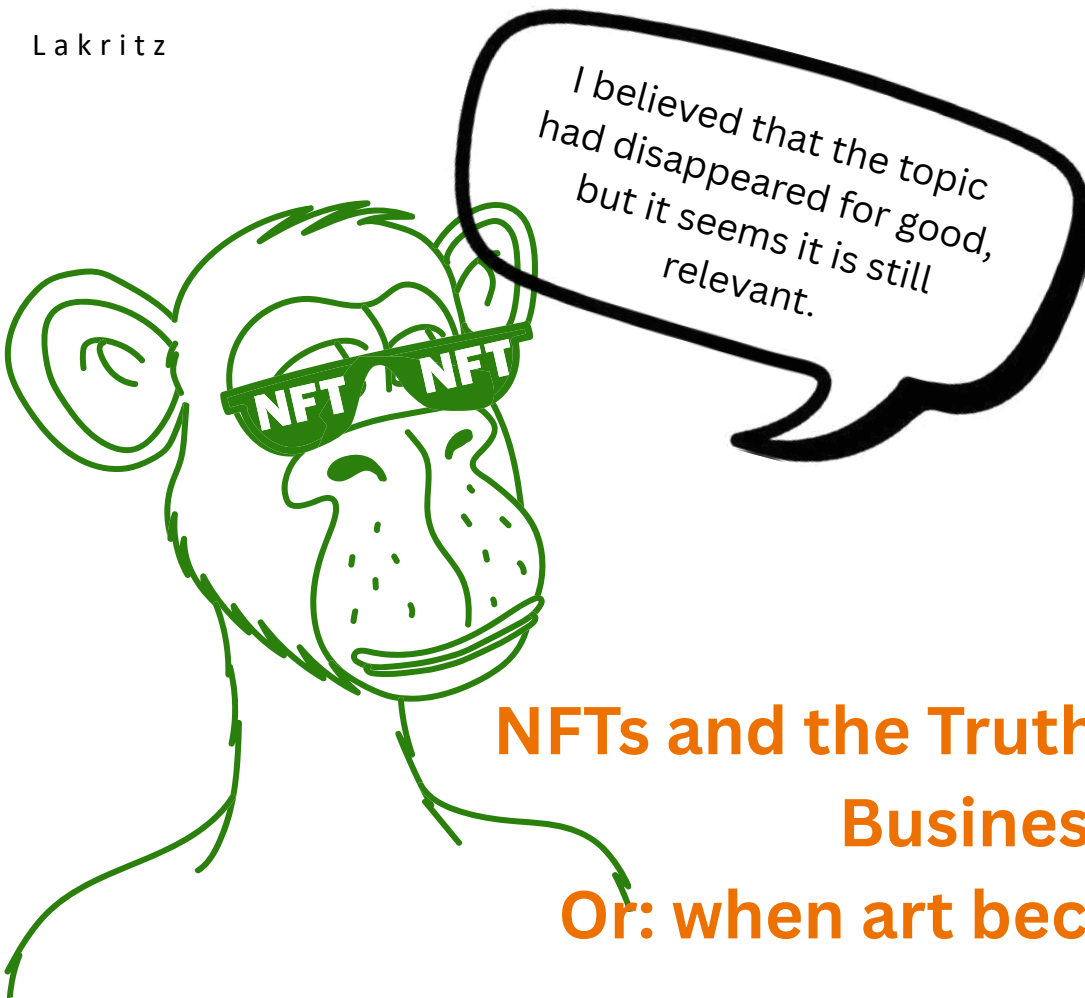
What makes events like this special is not only the art itself but the conversations that emerge. Visitors can ask questions, observe unfinished work, and witness the ideas behind each piece. The studio becomes a place of dialogue rather than quiet observation.

Supported by the Cultural Office of the City of Wiesbaden, the local councils of Biebrich and Schierstein and the Rheingau cultural network, the event highlights the vibrant artistic community along the Rhine.

For those curious about how art evolves before it reaches a gallery wall, Open Studios on the Rhine offers a simple invitation: follow the river, step inside the studios, and discover where art truly begins.

More information:

www.offeneateliers-wi.de



NFTs and the Truth Behind the Business

Or: when art becomes bait

Every now and then, the art world invents a new obstacle course for artists to navigate. Lately, one of the most treacherous has been NFT scams—slick, convincing, and emotionally exhausting.

NFTs have been around since about 2014. In theory, they turn artwork into a digital token traded on the blockchain. In practice, they often turn artists into unpaid extras in a crypto speculation game. Think of your work less as the main event and more as the colourful little figurine on a Monopoly board. Cute. Replaceable. Not the point.

Here's the uncomfortable truth: when a "collector" approaches you out of the blue to turn your work into an NFT, chances are high that you won't earn a cent. You'll bleed money instead. Minting fees, platform fees, gas fees, onboarding fees—death by a thousand small, well-worded emails. The currency is the star of the show. The art is just there to make it feel cultured and fun.

Last week, I encountered another version of this trap. I was contacted—via email—by a fellow artist inviting me to take part in an online exhibition. The project was supposedly in collaboration with a large, reputable international gallery and hosted on an NFT platform. I won't name names here, because the people and institutions referenced are innocent victims too.

Naturally, I did my research. The artist existed. A strong online presence, exhibition history, connections that appeared legitimate. The gallery had a real history of NFT-related projects. The gallery itself, as galleries often do, did not respond to unsolicited emails. Nothing unusual there. Meanwhile, the communication from the "artist" was friendly, reassuring, patient—professionally human in all the right ways.

Long story short: if you follow this path, you stand to lose anywhere between R10,000 and R100,000 before the penny drops.

The NFT platform? Fake.

The email trails? Fake.

The artist? Fabricated.



Beautifully designed, though. Well-researched. Almost certainly AI-assisted. The backstory held up impressively under casual scrutiny. Only those deeply experienced in online ecosystems—and already a little suspicious by nature—would notice the small but crucial cracks in the system.

And that is the truly disturbing part. AI was used to construct an almost flawless fraud scenario. Not sloppy. Not desperate.

Precise. Calculated. Polite.

How sad. How low.

And yes, you could argue: that's the world we live in now. You'd be right. But acceptance does not mean silence, and it certainly doesn't mean indifference.

Which brings us to a larger question artists can no longer avoid:

What is the future of art in an increasingly digital life?

We are surrounded by social media, NFTs, online galleries, endless content, endless choice. Audiences are overwhelmed—unsure what is art, what is decoration, what is valuable, what is noise. At the same time, many have become strangely unreceptive: emotionally dulled, non-committal, hesitant to decide for themselves. The art market has been diluted to the point where many have stopped visiting galleries, museums, concerts, theatres, poetry readings altogether.

Why bother leaving the house when everything can be streamed, scrolled, or swiped from the sofa?

Technology makes it possible. Convenient. Effortless.

But here's the part no algorithm will tell you:

You don't become a unique person by consuming everything from a distance. A tattoo and a nose ring won't do the job either. Experience will.

Experiencing art—standing in front of it, sitting with it, being unsettled or moved by it—still matters. Living with art matters. It sharpens perception. It asks something of you. It demands presence.

Art, in any form, must be experienced. It must carry emotion. It must trigger reaction. That hasn't changed, and it won't. The pressure on artists in the future will be exactly what it has always been: to remain human. To be vulnerable. To be emotionally charged. To create something unmistakably their own.

No blockchain can replace that.

And no scam, no matter how well designed, gets to redefine what art is worth.



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Art is not meant to be decorative



Art can be decorative. It can be an investment. It can be entertaining, pleasurable, even comforting to live with. It can beautify a space, complete an interior, or signal status. But none of these are the true purpose of art.

Decoration asks art to be well-behaved. It wants harmony, agreement, and visual ease. Art, however, is rarely born from ease. It emerges from friction – between the self and the world, between history and the present, between destruction and creation, between certainty and doubt. To reduce art to decoration is to strip it of its urgency, its complexity, and its capacity to unsettle.

At its core, art is a form of thinking made visible. It is a way of questioning, resisting, remembering, and imagining. It holds contradictions. It can be fragile and violent, quiet and loud, beautiful and uncomfortable all at once. Art is a site where personal and collective histories collide, where material carries memory, and where form becomes a language beyond words.



In a world increasingly driven by consumption, speed, and surface-level experience, art insists on slowness. It asks us to look again, to feel deeply, to sit with ambiguity. It does not exist to simply match a sofa or fill an empty wall — it exists to shift perception. It can disturb our assumptions, mirror our realities, and open spaces for new ways of seeing and being.

At Lakritz, art is approached as a living, evolving presence rather than an accessory. The works that pass through the space are not selected for their ability to please, but for their ability to provoke thought, emotion, and dialogue. They carry traces of process — of Material, of building up and breaking down — reflecting the ongoing tensions between destruction and renewal that shape both humanity and the environment.

To engage with art meaningfully is to allow it to affect you. Not just visually, but intellectually and emotionally. It is to accept that art does not owe us comfort. Instead, it offers something far more valuable: a mirror, a challenge, and an invitation to think beyond what is familiar. So yes — art can be decorative. But when it is only decorative, it loses its power. True art does not simply adorn our lives; it transforms the way we experience them.

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Indigenous Plants

Garden Care

Bee/Snake Removal

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Beyond Walls and Objects: Why Your Brain Needs Art

Art, Space, and the Invisible Impact on How We Feel, Think, and Perform



Over the past few years, the way we understand space has shifted dramatically. Neuroarchitecture and neurodesign have established that our surroundings—light, colour, scale, materials, acoustics, and spatial flow—directly influence how our brains function. The environments we inhabit shape our stress levels, our ability to concentrate, our emotional balance, and even our physical well-being.

Yet, despite this growing body of knowledge, many homes, offices, and institutions are still designed primarily around efficiency, functionality, or trend-driven aesthetics. How a space feels—and how it supports the people inside it—often remains secondary.

This is where a compelling new field enters the conversation: neuroaesthetics.

What Is Neuroaesthetics?

Neuroaesthetics explores how the brain responds to aesthetic experience, particularly art. It asks a deceptively simple question: What happens in our brain when we engage with art?

Using insights from neuroscience and psychology, researchers examine how colour, form, texture, rhythm, and imagery activate brain regions linked to emotion, memory, reward, attention, and meaning-making. Importantly, art does not sit in a single compartment of the brain—it engages the whole system.

What this reveals is profound: art is not decoration. It is an active experience that shapes mood, perception, and behaviour.

Living With Art: The Private Sphere

In private homes, art quietly but powerfully influences daily life. Neuroaesthetic research suggests that regular exposure to art can help regulate emotions, reduce stress, and strengthen a sense of identity and belonging.

In domestic spaces, art can:

- Create moments of calm in fast-paced lives
- Offer visual stimulation without overwhelming the mind
- Support emotional expression and meaningful conversation
- Encourage curiosity and imagination, particularly in children

Growing up with art nurtures emotional intelligence and creative thinking. Children who live with art learn to observe, interpret, question, and imagine—skills that extend far beyond the visual world. Art becomes woven into everyday life, subtly shaping how we relate to our surroundings and to one another.

Art in Corporate Spaces: Performance, Focus, and Culture

For corporate leaders, neuroaesthetics offers practical and compelling insights.

Research shows that visually sterile or under-stimulating environments can contribute to fatigue, stress, and disengagement.

Integrating art into workplaces can:

- Reduce mental fatigue and stress
- Improve focus and cognitive endurance
- Encourage creative and strategic thinking
- Enhance employee satisfaction and well-being

Beyond individual benefits, art transforms how organisations are perceived. In offices, hotels, healthcare facilities, and public-facing spaces, art communicates values: openness, cultural awareness, long-term vision, and care for human experience. It humanises environments, sparks conversation, and fosters connection.

For both collectors and companies, art in the workplace becomes a cultural statement and a strategic investment in people.

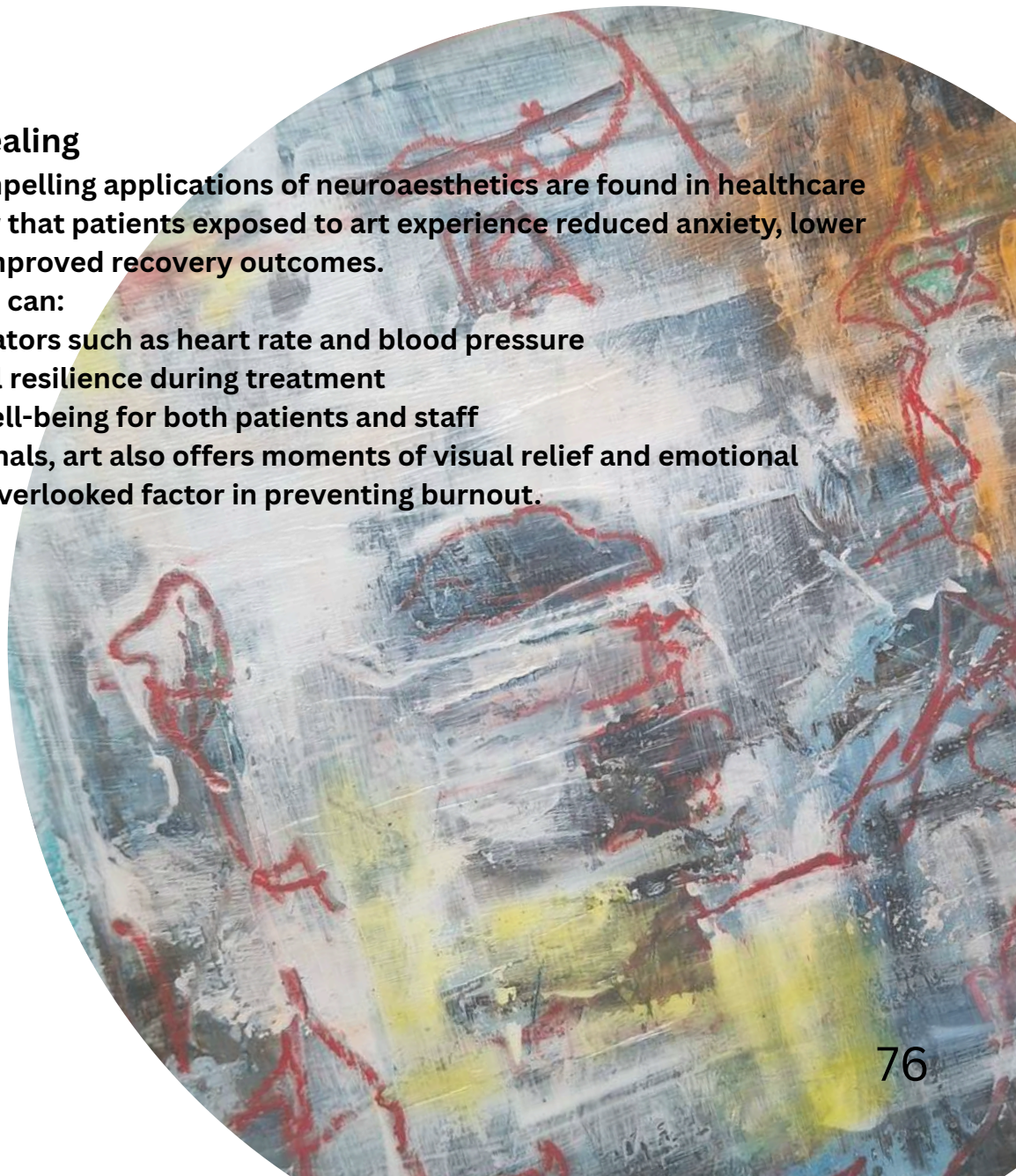
Art, Health, and Healing

Some of the most compelling applications of neuroaesthetics are found in healthcare settings. Studies show that patients exposed to art experience reduced anxiety, lower perceived pain, and improved recovery outcomes.

Art-rich environments can:

- Lower stress indicators such as heart rate and blood pressure
- Support emotional resilience during treatment
- Improve overall well-being for both patients and staff

For medical professionals, art also offers moments of visual relief and emotional grounding—an often overlooked factor in preventing burnout.





Lakritz: A Living Neuroaesthetic Experience

At Lakritz, these ideas are not abstract—they are experienced firsthand. Visitors frequently remark that they feel the space before they consciously engage with individual artworks. The experience begins with atmosphere: colour, texture, openness, and an invitation to slow down.

Lakritz is not simply a place to view art; it is a place to be with art. Conversations emerge naturally, time seems to shift, and visitors often linger longer than intended. This response aligns with what neuroaesthetic research confirms: meaningful engagement with art creates emotional resonance, focus, and connection.

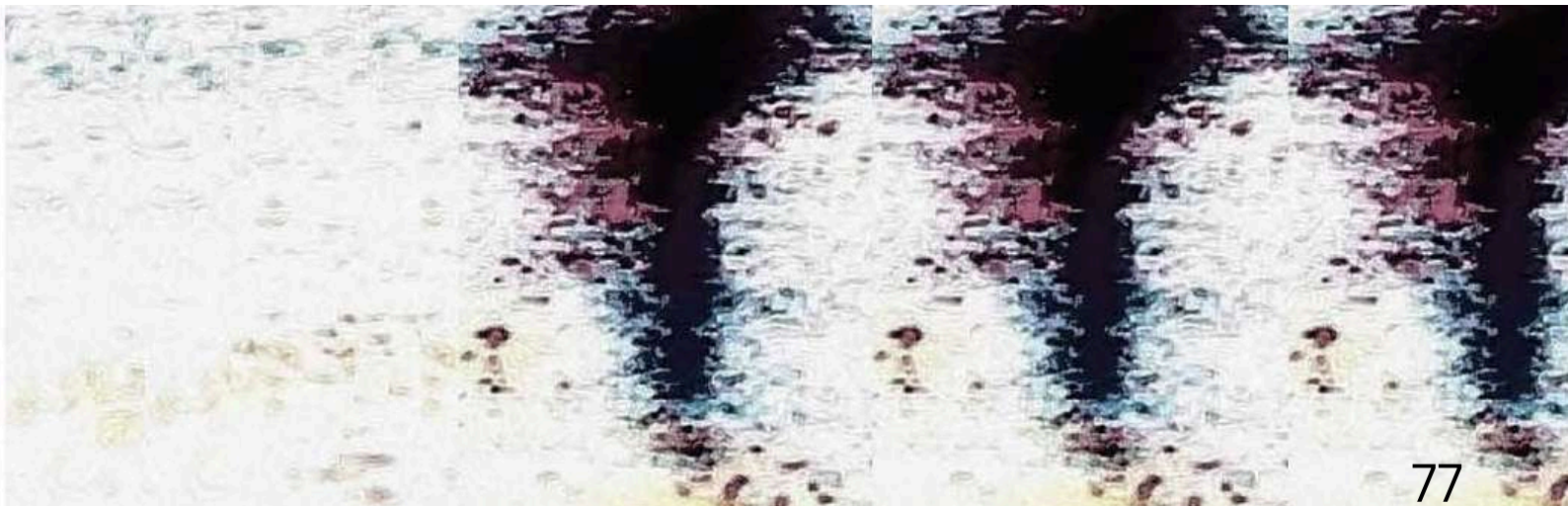
Rather than presenting art as isolated objects on walls, Lakritz demonstrates how art shapes experience—how it supports reflection, dialogue, and a deeper sense of presence.

Art as an Investment in Human Potential

Neuroaesthetics makes one thing clear: art is not a luxury—it is a necessity. It is a resource that supports mental health, creativity, performance, and recovery.

For private households, art builds emotionally rich environments. For collectors, it becomes a way of shaping meaningful spaces and legacies. For corporate leaders, investing in art is ultimately an investment in people—supporting focus, resilience, and innovation.

To grow up with art, to work alongside it, and to recover in its presence is not indulgent—it is deeply human. As neuroscience continues to reveal how powerfully aesthetics shape the brain, art deserves a central place in how we design our homes, workplaces, and institutions.



L a k r i t z

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The Garden - Where Art Grew Wild

At the very edge of a small, windswept hill stood a colorful, slightly crooked gate painted in swirling blues, yellows, and reds. Above it hung a sign made from driftwood and bright thread: THE WILD ART GARDEN.

Behind the gate was no ordinary garden. This was a place where plants whispered, insects hummed like tiny musicians, and artworks seemed to breathe.

Lila, a curious girl with paint-stained fingers and mud on her knees, loved this garden more than anywhere else. She visited every afternoon after school, carrying her small sketchbook, a tin of crayons, and her endless imagination.

One sunny day, as she pushed open the creaking gate, she noticed something different. The flowers were glowing softly, as if they were made of light. The tall sunflowers nodded more eagerly than usual, and a cluster of bright blue butterflies danced in circles above a sculpture shaped like a giant spiral.

A golden bee buzzed toward her, its wings shimmering like tiny pieces of glass.

“Hello, Lila,” the bee said in a tiny, musical voice.

Lila blinked. She wasn’t scared – in this garden, strange things were normal.

“Hello,” she replied. “Why are you glowing today?”

“We need your help,” the bee buzzed. “The garden is losing its color. The art and the nature must stay connected, or everything will fade.”

Lila looked around. Indeed, some flowers appeared slightly duller, and a painted stone bench seemed less vibrant than before.

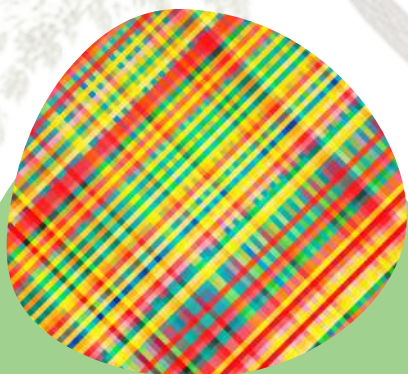
Suddenly, a group of ants marched past, carrying tiny paintbrushes made from blades of grass. Behind them hopped a bright green frog wearing a crown of petals.

“The garden’s story is breaking apart,” croaked the frog. “We need a new one.”

Lila sat down in the soft grass and opened her sketchbook. She thought about the way art and nature lived together here – the sculptures growing moss, the murals wrapped in vines, the trees that looked like they had been painted by the wind.

She began to draw.

First, she sketched a tall, twisting tree whose branches curled like brushstrokes. As she drew, a real tree nearby began to twist and curl in exactly the same way.



Next, she drew buzzing bees weaving patterns through the air. Instantly, real bees swirled above her head in shimmering, glowing loops.

She drew delicate flowers made of both petals and paint, and they appeared in the garden, blooming in colors that had never existed before – deep indigo, shimmering coral, and glowing amber.

The insects gathered around her – ladybugs, dragonflies, beetles, and butterflies – watching in wonder.

“Draw us an adventure,” chirped a tiny ladybug.

Lila smiled and sketched a winding path that led through towering grasses, past shimmering sculptures, and over a sparkling stream made of light. Along the path, she drew children dancing with leaves, artists painting with petals, and animals creating music with rustling plants.

As her pencil moved, the garden shimmered brighter. The colors returned – stronger than ever. The flowers glowed, the sculptures sparkled, and the bees hummed a joyful tune.

Suddenly, Lila felt herself lift off the ground. The bees carried her gently into the air, swirling above the garden. From up high, she could see how everything was connected – roots weaving beneath the soil, vines climbing sculptures, butterflies fluttering over paintings, and sunlight dancing across leaves and artworks alike.

When she floated back down, the frog bowed deeply.

“You have saved the Wild Art Garden,” he said.

The bee hovered in front of her again. “Remember, Lila – art is like nature. It grows, changes, and lives. And nature is like art – full of imagination, wonder, and unexpected beauty.”

Lila closed her sketchbook, feeling warm and inspired. As she walked back through the painted gate, she turned for one last look.

The garden shimmered in perfect harmony – art and nature, woven together like a living, breathing masterpiece.

And from that day on, every time Lila created art, she felt the garden grow a little brighter.

www.emeraldvale.co.za



Seed Dispersal

By Martin Kunhardt

Being surrounded by a rich variety of wildflowers and trees, I have become, almost instinctively, a collector of seeds – not only in hand, but in thought. Watching how different species release, scatter, or gift their seeds to the world reveals an intricate and quiet drama that unfolds across seasons.

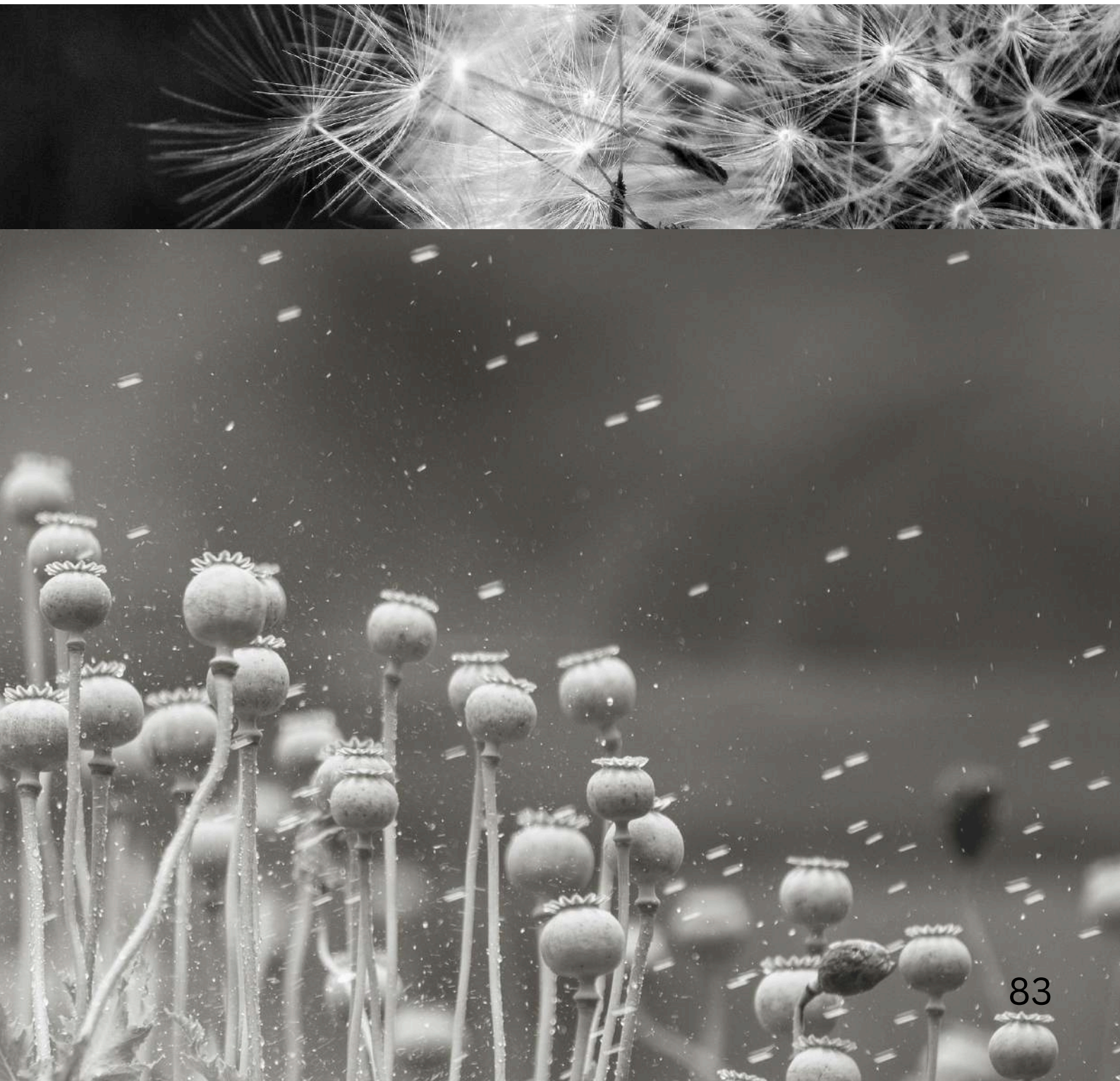
Each plant has its own method of dispersal, shaped by evolution, environment, and chance. The timing and success of this process are closely tied to the rhythms of nature – rainfall, temperature, wind, and the presence of pollinators all play their part. In some years, when conditions are generous, the veld flourishes with flowers and fruit. In others, such as the drought-stricken 2025/2026 season, the landscape tells a more fragile story. Many plants struggled to flower, and where blossoms did appear, some withered before they could set seed or fruit.

Certain species are particularly sensitive to these shifts. The sneezewood tree, aptly named and deeply rooted in our local ecology, requires a delicate balance of moisture, warmth, and even wind before it will flower. Over the past 25 years, some populations have only produced seed twice – a reminder of how closely reproduction is tied to favourable conditions. When sneezewood seeds do form, they are beautifully designed with small wings that allow them to travel on the wind, sometimes far from their parent tree. Yet if most seeds fall close by, tiny seedlings may carpet the ground beneath – only to face fierce competition for water and nutrients, meaning many will never mature into flowering trees themselves.

Other plants take a different approach, enlisting the help of animals and birds. The Turkey Berry (*Canthium inerme*), for instance, is not a tall or particularly striking tree, and can easily blend into the forest when not in bloom. In spring, however, it quietly transforms. Its delicate flowers draw in insects and butterflies, which assist with pollination. Later, the branches become heavy with small, sweet fruits that entice birds and mammals. Swallowed whole, the seeds travel far from the mother tree, passing through the digestive system where they are naturally scarified and deposited in nutrient-rich soil – perfectly prepared for new growth.

Colour, too, plays a vital role in this cycle of dispersal. Many shrubs, such as *Turrea obtusifolia* and *Turrea floribunda*, offer bright, attractive flowers that support small pollinators along forest edges and in the undergrowth. Their seeds remain safely enclosed until conditions are just right, when the capsules split open to reveal vivid red seeds — a visual invitation to birds that will carry them onward.

In this way, seed dispersal is both a practical necessity and a subtle choreography of nature — a process shaped by climate, collaboration, and the remarkable ingenuity of plants.



Cheese — Is It Safe for All?



Cheese, in its many forms, has been enjoyed by people around the world for thousands of years. Its origins can be traced back more than 8,000 years, to a time when milk was fermented and stored in animal skins. This process not only preserved the milk but transformed it into something flavourful and nourishing. Over time, aging techniques further enhanced taste and texture, and the development of natural rinds allowed cheese to be stored for extended periods.

Today, cheese is produced on a much larger scale, and while this has made it widely accessible, it has also changed its composition. Some mass-produced cheeses contain added flavourings, stabilisers, or preservatives that were not part of traditional methods. Popular varieties such as Cheddar and Gouda remain household staples, yet modern production often prioritises convenience, consistency, and shelf life. For most people with strong immune systems, these additives may cause little more than mild discomfort, such as bloating or sluggishness. However, for individuals with compromised immune systems, certain ingredients can lead to more severe and longer-lasting reactions. If consumers were more closely aware of all the preservatives, colourants, anti-caking agents, and flavour enhancers listed on labels, many might think twice about how much processed cheese they include in their diets.

There are, of course, nutritional reasons why cheese remains a valued food. It is rich in calcium and protein, and its long shelf life makes it practical in many kitchens. From soft, spreadable varieties like cream cheese, to semi-hard cheeses suited for sandwiches, to hard cheeses like Parmesan that add depth of flavour to cooked dishes, cheese plays a versatile role in daily meals.



In our fast-paced world, convenience and cost heavily influence food choices. Mass-produced cheeses often incorporate vegetable oils and stabilisers to keep prices low and extend shelf life. While suitable for many, these ingredients can pose challenges for people with sensitive or weakened immune systems – health effects that are not always immediately linked back to cheese.

In many ways, cheese reflects the broader shift in our food systems. What was once a simple, naturally crafted product has, in some cases, become more complex and industrialised. This leaves consumers navigating between traditionally made cheeses, which rely on time-honoured methods, and more heavily processed alternatives designed for taste, texture, and durability.

Even milk from regulated herds can contain trace amounts of antibiotics or medication, which may carry through into cheese in very small quantities. For most people, this poses little risk, but for those who require absolute purity in their diet, even these minimal traces can be a serious concern.

Ultimately, cheese remains a beloved and valuable food – but one that, like many modern products, invites more thoughtful consideration about how it is made and who it is truly suitable for.



The Compost corner

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Tetradenia riparia

Common Name: Misty Plume Bush

By Martin Kunhardt



is a fast-growing, aromatic, and semi-succulent shrub native to South Africa, widely known for its intense, pale mauve to white winter flowers. Often used in gardening for its texture and medicinal properties, it requires full sun to light shade, well-drained soil, and pruning after flowering.

Tetradenia riparia (Mistbelt Sage / Iboza)

Tetradenia riparia is a striking, fast-growing shrub native to southern Africa, commonly found along forest margins, riverbanks, and mistbelt regions. It is easily recognised by its soft, heart-shaped leaves, hollow stems, and clusters of delicate pale pink to mauve flowers that appear in late summer to autumn. When the leaves are crushed, they release a strong, aromatic scent, hinting at the plant's rich store of essential oils.

Beyond its ornamental appeal, Tetradenia riparia has a long history of use in traditional medicine. The leaves and stems have been used to treat coughs, colds, and chest congestion, often by inhalation of steam or as a mild herbal infusion. Poultices made from the leaves have been applied to wounds, swellings, and skin irritations due to their believed anti-inflammatory and antiseptic properties. In some cultures, the plant has also been used to relieve headaches and body aches, as well as to deter insects.

Valued both for its beauty and its healing potential, Tetradenia riparia remains an important and culturally significant plant in many parts of South Africa.

LIFESTYLE

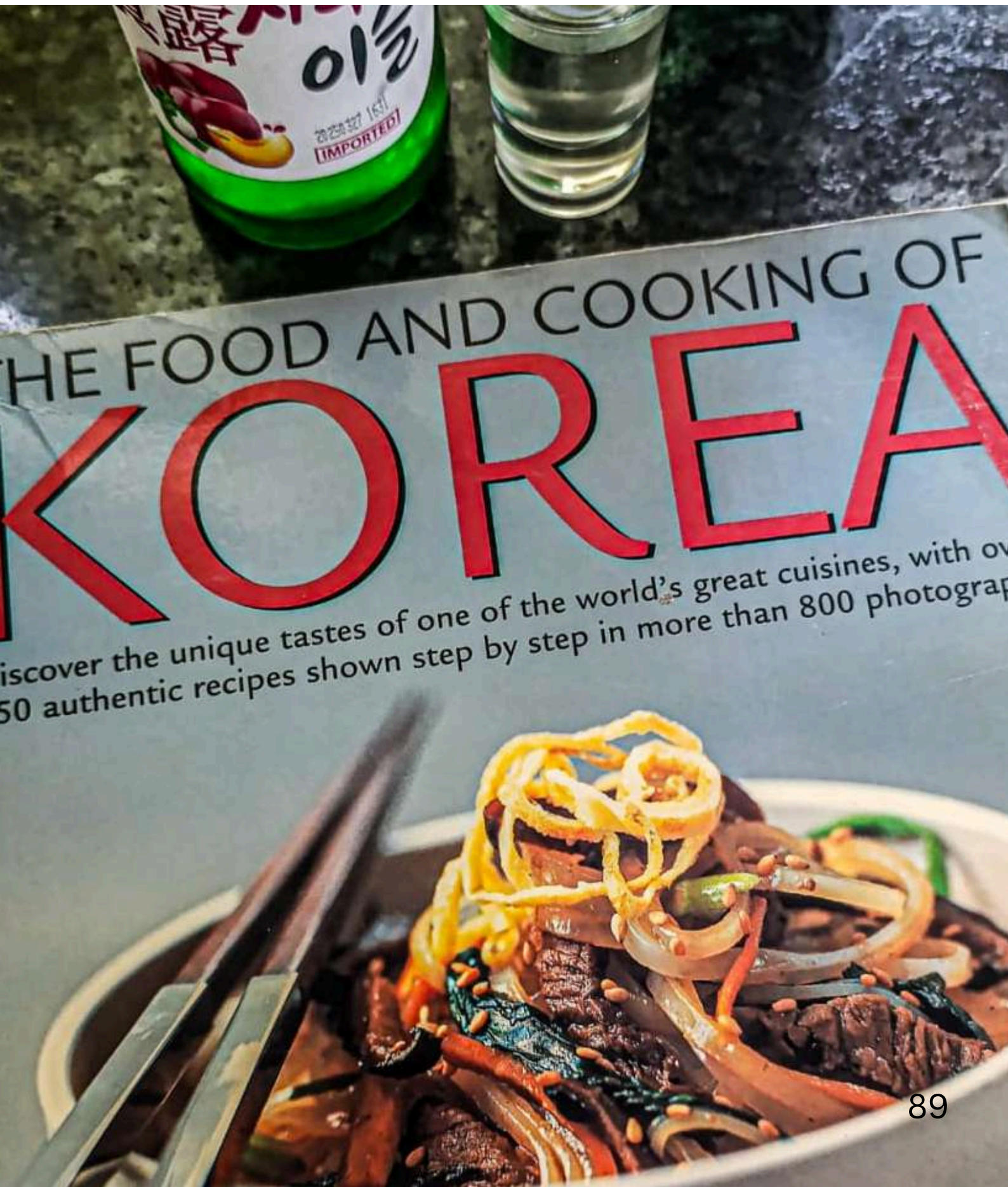
SECTION

EAST LONDON
COASTAL
LIFESTYLE

by Wade Louw

A Bowl from Another Shore

A Journey into Korean Comfort Food





While leafing through an old Korean cookbook, I found myself drawn to the comforting simplicity of bibimbap, a dish that feels both humble and beautifully composed.

At its heart, bibimbap is an arrangement rather than a recipe. A bowl of warm short-grain sushi rice becomes the canvas, topped with a colourful selection of sautéed vegetables. Carrots, mushrooms, zucchini, each cooked simply so their individual flavours remain clear and distinct.

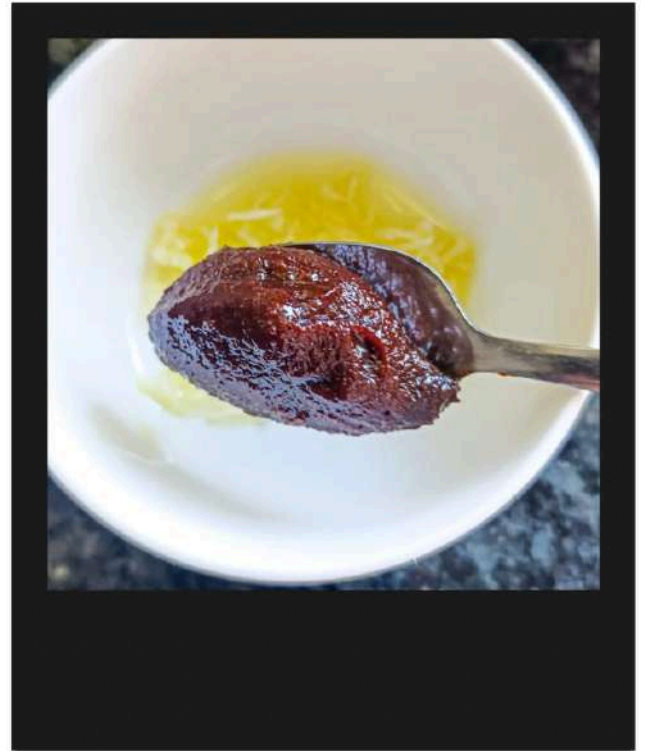
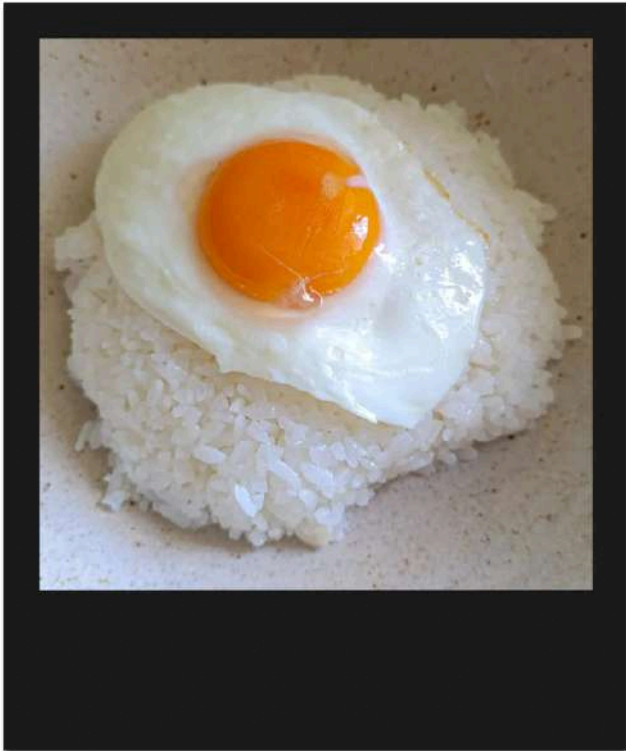




At the centre sits a generous dollop of gochujang, that deeply savoury Korean chilli paste, seasoned here with garlic, toasted sesame oil and a splash of rice vinegar. When everything is finally mixed together, the bowl transforms, heat, spice, sweetness and umami folding into the rice in that deeply satisfying way that makes the dish so beloved.

What makes it even more appealing is how easy it is to recreate at home. Nearly all the ingredients are readily available in our city now, a small reminder of how wonderfully global our local food landscape has become.

And for those wanting to take the experience a step further, a few local restaurants have begun stocking soju, the clear Korean spirit traditionally enjoyed alongside meals like this. Served ice cold, its clean, subtle sweetness makes the perfect companion to the warmth and spice of bibimbap.



Sometimes inspiration doesn't come from elaborate recipes or rare ingredients. Sometimes it comes from a worn page in an old book and a simple bowl that brings a taste of another culture comfortably into your own kitchen.



The Compost corner

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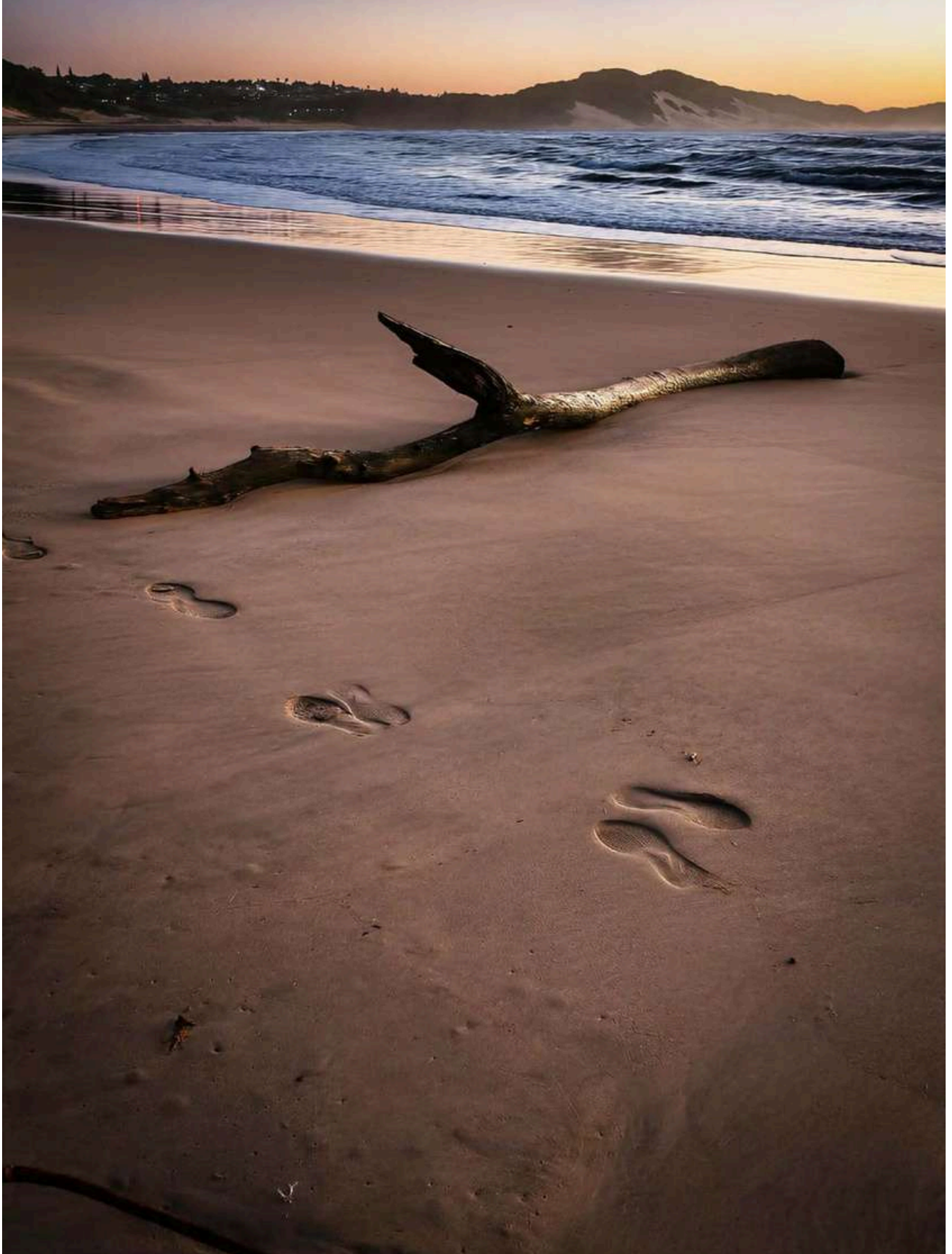


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East London in Light

Through the Lens of Brett Greenan





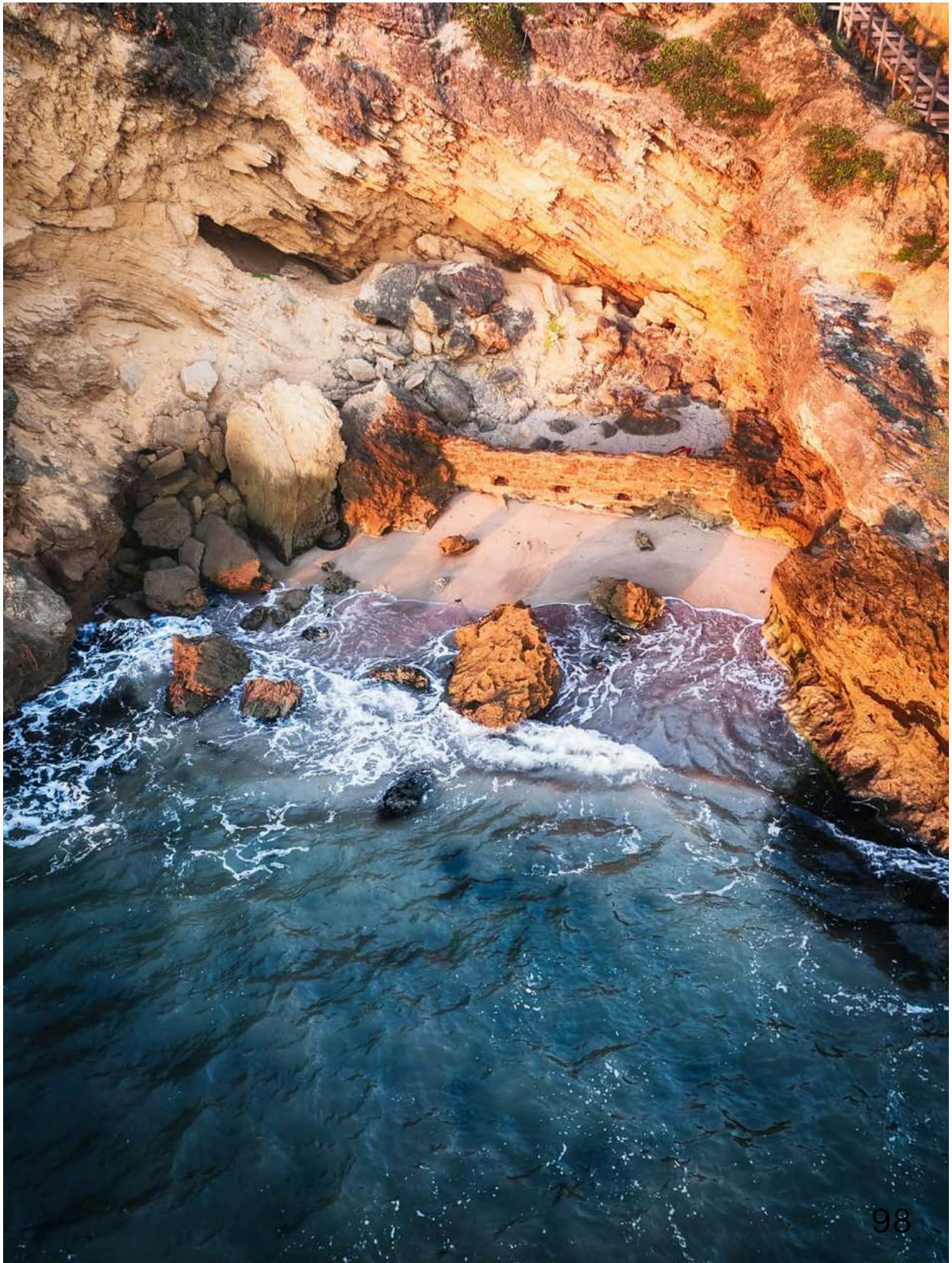
Some photographers capture places. Others capture their atmosphere. In the work of Brett Greenan, East London is not merely photographed, it is observed with patience, with reverence, and with a sensitivity to the subtle poetry that lives between light and landscape.

He begins not with landmarks but with atmosphere. For him, the true subject is often light itself. The way morning light moves through ocean mist, touches harbour steel, or softens the coastline and carries emotion.

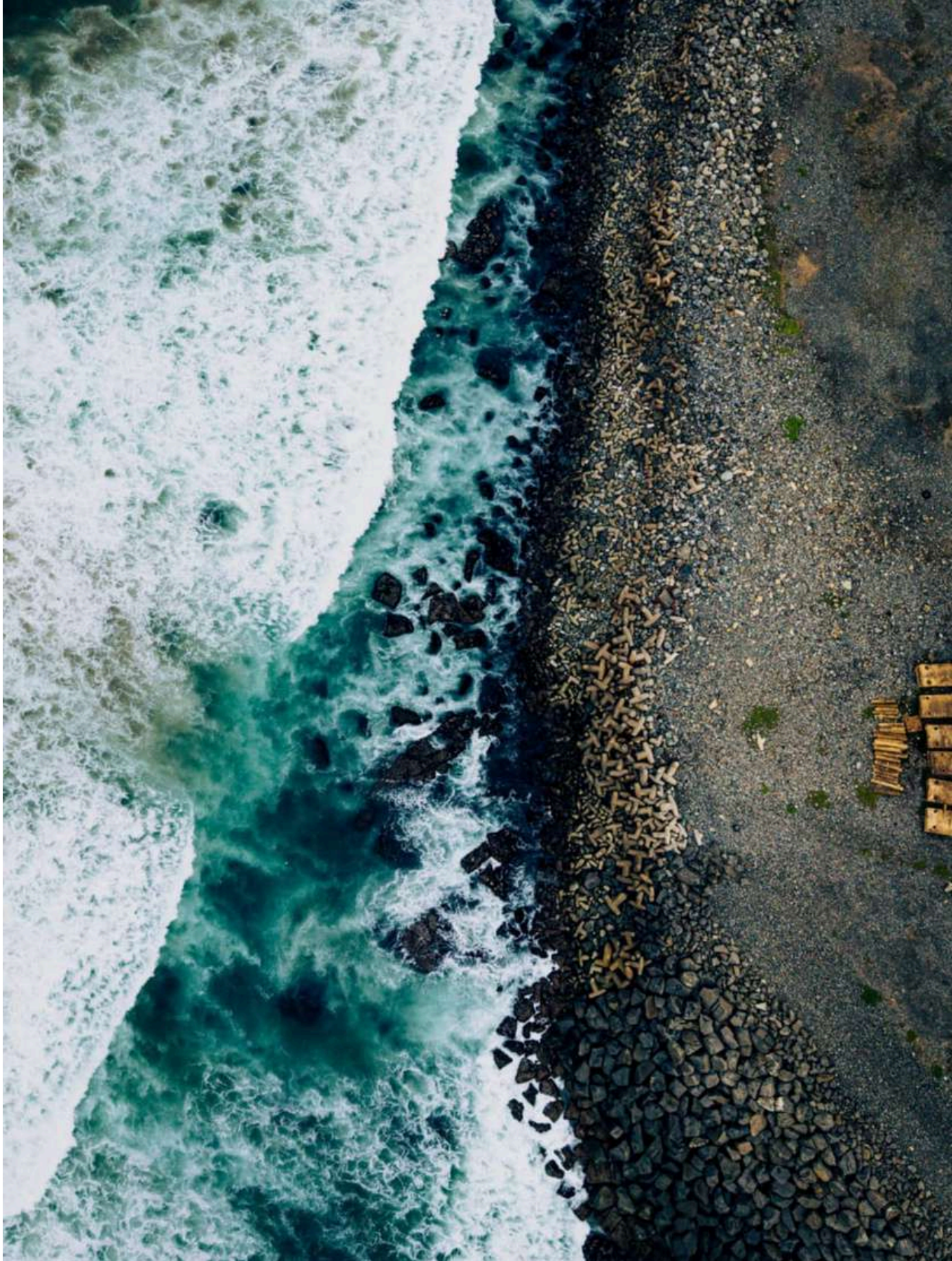
While the city offers natural grandeur, wide beaches, dramatic cliffs, and the working harbour, Brett often anchors these expansive scenes with quiet human moments: a lone surfer, a distant ship, or someone walking along a pier. For him these details remind us that we are part of the landscape, not separate from it.

Early morning is when the city feels most honest for him. Before the streets fully wake, sunrise over the ocean and harbour reveals a softer, more reflective side of East London, an authenticity that can't be staged. The harbour, Nahoon Beach, the Esplanade cliffs, and the bridges over the Buffalo River are places he returns to often. Each day they shift subtly with light, weather, and tide, offering something new to observe

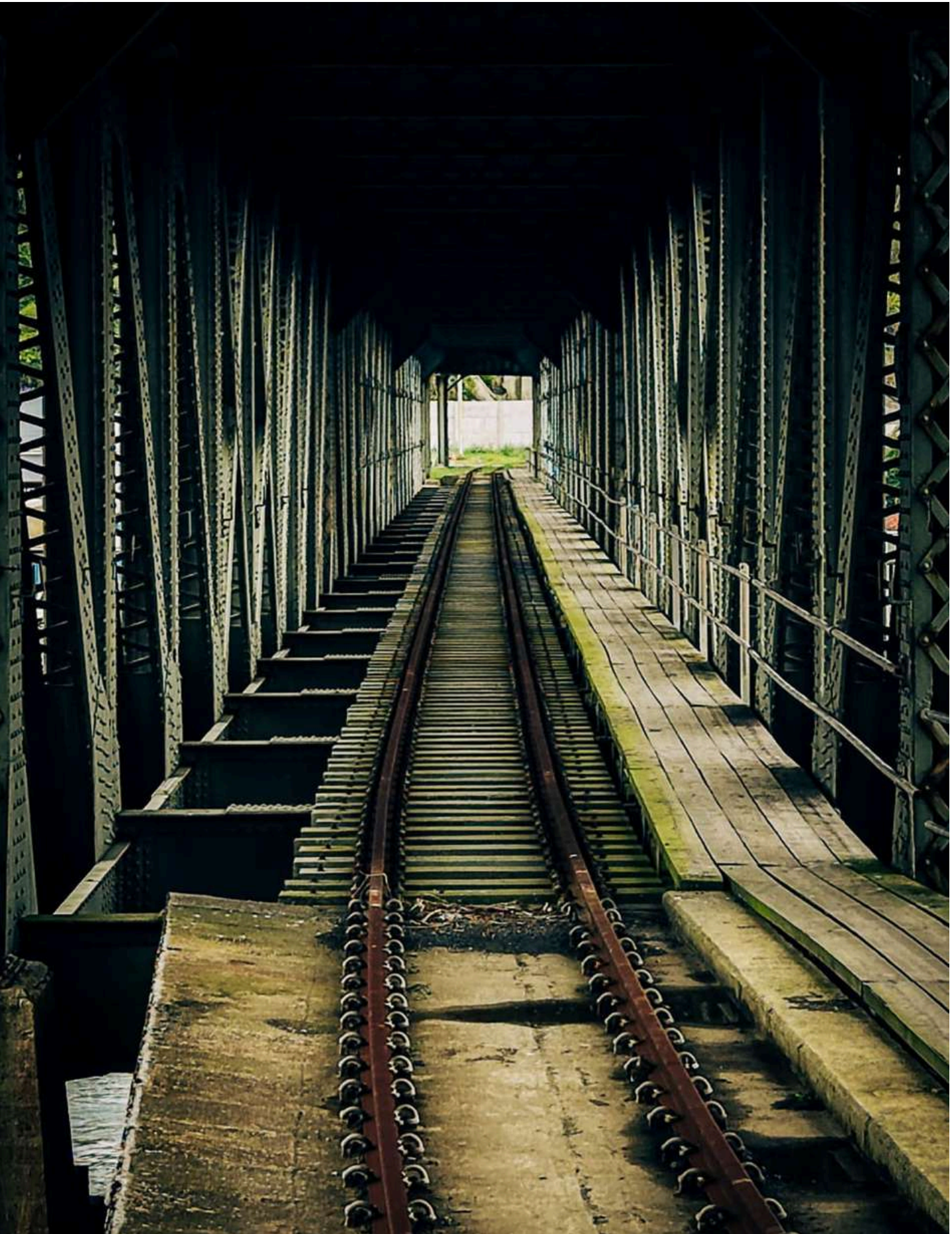




Over time, Brett's photography has become less about simply capturing beautiful scenes and more about documenting the atmosphere and identity of the city itself. His work encourages us to slow down and notice the nuance of familiar places.




Through his lens, East London reveals its true character, resilient, quietly powerful, and deeply connected to the sea. And sometimes, all it takes is a different perspective to remind us how beautiful our own city really is.



Urban Poetry in Paint

Murals and the New Visual Language of East London





For decades, graffiti existed on the margins of cities, an art form born from rebellion, appearing overnight on forgotten walls. In recent years, however, something remarkable has been unfolding in East London. Murals and street art have begun transforming the city's public spaces into something resembling an open-air gallery.

Walls that once carried little more than fading advertisements and weather stains now hold vivid portraits, wildlife, and symbols of South African identity. These works do more than decorate the city, they subtly reshape how people experience it.

Among the artists contributing to this transformation is local architect and street artist Nathan Sanan, who has become known for murals that blend architectural precision with the spontaneity of street art. His towering Springbok mural at Vincent Park Shopping Centre has become something of a local landmark, while his bird murals along Chamberlain Road introduce flashes of movement and life into the urban landscape.



Internationally recognised graffiti artist Nardstar has also left her mark on the city. Her mural at the Nestlé factory in East London, created as part of the Shayisfuba campaign, honours the women who work there a monumental yet deeply human tribute to resilience and labour.

Equally striking are the vibrant portrait and botanical works of Nicci Swartz. Her National Flame Protea mural at Vincent Park celebrates South Africa's national flower with bold colour and contemporary energy, transforming an ordinary wall into a moment of visual theatre. What makes this movement particularly compelling is that it unfolds in everyday places: shopping centres, factory walls, school buildings, and street corners. These works are encountered not in the quiet of a gallery but in the rhythm of daily life. In doing so, East London's murals are dissolving the boundary between art and city itself, turning the city's walls into canvases that tell stories about nature, identity, and place, slowly transforming the urban landscape into something far more imaginative than bare concrete ever allowed.



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