



ART IN PROCESS:

an interdisciplinary staff exhibition

Department of Art and Music



UNISA ART GALLERY

21 SEPTEMBER - 4 OCTOBER 2019

curated by Paul Cooper

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

By Paul Cooper

The prompt was for colleagues to respond selectively, creatively and critically to the work they do as teaching staff in the Department. The word process in the title of the show is significant. Colleagues were asked to contribute work that not only relates implicitly to their teaching and learning activities but that also explicitly demonstrates a process or set of processes relating to technical applications and conceptual contexts.

An interesting opportunity presents itself when cultural producers such as musicians and visual artists collaborate and work together. At the core of all creative work is a vulnerable place that all cultural producers work from. These are places of uncertainty, through which we all move to manifest our deepest responses to the places, people and contexts we encounter on a daily basis. It is there that we find the raw material to form our ideas into moments of meaningful creative expression.

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

- Andrea Walters
- Andrew Swanepoel
- Ania Krajewska
- Christel Liebenberg
- Duduzile Mathebula
- Gwenneth Miller
- Kabelo Maja
- Lawrence Lemaoana
- Nelmarie du Preez
- Nathani Lüneburg
- Paul Cooper and Marc Duby
- Setumane Justice Jimmy Mokoena

Andrea Walters

BVA (Unisa)
MVA (current) (Unisa)
Art Lecturer, Artist and Editor



A week, more or less

Femicide is the murder of a woman, usually by a husband or lover. In South Africa, at least three women are murdered daily by their partners. Walters's sculptural installation responds to these femicides reported in the media by the inclusion of victims' mouths, which are carved into ubiquitous Sunlight laundry soap bars. Each sculptural component is placed on a worn needlepoint rug, alluding to domesticity. The backdrop is a death shroud, embroidered with the names of the dead. According to Walters, the work signals how easily the banal and transitory meet the violent and permanent. .

Andrea Walters
andrea.walters.unisa@gmail.com



Andrea Walters
A week, more or less (2019)
Mixed media installation:
Sunlight soap, carpet and
embroidered cloth





Andrea Walters
A week, more or less (2019)
Mixed media installation:
Sunlight soap, carpet and
embroidered cloth

Andrew Smith

BVA (UP)

MVA (UP)

PhD in Art (current) (UNISA)

Art Lecturer and Artist

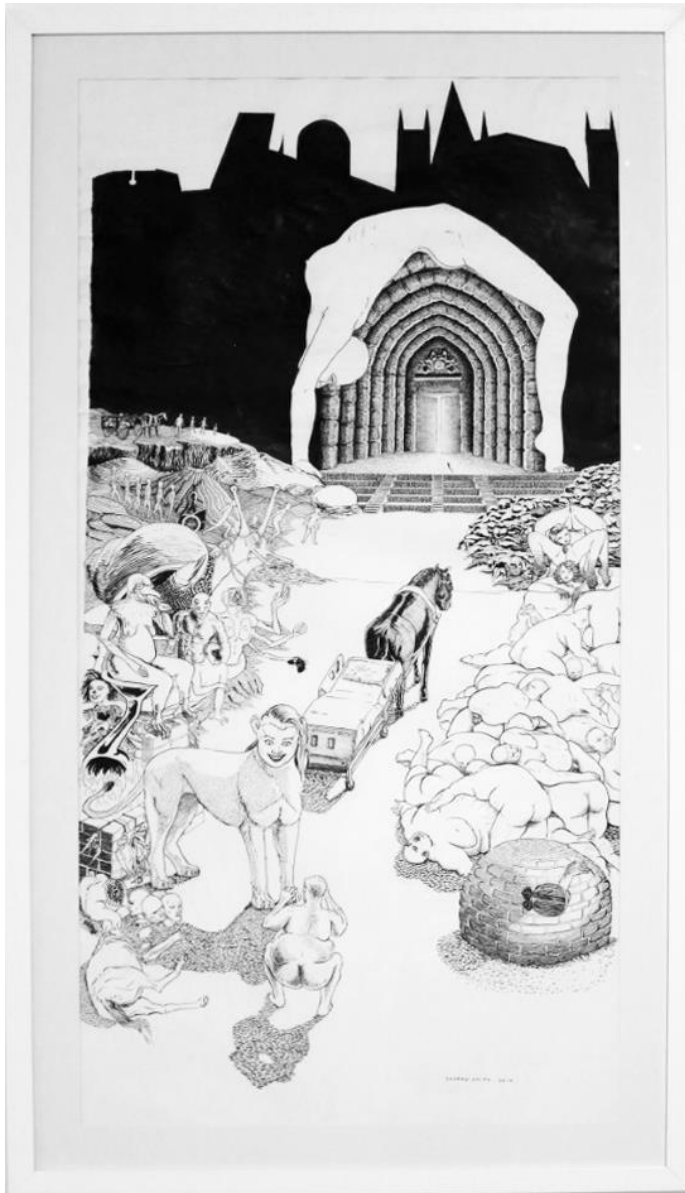


Garden of Earthly Delights 1

Andrew Smith's drawing entitled *Garden of Earthly Delights 1* depicts a doomed path, or a private hell. The artist addresses personal addiction and the notion of clearly seeing one's own doom. The work's detailed surface is intended to evoke obsession, simultaneously conveying a sense of dis-ease and discomfort through subtle distortions in perspective and proportion. Undulating visual patterns and textures are intended to both draw the viewer in and evince a feeling of nausea.



Andrew Smith
Garden of Earthly Delights
(detail) (2019)
Ink on paper



Andrew Smith
Garden of Earthly Delights (2019)
Ink on paper



Andrew Swanepoel

BVA (Cum Laude) (Unisa)
MVA (Cum Laude) (Unisa)
Art Lecturer and Artist



Blou Steen/Blue Stone

The title of the video performance by Andrew Swanepoel, *Blou Steen/Blue Stone* (2018), refers to the process of chemically castrating or chemically restraining the sexual virility of young conscripts in the South African Defence Force during the Apartheid years. Copper sulphate, also known as blue stone or blue vitriol, was added to beverages served to conscripts by army chefs. The notion of blue stone is applied as a metaphoric device to illustrate the toxicity of the processes implicated in constructing and controlling a young man's gender identity.



Swany (Andrew Swanepoel)
Still from *Blou Steen/Blue Stone* (2018)
Performance video





Swany (Andrew Swanepoel)
Stills from *Blou Steen/Blue Stone* (2018)
Performance video

Ania Krajewska

BVA (Unisa)
MA (Fine Arts) (Cum Laude) (UP)
DLitt et Phil (Art History) (Unisa)
Senior Art Lecturer and Artist



The Anthropocene Book of Trees and Fossils

In her work, *The Anthropocene Book of Trees and Fossils*, Ania Krajewska determines that ignorance of our biological and ecological heritage is a dangerously short-sighted paradigm at the end of the second decade of the twenty first century. The Anthropocene, a term coined by Eugene Stoermer, marks the visible geological consequences of human impact on the planet and includes debates on the calamity of the extinction of species, deforestation, plastic pollution, carbon dioxide emissions, fossil fuel abuse and the general recklessness of human behaviour. Krajewska addresses the possibility of the Eremocene (the Age of Loneliness on our planet) where the environments are pillaged and biodiversity is extinguished beyond repair.



Ania Krajewska
Title: The Anthropocene Book of Trees and Fossils (2018-2019)
Digital prints





Ania Krajewska

Title: The Anthropocene Book of Trees and Fossils (2018-2019)

Digital prints

Christel Liebenberg

BVA (UNISA)

Art Lecturer, Multimedia Specialist and Artist

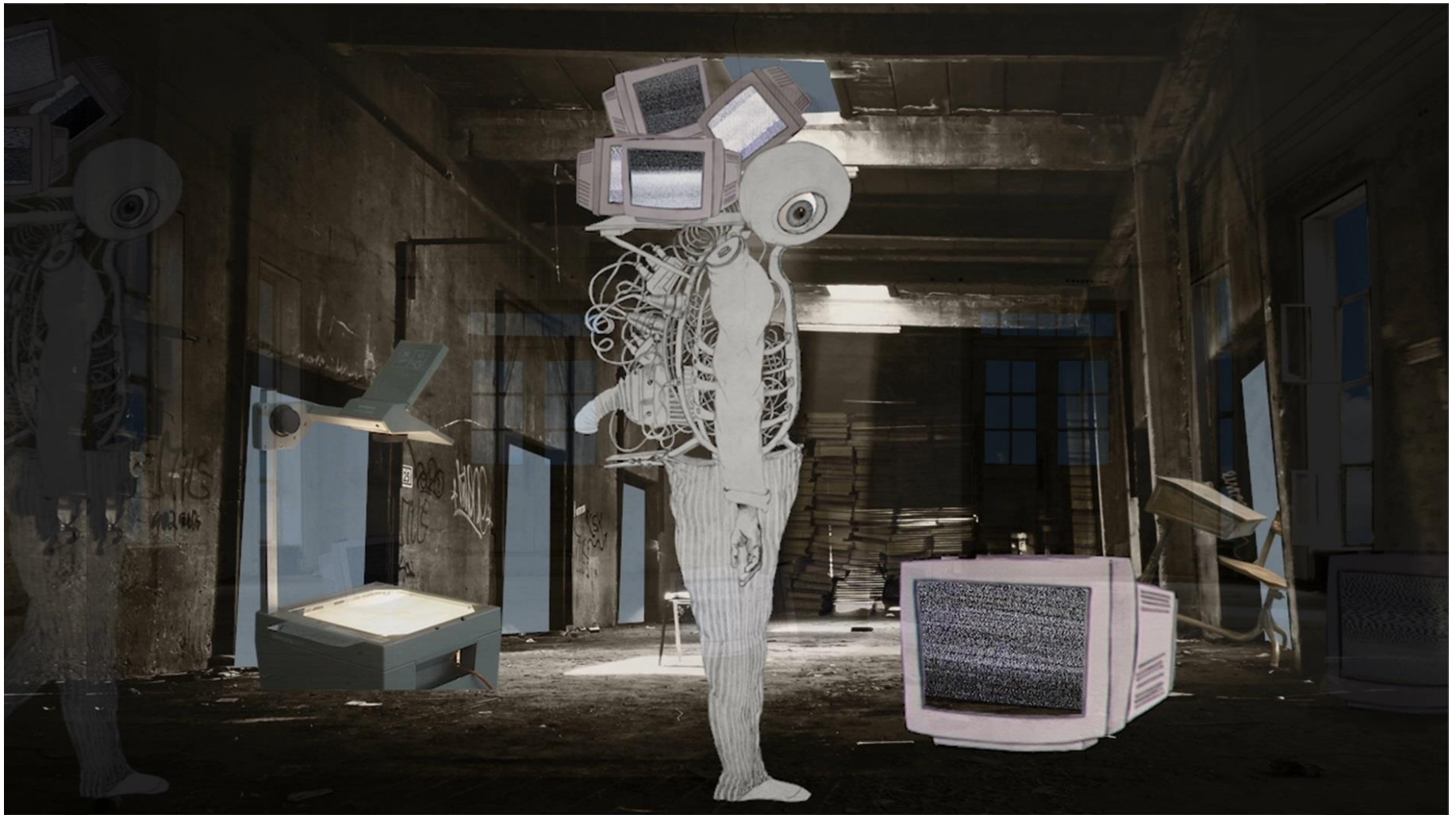


Humachine and It's All the Same

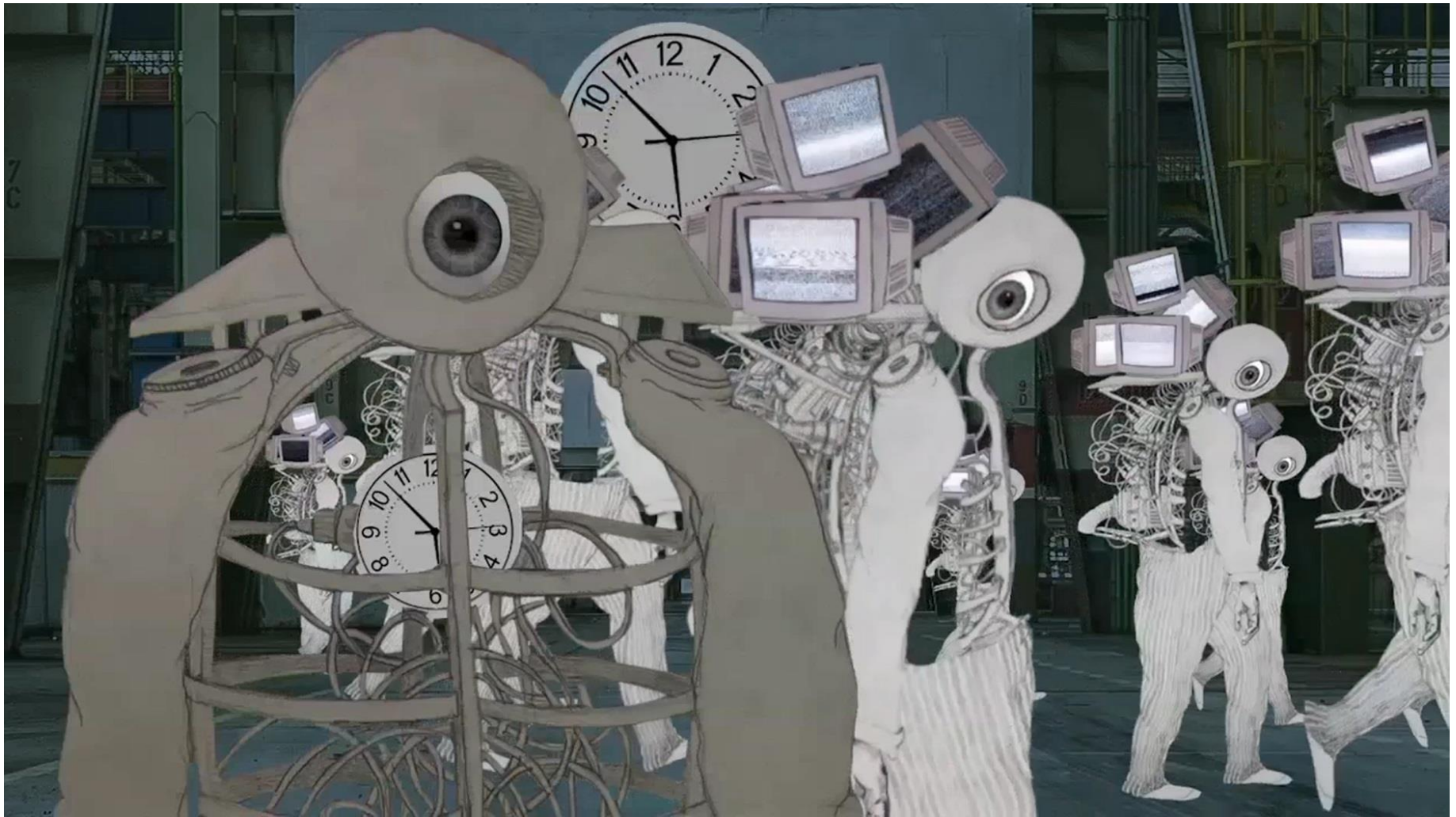
Through these two short animations, Christel Liebenberg explores the relationship between humans and everyday technology. *Humachine* (2018) is set in future post-apocalyptic society where the character repeats the same movements over and over, as we humans frequently do. It considers how aspects of our present will still exist and be repeated in the future. *It's All the Same* (2019), reflects upon the ways that we have become oversaturated with everyday technologies through constant online networks that distract, engender narcissism and expectations of instant gratification.

Christel Liebenberg
It's all the same (2019)
Animation stills





Christel Liebenberg
Humachine (2018)
Animation



Christel Liebenberg
Humachine (2018)
Animation

Duduzile Mathebula

BA Journalism and Political Science (Midrand Graduate School)
Postgraduate Diploma in Economic and Development Policy (Wits Business School)
Honours and Masters: International Relations and Affairs (Wits)
PhD in Art (UNISA) (current)
Research Assistant



In Leeto la metši le bagešo

In *Leeto la metši le bagešo*, Duduzile Mathebula comments on a journey about identity and lineage and seeks to address the answers that are located within footprints, under water and on anthills.



Duduzile Mathebula
Leeto la metsi le bagešo (2010)
Installation

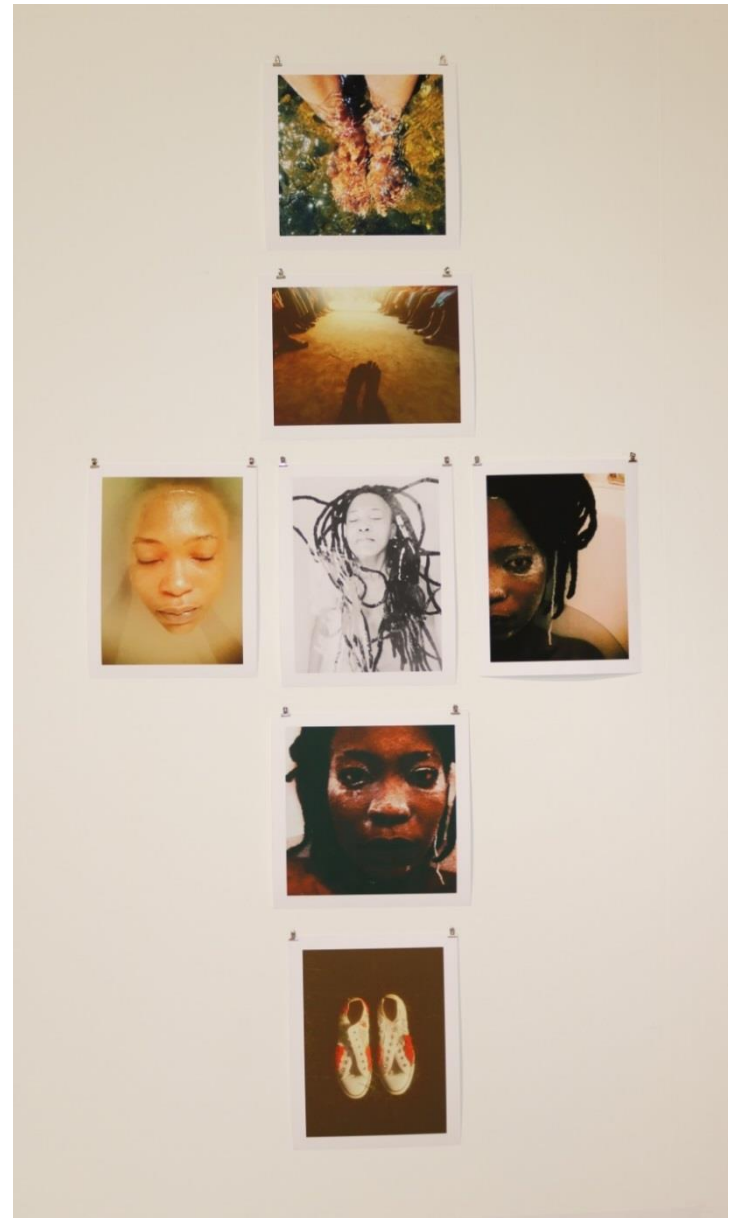


Duduzile Mathebula
Leeto la metši le bagešo (detail) (2010)
Installation



Duduzile Mathebula

Leeto la metši le bagešo (detail) (2010)
Installation



Gwenneth Miller

BA (Fine Art) (University of the North West)
HOD(n) (University of the North West)
MA (Fine Arts) (UP)
DLitt et Phil (Art History) (Unisa)
Senior Art Lecturer, Curator and Artist



Loss and its remains

This installation comprises three sections, each reflecting on the concept of remains as a refusal to relinquish the past, since the remains serve as a reminder of what is lost.

Influenced by Kristeva's writings on despair and sorrow, and an investigation of certain complexities inherent in this terrain, Miller evokes the tensional relationships that underscore loss and its tangible residue. Influenced by the writings of Giles Deleuze on surface, depth and change, the works are linked conceptually with Miller's research concerning the complexity inherent in folds. She uses folds both as site specific indicators and as a recurrent motif of loss and bereavement, alluding to the absent body.

Loss is further investigated through traces of human intervention on the land. The construction of farm dams encapsulates the attempt to provide for animals, but also invokes the trials and frequent failures inherent in attempts to harness nature. Miller's five works signify how loss is enfolded in the traces that surround us.



Gwenneth Miller
Folds. Assumed abundance (2017-2018)
Oil paint on canvas
915 x 1830 mm



Gwenneth Miller
New dams from the old (2019)
Ink on cotton paper
840 x 590 mm



Gwenneth Miller
Record of Pangbourne (2019) with detail
 Mixed media on cotton paper.
 840 x 590 mm



Gwenneth Miller
Dullstroom Dam (2019) with detail
Oil paint on canvas
1520 x 600 mm

Gwenneth Miller

Speak tenderly to my beloved I-IV (2019)

Photographs of hospital bed gown
each 590 x 420 mm



Kabelo Maja

BA (FA) (KwaZulu Natal)
MVA (current) (UNISA)
Art Lecturer and Artist



Whistleblowing

In sport, the act of whistle blowing signifies power and control through the referee's instructions, warnings and punitive measures. Kabelo Maja presents a range of three-dimensional works exploring socio-political issues concerning life in South Africa. The whistle sculptures further serve as a metaphor for the ethical and moral issues of a society where people are encouraged to act as whistle-blowers against the corrupt. Maja's installation interrogates the morals and ethics of contemporary societies, not only in a South African context but globally. .



Kabelo Maja

Whistleblowing (2018)

Installation: Galvanised Steel, Artificial turf, PVC pipes & Perspex boards, and Duct tape
Dimensions variable



Kabelo Maja

Whistleblowing (details) (2018)

Installation: Galvanised Steel, Artificial turf, PVC pipes & Perspex boards, and Duct tape
Dimensions variable



Kabelo Maja

Whistleblowing (details) (2018)

Installation: Galvanised Steel, Artificial turf, PVC pipes & Perspex boards, and Duct tape
Dimensions variable

Lawrence Lemaona

BA(FA) (UJ)
MVA (current) (UNISA)
Artist and lecturer



Fools Gold

Lawrence Lemaona regards the relationship between the media and the public as inherently problematic. He cynically identifies and repurposes existing control apparatuses using embroidered Kanga fabric, a material with its own complex provenance, emblazoned with darkly subverted political dictums. Lemaona critiques the sensationalist local media, and its ready public acceptance as the ‘truth’. Just so, when the reverse side of *Fools Gold* (2019) is examined, the text is rendered unintelligible on a background of barbs, turning didactic and propagandistic tools on their heads.



Lawrence Lemaona
Fools Gold (2019)

Mixed media installation: Embroidery and textile



Lawrence Lemaona

Fools Gold (2019)

Mixed media installation: Embroidery and textile



Nathani Lüneburg

BA(FA), MA(Fine Arts), and PhD (UP)
Senior lecturer UNISA



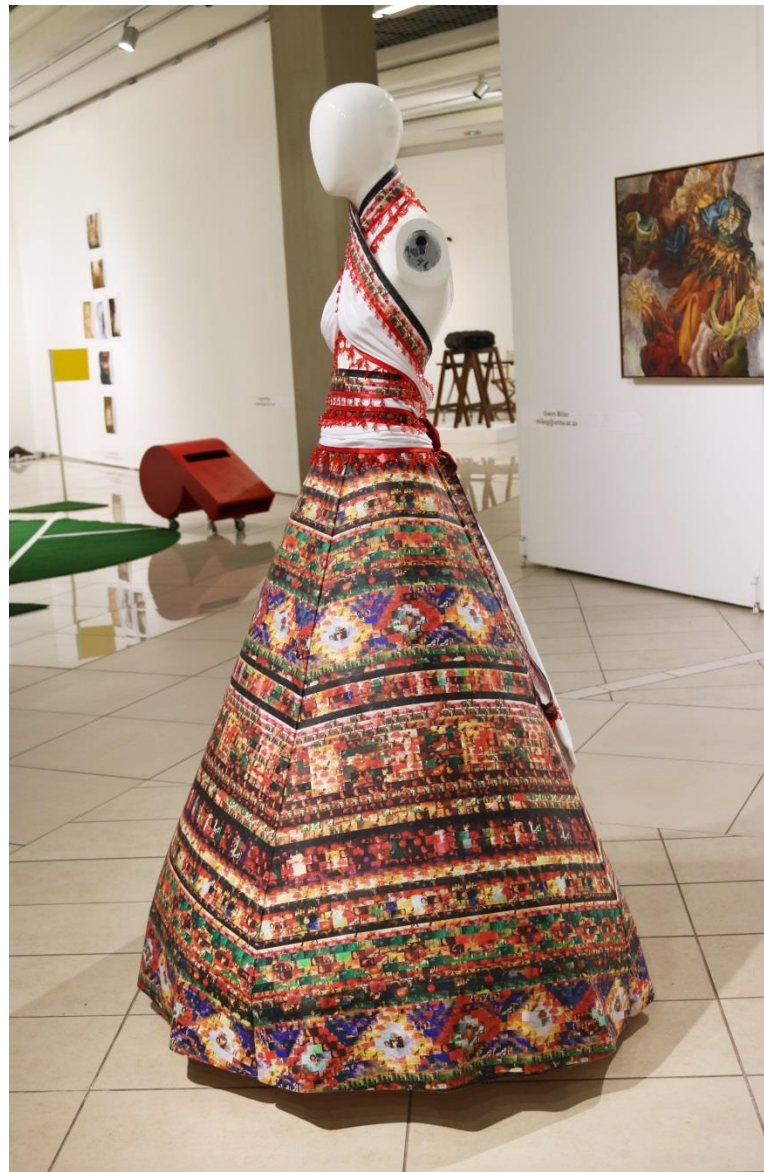
Dress

My Kameelperdjie se Droom (My Dreaming Giraffe)

Lüneburg presents two individual artworks conceptually linked by mourning and melancholia. The first, a bereavement dress, comprises an A-line canvas skirt with a white draped bodice. The skirt is patterned with 2 387 animation-stills narrating the traumatic experience of a miscarriage. Her second installation comprises a white wooden giraffe facing a television screen that is positioned on a three-legged table. A digital stop-frame animation consisting of 1 155 frames is accompanied by a piano score composed and performed by Lüneburg herself. The animation narrates the journey of a pet giraffe in search of her deceased calf. The artworks are rooted in Sigmund Freud's (1917) concept of mourning and melancholia, which is essential to her understanding of love and loss..



Nathani Luneburg
Dress (2019)
3D installation and detail



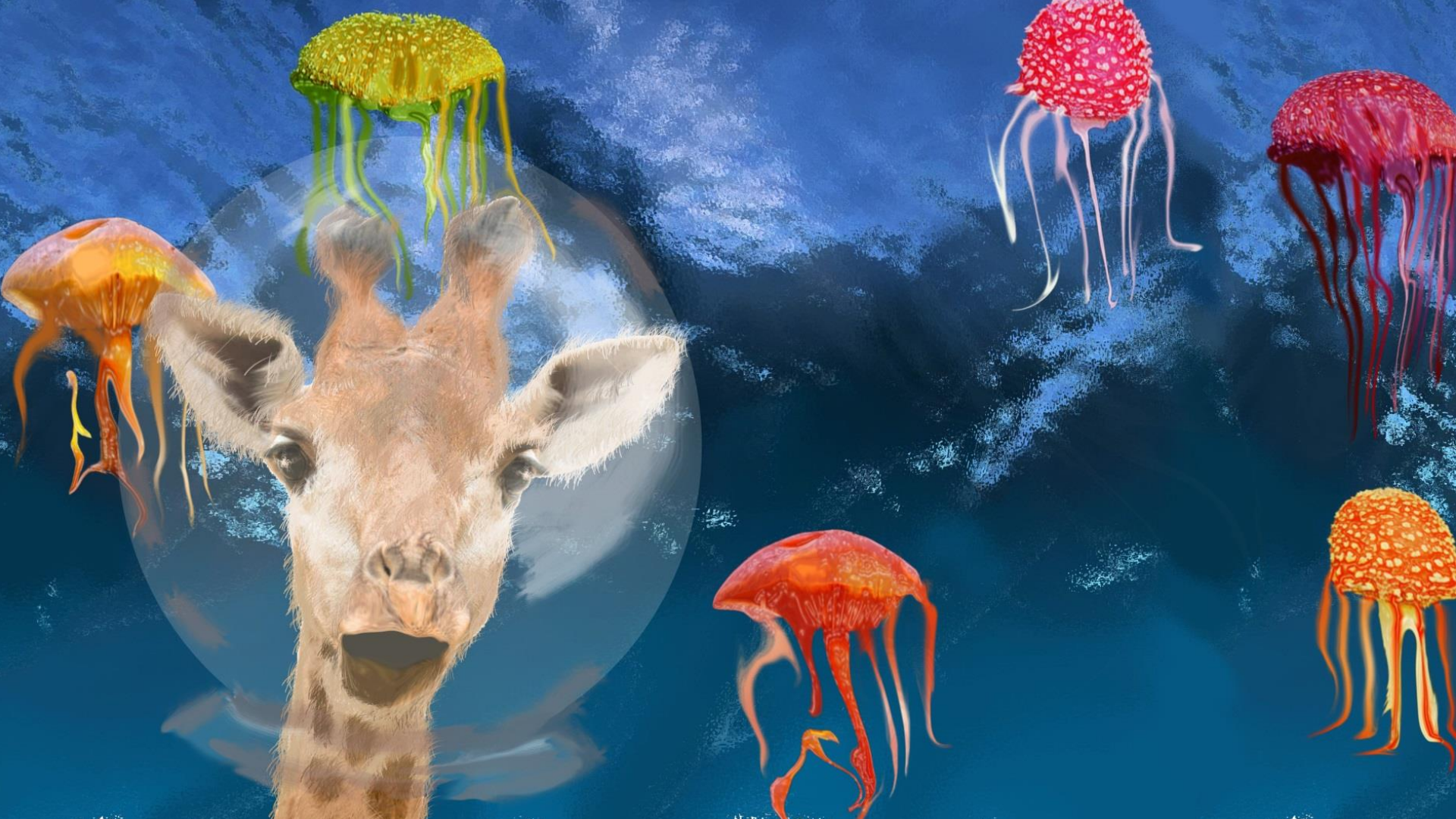
Nathani Luneburg
Dress (2019)
3D installation and detail



Nathani Luneburg
My Kameelperdjie se Droom
(My Dreaming Giraffe)
Animation and 3D installation



Nathani Luneburg
My Kameelperdjie se Droom
(My Dreaming Giraffe)
Animation and 3D installation



Nathani Luneburg
My Kameelperdjie se Droom
(My Dreaming Giraffe)
Animation and 3D installation

Nelmarie du Preez

B.A. Theology (North West)
B.A. Audiovisual Multimedia (Unisa)
Advanced Diploma in Visual Art (Unisa)
MA in Computational Art (Goldsmiths, UK)
MFA Fine Art (Goldsmiths, UK)

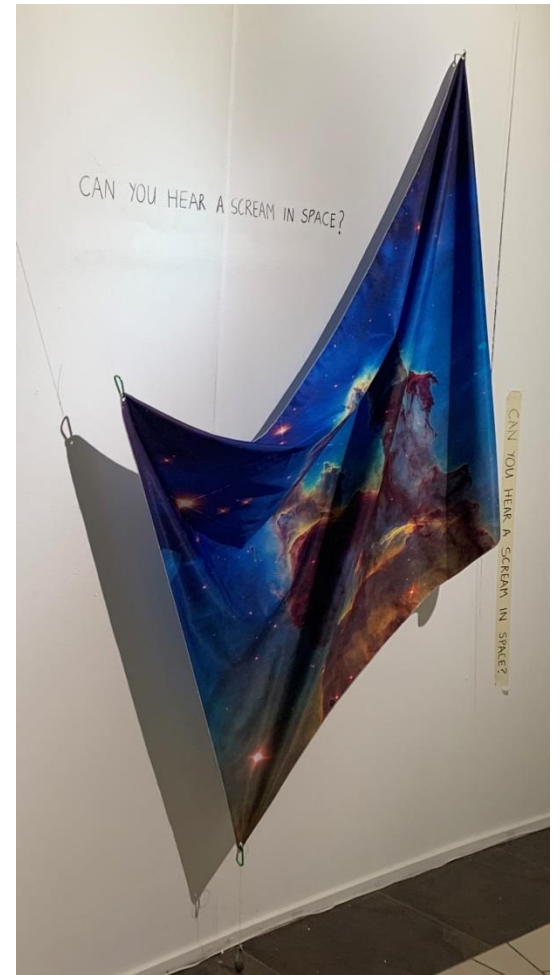


Deadline:

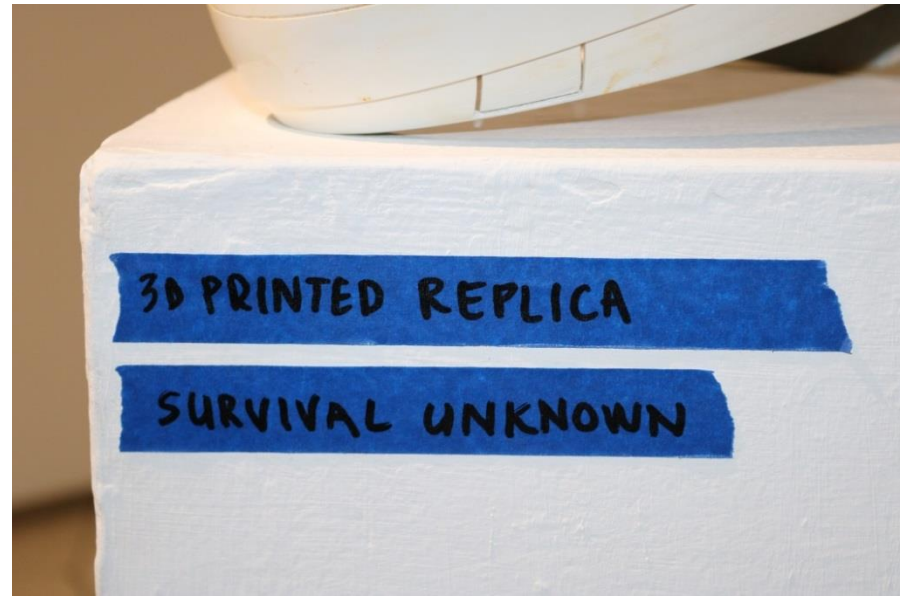
Deadline: (2019) navigates how our actions today, are impacted by our anticipation of tomorrow. It comprises of a 13:40 minute single channel video that is displayed on a machine that moves a television across a diagonal canvas, in accordance with the movement of the camera. Du Preez sets a stage for her investigation into how anticipation arises and how technology, religion, mass-media, art history and conspiracy theories influence our ideas/ideals about the future. The investigation plays out across three acts, with an introduction or 'gathering of data'-phase; a prediction-phase and an execution-phase. Following the tropes and mechanics of movie-making, the totality of the work brings together a collage of thoughts, research and questions about the future and it's imminent *Deadline: ...*



Nelmarie du Preez
Deadline: (2018-2019)
Robotic Installation



Nelmarie du Preez
Deadline: (2018-2019)
Robotic Installation



Nelmarie du Preez
Deadline: (2018-2019)
Robotic Installation

Paul Cooper

PGCHE (UP)
BA FA (WSOA)
BA (HONS) (WSOA)
MA (WSOA)



Marc Duby

BA (UCT)
MMus (UN)
PhD (UP)



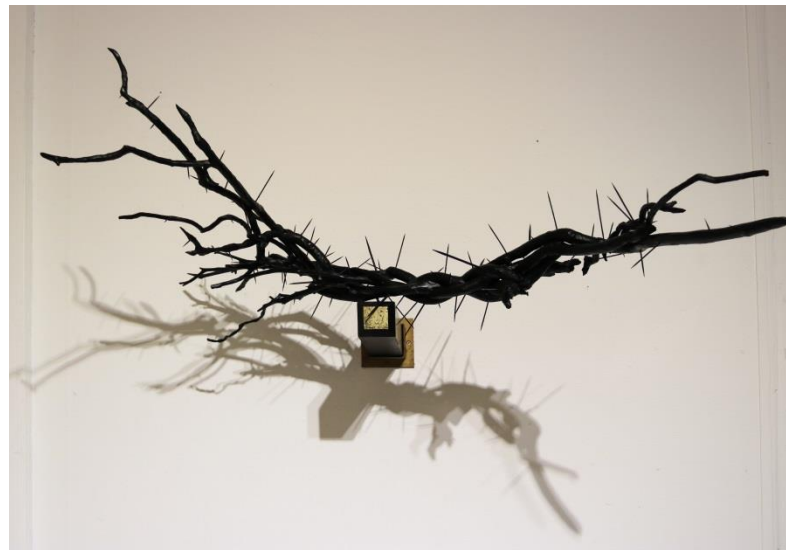
Untitled

Cooper and Duby's real-time collaboration involving painting and music carries with it an appropriate condition for making, free of any prescribed or officially sanctioned protocol, censorship and judgement. Duby's DIY modular synthesizer enables two broad categories of music types: drones and repetitive sequences. When melody is absent or continuously looping, other musical elements come into focus, most obviously timbral and rhythmic aspects. The performance depends on live feedback ensuing between Cooper and Duby and, since nothing is scripted, emerges from moment to moment in the course of these improvised interactions. The uncertainty of this creative place is reinforced by an unconditional flow of gentle and mindful response and reciprocity.



Paul Cooper
Untitled (2019)
Sculpture and painterly performance

Marc Duby
Untitled (2019)
Sound Performance



Paul Cooper
Untitled (2019)
Sculpture and painterly performance

Marc Duby
Untitled (2019)
Sound Performance



Paul Cooper
Untitled (2019)
Sculpture and painterly performance

Marc Duby
Untitled (2019)
Sound Performance



Setumane Justice J Mokoena

BA Fine Arts (TUT)
Advanced Diploma in Visual Art (Unisa)
Printing Lecturer and Artist



Notes From the Yard

In a recent collaborative printmaking process entitled *Notes From the Yard*, Setumane Justice Jimmy Mokoena in a light-hearted collaboration with his children, considers notions of everyday experience in relation to safety and security. He offers a critical account of violent outbursts such as the recent upsurge of xenophobic attacks. Mokoena draws inspiration from Mothsile wa Nthodi's woodcut series and integrates this with his children's contributions in the form of marks and images.



(A) King

Notes from the Yard

Print 1997

Setumane Justice Jimmy Mokoena
Notes From the Yard (2019)
Woodblock print

Art in Process: An Interdisciplinary Staff Exhibition. A review.

Robyn Sassen

Art in Process: An Interdisciplinary Staff Exhibition, curated by **Paul Cooper**, showcased work and work-in-progress by 13 artists teaching at the University of South Africa, in 2019. The initiative reveals a different side to working academics, enabling students to get the chance to experience what their teacher is making. But further to that, and like the Maboneng-based *Centre for the Less Good Idea*, this exhibition enables work-in-progress to be shown to the gallery-visiting public.

In part, the project's mandate was to give voice to the current research projects of these artists, and in this respect the notion that cleaves reflection to making was part of the brief. The brief's breadth, not forcing artists to make work according to a given 'theme' is valuable; instead of being prescriptive, it opens doors to collaboration. Many of the participants in this exhibition collaborate in their teaching, but not many have extended this give-and-take energy into the work on show here.

Only one piece featured clear collaborative braveries between two colleagues. The untitled work by **Cooper** and **Marc Duby**, a research professor with the department of Musicology, reflects ideas of chance by artists of the ilk of John Cage and that of Yves Klein and his "living paintbrushes". The piece offers a crossover between visual energy and aural traditions, boasts a deliberate lack of planning and choreography in its finding of itself, and uses a home-made synthesiser working on drone technology which mixes sound with ideas of censorship. Premised as it was, the work awakened possibilities in sound art and the idea of a happening. While the gallery visitor after the exhibition's opening was not able to see the happening, there was an atmosphere of mystical purpose associated with the piece's elements, now quiet in the wake of the performance, which took place on the opening night.

The absence of the recorded performance is not to say that the exhibition – or the gallery – lacks technological know-how. The first work one encountered in this this show was **Nelmarie du Preez's** aesthetically magnetic and politically interesting *Deadlines:*, which generates its own momentum in

its conflation of slow and quick technology and the importance of flags. This curious piece set the tone for the premises of the exhibition and immediately engaged the visitor in process, not unlike an idiophonic musical instrument, which makes sound without human intervention.

While the space for each artist's work was curated to enable works to 'speak' to one another and yet remain contained in themselves, not all of the approaches were completely convincing. The department's multimedia co-ordinator **Andrew Smith**, was a case in point. His heavily detailed drawing, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, is thoughtful, humorous and complex. It does, however, seem too incomplete to be a work-in-progress, and begs for the presence of a corollary. Similarly **Justice Mokoena's** relief print is an interesting image but falls short of a strong print ethos in its making.

Dynamic energy is evoked in the soap and metaphor-filled installation by Durban-based Unisa lecturer **Andrea Walters**. A mouth is carved into 25 bars of commercial Sunlight soap. It recalls the traditional threat to wash out a swearing child's mouth, thus cleansing it of dirty words. But Walters pushes this envelop further, with a found rug and a death shroud which she has stitched with the names of women lost to abuse partners, enabling the work to speak of damaging and toxic domesticity.

Lawrence Lemaona rose to national acknowledgement with his use of mediums which traditionally fit the female domain: fabric and sewing. Indeed, his signature approach has used hot pink, from the time of his ABSA L'Atelier win, in 2005. Here he shows a work which offers a nod to the reputation he has as one with the temerity to play with gender values, but it does not push these associations. The visitor feels a whiff of recognition but is not enticed to look more deeply.

Another Durban-based Unisa tutor is **Andrew Swanepoel** who examines his forced conscription in the South African Defence Force. His video work, *Blou Steen/Blue Stone* touches on a legend about SADF practices in their aggressive heteronormative imperatives. It was believed that a substance called blue stone or blue vitriol was used to chemically castrate youngsters homosexually inclined. Swanepoel's potent short film is collaborative by nature. He is the performer in this revealing piece which is difficult to watch, but difficult to leave unfinished.

Dark subtleties are evoked in **Ania Krajewska's** body of print-based works, some of which are framed, others not. There is a heady mix in these works between a botanical overload and a mordant dystopia, which speaks of our ecology and climate crisis in the Anthropocene.

Christel Liebenberg maintains that surreal, dystopical criticism of bland overbearing technology in her two short animations which recall the work of European Dadaist Hannah Höch, as it plays with pylon aesthetics.

An unintentional collaboration happens with other enticing installations. **Kabelo Maja** works with ordinary objects exploded to extraordinary size, like Pop artist Claes Oldenburg. His giant whistles are big enough for children to climb onto. Collectively, they open up reflections, from whistle-blowing to sports protocol; the artificial green grass on which they stand adds to their slightly dark sense of play. The installation constructed between several self-contained pieces of work by **Nathani Lüneburg** around an imaginary pet giraffe, does something similar. In multiple mediums, it entices and bedazzles the viewer with the diversity of approaches, and the weirdness of the repeating motifs. Thus the viewer is seduced into being a part of this piece, but not fed an explanation of this body of ideas.

Adjoining Lüneburg's installation, a group of multi-disciplinary works by veteran Unisa staffer, **Gwen Miller**, was shown. These considerably finished paintings, photographs and conceptual reflections are particularly potent and compelling in their physical presence and conceptual resonance.

The Unisa gallery space blends the modernist white cube notion with a discursiveness that does not, in this exhibition, seem to have been plummeted to its depths of exhibiting potential. Not all of the artists exhibiting here are part of a commercial gallery circuit; while it is not incumbent on an academic artist to be commercially exposed, platforms matter in the lending of exposure to ideas.



https://issuu.com/gwenmiller0/docs/2019_unisa_staff_exhibition_catalogue.pptx

ART IN PROCESS: an interdisciplinary staff exhibition

Layout and design of catalogue: Gwenneth Miller

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Contributors: curators and artists

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