

EARTHSCARS

Jeannette Unite

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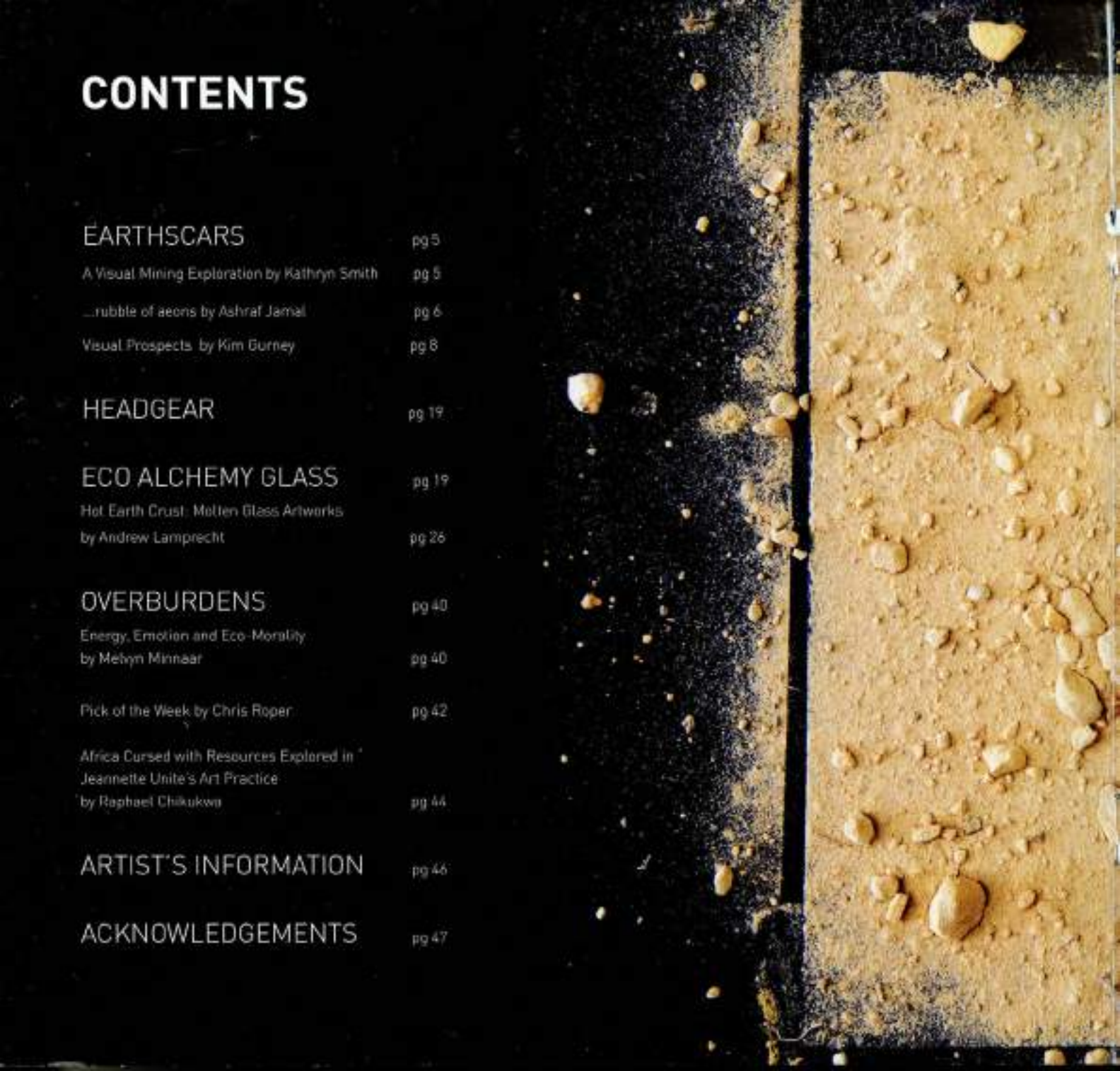
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EARTHSCARS

Mining Our Heritage

by Kathryn Smith

South Africa's rich and contentious mining histories provide the point of departure for Jeannette Unite's Earthscars on the level of both the material and metaphor.

Closely aligned with environmentally conscious art production, Unite's body of work is site-specific in the sense that she has employed diamondiferous materials, minerals, metal oxides and sands from various significant sites in the production of her work, including making her own pastels with these materials. Toying with the traditional understanding of "value", Unite has perpetrated her own brand of alchemy.

For a project that began as an identification of wounds that don't heal ("mining" as a reflection of a personal journey, not unlike Freud's parallel between psychoanalysis and archaeology, perhaps), the dense metaphorical possibilities contained in Unite's geological materials have resulted in a slightly different take on the rather hackneyed memory-history-landscape genres of much local contemporary art.

Art Pick of the Week
Mail & Guardian
December 2004

Kimberley Mines
Aerial View



...rubble of the aeons, not last night's takeaway...

By Ashraf Jamal

At a colloquium on colour hosted by Rhodes Fine Art in March 2010 Jeannette Unite chose to speak on her own art practice with specific reference to an age-old preoccupation with mixing colour and drawing on the unearthed remains from South Africa's mines. Principally a slide show and an anecdotal account, I became increasingly aware that Unite's focus was not only aesthetic and alchemical but also informed by South Africa's mining history. That Kumba, a division of Anglo America, amongst other multinationals based in South Africa have deemed it fit to grace their walls with Unite's art is therefore fitting. That the work is-yet-is-not merely decorative reaffirms a point made by Australian cultural analyst, Stephen Muecke, about the representation of his native landscape:

Aesthetics can be politics carried out by other means, for what one learns to value in landscape, indeed, what is included in the frame, enables the promotion of what is considered valuable and worthy as an object of aspiration. [Ancient & Modern, 71]

Land in South Africa and in Australia has from the beginnings of colonialism and at the inception of nationhood always been contested. In her presentation for the colloquium on colour Maureen de Jager forcefully conveyed the devastating impact which the unequal distribution of land continues to generate to this day. Politics and aesthetics, therefore, inevitably produces a collusive and unsettling bond, one which Unite has focused on without making the content of her works overtly polemical. Rather, after Simon Schama's interpretation of the earth art of Andy Goldsworthy, Unite can be read as "a dramaturge of nature's temper, often fickle, often foul" (Hang-Ups, 267). Schama's reading further hones that by Stephen Muecke, for land as concept and as grit is not automatically something deemed valuable or worthy, land is also something treacherous, "often fickle, often foul."

It is not surprising, therefore, that South African and Australian novelists have often dramatized the psychically damaging nature of nature's distemper. One need only recall the plight of the central protagonist in Patrick White's novel, *Voss*, or that of the protagonist in J.M. Coetzee's novella, *Dusklands*, who by sheer dint of will seeks

to transform wilderness to number. It is this desire to control and order the land, or rather the wilderness, which Unite implicitly critiques. Unlike Coetzee's protagonist, however, Unite as dramaturge stages another moment in the history of South Africa's landscape: that point when earth becomes commodity; that point when the commodity is exhausted; that point when the gaping maw of mined earth, like a victim of a rape, lies sullied, disregarded, left wasted, finally deemed nothing. It is at that point, then, that Unite revisits the ghostly remains of an excavation to gather up the traces, sometimes benign earth samples, sometimes foul, yet always beautiful.

For Unite the land, therefore, is never barren, bleached, abstracted, or worthless – a prevailing perception harking back to John Barrow's journeys into the Cape hinterland. That Unite literally transfers the subtle tinctures of earth to her surfaces speaks realms about the intimate links she draws between drawing, painting, and earth or land art. As the American cultural analyst, WJT Mitchell, observes: "Landscape is a medium of exchange between the human and the natural, the self and the Other. As such, it is like money: 'good for nothing in itself, but expressive of a limitless reserve of value'" (cited in *Ancient & Modern*, 71).

In speaking of land, therefore, one necessarily speaks of human intervention. That land, exhausted, still holds a reserve of value, whether as idea or substance, returns us to the process of commodification which is also intrinsic to the process of art making. It is here that one better understands Muecke's reading of representation in art as an object of aspiration. The preoccupation with land is of course a prevailing trope in all national cultures; moreover it is a preoccupation which indissolubly connects aesthetics, politics, and economics. One need only think of the English pastoral literature and painting tradition, or of colonial constructions of identity in Canadian and Australian literature and art. Or, in the case of South Africa, of relatively recent interrogations of mine dumps in the work of Clive van den Berg, the animated films of William Kentridge, the Hopperesque landscapes of Walter Meyer, or the gritty yet conceptual reflections of Willem Boshoff.

In an excerpt in the *Mail & Guardian*, from a lecture delivered by Willem Boshoff at the Johannesburg Art Fair, we encounter a moving reflection on humankind's relation to land:

The Karoo is, of course incredibly rich in fossils and I find fossils irresistible. I recently had the good fortune to live on the world heritage site, the Cradle of Humankind, at Kromdraai near Krugerdorp. There hominid fossils of our distant forebears were found throughout the 20th century. I saw for myself the caves in which our distant relatives lived and I felt a sense of self-discovery. The oldest hominid footprints on record are on the west coast near the town of Langebaan. These footprints are attributed to an individual named Eve and date back 120000 years. [M&G, March 26 to 31, 2010]

What Boshoff reveals to us is just how intimately the human and the natural, self and Other, are connected. For millennia a place of human habitation – a cradle of Humankind – it becomes all the more preposterous, therefore, to perceive the South African landscape as the legitimate subject of colonial domination and extortion. While Unite may not be as focused on the fossilized trace of ancient human habitation she nevertheless recognizes the on-going inextricability of land as petrification, as the reliquary of fossil remains, as earth gouged, hacked, expropriated, squandered.

Boshoff moves on to discuss his particular aesthetic relation to the properties of earth:

Granite, an igneous stone, was once a liquid that came up from deep inside the Earth by volcanic action. The past few years I often worked with texts that are written in sand and granite stones. My writings in sand are usually swept away at the end of exhibitions, while those in stone are permanent... Granite lies underground, dormant in hills and ridges, and it takes a supreme effort of blasting and drilling to dislodge workable blocks. I prefer to work with already existing blocks from old, worked-out mines and I try to rehabilitate those mines as much as to make sculpture. (M&G, March 26 to 31, 2010)

While Boshoff and Unite's process of making art are markedly different what joins them is precisely the need to revivify a worked-out mine. If Boshoff works with bold physical mass, producing on their obsessively reworked surfaces a language that is pictographic and conceptual, Unite elects to scavenge the trace elements, shards, flecks, of an earth that has virtually been rendered fractal by the violent actions of blasting and drilling. It is a powder she seeks, a powder which she returns to its original liquid state then transfers to the surfaces of her artworks. If Boshoff subjects the surfaces of his granite blocks "to months and months of merciless grinds and polishing until they glimmer like the liquid they once were," then Unite through quite another painterly and alchemical process similarly seeks to restore that glimmer and sheen to her works.

When listening to Unite speak about her untiring obsession with visiting and scavenging Mines for the fodder for her work – earth after all is also a kind of food – I became increasingly entranced by the delicacy of her process, her relish for the glamorous matter or substances she'd dredged and painstaking reworked into the medium of paint. Moreover, it was the iridescence of the soil substances she presented before us, substances which were not falsely boosted by artificial lighting but substances which harboured their own peculiar light. Here, furthermore, I was once again reminded of Simon Schama's elegiac description of Andy Goldsworthy's art process. Countering the glib accusation of a British critic that Goldsworthy merely "tidd[ed] around with nature, Schama argues that Goldsworthy's art is in fact "densely and poetically emblematic, returning insistently to the themes of vitality and mortality" (Hang

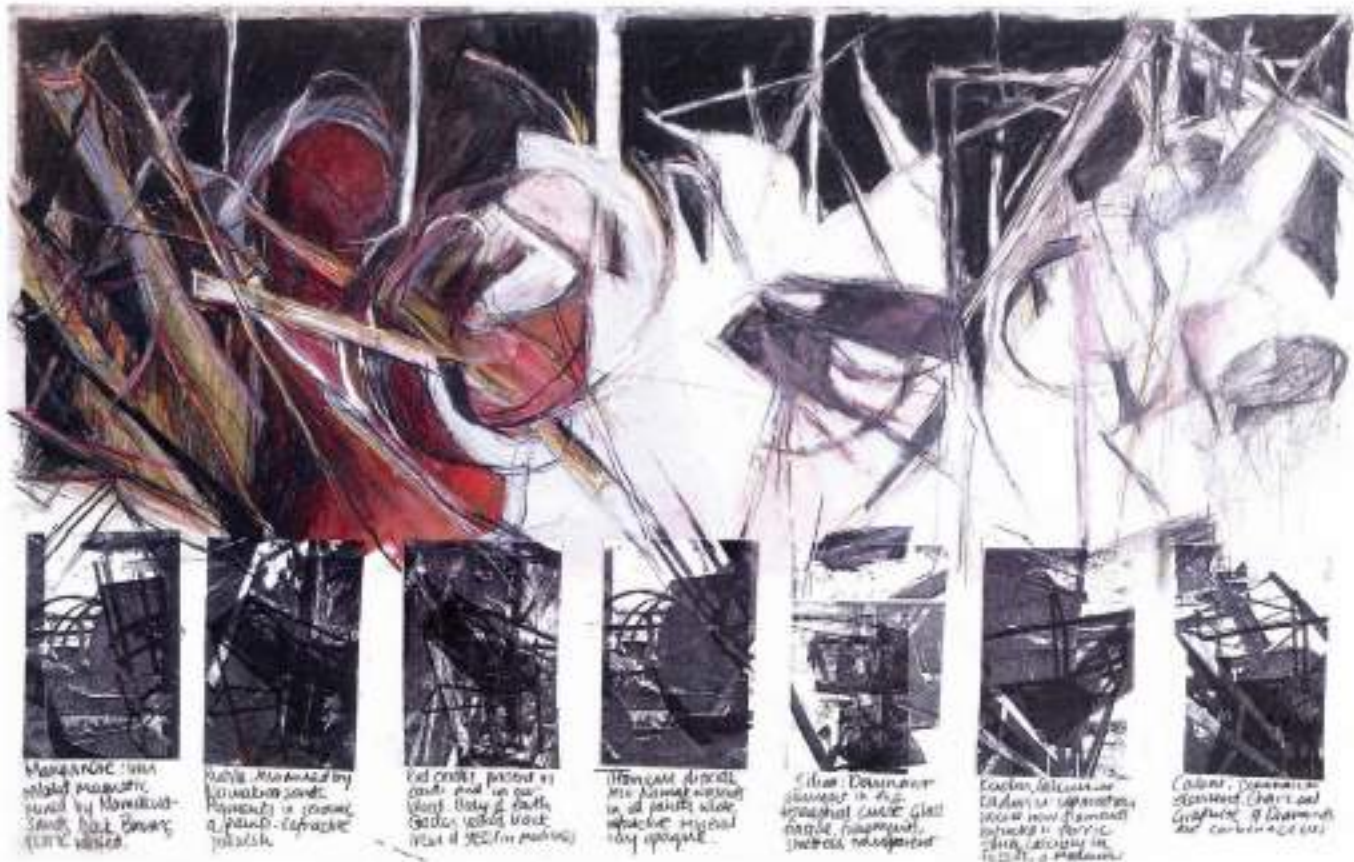
Ups, 269]. Schama goes on to speak of "the peculiar virtues of Goldsworthy's work – its moral intensity, its Ruskinian devotion to work and craft, its scientific curiosity, its intelligent engagement with the long history of land use; its marvelous instinct for the baroque hyperbole of the natural world – all those mottlings and jottings and peelings and stainings..." (Hang-Ups 269). Then in a strikingly inspired turn Schama goes on to counter Goldsworthy's work to the contemporary "connoisseurs of decomposition [who are so] overwhelmingly urban" and whose fascination is restricted to walls "amusingly inscribed with palimpsests of graffiti." And here follows Schama's vital qualification that while "Goldsworthy, too, plays in the junkyards of the world, [his works] are strewn with the rubble of the aeons, not last night's Chinese takeaway" (Hang-Ups, 270).

By examining Schama's words closely, with an ear to understanding Jeannette Unite's art, one finds a resonant vocabulary – a tool-box of words – which aptly describes what Unite is up to, for she too inhabits "the junkyards of the world", she too is a "connoisseur of decomposition"; she too captures a poetics that is densely emblematic, vital, mortal. Like Boshoff, like Goldsworthy, Unite draws upon the laceration and stain of the earth. In a contemporary world culture that is fascinated by art that is mirthless, profane, disposable, Unite returns us to the vitality of art as sacrament. That said, Unite is by no means an artist who romantically aligns herself with a gone world; she is no mere idealist. For her the earth as object of contemplation and source for art making is not only beneficent or regenerative, rather, it also accounts for a deep sense of disconnection which many South Africans have experienced in relation to place and geography. In sum, Unite's focus is not therefore intrinsically existential for while she is well aware of the iniquities associated with mining as a colonial and multinational enterprise, Unite's captivating interest has proved to be the earth in all its multifaceted, beautiful and/or toxic dimensions as a source for explorations in works which function as both colour fields and as scarred and scarified representations of figure and structure.

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Earthenars: Mineral and Material, Mixed media on cotton paper, 690mm x 1100mm, 2004

That might seem a sweeping claim for an apparently innocuous aesthetic. But Harvard University professor Elaine Scarry supports Danto's view with a compelling thesis in her book *On Beauty and Being Just*. Scarry expounds on the close connection between beauty and love of truth, which she says are allied. Furthermore, Scarry argues that, far from damaging our capacity to attend to problems of injustice, beauty instead intensifies the pressure we feel to repair existing injuries -- in part by demanding constant perceptual acuity (1999: 57).

Scarry gives the following instructive example: "How will one even notice, let alone become concerned about, the inclusion in a political assembly of only one economic point of view unless

one has also attended with full acuity to a debate that is itself a beautiful object, full of arguments, counter-arguments, wit, spirit, ripostes, ironies, testing, contesting; and how in turn will one hear the nuances of even this debate unless one also makes oneself available to the songs of birds or poets?" (1999: 61).

Scarry has her critics, and this essay's selective cull of various notions of beauty only hints at a deep and contested body of philosophy. But why talk of beauty, even in this limited sense, to introduce the art of Jeannette Unite? It might at first seem an unlikely lens, given that the artist often takes as subject matter the physical detritus of a mechanical, industrial world:

the mining industry of South Africa. She photographically documents and draws inspiration from the landscape that forms the backdrop to such industry. Sometimes her canvas is glass, at other times wood panels or paper. Her medium ranges from charcoal to pastels, acrylic paint, transmogrified minerals and even film animation (since 2000). Whichever, her register is usually abstract or leaning towards it, blending otherwise disparate fragments.

The artist's sustained focus on the world of mining, however, is more than purely metaphor: Unite collects leftover minerals, sometimes toxic, that she literally embeds into some of her artwork. To this end, her Cape Town studio has several shelves of neatly stacked large glass jars holding mining minerals of various colour and character. The studio is part chemistry lab, part office, part home. At its heart is a beautiful antique wooden table, reminiscent of a Wim Botha installation, bought at auction: "I couldn't stop nodding my head," Unite concedes, with her ready laugh.

The anecdote underscores an apparent gift for re-purposing with new meaning that which has been overlooked or set aside. Alchemists transmute the ordinary (lead-like) level of everyday perception to a subtle (gold-like) level (De Rola, 1973: 7). Unite's oeuvre echoes this kind of transformation, not only in method but also in meaning; she peppers talk of her art with references to personal experiences overcome. As critic Kathryn Smith writes of Unite's Earthscars exhibition (2004): "Toying with the traditional understanding of 'value', Unite has perpetrated her own brand of alchemy" (2004).

This idea of artistic alchemy resonates too in previous works that have drawn upon dreams, myths and legends, in series such as Thresholds (1998). The title refers to a desire to transcend and move through a subliminal dark into light, a desire of the artist that followed a traumatic assault a few years prior. This series, hovering between the figurative and abstract, spoke with its animated brushstroke about personal transformation. This animated quality, which recurs through Unite's oeuvre, is eloquently described by Anne Emslie:

"The pleasure of Jeannette's painting is that this is done with a delectable, generous, and appetizing mess and smudge and smear and tracery of paint, ink or charcoal ... a felt manoeuvring between spontaneity and control, abandonment and restraint, spillage and the damning of both materials and feelings" (2001).



Earthscars: West Coast Machines
Mixed media on cotton paper, 690mm x 1100mm, 2004





Earthscars: Red West Coast Machines
Mixed media on cotton paper, 690mm x 1100mm, 2004.



These characteristics are strongly evident in *Earth's Crust* (2007), which comprises mining dump waste, metal oxides and foils transformed through heat into 28 glass panels. It is a landscape literally created out of the land itself – a wry twist on a genre that has dominated the work of South African artists, from the apparently ‘unpopulated’ colonial perspectives of J.M. Pierneef to the contemporary charcoal drawings and film animations of William Kentridge.

The latter's work is mentioned by Sarah Nuttall in her book *Beautiful Ugly*; Nuttall says that beauty, for Kentridge, is the question of form. “Drawing beauty has everything to do with the materiality of his medium, so that for him the call of the Germiston landscape on the South African highveld, with its slime dams, reed beds and bleakness, was specific to paper, charcoal, ruler, eraser: ‘the burnt wood of charcoal itself moved between the object and the drawing’.” (Nuttall, 2006: 23). Unite has a similar preoccupation with form, evident in her intense charcoal works of headgear such as *What is Above is Below* (2007). She says:

“It's about responding to material. A piece of charcoal or compressed carbonaceous iron-rich black is actually the same thing, just in another form. The pointed connection is the thing; it seduces you.” (Gurney & Unite, 2008).

In Unite's oeuvre, her proxy is seduction. She has a sculptor's preoccupation for material, a concern traceable to a former tutor who had a profound influence on her work ethic and methodology: Kevin Atkinson, a former lecturer at Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town. But Unite has a painter's preoccupation with seductive surface. She says: “I want people to respond sensually to things because I think that helps them to access any idea. Because the works are quite abstract, the entry point is sensual ... and through that [viewers] can enter” (Gurney & Unite, 2008).

Take her many abstract panels – the *Overburden* series, for instance (2007). The title refers to the large sand deposits above mineral deposits, sand that has to be moved to tailings. Unite has created elongated, vertical wood panels treated with a variety of sands sourced from specific South African mining sites, as well as mined ash, minerals, metal oxides and powders. Critic Chris Roper called the *Overburden* works beautiful yet grim: “It's a very modern idea of time that is expressed here – not a sifting through of layers in a chronological order but time as a hodgepodge” (2004). This effect, he says, is heightened by



Earthscars: De Beers Hole Earth Moving Crane
Mixed media on cotton rag archival paper, 900mm x 1200mm, 2005

a consideration of materials used, which include Kalahari desert sand, Kimberley yellow ground from near the Big Hole, gold-mine sands containing cyanide and arsenic and metal oxides.

This artistic strategy of taking 'left-overs' and presenting them as beautiful might seem counter-intuitive. But as Nuttall has proposed, beauty is to be found at the limits of the ugly and beauty always stands in intimate relation to ugliness. (2006: 8). Such transformation can be effected through a simple perceptual shift, presenting differently to the viewer what occurs already in nature – a tension between art of nature and art in nature that philosophers through the centuries have

debated. Indeed, German philosopher Georg Hegel might have approved of Unite's work had he lived in this century: Hegel posits that the function of art is "to stir our senses, our feelings, our emotions, with everything which can find a place in the human soul" (Carritt, 1931: 162). Art critic Melvyn Minnaar put his finger on a similar characteristic of Unite's work when he described *Overburden* thus:

"Abstractions embedded in those antediluvial textures of gritty, earthy dark glimmer offer their own visual dark puzzles: like staring beyond the immediacy of the night sky ... they vibrate with emotion" (2004). Another commentator referred to these same panels as "barcodes with emotion",

says Unite. It's an apt description: her work speaks both of



Cape Town Industrial Landscape
Triptych mixed media on cotton rag, 1500mm x 2500mm, 2009

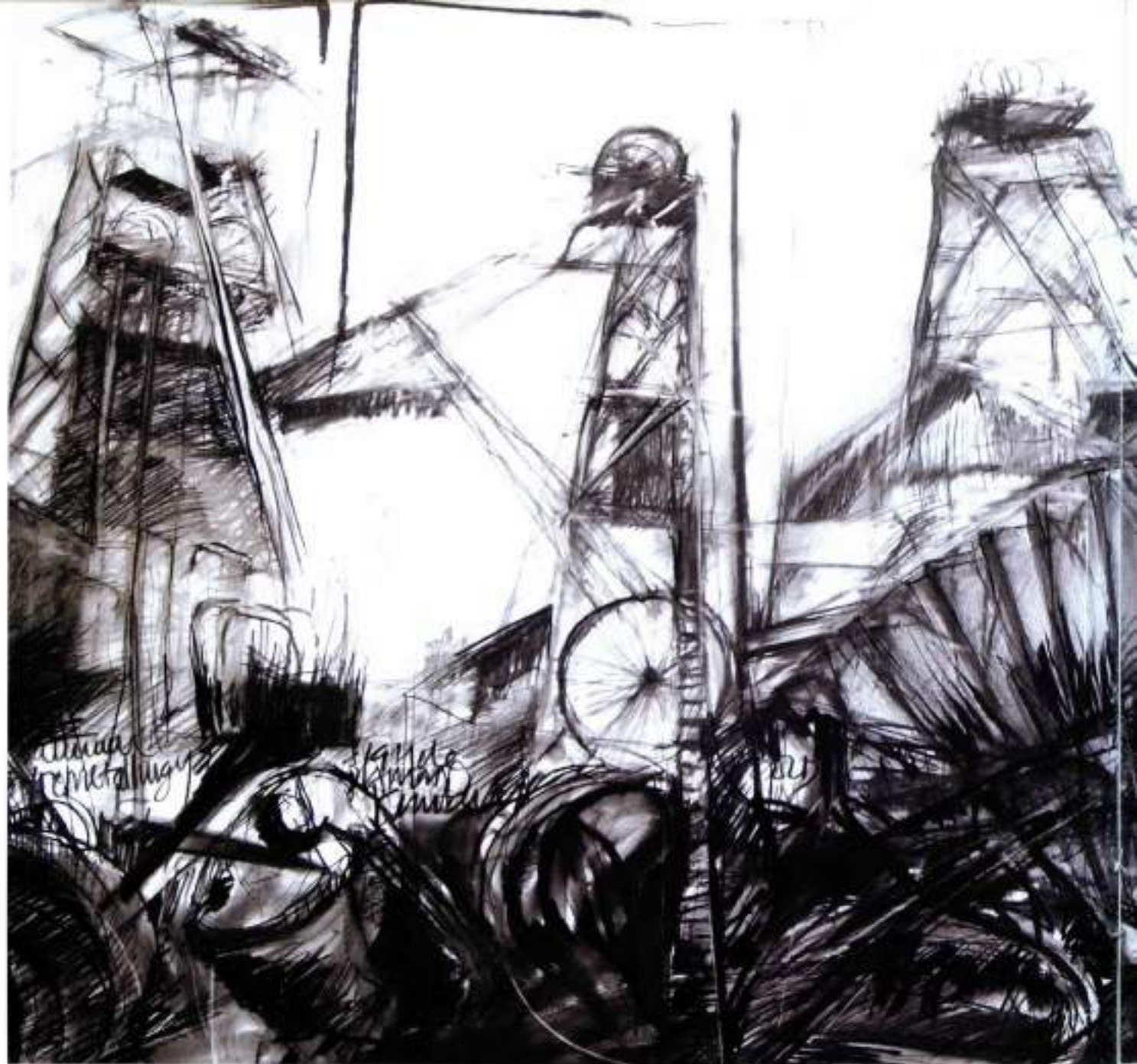
consumerism, concerns and personal affect.

The panel format of *Overburden* recurs through Unite's body of artwork, as does sequencing, gridding and framing works in series. Her *Sentences* exhibition (2001) comprised linked paintings grouped in strips of seven, each series conceived of as a visual sentence with handwriting out of focus. They developed from sequencing collages like an animation strip, linked by theme, colour and gesture. The works create a window of sorts, offering a redemptive vision of the future.

Unite suggests the multifarious panels of *Sentences* also references a classification system, an ordering of fragments.

This concern extends to her current work around the archive, an exploration of what information a system of power inscribes. Unite is hosting an exhibition, opening September 2008, at the national Archives, situated in the old Roeland Street Gaol in Cape Town. It's a compelling venue that holds maps, documents, photographs and other material dating back to the earliest days of colonial settlement in the Cape. The artist says she is intrigued by the politics of what is and is not stored, the process of retrieving records, and the loaded issue of who gets access.

Similar concerns recur in Unite's mining-related works. Her attraction to the geological metaphor was at first a rather



HEADGEAR What is above is below



serendipitous one. A personal relationship provided access to mining sites on South Africa's west coast, first at Alexander Bay on the Orange River estuary and later near Vredendal on the Olifants River. Unite says she was shocked by the polarised landscape: on one side of an electrified fence, an internationally protected reserve full of wildlife; on the other, closely guarded mining operations. She later overheard geologists discussing minerals, trace elements and indicator stones and a new world opened up. She took photographs and let the ideas percolate. "The whole geological language of the landscape just became alive," she says (Gurney & Unite, 2008).

Any viewer of *Fine Art* is alert to the associations of subject matter. Mining is a key sector of the South African economy and one of the largest employers but it has a long and contentious history, in particular around the disruption of family life for many black South Africans who migrated from the rural areas to work in the mines. The land itself was also a brutal tool of the apartheid regime, with successive Land Acts dealing blows of dispossession. There is consequently a heavy socio-political subtext attendant to Unite's subject matter, willed or not. It is a subtext to which the artist is very alert. But she has become appreciative of the benefits of the mining industry too. "It's actually all part of evolution," she says, referring to technological strides dependent on commodities.

In a time of increasing environmental anxiety, Unite's artwork inevitably speaks to broader socio-political issues. These include the current global rush to secure mineral commodities, particularly in Africa, in a fraught time of energy crunches and fuel price hikes. They also reference concerns around land restitution and mineral rights in a country debating the merits of free market growth versus state intervention for more equitable distribution of resources.

Certainly, post-apartheid South Africa has a range of competing priorities led by the delivery to the previously disenfranchised of a range of basic rights, services and dues that apartheid denied the majority. In this broader context, the arts sector has been challenged to justify its importance and relevance. Unite's work might offer a predominantly aesthetic experience, as critic Paul Edmunds avers in an *Art Throb* review of *Sentences* (2001). But who ever said that beauty was frivolous? Through Scarry's lens at least, the arts are a vital part of the imperative towards greater social justice.

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Kim Gurney is a visual artist and freelance writer.



Headgear: 8 Meters Under

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with handmade pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre.

2450mm x 1250mm

2008

HEADGEAR



3.9 Kilometres
Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with handmade pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
1500mm x 830mm
2008



3.9 Kilometres Deeper
Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with handmade pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
1500mm x 830mm
2008



Namaqualand Copper

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
2450mm x 1250mm
2008



Sending the Steel

Drawing in cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including Mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
2450mm x 1250mm
2008



Shaft Head Apparatus

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
1500mm x 830mm
2009



Kimberley a Different Angle

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
2450mm x 1250mm
2009



Winding Gear Mechanism

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
2450mm x 1250mm
2009



Winding Gear Mechanism

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
2450mm x 1250mm
2009



Conveyor

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
2450mm x 1250mm
2008



Gold Shaft

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre.
2450mm x 1250mm
2008



Deep Blue Shaft

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
2450mm x 1250mm
2010.



Winding Gear Shaft

Drawing on cotton rag archival paper with hand made pastels including mixed media carbon, charcoal, iron oxide, titanium and yellow ochre
1500mm x 830mm
2009



A selection of some of 500 Headgear images sourced from museums and State Archives. A vanishing engineering feature in our African industrial landscape.

ECO-ALCHEMY GLASS

Hot Earth Crust: Molten Glass Artworks

By Andrew Lamprecht

In memory of Jo Faragher

[True alchemy] employs nature's agents and imitates her operations. [False alchemy] works on erroneous principles and employs the tyrant and destroyer of Nature as her agent. The first, from a small quantity of a vile matter, fashions a most precious thing. The second, from the most precious matter, from gold itself, fashions a matter most vile, smoke and ashes.

Jeannette Unite began experimenting with glassmaking in 1999 at the suggestion of onetime collaborator Jo Faragher. Since then her works in glass have become an important adjunct to her deep and penetrating exploration of the legacy of industrial, and especially mining, activities on the South African landscape. Glass, with its simultaneous fragility and strength, its ability to reflect and refract colour in exquisite and unique ways and in order to work with it, the demand for a profound technical and physico-chemical knowledge clearly makes for a fascinating medium for Unite. All her work articulates the convoluted and frequently obscured interconnectedness of power and fragility, of legacy and what is seen as expedient and temporary, of that which is transparent and that which is occluded. These seeming contradictory stances are all interrogated and made glaringly present in her glass works.

Approximately 90% of the glass industrially manufactured today is soda-lime glass. Like almost all glass (and most glass manufactured in the past) its core component is silica (derived from sand) with the addition of sodium carbonate (soda) to lower its melting point and calcium oxide (lime) for durability. The resultant product comprises approximately 70-74% silica in its make-up. This is the glass one typically encounters in everyday life, in windows, bottles and other practical applications and this is the glass that Jeannette Unite uses as the basis for her works.

While naturally occurring glass, such as obsidian, has been known and worked since prehistoric times, the oldest known glass products produced by human agency are believed to be mid-third millennium BC glass beads from Mesopotamia and Egypt, possibly created as a by-product of ancient metal-working. In the context of Unite's fascination with mining this is a very suggestive theory to consider. The origins of glass may well be tied up to the accidents of ancient mining processes.

From this time glass manufacture developed rapidly in the cultures of the eastern Mediterranean world, although it remained a luxury material until early modern times. Many different techniques and types of glass manufacture were discovered including the production of transparent glass and 'stained' glass (i.e. glass to which metallic or other impurities were deliberately added in order to change its colour).

In the most simplistic terms Jeannette Unite's glass works are typically produced by using a sheet of plate glass as a base and then arranging shards of discarded glass, metal fragments and dusts, diamondiferous sands and the other detritus from industrial mining processes and composing an image, upon which a top layer of plate glass is then placed. This 'sandwich' is then heated in a kiln at high temperatures where the layers fuse and colour and material changes take place in the minerals producing (after lengthy cooling and annealing) a glass panel. In actual fact the process is far more complex than this, utilizing carefully controlled changes in temperature of the kiln, and the addition of different materials at various stages of the process in order to achieve the exact colours or characteristics that the artist desires. Several 'firings' over a number of days may be required to achieve the particular effects sought after. The finished work has a visual language that echoes Unite's paintings and drawings but with a tactile quality and three-dimensionality all of their own with their crusty surfaces variations in transparency and evidence of bubbles of molten material having burst.

Discovering this process did not come overnight and involved years of experimentation and research. In addition the decision to work in glass and as part of her mining project came about from strands of knowledge that were at first unrelated. Unite reflects on this as follows:

I met Jo Faragher in group therapy months after I had been assaulted in 1992. Jo died in 2009 but he shared his love and knowledge of materials and glazes and metal colour. He understood the distribution of geological 'organs' – the gold face – how geology was distributed deep in the earth from the perspective of both the underground mining engineer beneath the surface and as an alchemist/ceramist. He understood the geological offerings and the magic they could yield. He knew and understood temperature phases, the chemical combinations required to make glass as well as having done numerous workshops in the East and the Netherlands and visiting hot shops around the world while researching about the possibility of making ceramic decals. Jo's insistence on my learning glass processes in 1999 resulted in us doing a series of glass artworks.

A year or so later I was engaged to a geologist on the diamond mines and I started drawing connections from conversations the geologists were having about diamond tracer materials with what Jo had said. These diamondiferous and metalliferous materials are the same mentioned on artists' paint tubes and all this combined with knowledge from my professor and mentor – the artist Kevin Atkinson who shared his system of making our own paint from pigments and aggregates like marble dust – brought me to the point where I began to work with raw material from the earth in order to describe the earth. The glass perfectly synthesised my desire to create 'abstract' images with conceptual content from this specific material content! Pieces of discarded copper cable articulate between 'frozen' bits of molten glass piercing the air and grazing your finger in a way that is not traditional for this art form.

I think I started working with glass at a time that I was emotionally and psychically fractured – so the glass also symbolised my own internal need to congeal and anneal and heal – and once whole the innate risk of the material and ever present danger inherent in the materiality of it disintegrating from thermal or mechanical shock. I like my pieces to be crusty and opaque and rough and sometimes sharp and uncomfortable, although technically perfect, to suggest danger.

My glass processes mimic geological processes and layering to create the crusty, opaque vitrified land/forms which also mimics the geological formation of the earth using the same materials and minerals. This is a deliberate imitation of the geological processes of the earth's formation



Vertical Cobalt
Cobalt and industrial elements hot fused into molten glass
500mm x 150mm
2006



Industrial Ladders
Diamond gravel and copper foil hot fused into molten glass
300mm x 150mm
2006

where glass is kiln formed at similarly high temperatures with similar materials. Chance elements are controlled by quantities, heat and duration of 'soaking' and the use of alkaline additives as well as the viscous toxic elements that transform metal into brilliant colour.

When I started the glass my lack of education in physics led to my bed-time reading of the periodic table of elements and restless fantasizing about the chemical reactions and colour combinations and visual possibilities that would result from reactions of combinations of lithium/arsenic/ cyanide if added to titanium dioxide and lead bisilicate.

This restless, probing and explorative experimentation and research echoes the process by which alchemists went through in order to learn their skills and alchemy is something that seems to sit comfortably in describing Jaquette Unite's working methods.

In 2004 Kathryn Smith wrote 'toying with the traditional understanding of "value", Unite has perpetrated her own brand of alchemy.' Indeed 'alchemy' is a term that Unite herself has applied to what she does on several occasions. As early as 2001, in relation to *Sentences*, a series of polyptych paintings and a video, she noted

Fire is profound. It transforms materials. It consumes the old and something new is born – clay is mud and becomes stone. Alchemy on the ethereal level is about altering perception and consciousness from lead-like to gold-like. It's not about understanding. It is about 'innerstanding'. I see the process of art making as alchemical, about personal transformation. It's about becoming other.

Clearly, long before she embarked on the glass works discussed in this essay she was aware of a metaphorical link between her work and that of the alchemists of old. Today alchemy is frequently characterised as a misguided and foolish endeavour to try and turn lead into gold in the days before modern science and chemistry set matters straight. However this 3000-year-old tradition – mystical and obfuscatory though it may sometimes have been – represents a system of experimentation, discovery and research that many believe underpins several aspects of modern science and chemistry, especially its practical aspects including ore testing and refining.



Indeed the relationship between alchemy and glassmaking is itself one that, until recently has been little understood. In a 2008 exhibition *Glass of the Alchemists: Lead Crystal-Gold Ruby, 1650-1750* held at the Corning Museum of Glass this connection was explored. Many of the innovations in glassmaking during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be ascribed to the experiments of alchemists in the field of material science.

For centuries writers on alchemy stated that the goal of turning lead or some other base material into gold was only symbolic of some much higher goal and recent academic research has amplified this view. As Pierre-Jean Fabre observed in 1636 'Alchemy is not merely an art or science to teach metallic transmutation, so much as a true and solid science that teaches how to know the centre of all things, which in the divine language is called the Spirit of Life.' Alchemy was a system that sought to take that which is base and imperfect and transmute it into that which is perfect. This process could involve a number of steps, much as the creation of Unite's glass pieces do. These stages were linked to colour changes, echoing the transformation of minerals of one drab colour into spectacular and varied hues in Unite's process of combing materials, heating at high temperatures and cooling them between sheets of glass. This is not the only similarity: just as she acquires the materials she uses from mines herself, so to those who engaged upon the 'Great Work' of alchemy were taught that 'it is essential to journey to the mine, and take possession of the raw subject.'

There can be no doubt that the discourse of alchemy was frequently shrouded and even obscured with much mystical or pseudo-mystical mumbo jumbo and a seeming obsession on the part of many of its followers to make valuable gold out of something of much less financial worth. However there can also be very little argument with the thesis that for many of its practitioners this was merely a physical manifestation (even a ruse) for the pursuit of something quite different, namely the spiritual perfection of the self and the transformation of material that is worthless, fractured and unresolved into substance of permanence, beauty and true value.

Vertical Core
Cobalt and chromes and coppers hot fused into molten kiln formed glass artworks
500mm x 150mm
2008

While it is suggestive that other writers, and Unite herself, have drawn analogies between her artistic methodology and that of the alchemists, it should be noted that she is no New Age neo-hippie on some quest for mystical secret knowledge. Her practice is firmly rooted in scientific research and she has no illusions as to the hazards of working with what she describes as 'all the dangerous things' that she utilizes to make her glass art.

An alchemical or mystical description of glass production is not so far-fetched; of course the characteristics of glass can be explicated scientifically, but there is a 'magic' to glass as any child knows: its fragility and simultaneous strength; its properties of transparency; the myths that have grown up around it such as it being 'a very slow-running liquid' rather than the solid it so obviously is. Similarly the alchemical philosophy of turning human body (lead) into the eternal (gold) reflected in 'transmutation' of sand into glass. The fact that ancient glass is still with us demonstrates that despite its susceptibility to breakage it nevertheless endures if cared for. This can be applied more generally to art making. As Unite argues, 'this is central to artistic transformation: What artists are doing is transcending / transmuting / transporting material from one state to another.'

Jeannette Unite's work for the last decade has uncompromisingly interrogated 'the geographical and geological history of Africa's industrial and mining sites and how the impact of colonialism and globalization affects how we occupy our current landscape.' This combined with her description of herself as a 'physicalist viscerally connected to material and its alchemical and aesthetic possibilities' has led to a body of work that intrinsically draws upon the physical remnants (e.g. industrial waste material, mine dust and discarded manufactured goods such as glass) of the processes she uses as subject matter (mining, industrialisation and the exploitation of natural resources). In itself this is a powerful artistic statement but when one considers the manner in which she takes that which industry discards as useless by-products and transmutes them into that which has real aesthetic value one sees that she is doing far more than drawing attention to an ecological and resource-based problem. She is indicating its solution. In her glass works she is at pains to only use 'waste' material be they broken window panes or dust leached of its gold content and then transform them into something else, showing us what potential treasures have been missed in that callous act of 'throwing away'. In this light it seems to be no coincidence that one of





Hot Earth Crust Copper – From Whence It Comes

Earth Crust Glass wall utilizing a predominance of copper waste from industry and the oldest colonial mine in South Africa, the Simon van Der Stel Mine in Namaqualand. These panels have undergone multiple firings through the furnace which have resulted in the crystalline glacial fluxing of the minerals and metals.
1700mm x 2800mm, 2005 - 2007



Vertical Cobalt
Cobalt, copper, diamondiferous and metalliferous material.
Not fused into molten glass.
500mm x 150mm
2008

her chosen materials is glass. Glass is one of the most eminently recyclable materials around yet in South Africa more than two thirds of that disposed of [600 000 tons in 2007 alone] ends up in waste dumps. Clearly she is not just concerned with physical matter alone but that it also matters as to what we do with it.

Though her glass art is 'abstract' in artistic terms there can be no doubt that it draws upon the landscape [that overriding theme in so much of her work] for inspiration. Visually there are echoes of the land to be seen and that which lies beneath it and has been harnessed for our needs is reflected in its materiality. But there are other hints too: of a landscape transcended and healed; of dreams, ambitions and flights of imagination that would make the ancient alchemists proud.

A very young visitor to her studio opined that *Earth Crust* (2007) 'looks like the surface of the moon' and maybe she demonstrated observational wisdom beyond her years when one considers that that work comprises 28 panels, the same number of days in the lunar month. For alchemists the moon represented the female force of purification, essential in the transmutation of base matter into gold; essential in restoring balance to that which is unbalanced; healing and making whole that which is shattered and torn asunder. Jeannette Unite's glass art too seems to be engaged in this great work.

FOOTNOTES

Dom Antonio Joseph Pernety, *Dictionnaire Mytho-Hermetique* (1787) quoted in Stanislas Klosowski de Rola, *Alchemy: The Secret Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1973), p. 13.

'Art Pick of the Week', *Mail & Guardian*, 10-16 October 2004.

Quoted in Anne Emshie, *Sentences*, (Bell-Roberts Contemporary, 2001), p. 13.

The Mystery of Alchemy and its Influence on Baroque Glass [J. Iwajda]: http://www.artistsky.org/index.asp?ref_sec=11&ref_new=23665&date=2/26/2008 Accessed 19.01.2009.

See, for example, the work of Stanislas Klosowski de Rola in the region.

Les Secrets chymiques, quoted in Stanislas Klosowski de Rola, *Alchemy: The Secret Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1973), p. 8.

De Rola, *ibid.*, p. 10.

Unlike those alchemists of old who not infrequently died from exposure to hazardous substances used in their experiments.

The late Professor Kevin Atkinson's teaching influenced Untie's practice in both her manufacturing her own materials and the idea that artistic transformation is about the coagulation of concept into matter.

Artist's Statement in Andrew Lamprecht, 'Artists: Jeanette Untie', ArtThrob (Available: <http://www.artthrob.co.za/Artists/Jeanette-Untie-by-Andrew-Lamprecht.aspx>) Accessed 25.01.2010.

Ibid.

SA Engineering News, 13 July 2007.

Don Antonio Joseph Pernety, Dictionnaire Mytho-Hermétique (1787), quoted in Stanislas Kossowski de Rola, *Alchemy: The Secret Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1972), p. 12.

'Art Pick of the Week', *Mail & Guardian*, 10-14 October 2004.

Quoted in Anne Emshie, *Sentences*, (Blad-Roberts Contemporary, 2001), p.12.

The Mystery of Alchemy and its Influence on Baroque Otava L. F. (Available: http://www.artdaily.org/index.asp?int_sec=11&int_news=3366&date=3/24/2008) Accessed 19.07.2009.

See, for example, the work of Stanislas Kossowski de Rola in this regard.

Les Secrets-chymiques, quoted in Stanislas Kossowski de Rola, *Alchemy: The Secret Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1972), p. 8.

De Rola, *Ibid.*, p. 10.

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Ibid.

SA Engineering News, 13 July 2007.

Andrew Lamprecht teaches Discourse of Art at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, UCT. He is active as a writer, critic and curator with a particular interest in contemporary South African art.



Vertical Shaft
Titanium copper wire, foil and diamond gravel, in molten
kiln formed glass
500mm x 150mm
2007



Glacial
Molten glass with copper and cobalt multi-fired
400mm x 200mm
2008



Aquifer
Minerals fired into molten glass with industrial waste and copper wire
400mm x 200mm
2008



Industrial Earth Moving Crane
Glass art with industrial waste and mine dump waste
400mm x 200mm
2008



Residual Geology
Hot fused and molten glass panels with gold mine dust and silver, platinum and copper metal foils, lustrous and diamond gravel ore particles
350mm x 350mm
2008



Time Deposits

Hot fused and Molten Glass panels and traces of metal oxides and dusts

350mm x 350mm

2007



Industrial Sediment
Waste with copper wire and cobalt multiferrous
350mm x 350mm
2008



Vertical Shaft
Titanium, copper wire and cobalt oxide in molten kiln
formed glass artwork
500mm x 150mm
2008



Industrial Sediment
Waste with copper wire and cobalt multi-fired
350mm x 350mm
2008



Multi Panelled Glass Wall Installation

Hot fused molten glass with gold, platinum, diamond, manganese and copper industrial waste and oxides of iron, manganese and titanium
 400mm x 400mm

Public Sculpture Awarded Department Science and Technology CSIR building, Pretoria, Gauteng

2006

OVERBURDENS

Energy, Emotion and Eco-Morality

by Melvyn Minnaar

The Overburden series refers to massive sand deposits above diamond gravel deposits that are moved during mining activities. Unite uses site specific sand and embeds it onto wooden panels in artists emulsion.

"The Overburden series comprises minimalist-precise, elongated, vertical wood panels treated with a variety of sands sourced from specific mining sites- and mined ash, minerals, metal oxides and powders and the like- to offer highly tactile surfaces that glow beyond their immediate flat space. The pieces are elegant and boldly sculptural in their attraction. Abstractions embedded in those antediluvial textures of gritty, earthy dark glimmer offer their own visual dark puzzles: like staring beyond the immediacy of the night sky...they vibrate with emotion."

Cape Times
25th Feb 2004



West Coast Mine Machines
Square painted canvas panels, 2100mm x 1000mm, 2005
Chemeng Building, UCT Works of Art Collection



Carbon Imprints
Graphite, carborendum, iron, titanium, gold mine dust in artists acrylic medium
300mm x 300mm
2010

A Visual Mining Exploration

by Chris Roper

"The large 2m high works in Overburden are very beautiful, but also very grim in the way they express layers of geological time. It's a very modern idea of time that is expressed here - not a sifting through of layers in a chronological order, but time as a hodgepodge. This effect is heightened by considerations of the materials used. For example, on the 2.2m high wood panels of Overburden 1: Soiled Unite has used interaliala, Kalahari desert sand, Kimberley yellow ground from near the Big Hole, red sand from Johannesburg and Kimberley, gold mine sands that contain cyanide and arsenic, minerals metal oxides and powders, and so on ...the personal as making sense of the over-powering impact of the geological sweep of the works. When you visit the show, give yourself time to sit in front of the works - you'll feel a strange sensation as you become dizzily drawn into the layers of minerals and dirt."



Pick of the Week
Mail and Guardian

Feb 26 2004

Overburden: Soiled
Mixed media polyptych wood panels with diamondiferous minerals
and sands in artists acrylic emulsion
1900mm x 1800mm
2007



De Oord, A sedimentary geological feature on a West Coast diamond mine.



Overburden

Contains pure copper grindings, sulphur blue, graphite, titanium dioxide, iron, manganese and carbon on polypich ply panels in artists acrylic medium
1900mm x 1400mm
2007

Africa Cursed with Resources explored in Jeannette Unite's Art Practice

By Raphael Chikulwa

"Africa, rich with natural resources, is the envy of the West. Much of our things come from the things most people have little knowledge of. They should have been a blessing but they are a curse. For he who controls them, controls the people and the diamonds." By Sorious Samura Insight News (Cry Freetown 2000) Insight News TV

The above words by Sorious Samura, a Sierra Leonean filmmaker, remind me of my conversations with Jeannette Unite whose work and words relate to African mineral resources. Africa is in a crisis and its minerals, people, water, metals are appropriated adding to its burden of inherited exploitation. There are endless senseless dirty wars in Africa because of the natural resources in Africa.

My first meeting with Jeannette was in 2005 during the controversial eKapa Session in Cape Town South Africa. She talked about her work around African mining with characteristic clarity and eloquence and the source of meanings in her work. She spoke of the African continent's myths, its realities, and her intervention as an artist and her dream to give back and empower through her work. My conversation with Jeannette ended up in her space viewing some of her works about resources.

On my second visit to Cape Town, I gained a better understanding of Jeannette's work and her subject matter. I have followed her working practice for over five years and believe that she has a potential to make a difference to the fragile continent of Africa. Jeannette work contributes to understanding the history of the African landscape we live in. She is among other African artists whose work allows the viewer into this subject matter through aesthetic language. Through the "Earthscars" research Jeannette has made powerful artistic and creative social observations.

Jeannette works with provocative Africanist issues and is fully aware of the significance of location and site in time and place and she always think beyond. She always faces backwards to the pre-globalized past and forward to an African future of equality in which Africans benefit from their resources. She makes a unique contribution to the post colonial discourse through her particular use of materials that define locality.

She shares a common exploration of the post-colonial question around visual memory and culture with Zimbabwean artist, Berry Bickle,

whose work she admires. Both artists focus on the medium as an important part of the artwork to add both local and universal meanings in illustrating specific issues on humanity. Today the continent of Africa is faced with endless conflicts. Jeannette's works focusses on the villagers who have been displaced by diamond mines in Angola, Congo, South Africa, Namaqualand, and Chiadzwa, Zimbabwe and so on. Some of the issues the work deals with are greed, corruption; double standards, exploitation, and postcolonial ego have become a stumbling block to the development of Africa.

The resources are the fuel for conflict and the wars in Africa. The empire's wars outside Africa used Africans who were paid for with a five pound note, a bicycle and a coat. There were no reciprocated benefits for the veterans from the commonwealth. The issue of the so-called Commonwealth remains a bone of contention as voiced by a Tanzanian Second War veteran who sums it up he said, "We were once members of the British Empire and yet we never gained anything and I am complaining."

Those Africans from the colonies are still swimming in poverty as their counterparts from the mother of the whole empire and the Commonwealth, Britain, have a lifetime pension. Today as a son of a Second World War veteran I still wonder what's so 'common' about Commonwealth. The question about what's common about the Commonwealth needs to be re visited as there is nothing shared about the wealth that should rightfully belong to Africa.

The terms "dark continent" and "Deepest Darkest Africa" was invented by Western theorists and historians. I still find it improper, racist and inhumane. Africa is no dark continent because it has sunshine throughout the year and yet the Western World is dark half the year and other countries in the West have to use artificial light. Darkness implies lack of knowledge yet the aesthetics and intellectual originality of Africa inspired modern art.

Reading books written by Westerners about Africa one realises that their perception is revealed in their use of the term "Africa the Dark Continent". It was only when I stepped into the Western world that I realised that the darkness about Africa was within the Europeans themselves.

Jeannette's passion for Africa cannot go without comment. She uses her art to tell the sad story of exploitation, environmental degradation, double standards, slavery and cheap labour perpetrated by corporations. Her work strives to depict and symbolize the different issues that impact on inequality that affects poor mining communities and issues that affect the rest of the continent. She challenges these controversial post colonial issues and refuses to be intimidated in her practice. Jeannette uses art as a weapon, her works on paper, glass and



Copper Mine, Nababeep, Namaqualand

wooden panels using natural materials found on abandoned mines that remind us of the lack of responsibility by both mining companies and African Governments. Mining dumps remind us of the environmental degradation, water pollution and poverty after the minerals have been extracted in countries in Africa. These works challenge us to look into the past and read the history of exploitative events especially in Angola, Congo, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Africa's political and economic history is not easy to live with, our dark past keep on haunting us. "Earthscares" are about the residues of the undemocratic regimes that exploit while benefiting from Africa's rich resources.

The African Landscape and its unjust history underpin Jeannette's works of art and conversations. Her work has progressed through the theme 'TERRA' each exhibition developing an aspect of the mining theme. She uses her art as a weapon to narrate the story of greed, corruption, and exploitation, which is ruining the world as we knew it. Her work is a unique account of the power struggles between victims, and of giant mining companies and governments. Some of these works challenge the so-called democracies of the world in relationship to the growing poverty crisis in Africa.

To quote Jeannette "My real feelings about mining are ambivalent. People often automatically criticise mining but yet they have cell phones, laptops, camera's which we have because of mining. There was the stone age, the bronze age, the iron age, now we are in a poly-metal age and a poly-technological era - we fly across the globe, communicate across vast distance at the click of a button or the blink of an LED light and we are addicted to the immediate gratification of these technologies that link us across the planet. The real challenge is for artists to alert people to the challenge of not perpetrating inequalities. Of mining responsibly and benefiting those that live near the wealth beneath the ground. Not perpetuating the resource curse."

"Africa is the responsibility of everyone who has benefited from its riches."

This compilation of images and texts provides a valuable insight into Jeannette Unite's influences and confirms her art practise and development as a storyteller, thinker, archivist, environmental activist, political commentator, teacher, and a cultural historian

Raphael Chikukwa is a Zimbabwean curator and is currently doing his PhD through Kingston College, London.

JEANNETTE UNITE

Jeannette Unite travels to mining and industrial sites for samples and research and to video and photographically record evidence of the residual remains of colonialism. She studied BA Fine Art at the University of Cape Town from 1981 until 1986 and studied further at UNISA while teaching at Frank Joubert Art Centre until demand for her artwork propelled her into full time art practice in 1997. She continues to live and work in her studio in Cape Town.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 - *TERRA: Above Below*, Oliewenhuis Museum, Bloemfontein
- 2009 - *Headgear AngloGold Ashante*, Turbine Hall, Johannesburg
- 2008 - *Remembering the Future Archives*, Old Gaoi, Cape Town
- 2007 - *Hot Earth*, Thompson Gallery, Johannesburg
- 2004 - *Earth Scars: A Visual Mining Exploration*
 - William Humphreys, Kimberley
 - Mozambique National Gallery, Maputo
 - Irma Stern Museum Gallery UCT Cape Town
- 2001 - *Sentences*, Bell Roberts Contemporary Gallery, Cape Town
- 1999 - *Thresholds*, Irma Stern Museum Gallery UCT, Cape Town
- 1995 - *Abstracts*, Association of Visual Arts, Cape Town
- 1993 - *Recent Works*, Association of Visual Arts, Cape Town
- 1990 - *Sensuous Images*, Wandel Street Gallery, Cape Town

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 - *The Lie of the Land: Representations of the South African Landscape*, Old Town House, Iziko Museums
- 2009 - *Tashkent Biennale*, Central Asia, Uzbekistan, Sacred Planet, Monteverde, Italy
- 2008 - *Re-structuring the Colonial*, Thompson Gallery, Johannesburg
- 2007 - *Visions of Africa*, Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria
- 2006 - *HERM - Boundaries Between Wild and Cultivated*, Ann Bryant, East London
- 2005 - *Gunfree SA*, Constitution Hill Auction, Johannesburg
- 2004 - *Surfacing With Lynne Lomofsky*, Unite Studio Gallery, Cape Town
- 2003 - *S.U.M. BagFactory Residency Exhibition*, Fordsburg Art Studios, Johannesburg
- 2002 - *NSPCC Old Mutual HQ*, London
- 2001 - *SA Today Signature Artist*, Fair Centre, Helsinki
- 2000 - *Artichoke Multimedia Event*, Sandton Civic Centre, Johannesburg

- 1999 - *Paper Prayers*, Hardground's Travelling Show Inaugural Exhibition, SA Libraries, Cape Town
- Soft Serve*, Public Eye Event, SA National Gallery, Cape Town
- 1994 - *Print Triennial*, Musée d'Art Contemporain Internationale, Lyon, France
- South Africa in Black and White*, curated by Ray Mayten, South African National Gallery IZIKO, Cape Town
- 1993 - *Brides*, curated by Christopher Peter, Irma Stern Museum Gallery, University of Cape Town
- 1992 - *Art Now*, AVA Gallery, Cape Town
- 1991 - *Launch Exhibition*, IN-FIN-ART Gallery
- 1990 - *Critics Choice*, AVA, Cape Town
- 1981 - *Kelloggs Young Artists Travelling Exhibition*, Award Winner

PRESENTATIONS AND CONFERENCES

- 2009 - *VANSA 20:20*, Cape Town
- *AngloGold Ashanti*, Turbine Hall, Johannesburg
- 9th Tashkent Biennale "Urban Philosophy: Anthropological
- *Landscape*" Scientific conference, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- XLIIIrd AICA Congress, "The Relations between Art and Science: Complicity, Criticality, Knowledge", Dublin Castle, Ireland
- 2010 - *Colour Colloquium*, Rhodes University, Grahamstown

SUMMARY ART COLLECTIONS

- Anglo - KUMBA, Johannesburg
- Development Bank South Africa
- SwissRe, Johannesburg
- Vodacom, Cape Town
- Fairbridges, Cape Town
- Clifford Chance, Brussels, Belgium
- MTN, Johannesburg
- PEZULA, Knysna
- DEVS, Cape Town
- Isqithi HQ, Johannesburg
- Old Mutual Place London
- University Cape Town Chemical Engineering Building
- William Humphreys Public Art Museum, Kimberley
- Department of Science and Technology CSIR Building, Pretoria

AWARDS

- 2009 - Art Moves Africa (AMA) Research grant for travel in Africa
2009 - Tashkent Biennale Merit Award for the most original use of natural materials in her work
2009 - VANSÁ Mouille Point Sculpture Finalist
2006 - Award Glass Installation Public Art Competition CSIR Deep Science Technology Tshwane
2004 - Ollawenhuis Competition (Glass & Steel Water Sculpture) Finalist
2004 - Constitutional Hill (Glass & Steel Water Sculpture) Finalist
1981 - Kelloggs Young Artists Award First Prize competition & 4 Year International Art Scholarship

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Michael Le Grange	Pg 14; 25; 42; 43

In Memorium

To my late Professor Kevin Atkinson for the introduction to a method of making art material that has informed the foundation of my practice. Jo Faragher, miner, ceramicist, alchemist and Grazia De Beer, ecologist and environmental activist and my grandmother, Renee, who studied art and music at the Sorbonne, played bridge like it mattered and brought us up. And finally to my dog, Caz, who taught me to be free from fear.





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