

Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time

Liza Grobler

Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time

Published on the occasion of Liza Grobler's eleventh solo exhibition of the same name





First published by **Yellowwoods Art**
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ISBN 978-0-620-63125-9

Printed by Scan Shop

¹⁶⁹²
Spier

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CONTENTS

10

Foreword

Jeanetta Blignaut

14

Note to Self

Liza Grobler

18

Unimaginable, Unnameable, Poetic: The Creative Force in the Work of Liza Grobler

Amanda Botha

62

Dancing Line, Blindfolded Through Time: Liza Grobler's Experiments in Collaboration

Andrew Lamprecht

96

A Conversation

Liza Grobler and Barbara Wildenboer

144

Biography and Exhibitions

Artist Biography

List of Exhibitions

Awards, Residencies and Collections

Biographies of Collaborators

158

List of Artworks

I see it as part of the artist's role to reinvent the way we see things around us – something Liza does beautifully in this show. The consistent presence of the line in every medium and work is metaphorically “blindfolded” in that it has no conscious end goal but is instead dancing; making shapes and figures which have their own logic and abstraction.

Antoinette Murdoch, Chief Curator of the Johannesburg Art Gallery

FOREWORD

By Jeanetta Blignaut

CEO of Yellowwoods Art
Curator of the Spier Contemporary Collection

Artists are the pioneers of our culture. We endeavour to be their custodians and to create space for artists to explore freely. On behalf of Spier, we function as patrons of artists who take this lead. And it certainly helps when one knows an artist personally, and has done so for a long period of time.

Having shared a studio, a house and projects of all sorts and sizes with Liza for more than half my life, I hope this publication will show the wonder of her work: the constant grappling with the formal building blocks of art, which echoes a concurrent grappling with the large questions in life – survival instinct, the shadow of death – as well as light humour to keep us going.

I could venture an explanation of Liza's work by discussing the "point in time" – the definition of a mere dot; or elaborate on how the dot "moves forward" – so creating a line, a connection, a network. But I would rather avoid this kind of bane analysis, observing instead a witticism of the oft-quoted Winston Churchill:

"I cannot forecast to you the action ... It is a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key." – BBC radio address regarding the Russia Question (1939)

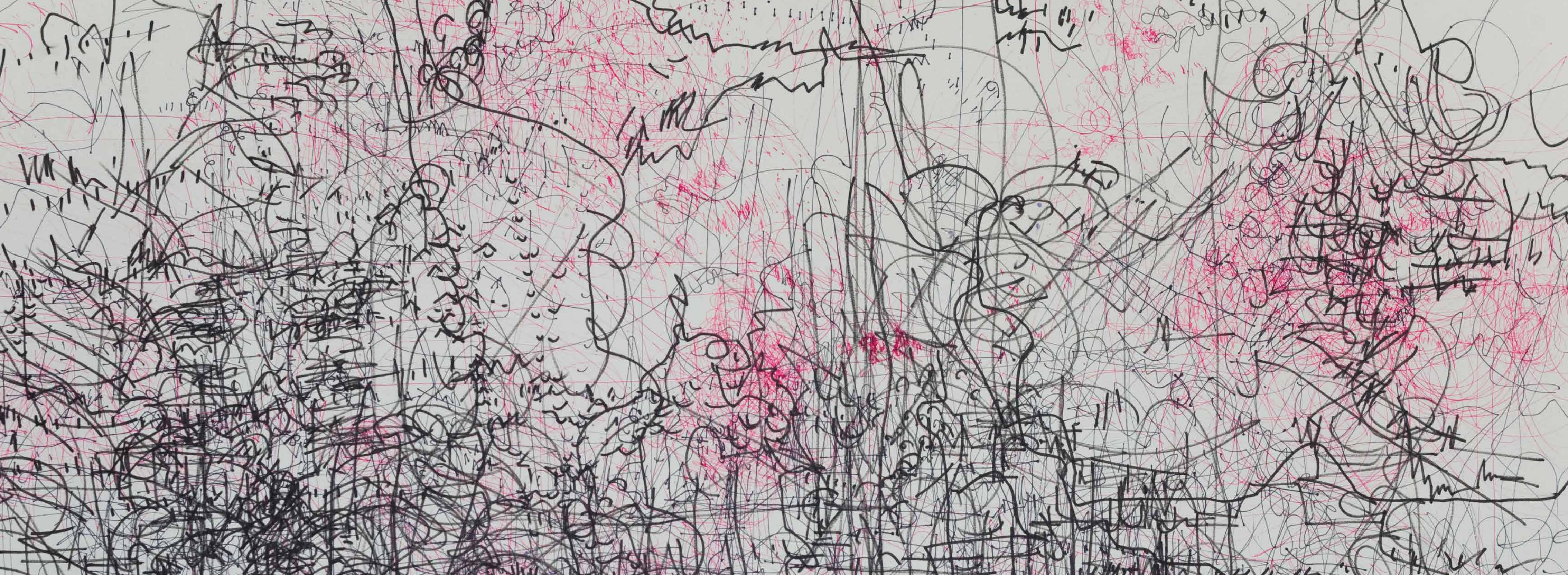
The *Blindfolded Line* is perhaps the riddle, wrapped in mystery; *Time* perhaps the enigma.

Liza's work is best experienced firsthand – inside the womb of her interventions, facing the darkness of base power and basic instinct, awed before monumental works and amused by tiny ones.

An encounter with her work is a delight and a pleasure – even if it's the exact same work, every day. Because humour shows beauty. And it reminds me that the best life is lived *blindfolded, dancing through time*.

Pipe cleaner drawing, installation view, KZNSA, Durban





NOTE TO SELF

By Liza Grobler
14-15 June 2014

As artists, we are always trying to explain what we are doing, how we go about it, or who we are. We do this through CVs, artists' statements, biographies and art critical essays. All of these are important, and in some form they are all included here – I've ticked those boxes. But sometimes I think it might be good to check in with ourselves. *Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time* really is about the art making process as a journey, because for me that's what it is: a journey from one state of confusion to another state of confusion.

One has an impulse, an idea, a moment of clarity or even a concrete object, that somehow triggers something – and that might result in a chain of associations along which your mind slowly starts to take steps – sometimes in opposite directions simultaneously. Often it kind of stalls, but in the end there are moments where your mind and your process fall in step, and that is when the creative process starts to move. The process has no end destination in sight, although we often mistakenly view the exhibition as a destination. The process doesn't view the exhibition as a destination; the process just uses the exhibition as a "pause" if you will – so that it can stumble ahead in its own search. I still enjoy the search – even though I often find it frustrating.

I lose things all the time – I mean physical things. Through the creative process I lose direction, I lose track of time, I lose myself, and sometimes even a bit of my sanity. But be that as it may, it is a journey I chose to embark on years ago, and it's a journey that I really cannot abandon. Or maybe it is possible, but it has a very strange magnetic pull. And this endless journey enables me to find things which I was not looking for, and to engage in dialogues that I did not initiate.

The way in which we interact with our surroundings, the way in which we interact with each other, the way in which we get to know ourselves; it is all part of that process. For this very reason I often feel drawn to people – they fascinate me – and I want to get to know them. I know a lot of people, and I know many people rather well. And although I can talk a lot – and I tend to talk a lot – I don't think it's necessarily one of my strengths. Herein lies the power of collaboration: regardless of my initial thoughts and opinions, through collaboration I am granted the opportunity to change my mind. **And if there is one thing that is important in the art making process, it is the need to constantly adjust your outlook – because the mind wanders.**





UNIMAGINABLE, UNNAMEABLE, POETIC

The Creative Force
in the Work of Liza Grobler
By Amanda Botha

"One eye sees, the other feels" – Paul Klee

Liza Grobler is an artist who can turn unimaginable concepts into tangible form. She plays with a variety of materials, teasing them into shapes that were never meant to be. Shapes that are sensuous and tactile. *One has to appreciate them in their command of space: how they sinew and swoop differently from every angle.*

Her exhibition, *Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time*, features large and fascinating works where the viewer can get lost in this spatial interplay of contrasting materials. They are an intriguing delight, which restores one's faith in art that engages and inspires.

At the same time it is witty, bright, and rooted in our urban environment. It has elements of fun and also perhaps hidden social commentary. The subject matter indicates a deliberate and highly playful evasion of aesthetic categorisation. It is idiosyncratic, enigmatic art.

Previous pages: *Crush*, collaboration with Qubeka Bead Studio, installation view, KZNSA, Durban
Right: *Pipe cleaner drawing*, installation view, KZNSA, Durban



Grobler's vocabulary oscillates freely between the figurative and the nonrepresentational. She communicates through a unique symbolism that is more expressive than descriptive. She creates a magnificent depth and texture to the pieces she designs. **The subject is unnameable; the result is poetic.** One feels the authenticity of the creative impulse.

Grobler works on her own colour experiments, using blocks of colour with limited overlap, allowing them to become basic building blocks to create a colour harmony. The bold colours come together in vibrating edges that create a sense of pulsating movement, in order to be transformed into a sprawling hyper visual experience; into fantastic and yet deeply meditative works.

Her paintings feature a heightened chromatic palette, complex figure/ground reversals and interlocking forms, as well as a variety of surface textures modified by successive layers of resins, oils and waxes.

Right: **Detail: *Little Black Number*, performance costume in collaboration with Richard de Jager**





Left: **Detail: *Eye Candy*, performance costume in collaboration with Richard de Jager**

In this exhibition she explores the notion that all images develop from a single dot. **The movement of the dot does not only build an image, it also connects.** It shows an intrinsic need to communicate, to share experiences, and to be informed by responses. The line strives to dance, but mostly stumbles ahead into unknown territories. As with most explorations, the outcome is often a surprise.

The drawn line reconfigures space; it divides, yet juxtaposes two entities; it connects two distant points; it includes some, and excludes others; it marks a boundary between standing for, and standing against.

The notion of a “blindfolded line” leads to the experience of space. It is a search in the dark towards an unknown outcome. The artist allows organic patterns to evolve as independent configurations. The process is one of creating relatively unplanned elements that are arranged in spontaneous compositions, which gradually take shape as the work progresses. It could also be argued that the work exists in an indefinable temporal state: a work-in-progress and therefore, in a sense, incomplete. Both the form and the process inform the content.

Conceptually, the works are open to manifold impressions. In fact, it can be said that the artist depends on the viewer to complete the picture. The exhibition invites viewers to allow their own imaginations to take a ride on the playful and engaging ideas that the artist presents. Grobler engages with mundane materials, giving everyday objects a new life, and spreading energy to all who encounter them.

The viewers are integral through their participation. They are invited to become part of the artwork itself. In fact, their interaction with the work allows further organic growth. In the pipe cleaner web, the lines sit in space; a maze growing over time, created through audience participation. The artist trusts and allows the work to flow and develop without having final control. Retrieving and letting it unfold, becomes part of the facilitation process of finalising the end product.

By allowing space for the unknown, and inviting participation, the artist is creating a social form of art. In the manner of Michel Foucault, Grobler allows art making to unfold like a game that invariably goes beyond its own rules, and transgresses its own limitations. The aspects that are absent are as important as those that are present.

Liza Grobler’s exhibition, *Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time*, is a highly immersive installation. Her work has a gravitas with an ethereal splendour.

Sources

Foucault, Michel: *What is an Author?* Lecture presented to the Societe Francaise de Philosophies, 22 February 1969. In: *The Philosophy of Language*. Edited John Searle, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
Franciscono, Marcel: *Paul Klee – His work and Thought*. University of Chicago Press, 1991.



It's a Quiet Thing #1-6

Acrylic paint and mixed media on double marine ply board, dimensions variable









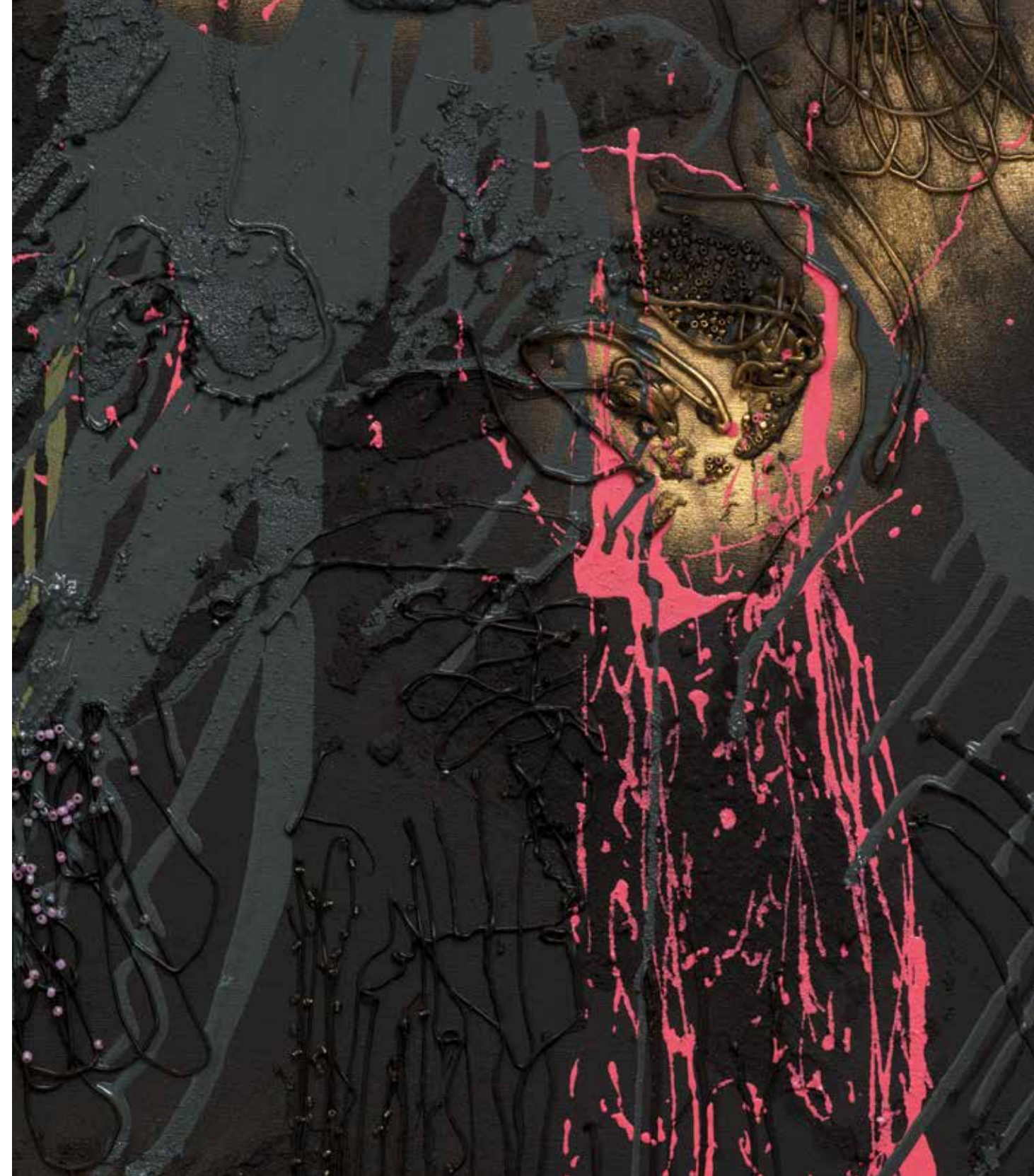
It's a Quiet Thing #1-3, installation view, KZNSA, Durban



It's a Quiet Thing #1-6, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery



Left/Right: Details: *It's a Quiet Thing #1-3*



Fabricated Landscapes – a painting quilt



Oil paint and mixed media on marine ply and canvas, installation dimensions variable



Fabricated Landscapes, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery



Fabricated Landscapes, installation view, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein



Left/Right: **Details:** *Fabricated Landscapes*







Left: Detail: *Fabricated Landscapes*



Left/Right: **Details:** *Fabricated Landscapes*



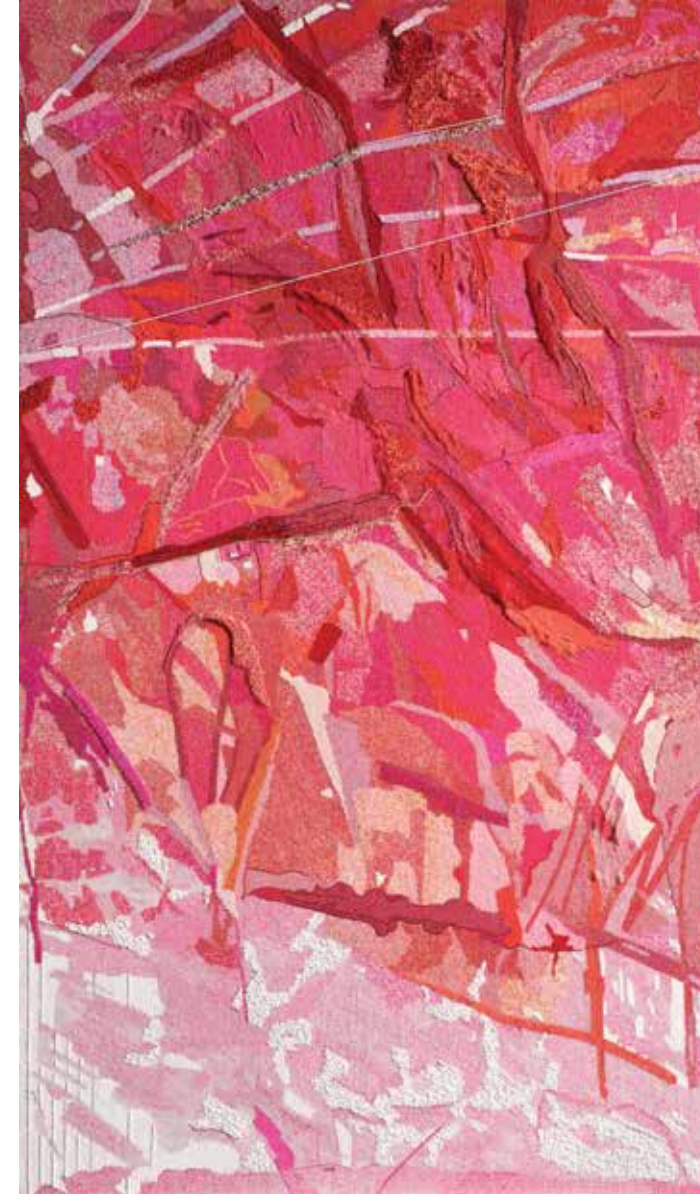
Crush
(Collaboration with Qubeka Bead Studio)



Glass beads on board, installed dimensions 740 x 240cm



Fabricated Landscapes and Crush, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery



Detail: *Crush*



Left/Right: Details: *Crush*





Left: **Detail:** *Crush*

Right: Detail: *Crush*



DANCING LINE, BLINDFOLDED THROUGH TIME

Liza Grobler's
Experiments in Collaboration
By Andrew Lamprecht

At the end of the day – at the end of the process initiated by conversations with other artists, and continued through this series of exhibitions by Liza Grobler – **the ultimate collaborator with the artist may well be the viewer.** *Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time* is at once playful and deadly serious. We are encouraged to walk, stalk or prance through the situations that have been initiated by Grobler, engage or disengage as we will, and thus respond to what she has presented in this unfurling of her art.

Though anyone familiar with Liza Grobler's aesthetic will see that this is clearly an exhibition by her, it is important to recognise the central role of collaboration in this body of work. Initiated as a series of discussions through social media such as Facebook (especially in the case of her international collaborators), as well as with face-to-face meetings with her friends, Grobler in each case begins with the point, quite literally, of a dot or a mark that signals the first stage of making a work.

Questions are posed to her partner-in-art; either directly, or by making something that through a to-and-fro leads to the next phase in production – which ultimately results in the work on display. Though not quite ultimately; since built into her process is the freedom to change works from exhibition to exhibition – continuing the dance, if you like.

I would be surprised if this continuation does not include the audience. Grobler remarked with patent glee at the response of children to her exhibition at Oliewenhuis, a museum that always seems to be bursting at the seams with kids, and I suspect that their engagement filtered into what was shown afterwards in the KZN Gallery and JAG.

Accompanying the exhibition is a small “parcel” of square cards that pose questions such as: “This exhibition consists of artworks made from many different materials. Which of the materials [listed] is NOT used in the exhibition?” Flipping them around, the cards can be put together, jigsaw-like, to make a picture, which, if one chose to, one could add to. Essentially this education pack has become a part of Grobler's process, the results of which she will not see. **This ability to “let go”, to allow others to “mess with your stuff”, is rare and usually very difficult for a creative person, but here Grobler has made it her raison d'être – and the results speak for themselves.**



Pipe cleaner drawing, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery



Craft has always been central to Liza Grobler's artistic language, and there is a strong engagement with craft-based practice in *Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time*. The litany of artists who claim crafters as "collaborators", when in fact the crafters merely carry out a set of instructions presented to them as a *fait accompli*, is very long indeed. But this is not the case here, nor has it ever been for Grobler. And you can be sure that the women of Qubeka Bead Studio are as present in engaging with their work as Grobler herself is.

The collaborative act is inherent in the title of the exhibition, but I also see these lines breaking the boundaries of pictorial space, and even, perhaps magically, starting conversations with works made by artists who have never before spoken to each other. Time, as much as line, is blindfolded in this exhibition: Just as one may find that what seemed like a few minutes on the dance floor was in fact a few hours, so too here the temporal has folded in on itself.

Once these exhibitions are ended, the works will be dispersed, and join others by different artists in private and public collections. I can see them now, nudging a shy etching or slick and sexy lambda print next to them, egging them on to the dance floor.

These works are flirtatious and demand to be engaged with, like the best and most satisfying dance partners. Liza Grobler is the MC at the helm perhaps, shouting out the numbers as if at a square dance. But the performance that takes place in the gallery is a magical transmutation and tribute to what can happen, if one allows someone else to be responsive, and gives one's work freely, as a gift.

Right: *The Guardians: Pause and Full Stop*, collaboration with Norman O'Flynn, installation view at KZNSA, Durban



Cyber Collaboration - a dialogue

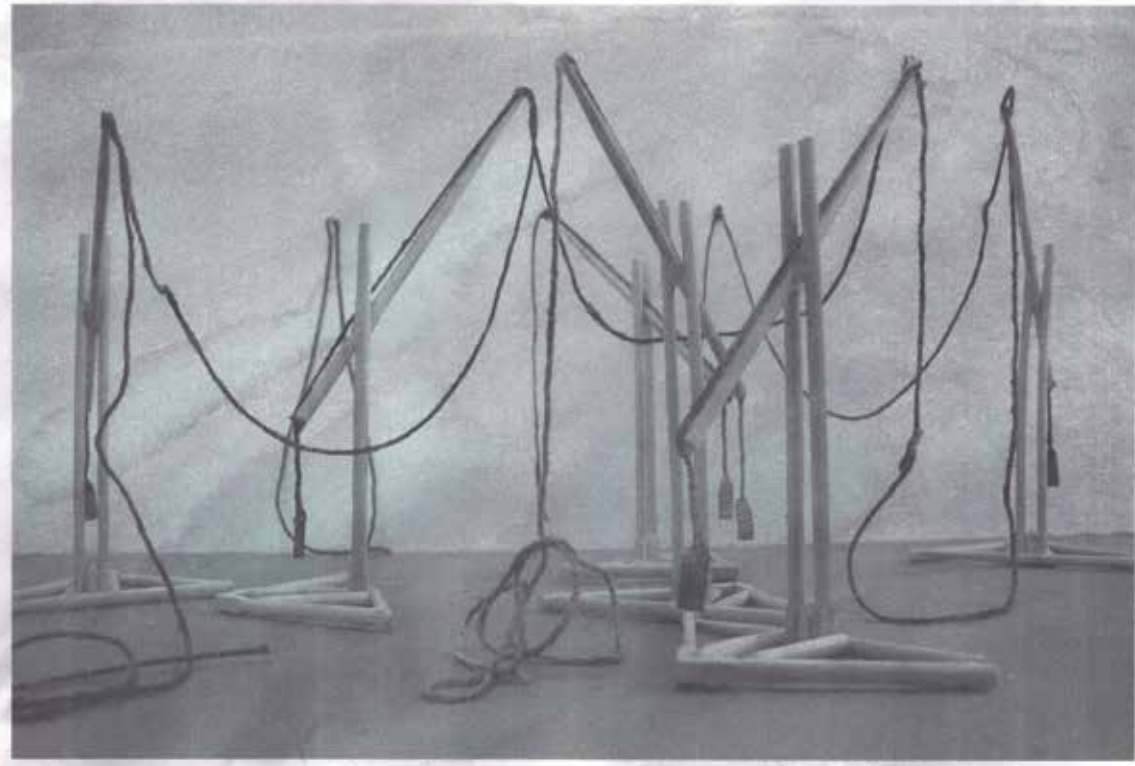
Blindfolded Line, 2013, mixed media drawing

"While blindfolded, I made a two-handed drawing over a period of three hours. I emailed the outcome to 10 of my colleagues in 10 different countries. Participants received a digital version of the drawing and the exhibition title. They were asked to respond to this, with a visual image of their own. This is the collection of images that stems from that exchange."

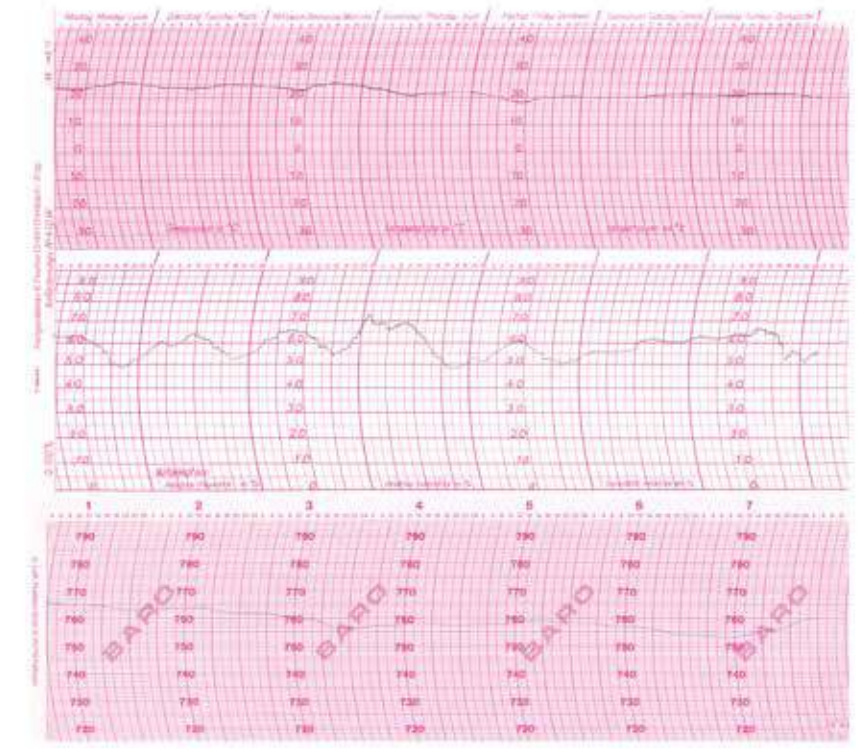




Above: **Contribution by Mithu Sen** Right: **Contribution by Teemu Mäki**

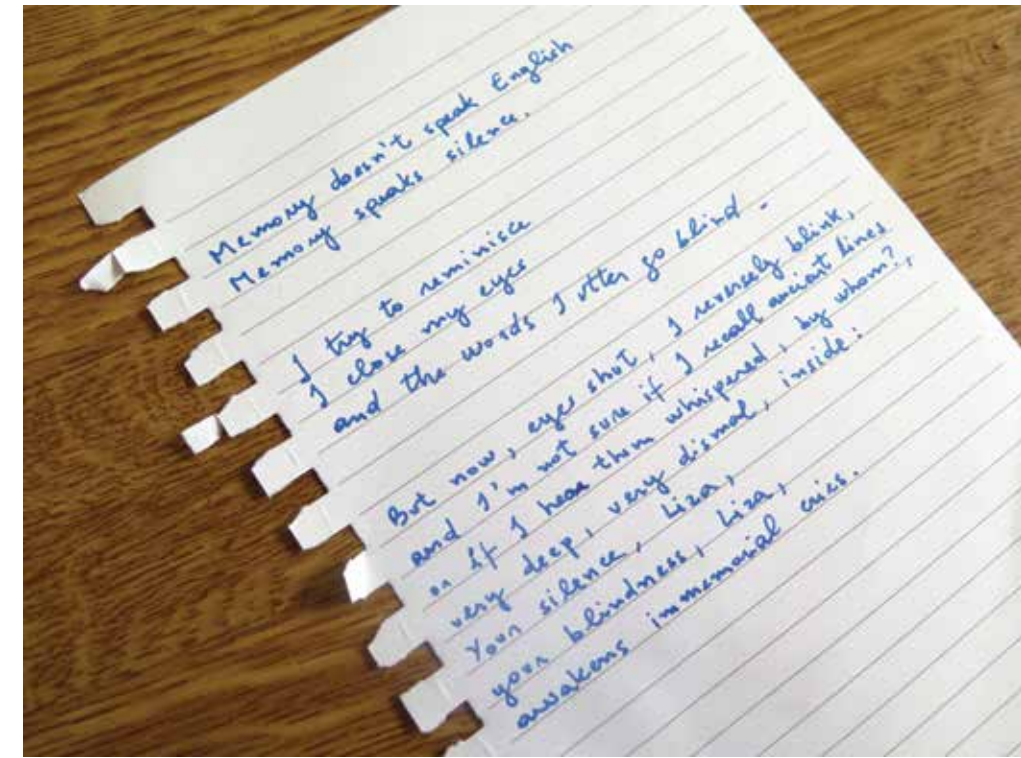


Above: Contribution by Kirsty Tinkler Right: Contribution by Ella Ziegler





Left/Right: *Awake, a Father's Wake* by Caoimhghin Ó Fraithile



Left: Contribution by Beate Frommelt Above: Contribution by Julián Fuks

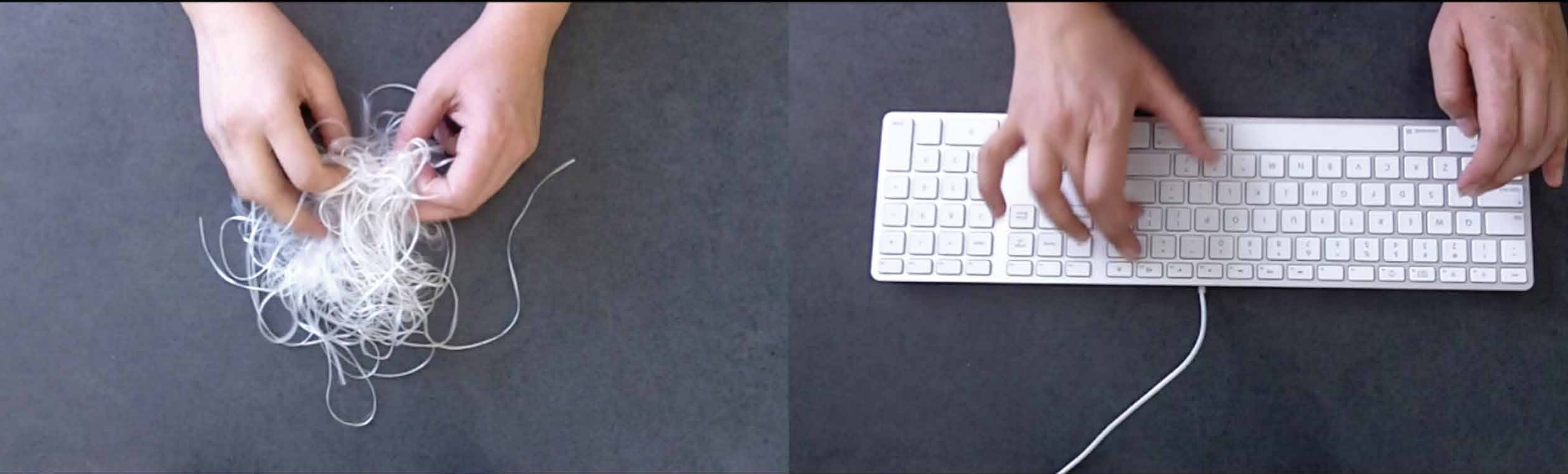


Left: Contribution by Lieven Siegers



While blindfolded, I made a two-handed drawing over a period of three hours. I emailed it to 10 of my colleagues. Participants received only the drawing and the title of the work 'Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time.' They were asked to respond to the email by sending a visual image of their own. Cyber Dialogue is the collection of images that stems from this exchange.

Left: *Cyber Collaboration*, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery



Left: Contribution by Alicia Marvan



Left: Contribution by Ulric Roldanus, video still of performance



Right: *Cyber Collaboration*, installation view, KZNSA, Durban

The Guardians: Pause and Full Stop
(Collaboration with Norman O'Flynn)

Fibre glass, wool, synthetic hair, dimensions variable





Right: *The Guardians: Pause and Full Stop*, installation view, KZNSA, Durban



A CONVERSATION

Liza Grobler (LG) and
Barbara Wildenboer (BW)

LG For me, the physical qualities of the materials are very important. So, I might find a kind of rope that I like – it just catches my eye in the space within which it operates – I’ll see a specific colour rope, and think: “Ahh that’s pretty, can one make something out of this?”

BW Maybe our work isn’t really that different, because I remember when I was working towards my master’s degree, I simply worked with materials, motifs, colours – things that I found appealing. I did not really consider why I chose the different things. But, in retrospect, it all made sense. You showed me images of that artist who–

LG Oh, Judith Scott.

BW It made a big impression on me. I put eggs in nests and wrapped them in nets, I made boats filled with rocks to weigh them down, but I didn’t think why I was doing this. In hindsight, when one looks at the body of work as a whole, there is a certain state of mind–

LG But also the nests seem to be something we both come back to–

BW Nests and drops.

LG I don’t know how you feel about this, but one of the things that truly annoys me: I hate it when people want to start conversations about the feminist angle in my work. It irritates me immensely.

BW Somewhere there will be a feminist angle in our work, because we are female, but it’s not–

LG That’s the whole point: I’m also a certain age, and from a certain culture, and from a certain ... whatever. We are the sum of various different factors, and I hate the idea that it [my work] is always put in a feminist bracket.

BW All three works in our collaborations have components associated with feminist theory: the concept of craft; the idea of female artists.

LG We both work with the image of the nest, or the birthing process; we are very visceral in many respects. In my current show, *Blindfolded Line*, I place red against black – one wants to make a direct comparison with the womb and the umbilical cord. It’s not that I want to cut it out completely, but that is not the essence of my work. I think it’s integral to what I make, but it is not the focus of what I make. Do you understand what I’m trying to say?

BW They are archetypal symbols – whether you’re a woman or a man – it has more to do with our humanity.

LG I don’t deny the fact that I am a woman, or that there are links with the womb and motherhood and the creative process of giving birth.

Thinking Cap
(Collaboration with Barbara Wildenboer)

Digital print on cotton rag, 126 x 69cm



- - -

LG An exhibition is a bit like giving birth – whether you are male or female. To have an exhibition is a bit like having a child, who then develops its own identity – in spite of our intentions or preconceived ideals. Although you still have a connection with it, the exhibition becomes independent of you. Once my work is being exhibited my role is fulfilled. That is why I always try to have collaborative components and performative aspects in my shows, otherwise I feel completely alienated.

BW It's a bit like sharing the burden of parenthood with someone [both laugh heartily].

LG Yes! I remember Timo Smuts, my supervisor, called exhibitions “the graveyards of the creative process”. When the work is up, and so carefully displayed, it's a bit like tombstones. You've worked through a process, you've come to some insight (or not), you've resolved or consolidated your process to whatever product or outcome, and now it is there for people to see, or to interpret – but you as the creator are redundant. That is part of the reason why people always get such intense post-exhibition blues.

- - -



Right: *Thinking Cap*, installation view, KZNSA, Durban

Waltzing Mathildas
(Collaboration with Barbara Wildenboer)

Installation view, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein





Waltzing Mathildas, Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery

BW

We talked before about doing something spectacular that costs a lot of money, that can astound many people for a moment; as opposed to making something that costs less to produce, and is purchased by a wealthy individual for a private home. Remember when you were conceptualising the balloon projectⁱⁱⁱ? I was experiencing a kind of dilemma because of the amounts of money people were willing to give to these temporary public things – and then you told me that there can be one kid that looks up into the sky and thinks, “Wow, things are hard, but here is something amazing!” Visually your work often has that aspect of wonder, and you have an exceptional feel for colour and colour combinations. You use materials that people see every day. I think the combination of all these aspects is your redeeming quality – it enables people to relate, even if the work is incomprehensible and bizarre.

LG

I find that old people and children can engage freely with my work, and people that are very informed about art always pretend to know, even though you don’t even know what it’s about. Within the context they’ll try to find some connections – whether they criticise it or not; that is another story. I make different types of work depending on the situation. Certain larger projects, that are public and for everyone, are easier on the one hand, because people don’t have specific expectations. The question as to whether or not a work is art often isn’t even voiced because they don’t “read” it as art in that context. I don’t really care either way; for me it is about creating a sense of wonderment.

ⁱⁱⁱ Grobler, Liza: *Diary of a Nanosatellite*. [Performance artwork]. Khayelitsha, 2013.

- - -

LG But I also want to talk about the weird connections that exist between people that know each other – many of us that are creating work at a given time, and within a specific space or context–

BW Like everyone starting to use the same shade of green. And the drops – the drops, the nests, the stones.

LG Yes, so I want to talk about ideas. There’s a nice quote in a novel *Genesis*^{iv}; where the character states that ideas are parasites – we think we have ideas, but actually ideas have a will of their own, and they will always find a vehicle through which to come out.

BW Steven Johnson’s TED Talk discussion about where good ideas come from, and how people got together in coffee houses and chatted and exchanged ideas, and how the Enlightenment then started. In the same way, through collaborations you double your chances of luck! Because if it is not only strategy and skill, through collaborations you can double your chances.

LG It’s a very interesting way to think about it – I’ve never thought about it in those terms.

BW We are blindfolded!

LG Yes! All our actions are actually a stumble.

BW Stumbling blindfolded – stumbling through time! [laughter] You stumble and when you trip over something, it is “Ahhh!! Eureka!!”

- - -

^{iv} Beckett, Bernard: *Genesis*. Longacre Press, 2006.

- - -

LG Intuition is not magical.

BW Intuition is just a sixth sense that we do not acknowledge scientifically. I don’t want to talk about my first solo, but in retrospect I was so impressed. I thought, oh stones are pretty, oh nests are nice. I didn’t think, “I choose this, because this means this, and that refers to something else.” I just stumbled ahead blindly. I just did things that felt right. It wasn’t as much knowledge, as emotions and experiences. It was absolutely emotional. I intuitively selected things that meant something in the end.

LG But sometimes we also choose the wrong things. Generally we default to the right thing as a result of our experiences, but sometimes we default incorrectly. That’s why it’s important to keep the other half alert, to avoid incorrect defaults.

Where were we? Oh, Surrealism. It has to do with the Zeitgeist – ah! How I hate that word (along with “melange”). I think there are shifts that are taking place right now, and now in Paris I noticed it again. Here in South Africa things are still a bit more focused on the socio-political – and that’s not necessarily bad, it’s just how it is. For me it’s always been important that creating an artwork is a bit like making a dream materialise – art is moving closer to the idea of the dream. My dreams aren’t necessarily very exciting, but it’s the idea of making something non-rational visible, that appeals to me. It’s a physical presence of something that should not exist. When I make things, I create objects, and they do exist. But they shouldn’t really.

- - -

Little Black Number
(Collaboration with Richard de Jager)

Costume, performance and diasec print





Little Black Number, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery

BW That's why Thinking Cap is a good work! It's one of those things that was unfamiliar. I was uncomfortable with that piece. I'm not anymore, because I've become used to it.

LG I think it illustrates rather clearly the connections between people, and the relationship or context between people and the world.

BW This is the first time that you or I say something that actually explains what it is about. You can make the connections with the World Wide Web, and interpersonal relationships, and us that go on residencies.

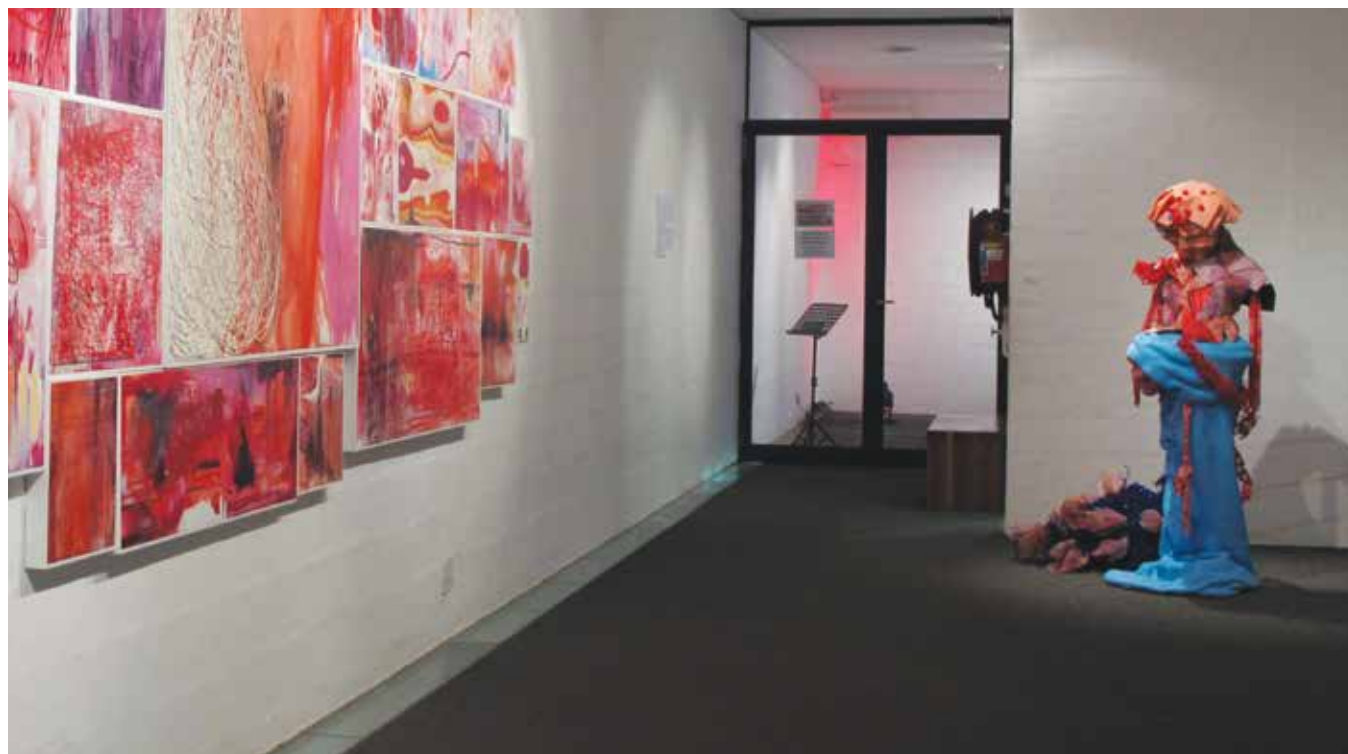




Eye Candy
(Collaboration with Richard de Jager)

Costume, performance and diasec print





Eye Candy, installation view, KZNSA, Durban

LG What I wanted to say about France, about Paris, was that I really think we are moving back towards Surrealism.

BW Surrealism has always been there – Hieronymus Bosch.

LG Yes, where the environment and the social structure are ready to embrace it. I think we are in a new era of Surrealism. All these things like space travelling, and additional dimensions, and new planets and all the other stuff. Ephemeral ideas versus rational thinking processes, and the fact that these things are much more closely connected – now there is more scientific proof that starts to acknowledge this.

BW Parascience!

LG Yes. That's a nice word. Does it exist?

BW Yes, Masaru Emoto – the guy with the water crystals – came up with the term. People said: "What you are doing is pseudoscience" (because it hadn't been tested according to certain empirical methods). And he said: "It's not pseudoscience, it's parascience" – because there are certain scientific things that we can't explain.

LG I reckon it's a second phase of Surrealism: Rationality is not the most important thing.



Left: *Eye Candy*, installation view, KZNSA, Durban



Left: *Eye Candy*, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery

Propositions

Paper-mache, pipe cleaners, installation dimensions variable





Propositions, installation view, KZNSA, Durban

BW The three main themes of Surrealism were death, sex and violence.

LG Aren't those more or less the cornerstones of life anyhow? [laughs]

BW My work is always dealing with death—

LG And mine with sex and violence! [laughter] In the end, every show is just another dot on the route of processes. That's actually a bad thing to realise. This is my eleventh solo.

BW But you trust your intuition.

LG And that show is just "that show", and it's the best you can do at that point. It's not the best that you can ever do, and hopefully you'll do better in future, but at that point in your life you're at that place. That is what I am enjoying about my career now, is the knowledge that "there's no turning back".



Left: Detail: *Propositions*





Previous page: *Propositions*, installation view, KZNSA, Durban

Left: *Propositions*, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery

Pipe cleaner drawing
(Collaboration with all visitors)

Installation view, KZNSA, Durban





Above: *Pipe cleaner drawing*, installation view, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein Right: *Pipe cleaner drawing*, installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery



Left: *Pipe cleaner drawing, in progress*

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Liza Grobler (b. 1974) lives in Cape Town, South Africa. She blurs the traditions of craft and fine art, breathing new life into discarded, mass-produced materials through traditional craft techniques like crochet, beading and weaving. Her work explores the tangible qualities of materials and the connections between people, artworks and the world around us; her installations creating dialogues with the spaces in which they are displayed. The viewer is encouraged to travel with her into an imaginary world where fact and fiction become one, everything is in flux, and anything is possible.

Grobler often embarks on ambitious collaborative projects with fellow artists; constructing objects, images and installations through interaction and exchange. Gallery exhibitions, projects and interventions are integrated components that cross-reference one another.

To date, she has had ten acclaimed solo exhibitions, and initiated numerous site-specific and collaborative interventions in South Africa and abroad. *Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time* is her eleventh solo exhibition.

LIST OF EXHIBITIONS

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2014

/

2013

2012

2010

|

2009

2007

2005

2004

2003

|

2002

2000

|

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

/

2014

Blindfolded Line, Dancing Through Time, Oliewenhuis Art Museum (Bloemfontein), KZNSA (Durban), Johannesburg Art Gallery (Johannesburg)
Interrupted Daydreams, Spier Estate, Stellenbosch
White Termite, Brundyn+, Cape Town
Visitor (The Square): A Solo Exhibition in Two Parts, iArt Wembley Project Space and iArt Gallery (now Brundyn+), Cape Town
Visitor, Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town
9 Chicks and a Dick, AVA Gallery, Cape Town
Groei #1, Outlet, Pretoria
Play with Me, AVA Gallery, Cape Town
I can't see the wood for the trees, so I'm taking a line for a very long walk, João Ferreira Gallery, Cape Town
Almost a Valentine, Chelsea Gallery, Wynberg
The Garbage Men Wear Gloves, Chelsea Gallery, Wynberg

South Africa: 10 x 12 @ SA, Benetton Collection, Venice
Durbanism: Durban City, Urban Sea Edge and Southern African Sub-Tropics, International Union of Architects World Congress, Durban

2013 *5 Years in Print*, Warren Editions, Cape Town
Chance favours the Connected Mind (collaboration with Barbara Wildenboer), Amelia Johnson Contemporary, Hong Kong
Stellenbosch Revisited, Die Woordfees (literary festival), Sasol Museum, Stellenbosch
2012 *Summer Salon*, Brundyn+, Cape Town
Tjorts/Cheers! drawing exhibition after a poem by Danie Marais, AVA Gallery, Cape Town
2011 *Alptraum* travelling drawing exhibition, Berlin, Los Angeles, Cape Town
Open Books (Contemporary Book Art in South Africa), iArt Gallery, Cape Town
Collection 13, SMAC Art Gallery, Cape Town
Johannesburg Art Fair, Brundyn+
2010 *Divisions: Aspects of South African Art (1948-2010)*, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch
The Menippean Uprising, curated by Pierre Fouché and Hentie van der Merwe, Blank Projects, Cape Town
Frans Masereel Centre Annual Printmaking Show, Kasterlee, Belgium
Twenty Years of South African Sculpture, curated by Andrew Lamprecht, Nirox Sculpture Park, Cradle of Humankind, Johannesburg
Johannesburg Art Fair, SMAC Art Gallery
2009 *Black: the antithesis of the fraudulent sensuality of culture's façade. An experiment in voluntary asceticism*, Blank Projects, Cape Town
Warren Editions, Monotypes and Etchings, Curious, Whetstone and Frankley, Cape Town
2008 *The Bijou Burns Again*, UCA Gallery, Observatory
Women in Craft, Spier Estate, Stellenbosch
2007 *Common Ground* (collaboration with Jeanne Hoffman), Lönnstrom Contemporary Art Museum, Rauma, Finland
South African Art on Paper, Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sydney, Australia
TACT, Artspace, Pretoria

2006 *STEEK*, two-person exhibition in collaboration with Barend de Wet, Blank Projects, Cape Town
the blank paper project, *Cape 07 Biennale*, Blank Projects, Cape Town
Just like home (collaboration with Norman O' Flynn), Solothurn, Switzerland
20<artists>06 travelling exhibition, coordinated by Norman O' Flynn, Bell-Roberts Contemporary, Cape Town, and Art on Paper, Johannesburg
2005 *Of Want and Desire*, João Ferreira Gallery, Cape Town
Cape Biennale, curated by Andrew Lamprecht, Blank Projects, Cape Town
The 5th International Florence Biennial for Contemporary Art, Fortezza de Bastilica, Florence, Italy
Synergy: Michaelis Collection of Contemporary Beaded Designs, as part of *The History of Beads in Africa*, Iziko Museum, Cape Town
2004 *Stolen Affections*, Goethe Institute, Bahai, Brazil
Artomi, Omi, New York, USA
2002 *Low Rider*, Polvo Art Studio, Chicago, USA
2000 *Majority Rules*, Free Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland
SELECTED SITE-SPECIFIC PROJECTS
2014 Nando's public artwork for World Design Capital Cape Town
Nirox Winter Sculpture Show, Nirox Foundation, Krugersdorp
2013 *Facebook Friends*, Woodstock Industrial Centre, Cape Town
2012 *From Mooiuitsig to Mooiuitsig: an Artventure*, with Hannah Paton and Swain Hoogervorst, commissioned by Lien Botha for Hangklip Art Week, Cape Town

- 2010** *Cocoon*, Nirox Sculpture Park, Cradle of Humankind, Johannesburg
Imagination: For Humans – The Laboratory for Recycled Revolutions, curated by Isa Suarez, Greatmore Art Walk, Cape Town
- 2009** *The 1-day Residency Project* in conjunction with *Visitor* (collaboration with 14 visiting artists), Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town
- 2007** *Afrikan Tähti/Star of Africa* (collaboration with Jeanne Hoffman), route and public intervention after a Finnish board game, Rauma, Finland
C-Units (collaboration with Jeanne Hoffman), Big Bay
Icarus Project (collaboration with Norman O' Flynn), Cape Town
- 2006** Interactive sculptures for *The Tempest* theatre production by Marthinus Basson, KKNK, Oudtshoorn
Soft Rock Project, Sunset Beach, Cape Town
Teardrop Project, Solothurn, Switzerland
Heritage Cache, a site-specific group project coordinated by Cobus van Bosch and Arlene Amaler-Raviv, Cape Town
- 2005** *Groeisel no. 2*, a crocheting performance and installation, curated by Abrie Fourie, Aardklop Arts Festival, Potchefstroom
- 2004** *D.I.E.N.S.* street intervention (collaboration with Pierre Fouché, Norman O'Flynn and Johan Thom), KKNK, Oudtshoorn
- 2003** *Excess: Proudly South African*, in collaboration with Jesus Macarena-Avila, Cape Town
- 2002** *Momentary Monument* (collaboration with art students), Rauma, Finland
Music Concrete-YDEsire (collaboration with Jeanne Hoffman), the Castle, Cape Town
Fantastic Rubbish mixed media installation, World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg
- 2001** *R.I.P* (collaboration with Jeanne Hoffman), Durbanville
Forest Cross, Dalsåsen forest, Norway

- 1999** *Oos Wes, Tuis Bes*, curated by Mark Coetzee and Leze Hugo, Oudtshoorn Arts Festival, Oudtshoorn
- AWARDS & RESIDENCIES**
- 2014** Residency at the Cité, Paris (February-March 2014)
- 2013** Shortlisted for Woordfees Visual Arts Award
- 2009** Frans Masereel Printmaking Residency, Kastelee, Belgium
- 2008** Short-listed for Commonwealth Arts and Craft Award
- 2005** AVA Public Sculpture Competition
 Selected for 3rd Brett Kebble Art Competition
- 2004** Art Omi International Artists' Residency, Hudson, New York, USA
- 2003-4** Artist-in-residence, Greatmore Art Studios, Cape Town
- 2002** Rauma Artists in Residence, Finland
- 2001,5,6,8,9,10** ABSA Atelier Regional Finalist
- 2001** UNESCO Ashberg Bursary: Nordic Artists' Centre Dale, Norway
- COLLECTIONS**
- Work included in numerous corporate and private collections, locally and internationally, including; City of Cape Town Collection (South Africa), the Francis Greenberger Collection (USA), Frans Masereel Collection (Belgium), Benetton Collection (Italy), Hollard Insurance Collection (South Africa) and Nando's Collection (UK).



COLLABORATORS

Alicia Marván (Mexico/USA)

Alicia Marván emphasises the sculptural and poetic inherent in the human body and its actions, in art that can be experienced, touched, eaten, worn or inhabited. Her work has been presented by cultural organisations and academic institutions in Mexico, USA, Canada, Germany and The Netherlands. These include the Canada Council for the Arts, Ontario Arts Council, Breuninger Foundation, Goethe Institut, Stroom Den Haag, the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, The Tree Museum and Movement Research. She directs the Guapamacátaro Center for Art and Ecology in Michoacán, Mexico.

Credits for *Cyber Collaboration* piece: Music – Patrick O’Hearn

Barbara Wildenboer (South Africa)

Barbara Wildenboer recently held her eighth solo exhibition entitled *The Lotus Eaters* at the Oliewenhuis Art Museum in Bloemfontein. She has been awarded several international residencies in Jordan, Palestine, Colombia and Malaysia, and participated in several group exhibitions both locally and internationally. In 2011 she was selected as one of the top 20 finalists for the Sovereign African Arts Award, for which she received the Public Choice Prize. Wildenboer obtained a master’s degree in Fine Art (with distinction) from the Michaelis School of Art at the University of Cape Town in 2007.

Beate Frommelt (Germany/Switzerland)

The medium of drawing serves as a starting point in Beate Frommelt’s work. The work then transforms into an installation or projection – making the drawing physically accessible to the viewer. Frommelt has had shows in Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, UK and USA. She holds a master’s degree in Fine Arts from Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, London.

Caoimhghin Ó Fraithile (Ireland/USA)

The purpose of Ó Fraithile’s art practice is to exercise sensitivity to the essence of nature, and our place within it. Since 2009, he has worked with a rural community in Niigata, Japan, as part of the Niigata Shi Soil and Water triennial; to create a series of structures that are activated by night performances, and lit by fire and candlelight. The long-term intention of the triennial is to revive the area, and bring art into the community. His work is resonant of Shintoism or Animism: By revering our place in nature we are reminded that we are all one with it.

Credits for *Cyber Collaboration* piece *Awake, a Father’s Wake*: Buteo performer – Hisako Hirakawa, photographer – Tadao Kazama

Ella Ziegler (Germany)

Ella Ziegler’s art practice is research-based and focuses on site-specific interventions in urban spaces. She is particularly interested in different approaches to narratives and narration, and the manifestation of these in published materials such as artist books, multiples, takeaways and performance lectures. A survey of Ziegler’s artistic practice was recently shown at the Arnsberg Art Association (2014). She has received numerous awards such as the Stiftung Kunstfonds Scholarship in 2010 and the Berlin Senate Scholarship for Fine Arts in 2005 and 2009. Since 2011, she has been tenured as professor at the University of Fine Arts in Kassel, Germany

Jacques du Plessis (South Africa)

Jacques du Plessis is a musician and composer who regularly collaborates with some of South Africa’s foremost musicians, and across disciplines with a diverse range of artists. His audio piece for the *Cyber Collaboration* made the space breathe. He is founder of Fresh Meat Studio, and for the past eight years has worked in collaboration with Gert Besselsen to compose for television and theatre. Du Plessis and Besselsen are also widely known as the band Mr. Cat & The Jackal.

Julián Fuks (Brazil)

Julián Fuks is a Brazilian author and journalist who has worked as a literary reporter for the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo*, and as a reviewer for the magazine *Cult*. He is also the author of *Procura do romance* (2011) and *Histórias de literatura e cegueira* (2007), both shortlisted for the Portugal Telecom Award and the Jabuti Award. In 2012, he was selected by *Granta Magazine* as one of Brazil's best young novelists.

Kirsty Tinkler (Australia/UK)

Kirsty Tinkler was born in Australia, and lives and works in London. She is primarily concerned with making outdoor, temporal, site-responsive work; notable works include *Twin Temples* (2013) at Nottingham University Park in the UK, *Under Construction* (2004) at Dumbo, New York and numerous works for Sydney's *Sculpture by the Sea* Exhibition. She has participated in numerous residencies and international exhibitions, and has had three solo exhibitions in the UK. Tinkler studied Sculpture at the Royal College of Art, London and the National Art School, Sydney.

Lieven Segers (Belgium)

Flemish artist Lieven Segers collects small moments and stories from his own close surroundings. Resisting any kind of documentary style, these moments are framed and transformed with a humorous, sarcastic or critical view of art and daily situations; with an attitude that could resemble that of an old court joker. The issues that are depicted, and the manner of depiction itself, are very close to the ordinary, narrowing the distance between the viewer and the subject matter.

Mithu Sen (India)

Mithu Sen is an important force in contemporary art in South Asia, with acclaimed projects featured at the Dhaka Art Summit and Art Chennai in 2014. Her 2010 solo exhibition *Black Candy (iforgotmypenisathome)* was awarded the prestigious Skoda Prize in Indian Contemporary Art. Sen has held important solo shows in Paris, Taipei, Vienna, London, New York, Mumbai and Delhi; and has exhibited in museums, biennales, and art festivals all over the world. Her work was featured in *Vitamin D2: New Perspectives in Drawing* (Phaidon Press, 2013) and *Avant Gardes of the 21st Century* (Phaidon Press Limited, London, 2013). She completed her MFA degree in Painting at the Kala Bhavan, Visvabharati University in Santiniketan, and was also awarded a grant from the Charles Wallace India Trust to study at the Glasgow School of Art, UK.

Norman O 'Flynn (South Africa)

Norman O 'Flynn is an artist best known for his paintings and witty, intimate sculptures, which draw on a unique visual language. His works poke fun at himself and others – and though presented as harmless, almost childlike stories, they hide much bigger questions regarding the state of humanity. O 'Flynn has held eight solo exhibitions in Africa, and participated in numerous group shows locally and internationally. He was a finalist in the prestigious Absa Atelier Awards, and his work hangs in private, corporate and museum collections around the world.

Richard de Jager (South Africa)

Award-winning costume designer Richard de Jager has dressed the likes of Kate Moss, Jay Z and Rihanna. His Pwhoa Knitwear label has a cult following. He frequently collaborates with artists, and has participated in numerous exhibitions locally and internationally.

Teemu Mäki (Finland)

Teemu Mäki is an artist, writer and theatre director. He works in the fields of art, philosophy and politics “by whatever means necessary”; observing that art offers the most versatile and holistic tool with which to explore both philosophy and politics. His creative output is usually visual art, theatre, literature or theory. Mäki holds a doctorate in Fine Arts, and has worked as professor of Fine Arts at Aalto University.

Ulric Roldanus (The Netherlands)

Ulric Roldanus creates work through a range of different media, ranging from sculpture to video, performance art and public interventions. For the *Cyber Collaboration*, he subverted traditional roles of male artist and female model in a performance piece that had him, as sculptor, blindfolded and directed by the model. Roldanus has held numerous public art interventions and solo shows across the globe, and has participated in international group exhibitions, symposia and residencies, including a Greatmore Studios residency in Cape Town.

Credits for *Cyber Collaboration* piece: Model – Alma Lindenhovius, camera – Dorothee Meddens

LIST OF ARTWORKS

- 29** ***It's a Quiet Thing #1-6*, acrylic paint and mixed media on double marine ply board, #1-3: 200 x 200cm each, #4-6: 100 x 200cm each**
 29-31 #1-3¹
 34 #1-3, Installation view, KZNSA, Durban
 32-33 #4-6¹
 35 #1-6, Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery²
 36-37 Details
- 39** ***Fabricated Landscapes*, oil paint and mixed media on marine ply and canvas, installation dimensions variable¹**
 40, 52 Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery²
 41 Installation view, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein⁶
 42, 44, 46, 48-49 Details¹
- 51** ***Crush*, collaboration with Qubeka Bead Studio, glass beads on board, installed dimensions 740 x 240cm¹**
 16-17 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban⁴
 52 Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery²
 53, 54-55, 56, 59 Details¹

- 69** ***Cyber Collaboration***
 12-13 *Blindfolded Line*, 2013, by Liza Grobler, mixed media drawing¹
 70 Detail, *Blindfolded Line*, 2013, by Liza Grobler¹
 71 Contribution by Mithu Sen
 71 Contribution by Teemu Mäki
 72 Contribution by Kirsty Tinkler
 73 Contribution by Ella Ziegler
 74-75 *Awake, a Father's Wake* by Caoimhghin Ó Fraithile, credits: Buteo performer – Hisako Hirakawa, photographer – Tadao Kazama
 76 Contribution by Beate Frommelt
 77 Contribution by Julián Fuks
 78 Contribution by Lieven Siegers
 80 Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery²
 82 Contribution by Alicia Marvan, credits: music – Patrick O'Hearn
 84 Contribution by Ulric Roldanus, video still of performance, credits: model – Alma Lindenhovius, camera – Dorothee Meddens
 87 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban⁵
- 89** ***The Guardians: Pause and Full Stop*, collaboration with Norman O'Flynn, fibreglass, wool, synthetic hair, dimensions variable¹**
 67 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban⁴
 91 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban
- 99** ***Thinking Cap*, collaboration with Barbara Wildenboer, digital print on cotton rag, 126 x 69cm¹**
 102 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban

- 107** ***Waltzing Mathildas*, collaboration with Barbara Wildenboer, video**
 107 Installation view, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein ⁶
 108 Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery ²
- 113** ***Little Black Number*, collaboration with Richard de Jager, costume, performance and diasec print ¹**
 21 Detail ¹
 114, 117 Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery ²
 118-119 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban ³
- 15, 121** ***Eye Candy*, collaboration with Richard de Jager, costume, performance and diasec print ¹**
 22 Detail ¹
 122 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban
 124 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban ⁴
 126 Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery ²
- 129** ***Propositions*, paper-mache, pipe cleaners, installation dimensions variable ¹**
 130 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban
 132 Detail ¹
 134-135, 162-163 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban ⁵
 136 Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery ²
- 139** ***Pipe cleaner drawing*, collaboration with all visitors**
 11 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban ⁴
 19, 150-151 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban
 139 Installation view, KZNSA, Durban ³
 64, 140 Installation view, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein ⁶
 63, 141 Installation view, Johannesburg Art Gallery ²
 142 In progress ⁴

Photography credits:¹ Michael Hall² Anthea Pokroyd³ Paulo Menezes⁴ Shirin Motala⁵ Siphiwe Mpanzi⁶ Karen Marais

All artworks dated 2014, unless stated otherwise.



