





Foreword

Prof Kim Berman

The 4th years of 2012 can certainly be proud of their achievements.

This group of dedicated and tenacious students have excelled in the challenges they have faced, both technically and conceptually. The Department of Visual Art prides itself on producing graduates who can take up any place in the complex and challenging world of exhibition production, following in the footsteps of the Department's alumni of the quality of Willem Boshoff, Robin Rhode, Nicholas Hlobo and Mary Sibanda, who have represented South Africa with great accomplishment on an international platform.

The UJ Visual Art Departments BTech students possess a range of qualities to prepare them for a complex world. These qualities are acquired through rigorous technical and academic skills training, conceptual development, experiential workplace learning, professional development and community engagement. Students graduate with capacities including knowledge of oneself in the world as well as resilience and agency to see themselves as agents of change. We are confident that all the members of this 2012 graduating group will go on to be successful leaders in the diverse field of the visual arts and for which they are amply skilled, prepared and suited.

On behalf of the members of staff of the Department of Visual Art, we want to congratulate you all on your passionate dedication to your studies and for presenting powerful and challenging final exhibitions. We all look forward to seeing your future work on competitions and exhibitions, both locally and abroad, in the years to come.



Claire Attwell - (mis)fortune

The primary theme of my practical work expresses my concern over the dwindling numbers of African Rhino. I examine causes that position the Black rhino on the brink of extinction and why the White rhino numbers are drastically declining, perhaps following the fate of the Black rhino. The focus of my paper is to uncover the costs of the relationship that exists between Africa and China. The practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Vietnam, China and smaller Asian countries fuels the demand for rhino horn, causing rhinos to be butchered in South Africa's national reserves and on privately owned game farms. The sudden increase of media coverage concerning rhino poaching and rhino horn syndicates operating in South Africa in 2011 became a starting point to my research in 2012. The endemic demand for rhino horn is a hot topic within South Africa, the media regularly disseminating new information. Initially the shock of rhinos being slaughtered for the sole purpose of acquiring a horn was disturbing. Even more so was the fact that the powdered form is consumed in the belief that the rhino horn possesses aphrodisiac qualities.

As the year has progressed, my research has led to the discovery that China's interest in Africa is even more sinister than acquiring rhino horn for use in traditional medicine. China's expanding economy has led to the demand for Africa's natural resources. Conditions in African countries such as dubious and often corrupt government systems and poor economies have allowed a resource hungry country such as China to exploit the land and labour of Africa. African leaders welcome China with open arms, sealing deals benefiting African governments but indiscreetly depleting the continent and endangering the natural fauna and flora. China appears to be taking decisive steps to colonise African countries under the apparent gesture of aiding the African countries financially.





Monique Boaventura - *Crossing Cultures: The Identity of Heritage*

The topics I discuss in my practical work are hybridity and identity.

My reason for choosing these topics is to explore the role of the white hybrid individual in post-colonial South Africa and to see what role social experiences and cultural contact plays in identity construction, specifically that of the hybrid individual.

I attempt to reveal the impact that colonialism has on the white hybrid form and how white identity constructs stand to be removed from collonial and western influence in order to develop a new white South African identity.

My reason for discussing the topic of hybridity and identity is due to my feelings of displacement and isolation as a white individual due to the inherent racist identity of the white form in post-colonial South Africa.

I attempt to understand new forms of identity construction that will allow the hybrid individual a chance to develop an independent identity.







Levana Chester-Londt - Human Nature

My concerns lie with the exploitation of nature and particularly the Rhinoceros.

My work consists of a multitude of cast clay sculptural forms in the shape of Rhino horns. These are presented in rows like a Cartesian plane in order to represent a type of graph. This graph indicates the number of Rhino killed so far in 2012.

My exhibition includes a horn-like cage in which I perform. Covered from head to toe in white clay slip, my performance consists of me slowly exfoliating the dried clay slip from my skin. The performance is a metaphor for the entrapment and hopelessness of the Rhino when faced with brutal extinction as well as the seeming hopelessness of the citizens of South Africa to do anything about it.

My performance is accompanied by a series of drawings of the distorted body and a video projection derived from my performance.

The work attempts to highlight the scourge of Rhino poaching in South Africa as well as the inertia on our part to tackle the issue head on and with passionate commitment.





Solange Da Silva - Six Secrets of Tilia

My art is based on the history of women and the way it has created and impacted the ideals of the female appearance. For many centuries women were expected to look and behave in an orderly manner. Today there is no difference. The media has bombarded societies with the concept of beauty and acceptance of what the media thinks fit for society. Therefore the general public is conditioned to look up to idealistic figures, to strive to be like them, in order to be accepted into the norms of society.

My work is influenced by the idea of the traditional woman. This traditional woman is submissive to the male presence. I have taken this concept and divided it into three parts: the physical element, the controlling component and the traditional role of women. I work with this concept because I feel that the society we live in today has not liberated women from the full idealised constraints created by men.

My work questions the notion of beauty. What is beautiful is in the eye of the beholder. The concept and criteria for beauty varies from person to person. It is impossible for every woman to have the 'ideal' figure for the reason that every human being is physiologically different and unique. This uniqueness should therefore be embraced. My artworks take the form of an installation; the first part is a large wool structure. The second part consists of six cement 'mannequins', each one having a different body shape. The third element consists of plinths which I have designed to look like cupboards which act as a metaphor for one's secrets, inner desires or fears.





Jacky Hermanus - Regression

I deal with memory in my paintings. I chose this theme because I want to explore old family black and white photographs and how they connect to me. I am interested in memory because of their strange connections to past events. My fascination with memory is in how and why we forget certain events or instances and why we remember others.

My artwork deals with the context of nostalgia and the patters of connection to my past as exemplified by photographs of my family. When recalling aspects of our lives we remember snippets and sometimes trivial details about our past that may have little significance to others but are tied to an emotional understanding of the event, person or place. The events before and after these remembrances are lost but we often cling to the bits that we visually remember and these may even be enhanced by smells, sounds or touch sensations also stored in the brain.

Through my paintings I try to regain some of my memories that have faded over time. I attempt to fill in the missing gaps by constructing a memory in order to understand more about my origins through my family. At the same time some of the figures I paint remain unknown to me as I have never met them, I only have the stories of them to construct my 'imagined' relationship with them.

At times I admit that I may even invent or embellish who the characters are as I paint them in an attempt to make them real to me.





Jade Mahlangu - *Dr Jeckll's Intriguing Metamorphosis*

In my artworks I look at two conflicting ways of healing: traditional African healers (Sangoma) and the western health system (General Practitioner). I am dealing with the concept of healing because an illness has affected my whole life and it also determines the way I interact with people. Often having a long-term illness can isolate a person from the rest of the world because one starts living a different lifestyle and a long-term condition can limit a person because there are some things that one can and cannot do.

These two methods clash with one another because doctors believe in scientific evidence whereas traditional healers believe in ancestors and the spirit realm. Traditional healers believe in the four elements of nature namely water, fire, air and earth; they believe that the four elements have the power to heal the sick. In my artworks the four elements are represented by the four gods wearing robes. The god's bodies are distorted and deformed because they represent something that is in the spiritual realm and something we cannot see or touch and because we live in a world where most South Africans believe in rationalisation and scientific evidence.

Through my artworks I want to remind people that the body is fragile and that there are certain things that they cannot control.





Heidi Mielke - *All animals are equal* but some are more equal than others

The inspiration for my photographic prints lies in the form of my dissatisfaction with the violence in South Africa. The concepts that encapsulate my work are drawn from my interest in commenting on the violence in South Africa with relation to themes of aggression, brutality and abuse. These concepts are utilised in a constructive dialogue with the viewer in order to comment on the socially-orientated issue of violence. My photographic prints may not appear to depict any particular event, thus providing the viewer with the opportunity to engage with the artwork in a spontaneous and unconditional manner as the artworks cannot be morally or critically defined. The viewer is given the capacity to associate and interpret the artworks in an unlimited manner.

My body of work consists of a series of photographic prints in which I explore two different photographic techniques, namely: black and white digital prints and van Dyk Brown, hand printed photographic prints. I began working with black and white digital photographic prints that comprised of aspects of images that could potentially be found at a crime scene. I wanted to create a dialogue between the black and white digital prints and the hand-printed van Dyk Brown prints. I created this work as a therapeutic response, through which I came to terms with disturbing and upsetting issues of violence that have angered or enraged me. The images that appear within the installation do not portray actual victims, nor do they give any indication as to what actually happened. Therefore a sense of ambiguity and mystery is alluded to. I want the viewer to respond to the images alone, in which the imagination is given the chance to complete the missing parts to the story or investigation. The use of dismembered animal parts serves as metaphorical victims of violence.







Mpumi Ngoma - *Negotiated Identities*

My work interrogates the custom of Lobola which is involved in African traditional marriages. In my paintings I explore Issues of femininity, identity and gender, as I question the notion of domesticity and vulnerability within the context of African tradition. These issues propel me to locate who I am and where I fit in a westernised society as a woman confronted by the reality of an African tradition The feminist aspects such as subservience and the gaze come into play as I attempt to unpack the underlying issues that resonate within the culture of give and take; Lobola to be precise. The prominent subject matter in my work is the bride and the cow which is the bride price. The bride price is depicted in either as hanging meat carcass, skulls or the head of cow. I thus begin to formulate a relationship between the bride and the cow. The traditional framework of marriage therefore becomes a space of fear and unease that the protagonist bride enters. In my paintings I become the protagonist bridethat is confronted with the mentioned issues. I use my self-portrait as a point of reference for my source material where I undergo the process of embodying certain characters. Playing with the idea of the gaze, in my paintings I am either boldly present or shying away from the viewer's gaze. The reason why I include the idea of the gaze in my paintings is that I aim to explore and subvert the notion of being perceived as an object of men's desire as it constitutes subservience. In my work I find myself striving to embrace these cultural values but it becomes difficult because of how these values subsequently perceive black women's identity as inferior. I therefore find myself caught up between traditional, culture and my values, and the influences of hybridity given the fact that I can negotiate my identity as a woman.





Penny Payne - The Four Corners of the Mind

My work investigates self-reflexivity as a form of identity construction through the process of artist books. I use the process of self-image and self-reflexivity by transforming objects into symbols to explore aspects of my identity. The themes I use to show self-reflexive processes are fear and anxiety and developing an artistic voice which speaks about psychological conditions I experience in my life. I use the format and process of creating artists' books to explore these themes, therapeutically working through them to find my artistic voice.

The book as an object becomes a symbolic format not only being a container for stories but distorting and disfiguring the book to form a narrative itself. The book object is a different fragment of existence in time and becomes something 'other' as it represents the way that my identity has been constructed through a set of ideologies, upbringing and social environments.

I embody myself within the entire book, reusing and manipulating existing books, where all the details combine together to form a constant whole. Storylines are created in visual form, in order for the viewer to create their side of the story, allowing for any type of direction to take place. Suffocation, decay, rebirth, obsessive, disintegration and psychology, are the words which contain and become metaphors in order to explore my personal stories constructing my identity residing within the book objects which I have created. I create a cube structure which has four walls and is 2meters high by 1,8meters wide. Each wall has been created around a specific theme of experiences, remembrances, discovery of identity, fears and anxieties. The labels I have given each wall are 'intellect', 'body',' psyche' and 'spirit'. I describe the chosen theme behind each part and how the components come together in the end creating a unified composite of psychological states.





Jenny Pomeroy - Rousing Mouths

My body of paintings have a strong psychosexual narrative. They adopt an exploratory and cathartic approach to investigating psychoanalytic theory, psychosexual stages of development and themes of abjection. I investigate Freud's theory of personality development that is centred on the effects of sexual pleasure drive on the individual psyche and emerging personality in my work. The paintings examine various stages of psychosexual development, where the mouth is employed as the main motif and becomes the focal subject matter as well as a vehicle to explore these themes. The oral stage thus becomes a prominent theme within my work however the other stages of psychosexual development are also alluded to.

The paintings are sensual and perceptual and speak of a female sexual appetite that is in no way subordinate or oppressed, but rather celebrated. Due to the scale and the nature of these paintings, they appear violent and highly aggressive. The teeth threaten to devour the viewer and the paintings become predatory. They are unapologetic in their bold application of brush strokes and uncanny subject matter. These highly personal explorations into my behavioural traits and psychological shapings are self-reflexive and explore identity as a construct. I leave much of my painting in its raw state of unconscious gestures, where I explore the relationship between the unconscious and the conscious in the creative process.

In this light, my approach to painting can be seen as cathartic and the link between psychoanalysis and painting can be identified. The paintings are gestural and impulsive and I allow the medium itself to speak with authority, indulging in the textural quality that paint has to offer. Paint is not only used to describe teeth, tongue, food and flesh in my work, but becomes equivalences for those things itself in its materiality.





Caitlin Rabitte - Impediment

The concept for my works focusses on society's need to make itself feel safe. This is done by creating so called 'safe zones'. Some people place a lot of emphasis on security, resulting in this security playing a vital role in how these people interact with society. Due to fear and the need to feel safe, many people enclose themselves in security conscious environments, surrounding themselves with booed gates, electric fences, walls and alarms to name a few. This reliance on security means that some people venture outside the gated communities less and less.

When creating my works I try to portray the elements of security and anxiety in a metaphorical way. My pieces focus on the fear and insecurity one still feels in a secure environment. My paintings aim to show how the presence of these security elements only heightens our fear of what lurks 'outside'. My artworks speak of the inability to ever feel safe, even though some people try to make themselves feel safer with the use of security measures. No matter how hard we try to make ourselves feel safer, there is always a sense of discomfort and the unknown.

When looking at my works and understanding my concepts I hope that viewers will see how the presence of security measures and systems only reinforces the fears that are ever-present in the back of our minds. I hope that the viewer will see how trapped we become by our fears and anxieties.





Marsha Steyn - Ritueliese Senustelsel van die Afrikaner Vrou

I find and collect dresses in various places such as from friends and family or second hand stores. Each of these dresses is unique as I develop them from being just a dress to an art object. They go through a transformational process, in order to amplify each dress's meaning as an object-like form which break and question the 'ideal' Afrikaner woman. These dresses then get stiffened with fiberglass resin in order to keep the form of an implied female body. Rites of passages come with the culture and one has to partake in certain events to become more intertwined with the culture. These events happen through different stages in one's life, such as baptism, school and marriage marking incorporation in the larger Afrikaner community.

Each dress displays an important practice that happens in a girl or women's life. Each dress questions and forces a wedge into a particular event because they go beyond the 'ideal' by not being what a viewer might expect. My dresses embody the different roles incorporated in the life of an Afrikaner girl or woman. My work displays identity issues among current young female Afrikaners, as religion is seen to be part of history and is still practiced by some Afrikaners, one can assume that religion still plays an important role in finding one's identity.

Each dress represents an independent woman in search of a new identity.



