



INTERNATIONAL LAND ART EVENT SOUTH AFRICA 2011





International Land Art Event Plettenberg Bay South Africa 22 – 29 May 2011

| 01

*Photographic Essay by Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau
Contributions by Meredith Randall and Anni Snyman
Design and Production by Studio 5*

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Every site is relevant – including that of the art book. It provides an opportunity for the art photographer and art writer to express and develop ideas and perceptions through which the reader can wander, experiencing a conceptual landscape.

In the first section of this book the art photography of Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau recreates the experience of walking the Land Art trail along the beaches of Plettenberg Bay in a photo essay accompanied by the impressions of art writer Meredith Randall. Andreas Kahlau contributed his expertise in digitally editing these images.

The artists’ statements about their work and a short biography on each artist are included at the end of this section.

The second part of the book describes the community of Bitou that embraced the idea of Land Art enthusiastically, participating through individual and group artworks, performances and tours as well as through supporting the **Site_Specific** team in every aspect of the event.

All of this has been beautifully compiled and designed by the team at Studio 5.

In the spirit of the event – and for love of the land and the art – each contributor made this publication possible through generous donations of time and skill.

We thank Estelle Dippenaar, for her trust, enthusiasm and mindful direction – without her unwavering support this art book, documenting a memorable event in the cultural life of South Africa, would not have been created.

The **Site_Specific** Team
August 2011



*The group of artists that were invited to participate in **Site_Specific**. Originating in the enthusiasm of Anni Snyman and Strijdom van der Merwe, this artist-led initiative expanded to include acclaimed art practitioners from South Africa and beyond.*

From left to right

Back row: Danie van der Westhuizen, Charles Levin, Erica Lüttich, PC Janse van Rensburg, Simon Max Bannister

Third Row: Angus Taylor, Hannelie Coetzee, Gabriele Meneguzzi, Vincenzo Sponga, Strijdom van der Merwe

Second Row: Marco Cianfanelli, George Magampa, Andrew van der Merwe, Niël Jonker, Carol Nathan-Levin, Gordon Froud

First Row: Tyron Tewson, Urs Twellmann, Mark Wilby, Anni Snyman

Foreground: Jan van der Merwe

INTRODUCTION

The Land is the Canvas

by Meredith Randall

From 22 -29 May 2011, 13 artists were invited to Plettenberg Bay to take part in South Africa's first international Land Art event, entitled **Site_Specific**. This artist-led project was conceived by Strijdom van der Merwe and Anni Snyman in an attempt to create more opportunity for Land Art in South Africa.

Land Art has always occupied a rather distinct space in the art world. Originating in the 1960s, it was considered to be on the fringes of the then radical Conceptual Art movement. Land Art is best categorised as a medium-defined art in the same vein as painting or photography. By its very nature, Land Art is typically created outside the gallery setting; it uses the land as its canvas, and anything from one's hands to earth moving equipment as its tools. Creating art out of sticks, stones and dirt and leaving it outside, exposed to the elements, means that most projects can only be remembered. The works erode rapidly; this natural transformation frequently provides the conceptual underpinning of the work. Today we often know these ephemeral works only through photographs.

Working outside, directly into the land – and free of the gallery setting – allows artists to work on an epic scale. For example, an early icon of Land Art, Spiral Jetty, created by Robert Smithson was nearly a half a kilometre long. Visiting the art requires a physical journey often far away from urban settings. It is a destination in itself.

Land Art was in many respects intellectually fired by the counter-culture movement of the 1960s, creating monuments in the

expansive outdoors that could not be possessed and allowing for small, domestic photographs or other mementos of the site to be offered to the galleries, collectors and patrons. A few intrepid collectors have Land Art installed on their estates. As most iconic Land Art is spread across multiple continents, jet-setting enthusiasts must travel to see their favourite makers.

As with most definitions, there are always exceptions and often an artwork belongs in more than one category or defies labelling. Christo and Jean-Claude, who are well known for wrapping buildings or installations such as *The Gates* in New York's Central Park, are often considered Land Artists although the artists themselves resist such classification.

Strijdom van der Merwe is probably the best known Land Artist based in South Africa. Motivated by the lack of Land Art related events in South Africa he and Johannesburg based artist Anni Snyman decided to create **Site_Specific**. The pair was soon joined by Heather Greig, Erica Lüttich and Margaret O'Connor to lead the organisation. They invited local and international artists who grasped the opportunity to be part of this project.

The invitees' art typically included objects. In some instances they had already created individual pieces that could be considered Land Art. For each of the artists, coming to Plettenberg Bay took them outside their normal practice – they were forced to experiment. Each was rewarded by a distinctly interesting piece.



The landscape has its natural cycles: the sun rises and sets; the tides come in and go out; the rains come and go; living creatures grow and die. Some of the artists, such as Strijdom van der Merwe, Hannelie Coetzee, Gordon Froud, Anni Snyman, Angus Taylor and Andrew van der Merwe purposefully created artworks that could only be fully realized with the passage of time and in interaction with the natural cycles.

In agreement with the local municipality of Bitou, the artworks on public land were allowed to remain for two weeks: the week of the events surrounding **Site_Specific** and the following week. Within this limited time scale, artists created marvellous temporary installations.

Urs Twellmann from Switzerland came to explore the rich terrain of Bitou. Capable of producing tight, sharply defined strokes with a chain-saw, Twellmann created multiple vessels for temporary installation during the week of events.

Through a play of shadows and densely packed words, Marco Cianfanelli utilised his love of text to question how we read the landscape.

Challenged by the invitation to explore the natural environs, Jan van der Merwe brought his installation art out of the confines of the gallery setting and let it face the outdoors for the first time.

Historically, Land Art has often been placed in big empty spaces; one can often imagine some miraculous force helped to create it. In a similar vein to fiction's magical realism, standing near many of the artworks included in **Site_Specific** one could envision a world in which physical properties behave in a slightly different way. Joining the artists in Plettenberg Bay was the dynamic Italian based pair of Gabriele Meneguzzi and Vincenzo Sponga, that collaborated on Land Art projects since the early 1970s. They created a classic Land Art piece which, through humour, allowed the viewer to imagine that we hold the power to sew continents together.

Site specific art can also be its own distinct genre of art in which the location informs the creation of the art. When the art is outside, this designation can easily overlap with Land Art, as Site Specific Art describes geographically bound conceptual art and Land Art is a medium. Mark Wilby, who curated a series of Site Specific projects in the Karoo in the late 1990s and early 2000s was invited to participate in **Site_Specific** in Plettenberg Bay. He constructed an artwork that challenged the distinctions so often drawn between the various forms of art.

Land Art is inextricably bound to the landscape. Often environmental artists use Land Art to advance a cause. Carol Nathan Levin created two works, one

independently and one in collaboration with Charles Levin. Each provoke the viewer to consider the vexed issue of how best to care for the world we inhabit. Charles Levin and Carol Nathan Levin collaborated to create a Site Specific sculpture in front of the contested desalination plant in Plettenberg Bay. Taking a JoJo rain water container as their material, they were able to create a dynamic twirling monument to the problems of solving water shortages.

In front of St Peter's Anglican Church Erica Lüttich created a beautiful temporary memorial by wrapping 12 trees in red fabric to probe how we determine our sense of 'belonging'. Lüttich also led the Hillbrow-based Boitumelo group to Plettenberg Bay. This community group created the "*Veil of Hope*" as an expression of self-empowerment.

Photographer, Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau, was invited to **Site_Specific** to document the artwork. Because Land Art is often temporary and physically distant, it is shared through photographs. Photography's role within Land Art is complex: sometimes it is considered an extension of the artwork, in other instances photography is a means of documenting what happens in a faraway location, often it is a combination of the two.

To best record the fifteen Land Art works on display at **Site_Specific**, Olivier-Kahlau

often woke at dawn to utilize the morning's soft light. In many instances, the artists collaborated with Olivier-Kahlau to further explore different aspects of their work. Marco Cianfanelli gathered passers-by to help move his logs into the waves to extend the concept that his driftwood hailed from another world. After the photo shoot was over, he returned the art further up the beach so it would not be washed out to sea.

A photograph freezes a moment. Olivier-Kahlau was able to capture Andrew van der Merwe's remarkable capacity for mark-making with droplets of water. Her sensitive images capture the essence of the temporary installations that were created. At times, such as with Angus Taylor's Los where she frames the sculpture against the backdrop of the homes of Plettenberg Bay and the sculpture's reflection in the water, her photographs add another layer of meaning to the art. Olivier-Kahlau's interpretation of the invited artists' works is presented in this book.

Urs Twellman takes his own detailed photographs of his projects and offers them as "postcards"; he views this as an integral component of sharing his work. Twellman is very clear about differentiating his images of the work that he produces from those that are captured by other photographers. His expository visual statements are a continuation of his vision, while other

photographers' pictures are the beginning of a new vision, an alternative view of his work. Alternatively, Anni Snyman, utilises some of the photographs that she took as the basis for a new artwork. To explore this often subtle differentiation, the artist's website is included in each of the artists' profiles.

During an interview on SABC, Hannelie Coetzee was questioned on what is the point of making art that so quickly disappears. The ephemeral nature of most of the pieces created for **Site_Specific** is a fair criticism. She replied: "*When I have the opportunity to travel abroad and visit a famous gallery I see art that I might not ever see again. I leave with only a memory of what I experienced when I saw the work.*"

There were so many parts of **Site_Specific** that were beautiful, poetic and heart-rending. The memory of each proves the durability of the project in its entirety.

The purpose of the event was to open up the field of Land Art in South Africa and to artists based here. This book is to serve as a permanent document to record the outstanding creations of **Site_Specific**.



Simon Max Bannister

AARTMOEDERS (E(art)h Mothers)

10 STONE BOULDERS
Kramshoek



06 | PILGRIMAGE

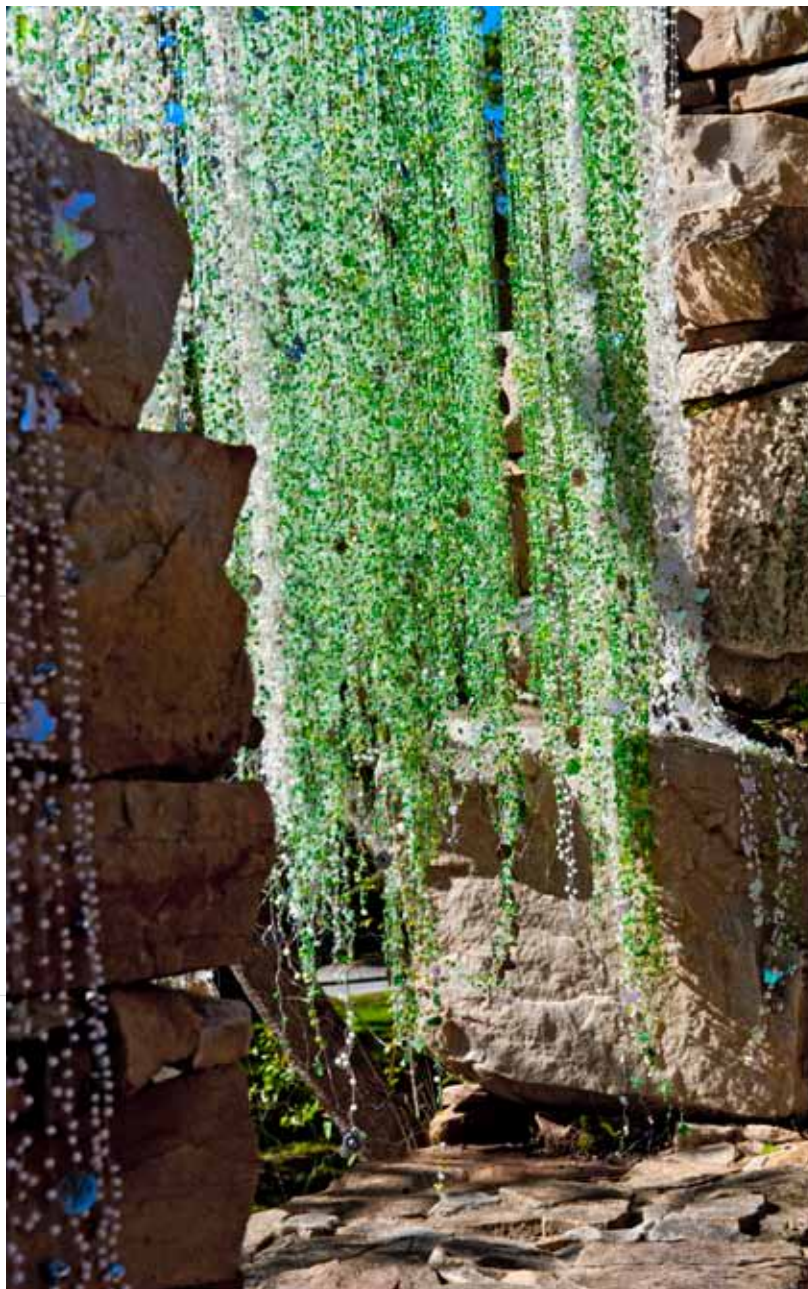




Knysna is the only place in South Africa where a herd of elephants live completely free and unfenced. This distinction is fading rapidly as it is estimated that only one matriarch and a few juveniles remain. The Eden to Addo Corridor Initiative aims to link this small group to the elephants in the Addo Elephant National Park outside Port Elizabeth, following ancient elephant migration routes that traverse 400 km, seven mountain ridges and five biomes. To raise awareness of its mission, the Eden to Addo Corridor Initiative, a conservation NGO, is creating South Africa's first Land Art route through the corridor.

They invited Simon Max Bannister to create the inaugural work for the Eden to Addo Land Art Route. Utilising the materials available in the surrounding area, Bannister conceptualised an artwork in an abandoned stone quarry at Kranshoek. Working with local stone masons, they enhanced the natural folds in the weathered grey stones and repositioned 10 large stone blocks (some weighing up to 2 tons) using earth moving equipment to form three large elephants walking along the path.

It is hoped that these mammoth boulders will act as talismans, guarding over the long journey toward re-establishing the old migratory routes.



Boitumelo

VEILED HOPE

COTTON STRING, FISHING LINE, BEADS, SHELLS
Timbershed

What is hope? According to Greek mythology, Pandora opened a box which contained the evils of the world including war, pestilence and famine. Hope lay at the bottom.

The Boitumelo Sewing Project meets regularly in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. Comprised mostly of women, the crafters have convened over the past 10 years to participate in numerous sewing projects. The collective offers a safe haven to learn skills, share experiences and develop life skills. At each gathering the ties of community are renewed.

As an ever changing collective, the group is known as Boitumelo, which means joy in Tswana. At times individuals from Boitumelo create unique objects – in such instances the individual is acknowledged as the maker. However, for *Veiled*

Hope, it is important for the collective experience of the group to come to the fore. For this reason the name of the creator is assigned to the community.

Through the process of making, Boitumelo enables the women to reaffirm their community circle. Each undertaking for numerous art exhibitions over the past decade has not only offered a retreat from harsh realities, but elevated their world view. Literally the act of creating enables the women of Boitumelo to make their own lives more beautiful.

Veiled Hope was initiated in Johannesburg and first exhibited at the Church of Peace and the Hillbrow Theatre Project before travelling to Plettenberg Bay. There Boitumelo offered a skills transfer workshop to participants of *Women on the Move* in

the Craggs, *The Bead Project* from KwaNokuthula, *Ietsie Bietsie* from Kranshoek, crafters from New Horizons, *Twin Clothing*, *Mohair Mill Shop*, *Bitou Sewing*, and crafters from *The Hope Project*. Each participant added strands to the veil, carefully crocheting and knitting into it their own hidden desires and meanings. *Veiled Hope* at **Site_Specific** was created by about 150 artisans and comprise more than 750 individual strands of green and white beads.

The journey of *Veiled Hope* will continue as they offer skills transfer workshops to different communities. At each location local women gather to sequence the beads, creating row after row, growing the veil to epic proportions. For each participant, the process of creating *Veiled Hope* is the embodiment of hope.





Marco Cianfanelli

DRIFT

MILD STEEL, DRIFTWOOD.
Central Beach





Along the beach, two lonely pieces of driftwood lie at odd angles. From afar, it appears that there are barnacles growing on them. Slowly, words emerging from the wood come into focus. Words such as “Truth”, “Security”, “Amazement” and “Shame”.

These logs were placed on Central Beach in Plettenberg Bay for two weeks, the words became rusty as the salt water and sandy wind ate into the laser cut steel words. The driftwood logs were not identical. On the straighter, more architectural-like column, the words and phrases revolved around society. On the other, more organically shaped driftwood, the words refer to the individual.

What do these words mean? It is with these words that we shape the structures and systems of the worlds that we inhabit. Cianfanelli, in his piece entitled *Drift*, confronts the viewer with maxims of an alien culture, which also form a cornerstone of Western civilization. Each pillar is distinct, just like each person in society is different. Taking words and phrases from ancient Egyptian wisdom texts, the Five Aggregates of Buddhist philosophy, as well as words from the spectrum of human emotions, Cianfanelli finds the commonalities that unite humanity.

Hannelie Coetzee

FAMILIE PORTRÉT (*Family Portrait*)

STONES WITH BANDS OF QUARTZ
Between tidal lines on Lookout Beach



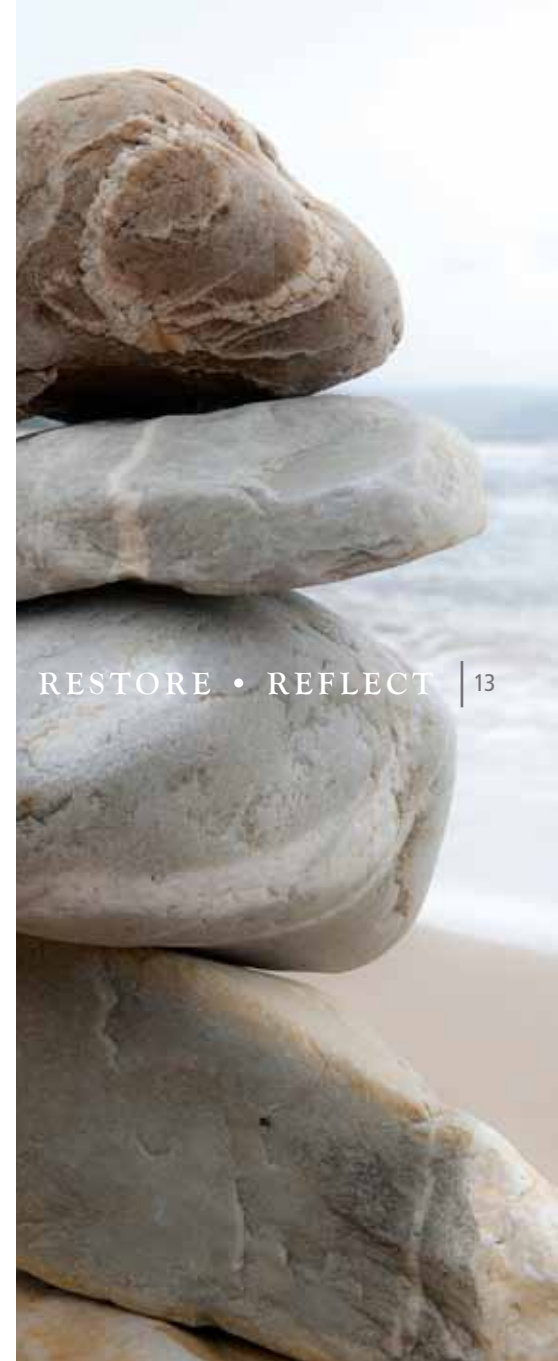
12 | REFLECT • RESTORE

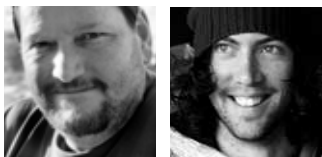




Collecting, rearranging and documenting stones out of place has become a theme in Hannelie Coetzee's work over the past 10 years. During **Site_Specific**, she installed a series of 13 stone cairns along the high tide mark at Plettenberg Bay's Lookout Beach – icons of her family members. This seemingly straightforward Land Art work was a week-long meditative look at what it means to stand beside one's family.

As the high tide rolled in, this oddly shaped family succumbed to the waves one-by-one. Because of the weight of the stones, they remained where they fell. Coetzee waited for the tide to retreat and then began rebuilding, each time having to find the correct balance when stacking the rocks one on top of each other. From the Monday, when she chose her site, collected the stones and built her piece, she sat with the cairns. Coetzee explains that this was probably the only time she had spent a week with all of her family as an adult – conservative, Afrikaans and not always accepting of her life choices. Spending time with this symbolic family, restoring them each time they fell, was highly therapeutic.





Gordon Froud and Tyron Tewson

DUST TO DUST

CLAY, WILLOW TWIGS
Old Milkwood tree at the historical Timbershed

After accepting the invitation to **Site_Specific**, Gordon Froud began to muse on a form that he has worked with for the past five years. Sperm Baby is composed of the head of a baby doll, attaching one leg where the neck ought to be. In a manner typical of munificent Froud, he invited Tyron Tewson, an art student at the University of Johannesburg to collaborate with him. Tewson created a figure of a fat man in Froud's sculpture class earlier this year. Together, the pair created Dust to Dust, in which about 300 clay slip cast figurines of Tewson's Fat Men and Froud's Sperm Babies were hung from a tree outside the Timbershed.

Gordon Froud is a realist. His work takes delight in the concrete and the tangible. Most of the other artists wilfully ignored the built environs of Plettenberg Bay, preferring the idyllic rather empty coast line. Froud and Tewson chose to suspend their sculptures outside the crumbling, roofless Timbershed to emphasise that men and most of their artefacts associated with their existence will return to the earth. Whether rich or poor, old or young, all will become dust. As the months pass, the only trace of this artwork that will remain is the ground tinged with the clay of the dissolved sculpture.

14 | ALL WILL IN TIME





RETURN TO THE EARTH | 15

16 | DROUGHT • WATER • WEALTH



Charles Levin and Carol Nathan-Levin

A Q U A (not a drop to drink)

10 000 LITRE JOJO RAINWATER TANK, BOLTS
Desalination Plant at the Piesang River Lagoon

The population of popular holiday destination, Plettenberg Bay, nearly triples during the Christmas period. This puts huge stress on available water resources. The region suffered one of the worst water shortages in living memory during **Site_Specific**. Charles Levin and Carol Nathan-Levin lived in the area for the past eleven years. They built their home themselves and use rain water tanks to supply all their own water.

Nathan-Levin conceived their **Site_Specific** sculpture in reaction to the building of a desalination plant in Plettenberg Bay. The pair used a 10 000 litre domestic JoJo rain water tank, with its bright green lightweight UV resistant polyethylene and food grade black lining, as their material. Levin then added his twist to the work, slicing and stretching it to give the impression it was spinning.

The sculpture is stationed next to the demure desalination plant, which is tastefully built into the landscape, painted sand colour beige and surrounded by indigenous foliage. The undulating curves of the verdant green echo the form of post-minimalist sculpture, recalling a focus of Levin's studies in the 1980's. Its beguiling beauty draws the viewer to engage with the structure. Surrounded by some of the most expensive homes in South Africa, one immediately wonders why more of these simple, inexpensive and environmentally friendly rain water collection tanks have not been installed, rather than constructing the potentially ecologically harmful brine spewing desalination plant.



Charles Levin

H O M A G E

VIDEO



TO VIEW VIDEO:

scan the QR code above or go to
http://youtu.be/xC4f_BcZC7M

Charles Levin's father passed away just before the devastating tsunami in Japan. In coming to terms with his personal loss, the Plettenberg Bay resident looked to the ocean for solace in creating his short video work entitled *Homage*.

Six actors wearing safety Hazmat suits stood in a pyramidal form, bowing to the ocean that not only points to Japan but is also the mass that separated English born Levin from his father. Levin circles the video camera around the actors. Playing with the speed of the spin, he quickens the pace as the film progresses, adding layers to the film with a reverse spin and briefly adding white fields. Levin took live audio recordings of the 2011 tsunami in Japan where the water is swirling through the towns and coupled these with the sounds of hump back whales. When shown for the first time during **Site_Specific**, the sound was loud; in the empty gallery space the noise was cacophonous.

It is remarkable that the two pieces Levin created for **Site_Specific** – one a video and the other a sculpture – have such a strong visual connection: They are both spinning. For Levin, spinning is a metaphor for the chaos of the world. He believes that within the chaos, harmony will prevail.



HARMONY WILL PREVAIL | 19



Erica Lüttich

HUNDRED
YEARS,
HUNDRED
MORE...

12 EUCALYPTS TREES, HAND-
PAINTED FABRIC
St Peter's Anglican Church

ALIENATED NATURE



History is often told through the land: who is occupying the land; who is trying to access the land; who is being pushed to the margins? Having rights to the land (or not) enhances or reduces people's wealth, power and opportunity.

Currently, there is an ambitious government-led programme to reduce the number of alien trees and plants. In so doing, they will reduce the stress the trees place on South Africa's scarce water resources. While Lüttich recognises the need for water conservation, she also sees in the programme an allegorical tale of South Africa's human population: the perennial story of inclusion and exclusion that defines this country's history.

Lüttich chose Eucalyptus trees as her historical metaphor: They are indigenous to Australia but have been planted in South Africa for over 100 years. Instead of ringing the trees, which stand outside Plettenberg Bay's St. Peter's Anglican Church, Lüttich wrapped them in red fabric printed with the lyrics of rock band Iron and Wine's 2004 hit *Woman King*: *"hundred years, hundred more, someday we may see a woman king, sword in hand, swing at some evil and bleed."*

This now highlighted marker draws attention to the often maligned trees. *"It's always fascinating,"* says Lüttich, *"what's in and what's out."*



Gabriele Meneguzzi and Vincenzo Sponga

CUCITURA (Sewing)

DRIFTWOOD, GRASS TWINE, SAND
Central Beach

22 | CONNECTING CONTINENTS



Upon arriving in Plettenberg Bay, Italian artists Gabriele Meneguzzi and Vincenzo Sponga stated their desire to repair the land. They decided to weave a literal thread, to metaphorically bridge divides – at local, national and continental levels. They used local grasses and spun their thread. Using a piece of driftwood as their needle, they sewed a gap in the sand of Central Beach. Standing on top of boulders that surrounded the artwork on three sides it seemed like their work could bridge continents.

Utilising whimsy and imagination, Meneguzzi and Sponga demonstrate the power of art. On the opening day an 8-year old boy remarked he wasn't sure if the thread was strong enough to stop the continents from drifting apart.



BRIDGING DIVIDES

| 23



Carol Nathan-Levin

†HE SKY IS FALLING

14 PAIRS OF TAXIDERMIED CHICKEN FEET
Milkwood trail near the Timbershed



24 | THE AVERAGE PERSON EATS 3 000 CHICKENS IN A LIFETIME



A close-up photograph of two severed chicken feet lying on a dry, cracked, reddish-brown soil. The feet are positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the frame, with their toes splayed out. The soil is uneven and textured, with some small, dried plant matter scattered around. The lighting is bright, casting soft shadows from the feet onto the ground.

EVERY MONTH 15 000 000 PEOPLE ARE BORN | 25

Since the publication of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* in 1906 – which describes in macabre detail, the way meat is raised and slaughtered – the meat industry has become increasingly sanitised; but the grim realities of the industry remain. Today's factory produced chickens live for 28 days in stacked, cramped cages. Their food is carefully proportioned with exact measurements of protein, carbohydrates, fats, antibiotics and vitamins to compensate for their singularly unnatural living conditions.

In Carol Levin's *The Sky is Falling*, 14 taxidermied chicken feet are cut cleanly just below the hock, exposing the tibiotarsus (or shin bone). The feet stand on the earth just outside the doorway to the Timbershed, where the opening ceremony of *Site_Specific* took place. It is probably the first time that these feet have touched the earth, stood without a cage surrounding them and gathered in such a small, intimate community.

Through this graphic visual affront, Levin forces the viewer to face the reality of how infrequently we see chickens outside a pre-packaged, cling wrapped form or not as food served up on our plates.



Anni Snyman and PC Janse van Rensburg

VERGESTALTUNG (*Embodiment*)

FICUS NATALENSIS TREE, DRIFTWOOD, TWINE
Milkwood trail

By definition Land Art uses the land as its medium. To this end, some Land Artists often enlist the landscape's natural cycles; the resulting intervention is not an end in itself, rather it births a living sculpture which grows and changes over time.

Anni Snyman noticed a particular tree with a redolently anthropomorphic form in Plettenberg Bay. Out of a piece of driftwood found by PC Janse van Rensburg, she carved a head and together they tied it into a nook of the tree. The carving of the head and fashioning it into the tree was only part of the effort required for the sculpture to come to fruition. Only in the years to come would the various stages of Vergestaltung come to life.

As the head becomes embedded into the tree, the foreign piece of driftwood will no longer look strange, it will become an integral part of the tree. If the head is removed, it will appear as if some portion of the tree is missing. This living sculpture explores the process by which an alien object becomes a local one.

Unfortunately, the head disappeared a few weeks after the events of **Site_Specific**.







GROUNDED



Angus Taylor

assisted by George Magampa

ONNEGROONDE GROOND OP WOENSDAG
SE KOERANT (UNGROUNDDED EARTH ON
WEDNESDAY'S PAPER)

SOIL, GRASS
Ebenezer Estate



Angus Taylor painstakingly created art work that will quickly disintegrate. Ungrounded Ground on Wednesdays Newspapers is a classic Land Artwork. A block made of compacted, exhumed earth sits on top of a pile of newspapers.

The hole from whence the soil came waits nearby. The hole and the block seem to be a perfect fit, like two pieces of a puzzle lying next to each other. The tension between the positive and negative space animates the sculpture – the block, with its crisp corners, belongs in the cavity. Yet if one were to attempt to move it, the block of rich black soil would crumble.

The sculpture is placed on a nondescript empty veld, a few hundred meters from the N2 near Plettenberg Bay. It is a space you drive by. To stop at the exact position of the block and its corresponding hole is to come and visit Ungrounded. When leaving the sculpture, one is also aware that the artwork will be washed away; one will not be able to visit it again.

Ungrounded Ground on *Wednesday's Newspapers*, with its humble material and modest size, is a monument to the moment.





Angus Taylor
assisted by George Magampa

LOS (loose)

BLACK WATTLE STICKS, BOLTS
Piesang River Lagoon

Los (Loose) is composed of two solitary figures floating in the middle of Piesang River Lagoon at Plettenberg Bay. Constructed of multiple sticks, each manlike figure floats down the river, held aloft by wooden branches. They seem to be captured in a moment of reaching out to grasp for something. A few of the poles appear to be escaping from the men, drifting down the water on their own. To view the sculpture in its entirety, one needs to walk around the lagoon, removing your shoes to gradually spiral inwards into the lagoon. At each vantage point, one is rewarded with a different version of the twisting bodies.

Land Art has always had a direct, yet complex relationship with photography. Because many Land Art projects are temporary, the photographs serve as a primary reference source. Here, the photographs give another vantage point, highlighting the reflection of the figures. It is in the sculpture's reflection that their full portrait emerges.

These lonely, isolated figures float down the river in full view of the community around them. These men are not alone, but connected by the multiple branches, that hold them aloft.







32 | CURRENTS PATTERNS REFLECTIONS



Urs Twellmann

STRANDED ALIENS

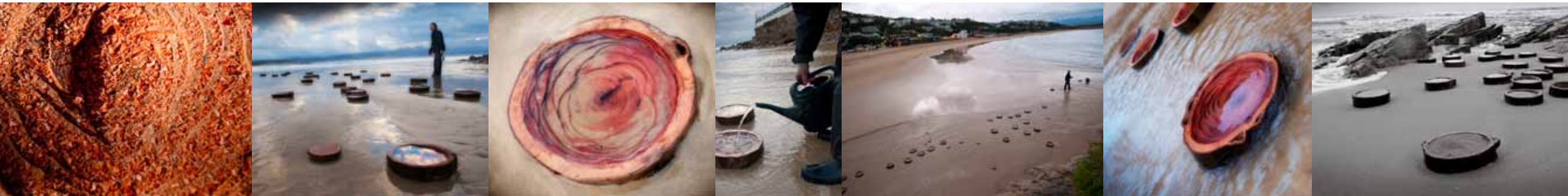
± 70 EUCALYPTUS DISCS

Various locations along Plettenberg Bay beachfront

Swiss-based sculptor Urs Twellmann uses a chainsaw as a chisel to carve wood. His dexterity with this typically loud and unwieldy machine is masterful. *Stranded Aliens* is composed of a single tree found on the Milkwood trail, sliced into 70 discs. Into each of these circles, Twellmann carved shallow vessels that can hold water.

Twellmann positioned these bowls in a variety of locations in the shallow waters of the Piesang River Lagoon and along the beaches of Plettenberg Bay, assembling them in different temporary constellations. He documented *Stranded Aliens* in a number of guises with his camera, capturing the reflections of the sky as well as the change in currents that the water undergoes as it washes over the basins.

Travelling frequently, Twellmann finds his inspiration in the materials that he discovers in situ. Many of his interventions only last a moment or two. Using documentary photography helps to bridge the gap between the remote and varied locations of his art and sharing it with a wider audience.





Andrew van der Merwe

ASEMIC BEACH CALLIGRAPHY

MARKS IN COMPACTED BEACH SAND
Central Beach

The making of a mark – from art to the written word, is a basic tool of communication. Understanding these marks is key to literacy – whether, for example, a circle symbolises a face or the number zero.

Van der Merwe is one of South Africa's leading calligraphers and has developed one of the most in-depth repertoires of mark making in South Africa.

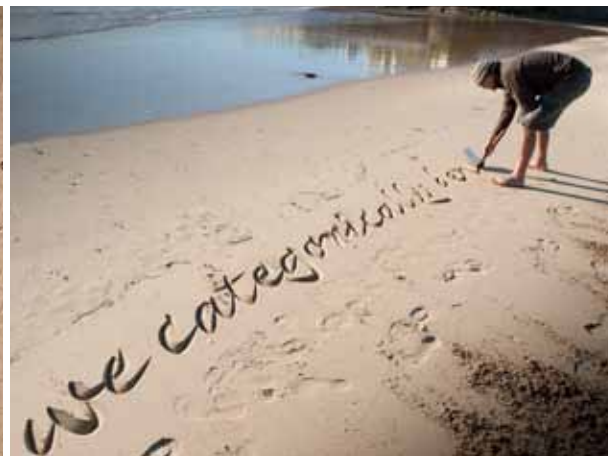
Van der Merwe has always played with sticks, scratching the sand with them. As his skill in lettering increased, so did his dissatisfaction with the types of marks he was able to create in sand. In response he fabricated a specialised tool kit to enable him to engrave into the sand. Relishing the physical nature of drawing in the sand, as opposed

to his normal practice of writing with a nib on paper, Van der Merwe writes in sand at about the same speed he would normally write on paper.

A visual artist of the written word, van der Merwe uses his beach calligraphy to question our literacy. He uses forms that have the characteristics of writing, but the strokes do not form known letters. Called Asemic writing, the reader deduces meaning not by way of the content, but rather through the form and structure of the text. The gestures in the letter-like symbols and the composition of the piece as a whole give a sense of the artist's intention.

If you ask Van der Merwe how he creates his sand drawings without creating a footprint, he replies: "I levitate".

34 | “MET HIERDIE GEDIG WIL EK NIE SIN MAAK NIE” LARA KIRSTEN







36 | $\alpha^n = F(n)\alpha + F(n-1)$



Andrew van der Merwe

Assisted by Chip Snaddon

INSIDE FIBONACCI

200 POLES
Central Beach

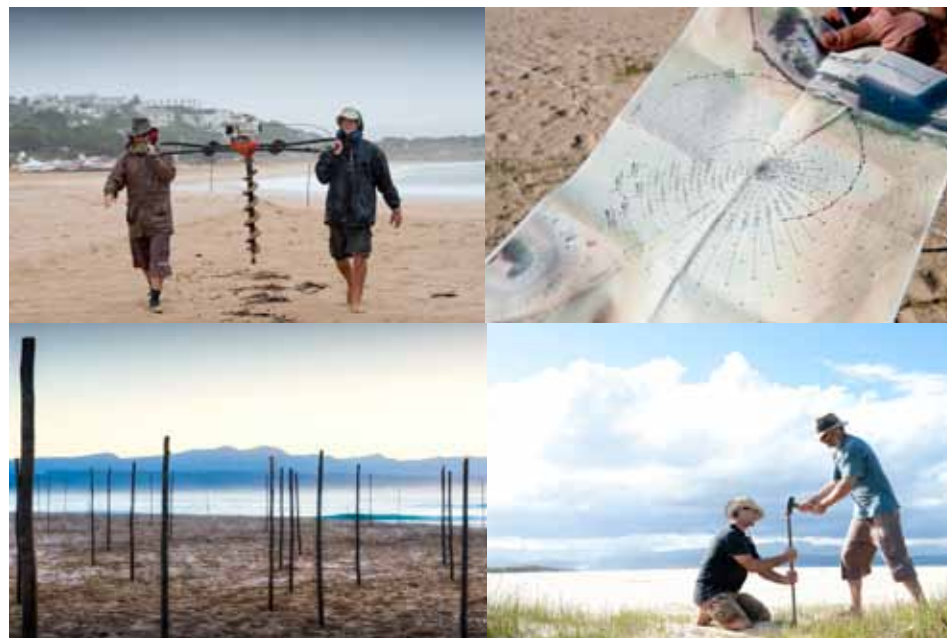
In both his contributions to **Site_Specific**, Van der Merwe draws our attention to the existence of an intrinsic pattern or meaning that is beyond our immediate understanding.

Mathematics is a rich, descriptive language which can portray the world around us. In its simplicity and descriptive elegance it holds the potential for beauty.

Named after the man who also introduced Arabic numerals to Europe in the Middle Ages, the Fibonacci sequence, describes a number that is the sum of the previous two numbers. It begins with 0 then 1. Logically, the integers follow as: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144, 233, 377, 610, 987, and so on. This sequence is common in nature, such as the pattern found in the head of a sunflower.

Van der Merwe utilised the Fibonacci sequence to configure an arrangement of poles. Viewed from the centre they appear to be random – no poles form a line – yet one discovers the graceful arcs as one moves through the installation.

The best view of this pattern was fortuitously from Van der Merwe's hotel room on the 5th floor of the Beacon Island Hotel. From this vantage point one not only sees the regularity in the placement of the poles, but also the pattern of movement. The passers-by's footprints on the sand add another layer to this installation.



$$\alpha^2 = \alpha + 1 \quad |_{37}$$



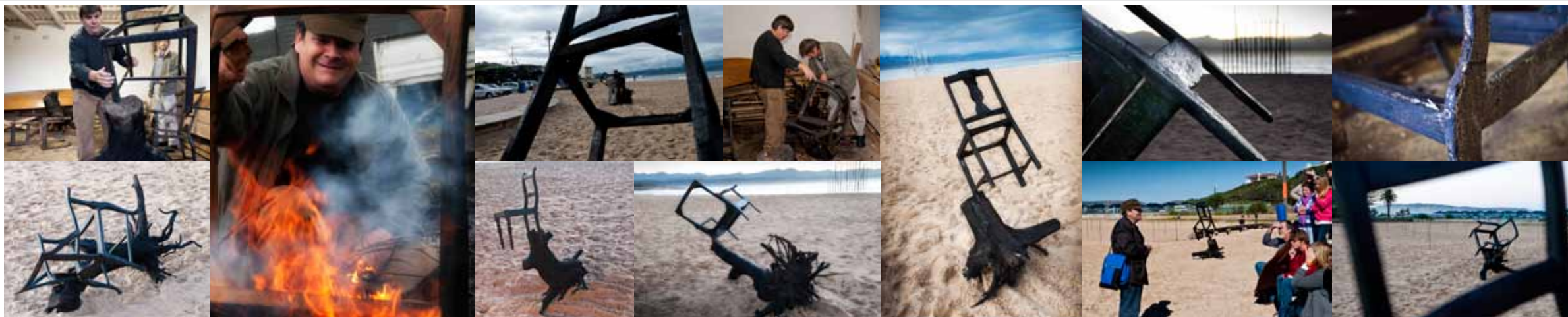
Jan van der Merwe

U P R O O T E D

CHAIRS, TREE STUMPS
Central Beach

Jan van der Merwe considers himself an installation artist. He usually creates large artworks of intricately recreated tableaux, often composed in discarded, found material; Van der Merwe calls the found objects “artefacts of our time”. He accelerates the decaying process by adding layers of rust or burning the objects to charcoal, transforming them into archaeological relics. Being invited to participate in **Site_Specific** challenged van der Merwe to work outside of the white gallery cube and to allow his installations to converse with the larger environment.

On Central Beach, just off the wooden walkway beside the main parking lot, stood van der Merwe’s Uprooted. It was composed of exposed blackened tree trunks merged with old discarded chairs standing before the sea. The chairs were never luxurious, but now they are stripped of whatever comfort they might have once provided. Van der Merwe describes the work as “a monument to all people whose lives were uprooted for various reasons.” It is not a monument for the ages. It will soon return to the earth.







Strijdom van der Merwe

CIRCLES WASHED UP BY THE TIDE

RAKED CIRCLES BETWEEN TIDAL LINES

Central Beach



On Monday 22 May, Strijdom van der Merwe led an orientation walk for the artists participating in **Site_Specific**. He was struck by the myriad objects that perpetually wash up on the shore and questioned the phenomenon: *“We all know that this occurs on a daily basis but how often do we really experience it?”* At low tide the following afternoon, he created a series of circular drawings in the sand, positioned in such a way that the ocean would wash over them. Drawn on Plettenberg Bay’s Main Beach, the circles were framed by the sea on one side and the town on the other. The gradual erosion of the drawings was transfixing and highlighted the timeless tension between man-made objects and nature, the fleeting nature of our world and time immemorial represented by the waves crashing against the shore.

There is a clear beginning to the work – when Van der Merwe draws the circles – and a clear end, after the waves finally wash the drawings away; at no point throughout this process is the artwork ever complete. Each phase is part of a continuum. By creating temporary artwork, the artist acknowledges the limitations of perpetuity. Making work that so quickly disappears, stands on the cusp between futile and valuable.



42 | THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE WORK IS NOT PRESCRIBED



Mark Wilby

NIËL JONKER

NIËL JONKER'S PERSON, ACTIONS AND
ARTWORK CREATED 22-29 MAY 2011

Site Specific art is a distinct genre of art. Its key defining feature is the location of the creative work. When the art is outside or engages with the land, it often overlaps with Land Art. At the same time, Land Art is often about a certain place, making the boundaries between the two genres fungible.

For **Site_Specific**, Mark Wilby (who curated a series of Site Specific projects in the Karoo around 2000) invited another artist, landscape painter Niël Jonker, to attend the event – as his artwork. Inviting a landscape painter as one's artwork for a Land Art project involves a certain irony as these two distinct fields of art, landscape painting and Land Art, are both in essence about the land, yet the two spheres rarely overlap philosophically or visually. Moreover, the two artists agreed that Jonker's paintings would not only be considered Wilby's artwork, but also that the time Jonker spent in Plettenberg Bay and all that he did while there would be considered part of the artwork. The two signed a formal contract to agree to this.

This turned Wilby's artwork into a performance, standing as a nearby sage as Jonker set up his easel at a romantic spot, very accessible from the Beacon Island Lifestyle Resort, where many of the events of **Site_Specific** were based. Hotel guests often wandered from the dining area to visit Jonker as he painted the sun, sand and sea in multiple variations. Jonker's performance lasted the entire seven day period: Every moment from breakfast to late night partying were folded into the fabric of the work. During the latter half of the week, Wilby displayed the paintings and a short video work of Jonker's performance in the hotel lobby. The episode forms part of Wilby's MFA at Rhodes University. It sparked much debate among the participating artists as to what Land Art, Site Specific art and other types of art are and where their work fit into this continuum.



Andreas Kahlau – Digital Editor

As one of South Africa's leading digital retouching and PhotoShop experts, Andreas Kahlau contributed his skill to enhance the Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau's photographs. Many of South Africa's leading photographers rely on Kahlau's expertise to enrich their images. Kahlau has attended a number of workshops with Jon Cone, one of the forefathers of digital Fine Art pigment printing in the USA and a number of very advanced PhotoShop workshops with Dan Margulis, one of the world's most knowledgeable PhotoShop experts.

www.kahlaucorp.com

Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau – Art Photographer

With her instinct for beautiful images, Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau lent her observant eye to **Site_Specific** to create incredibly sensitive images of the art work.

Shocking the wedding industry with her approach to photographing weddings, Olivier-Kahlau became the first ever wedding photographer to achieve a gold award at the famous Profoto Awards. She was awarded the Kodak Wedding Photographer of the Year award in 1999, as well as the Fuji ProFoto Photographic Award Image of the Year in 2007. Olivier-Kahlau has won over 60 professional photographic awards in the categories people, fine art, fashion and weddings.

Olivier-Kahlau is also sought after by collectors of photography. Regularly exhibiting since 2000, her exhibitions have received critical acclaim in London, New York and South Africa.

www.photography-africa.co.za

Meredith Randall – Art Writer

Having written about a wide range of art topics, Meredith Randall joined the enthusiasm of the **Site_Specific** team to write the catalogue essay of this artist-led initiative. She has curated dozens of exhibitions on four continents, including for the Iziko South African National Gallery, the Sao Paulo Biennale and the Pitt Rivers Museum. Educated at the University of Chicago where she obtained her BA and Oxford University for her Masters' in the History of Art, Randall has worked at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Yale University Art Gallery in Connecticut and the Unisa Art Gallery in South Africa. She relishes participating in an art project where wet shoes are a typical hazard.

Simon Max Bannister

A A R T M O E D E R S

The challenge was to use materials available on site. There were 10 large, extremely heavy blocks of stone scattered around the site (in curiously random positions). After much thought about my original intention and the challenge presented by working on such a scale, I was inspired to realign them and fit them together to form three elephants travelling in an easterly direction along the cliff edge. The stones had their own form and texture reminiscent of these wise animals: a leg here, a trunk there: It was as if they had been waiting for this transformation.

The elephants symbolise inspiring trailblazers such as the local legend, visionary opperhoof

Andrew le Fleur that led the legendary pilgrimage of the Griquas to found the community of Kranshoek.

The artwork is placed in the Eden to Addo Corridor to highlight the importance of corridors, for *“without keeping the linkages between protected areas open, the ability of the human race and of natural systems to adapt to the vagaries of climate change becomes severely compromised,”* as Pam Booth of the Eden to Addo Corridor Initiative (the NGO driving the process), says. Using Land Art to reinforce the idea of protected environments, heralds a new era in conservation in South Africa.

Born in Johannesburg in 1982, Max Bannister obtained a degree in Graphic Design at the Design

Centre in 2005. After working in the brand communications industry for three years, he began to pursue a more outdoor lifestyle that would include Land Art. His journey began by guiding Ahmed Nadalian around South Africa, assisting with his work and acquiring knowledge of world mythology. Recently, Max returned from a transatlantic research expedition, from Namibia to Uruguay. He found plastic fragments in every one of its sample captures across the ocean. Alarming as this is, there are signs of ecological adaptation and this inspired him to embrace plastic as a medium. At the Two Oceans Aquarium, he created an unconventional exhibition with large plastic sculptures that speak of confronting the dragon of pollution that we have created.

<http://www.maxplanet.info/>

It is by losing ourselves in enquiry, creation and craft that we become something. Civilisation is a continual gift of spirit: inventions, discoveries, insight, art. – Paul Goodman

The nature of an artist-led initiative such as **Site_Specific** includes many voices. Because of the absence of a curator or overarching theme, each artist was requested to provide a statement to accompany their artwork. These statements, and a short biography of each artist, are included to provide insight into the creators of the art and their processes.

Boitumelo

V E I L E D H O P E

The veil as a female attribute is almost universal across cultures – from being a bride to wearing the burka. Ironically, nature (and all things evil) is as often identified as female, and the issues many women face are also issues that affect the natural world. Exploring what the word *hope* means to someone trying to make a living in one of the most dysfunctional suburbs in Johannesburg is a challenging task.

In creating this veil of beauty we carefully crochet and knit hidden desires and meanings from our own stories into it, all captured in beautiful beads and charms collected from our different

environments. The activity of making strings for *Veiled Hope* creates a haven of openness and safety while we explore various cultural issues among ourselves.

The first part of *Veiled Hope* was created in Hillbrow and exhibited at the Church of Peace and at the Hillbrow Theatre Project in Kapteijn Street before travelling to be part of **Site_Specific**. Here we offered skills transfer workshops to the participants who added their beaded and crocheted strings to the 765 strings completed in Hillbrow – bringing the number of individuals that contributed to 153.

We installed the veil in a broken section of the Timbershed, where the veil's fine translucent

qualities juxtaposed the rough solidity of the stone wall. It is our hope that this artwork will grow as it continues its journey to connect voices and initiate hope across the continent of Africa.

*Boitumelo Sewing Project is the collective name of a group of crafters that live and work in the inner city of Hillbrow. The project recently embarked on outreach initiatives sharing its knowledge, skills and human experience with other communities throughout Africa. At **Site_Specific** the Boitumelo Project members participated as artists, as well as facilitating and teaching craft development with local crafters. They explored the possibilities of making products with found and natural objects and raised environmental consciousness with learners at six schools in the Bitou area. Boitumelo won several awards for projects and artworks since 2002, including the FNB Craft Now 2004 award, the sculpture prize for the Ekurhuleni Art Competition 2006, third prize in Craft Now in 2008, Skaftien Prize 2011 and several international awards. These collaborations do not only address past histories but also develop individual creativity, a sense of self and economic independence.*

<http://www.facebook.com/BoitumeloProject>

Marco Cianfanelli

D R I F T

With the intention of attaching them to trees on site, possibly along the Milkwood trail, I had brought laser-cut steel words with me. I had used these words previously in two sculptures. One set of words explore the parameters and laws of society, through the use of words and phrases that refer to, for example, the Human Rights charter, the UN standards of good governance and ancient Egyptian wisdom texts. The other explore the parameters of the individual, through the use

of words that represent the Four Noble Truths and the Five Aggregates of Buddhist philosophy, as well as the spectrum of human emotions.

In a previous exhibition, *Atlantis* (Cape Town, 1998), I referred to the beach as a metaphorical synapse between land and water and now, on arriving in Plettenberg Bay, I felt that the beach was the right context and the available driftwood a suitable vehicle to carry the words of this Site Specific intervention. One driftwood log had a strong architectural quality, like a Corinthian column, which I used for the words that refer to “society”. The other was very organic and gnarled, which I paired with the words that refer to the “individual”. In the context of the beach and shoreline, these works evoke ideas of arrival, imposition, loss and redundancy but they also evoke a sense of growth and transformation, like barnacles on a foreign object.

Marco Cianfanelli was born in Johannesburg in 1970 and graduated with a distinction in Fine Art from the University of the Witwatersrand in 1992. He has had six solo exhibitions and has won numerous awards, including the Absa L' Atelier and Ampersand Fellowship. His work can be found in public and private collections in South Africa, Europe and the United States. As an artist that works across the public and private realms, Cianfanelli engages the world in terms of systems rather than discreet objects or fenced off territories. He is constantly looking to realise art where one does not expect to find it and testing the possibilities for artistic intervention in the public realm. In so doing, he has been involved in a wide range of projects involving art, architecture and public space. For Cianfanelli, the idea of “place” refers beyond fixed geographical coordinates. It is an emissary from the past as well as a construction site of invention and reinvention. Place, or its absence, points to our intellectual and emotional desire for location, which

is as much about the construction of self as it is about a sense of community or even nationality.

<http://www.goodman-gallery.com/artists/marcocianfanelli>

Hannelie Coetzee

FAMILIE PORTRÉT (FAMILY PORTRAIT)

Familie Portret consists of thirteen sculptures facing the ocean at Lookout Beach, Plettenberg Bay. The stones used for stacking the sculptures were found at the site. The sculptures represent thirteen of my family members and form part of my ongoing exploration of my heritage as an Afrikaner. Only stones with a visible quartz line were selected. It symbolises the “mark” that parents – and their own beliefs and shortcomings – leave on a child. In my case I have questioned my staunch Christian religion and the assertion by that religion that I am part of a “chosen tribe”. I specifically built the sculptures on sand to reflect a shaky foundation.

As high tide comes in every few hours and topples these sculptures I would have to continuously rebuild them and thus contemplate issues regarding my family, upbringing and heritage. This was probably the only time I have spent a week with all my family – conservative and not always accepting of my life choices. Spending time with this symbolic family, restoring them each time they fell, was highly therapeutic.

Hannelie Coetzee is a Johannesburg-based visual artist and professional photographer. She combines Land Art, social documentary photography and collaborative art projects (with Such Initiative) and fuels one to feed the other. Photographing social development projects keeps her close to the pulse of South Africa. This inspires her to create Land Art

or sculpture but also return to the communities to invest in them through Such Initiative.

<http://www.suchinitiative.org>
<http://hanneliecoetzee.com>

Gordon Froud and Tyron Tewson

DUST TO DUST

Our installation for **Site_Specific** 2011 makes use of recycled found objects. We brought plaster-of-paris moulds of sperm babies and fat men with us (having used the moulds for other works previously). Into these moulds, we pressed slabs of clay from the Vantell Brickworks to get forms. Each form has an inserted willow from which it hangs. These forms were heat sealed to strengthen them but were not baked as we intend them to disintegrate and return to the earth over time. Initially there will be a visual poignancy in the figurative shapes hung in trees outside the Timbershed. Almost as if fruit hangs there, ready to ripen and fall, alluding to the potential of all that is born.

This piece (about potential) is dedicated to the memory of a young boy, Jett, who sadly lived for less than a month and died on the Wednesday of the week of the **Site_Specific** event.

Gordon Froud has been actively involved in the South African and international art world as artist, educator, curator and gallerist for the past 25 years. He exhibited in hundreds of solo and group shows in South Africa and overseas, served on many arts committees throughout South Africa and sat as judge for many competitions. He graduated with a master's degree in sculpture from the University of Johannesburg in 2009 and continues to run the sculpture department. Froud has taught continuously at school and tertiary level in South Africa and London. Froud directed Gordart Gallery

in Johannesburg from 2003 to 2009 where he showcased the work of new, up and coming artists.

Tyron Tewson was born in 1987 in Johannesburg. He matriculated from Parktown Boys High, achieving a distinction in Art. He is currently in his third year studying fine art at the University of Johannesburg, majoring in sculpture. Tewson has exhibited paintings and sculptures at the UJ FADA Art Gallery and the Roof Top Exhibition at the UJ Kingsway Gallery in 2010.

<http://www.art.co.za/gordonfroud/>

Charles Levin and Carol Nathan-Levin

A Q U A (not a drop to drink)

Drought, water, wealth. Recycling. The need to contain and save. 1 mm of rain falling on 1 metre of roof creates 1 litre of water. Included in our installation is the desalination plant, serving as a juxtaposition to our needs, or how to achieve the same end. The cut and scrambled JoJo tank creates a retro modernist industrial abstract sculpture.

Charles Levin was born in London 1961 and studied Fine Art in England, France and The Netherlands. He became a Director of the Johannesburg Art Foundation in the Late 80s. As a conceptualist, Levin morphs childhood memories and world issues with social relevance, reconstructing and deconstructing the past, present and future. Levin's work twists and turns through the labyrinth of life. He works in all mediums.

Born in 1963, Carol Nathan-Levin left Wits Fine Art department to become a fashion designer and found a career in costume building and creating “fashion sculptures”. She worked and exhibited in NYC and Los Angeles from 1988 to 2000, returning to South Africa to pursue a full-time

career in Fine Art. Using the skills acquired in costuming, she assumes the role of social critic to create her artwork and exhibits.

Charles Levin

HOMAGE

Exposes human fragility and pays respect to lost lives, on land and at sea. It references the past, present and future spinning out of control, with current reference to the earthquake and subsequent tsunami in Japan 2011 which created a nuclear meltdown, toxicity and toxic waste, toxic land and toxic sea.

Along with out-of-control environmental issues and global warming, my original inspiration came while watching nuclear waste being transported through London on the train lines in the 1970s and thinking, “Where is that going?” It also came from a scene in RoboCop the movie (1987), set in the future: The weather report with a UV sun factor warning: “Be careful when you go outside.”

<http://www.charleslevin.info/home.html>

Carol Nathan-Levin

THE SKY IS FALLING

Every month 15 million people are born on our planet. The average person will eat 3 000 chickens in their lifetime. To sustain ongoing population growth, humans have developed factory farms. Chickens are crammed up against each other, maltreated and abused. These 14 pairs of feet never had contact with the earth before.

I explore and expose subject matter that often makes people uncomfortable. I am interested in provoking discussion about unspoken secrets and

I am concerned with the interface of individual responsibility and political hypocrisy.

<http://www.carolnathanlevin.com/>

Erica Lüttich

HUNDRED YEARS, HUNDRED MORE...

Eucalyptus trees have been declared aliens in South Africa and although we imported, planted and nurtured them for decades, we have now decided that we must destroy them because they are invaders that use too much water. I selected 12 of these so-called invader trees at the St Peter's Anglican Church and wrapped them in red fabric with orange words and symbols proclaiming the years they have been a landmark on this site. This questions our denial of a cultural heritage we would do well to remember.

Instead of preventing a recurrence of labelling and separation, we are recreating new cleansing rules and destroying the trees by ring-barking them, cutting off the nurturing that they need to survive. I aim to highlight the discrepancies between the foreign which has been naturalised (such as the church and other imported cultural elements) and the foreign which has been alienated (such as the trees). Who are we to lay down this judgment and so cruelly ignore the value we once saw and applauded in the Eucalyptus trees?

Born in 1964, Erica Lüttich studied Art and Photography at Ruth Prowse College of Art, 1980 to 1983 and enrolled at Unisa for a Fine Arts degree in 1992. Her studies compelled her to become involved in community art projects. Since 1985, Erica has been working as a Film Editor on dramas, feature films and documentaries. Her work

in Sharpeville, Soweto, Hillbrow and Diepsloot is based on creative healing, offering skills and participation to and collaboration with communities. In 2010 she initiated the Fairplay Project, an inner city collaboration with youth, children and artists which was exhibited at Constitution Hill. With her guidance the Boitumelo Project won several awards and international commissions. Lüttich herself won the 2008 International Photo Competition **The Main Thing is Work?** in Germany. Erica has been involved in several group exhibitions at Unisa 1998 to 2003, Ansisters and Living Rites at Constitutional Hill in 2005 and 2006 and Ekurhuleni Art Competition in Kempton Park 2007. As a founder member of **Site_Specific**, Erica's sense of finding the creative, developing the positive and keen interest in storytelling gives her a sense of energy and urgency that is contagious.

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=574418685>

Gabriele Meneguzzi and Vincenzo Sponga

CUCITURA

Our idea was born looking out at the sea from the rocks above our work. We thought how wonderful it would be to sew rocks, sand and sea together as if they were different arts, different disciplines. So we made the line in the sand and constructed a thread of grass, and for a needle we found a beautiful driftwood tree on the beach. We cut the branches to make them resemble a needle, and that was it! We sewed the sand to communicate to artists not to stay in their own art, but to try to connect with each other as if we have been sewn together – transcending experiences and ideas, growing together.

Gabriele Meneguzzi was born in San Quirino (Pordenone, Italy) on June 12, 1949. After his years of compulsory education in Italy during which he learned watercolour, screen printing and embossing techniques, he chose to further his technical training and experimentation with materials in Switzerland. He takes as his creative materials, the objects he finds in woods and in riverbeds. Since 1974 he has collaborated with Vincenzo Sponga and together, in 1986, they opened a shop/workshop in Pordenone, Italy, where they work in metals and natural materials. Since 1999 Gabriele Meneguzzi and Vincenzo Sponga have created Land Art representing Italy at various international events.

http://www.vivoverde.com/gabriele_meneguzzi.html

Vincenzo Sponga was born in Azzano Decimo (Pordenone, Italy), on March 16, 1950. While working in the field of publicity graphics for fifteen years he experimented with various mediums from screen-printing to precious metals and ceramics. He took courses in Europe to gain knowledge of natural materials and their technical development.

http://www.vivoverde.com/vincenzo_sponga.html

Anni Snyman and PC Janse van Rensburg

VERGESTALTING

The anthropomorphic aspects of a particular Ficus natalensis on the banks of the Piesang River appealed to me ever since we started exploring the Milkwood Trail. Later, when my brother and Land Art partner, PC Janse van Rensburg, found a beautiful driftwood trunk with very evocative twists in its base, we decided to carve a head out of the driftwood and place it in the fig tree so

that other people could also recognise the human form of this specific tree. We hoped that the head would stay in place for a few years, so that the living, growing tree could flow around the base of the driftwood neck, eventually swallowing it so that the illusion of the head belonging to the spirit in the tree would become even stronger.

Two weeks after the event the head disappeared, provoking interesting questions about public art and testing our intention of “letting go” of the artwork.

Anni Snyman obtained a degree in Fine Art (Graphic Design) at the University of Stellenbosch in 1985. She works in various media ranging from traditional prints, photography and digitally manipulated images to three dimensional sculptures and collaborative constellations (juxtapositions of different creative disciplines in public spaces). She has had numerous shows and installations including a solo exhibition **Memory of Water** at the University of Johannesburg Art Gallery in 2006 and her first Land Art installation **Siren** with PC Janse van Rensburg at **Afrika Burn** in 2009. In 2010 she and Janse van Rensburg attended the **Humus Park** Land Art event in Pordenone, Italy, and returned to organise **Site_Specific** with Srijdom van der Merwe and a great team of friends.

<http://www.annisnyman.co.za>

PC Janse van Rensburg (born 1955) is an Architect and Developer. He lives and works in Cape Town. Since 2000 he has also been creating oil paintings and exhibiting works as part of the Izak Vollgraaff Studio. He is a founding member of **Site_Specific**, and his remarkable ability to create a convivial atmosphere added much joy to the event.

Angus Taylor

Assisted by George Magampa

OPGEGRONDE GROND OP
WOENSDAG SE KOERANT
(UNDERGROUNDED EARTH
ON WEDNESDAY'S PAPER)

Thematically I'm working with "groundedness" and "ungroundedness" as part of my research into a liminal reality. The liminal describes bridging concepts and refers to the "in-between" state. It has been comprehensively expounded by Victor Turner, and recognises the changeable and undetermined nature of reality. In **Ongegronde grond op Woensdag se koerant**, some of the meaning is directly communicated by the materials I used: The first work is a hole in the ground with the removed earth exhibited nearby. The displaced earth represents conceptual ungroundedness, and the work refers to a mental dislodging, a shake up of concepts – the transformation of thoughts – specifically the releasing of stagnant positions – from the cognitive known to the unknown. It is in this uncomfortable headspace that renewal can take place.

LOS

My other work, *Los* (Loose, Unfettered), also refers to the experience of liminal space – where the known has been left behind but the new has not yet been attained. This liquid, inchoate state is almost literally represented as the "headspace" of the figures.

Angus van Zyl Taylor, born in 1970, completed his BA in fine arts in 1996 at the University of Pretoria. After tutoring in drawing and sculpture at the University of Pretoria, he ran the Ashanti art foundry from 1996 to 1997. He started his own business and foundry **Dionysus Sculpture**

Works, in 1998. Angus teaches part time at the University of Pretoria. He acted as an adviser to the Tshwane University of Technology.

His choice of materials is constantly being reappraised and even when he chooses traditional materials like granite or bronze they are used in a unique way, whether by imprinting texts into the surfaces of bronze or eschewing the carve-ability of granite in favour of its block-like potential to construct form that alludes to human form without describing it (as much stone sculpture does). Contrasted to these materials are forms made of stacked grass, compacted earth, charcoal bricks and stacked slate. The inventiveness with which he tackles materials locates Taylor as a postmodern artist referencing traditional crafting techniques but using them in a contemporary manner and style. It is in the multiplicity of approaches and in the uses of diverse and sometimes alternate materials that Taylor has gathered praise and recognition. Taylor's ambitious nature has him tackling materials and scale that most sculptors would prefer to avoid. This has resulted in gigantic slate figures set into landscapes in various prestigious collections such as the Apple Mac headquarters in Sandton, in the Karoo and in private collections in Canada and Belgium. Awards: 1994: Best sculpture student (University of Pretoria); 1994: First prize – PPC young sculptors' award; 2005: University of Pretoria, Alumni Laureate; 2010: Selected as festival artist for Aardklop Art Festival.

<http://www.angustaylor.co.za>

George Magampa trained in the bronze casting of sculpture with Mike Edwards and Dietmar Wenning (both sculptor-founders) before joining the DSW (Dionysus Sculpture Works – the studio of Angus Taylor) in Pretoria in 2004. He is a multitalented foundry-man and a sculptor in his own right, specialising in well-crafted representative sculpture, that he casts in bronze.

Urs Twellmann

STRANDED ALIENS

For this work I cut about 70 discs from a Eucalyptus tree, and hollowed them out using a chainsaw in such a way that they could contain water. I arranged and rearranged these pieces at different places along the coast and along a nearby river. The tide played with the wooden discs, creating ever-changing constellations and patterns. The quiet water in the hollowed discs sometimes reflected the sky and sometimes created contrast with the current of water around the discs. Thus the work was constantly in progress, as observed and documented by camera.

Urs Twellmann was born on April 5, 1959, in Langnau im Emmental, Switzerland. He studied at the Academy of Arts, Berne, Switzerland; the Art Students League, New York; and the Manhattan Graphic Centre, New York. He was a part-time art-teacher for the Open University and in the Educational Programme for teachers from 1984 to 1999. He lives and works in Munsingen/Bern, Switzerland and has been a professional sculptor since 1981 with many solo and group exhibitions since 1979. Exhibitions and invitations to international sculpture symposiums include countries like Australia, Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Denmark, the United States of America, South Korea, the Czech Republic, South Africa and Switzerland.

Travelling frequently, Twellmann finds his inspiration in the materials he discovers in situ. Many of his interventions last only a moment or two. Using documentary photography, Twellmann can share the art with a wider audience. He is able to bridge the gap between making temporary sculptures and exposing it to a wider audience.

www.twellmann.ch

Andrew van der Merwe

ASEMIC BEACH CALLIGRAPHY

I like to invent my own pseudo writing systems. This is a matter of taking an essential form and playing with it the way a musician might play with a theme – turning it, reversing it, breaking it and rejoining it differently, etc. Lara Kirsten, a performing artist and poet that contributed to the **Site_Specific** event offered us a poem with the line: "met hierdie gedig wil ek nie sin maak nie" (with this poem I do not want to make sense), which is a way of describing the Asemic calligraphic intention: visual poetry that hints at language, but defies interpretation.

INSIDE FIBONACCI

Assisted by Chip Snaddon

This installation of nearly 200 black wattle poles was laid out in the pattern formed by the seeds on the head of a sunflower. It is the strongest, most efficient way for the flower to arrange itself. When one stood at the centre, the poles looked randomly placed and there were no radial lines. Any three poles that lined up would have represented a weakness in the flower head. However, if one moved into it from an angle, the spirals became evident. There were 13 long clockwise spirals and 21 short anticlockwise spirals leading to the centre. 13 and 21 are consecutive numbers in the Fibonacci sequence. It has an almost spiritual quality. It was Leonardo Fibonacci, a mathematician of the middle ages who popularised the maths that describes this arrangement and coined the term *Golden Ratio* (approximately 1.618). I used this ratio to draw my diagram with a compass made of a centre stake, a long tape-measure, my right leg and my friend Chip Snaddon.

Born in 1964, Andrew van der Merwe is a professional calligrapher and letter artist based in

Cape Town. Andrew van der Merwe has focused on lettering and mark-making since childhood. He started freelancing while reading for a degree in philosophy at the University of Cape Town. A professional calligrapher, Van der Merwe works mostly for designers and agencies. His artistic endeavours began through carving fantastical letters on the beach as a break from working at a desk on small pieces of paper. The tools and techniques are ones he has evolved over the past eight years. Andrew van der Merwe's art has become highly sought after and is shown locally and abroad including in the *Letter Arts Review*. In 2010 he was an invited artist to the Sharjah Calligraphy Biennale in the United Arab Emirates.

<http://j-laf.org/2008/10/worlds-project-report-beach-ca.html> and

<http://www.behance.net/beachscriber/frame>

Chip Snaddon was born in 1964. He has a BA in Fine Art from the University of Cape Town (UCT), majoring in photography. Since 1995, Snaddon has worked as a freelance illustrator and cartoonist. In 1998 he was appointed Cape Argus editorial cartoonist.

<http://www.cartoonist.co.za/chipsnaddon.htm>

Jan van der Merwe

UPROOTED

Assisted by Danie van der Westhuizen

At present I work with found objects – artefacts of our time. I transform them into archaeological relics using charcoal, rust and burn-marks which seem like a kind of scar, revealing human vulnerability and weakness. This installation consists of five separate structures made from the stumps of uprooted trees attached to pieces of furniture. All the objects have been scorched and blackened by fire. It may refer to the displacement

of people, but also suggests natural processes on the one hand and production processes on the other. In an attempt to confirm identity in our current and very volatile time, we arrange and reconsider the values and meanings we give to things we find every day. I try to create a poetic moment, a brief opportunity for contemplation, reconsideration, humility and respect.

*Jan van der Merwe was born in 1958, works in Pretoria and is a senior lecturer in Fine Art at the Department of Fine and Applied Art, Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). He obtained a master's degree in Fine Art at the Pretoria Technikon (now TUT) in 1999. His work is represented in a number of museums and corporate collections. He has also won several awards. Since 1976 he has taken part in numerous group exhibitions and has also had several solo shows. In 2006 the Pretoria Art Museum hosted a comprehensive retrospective exhibition of his work entitled **The Archaeology of Time**.*

<http://www.art.co.za/janvandermerwe/>

Danie van der Westhuizen was born in 1960. He lives and works in Pretoria as a carpenter, model builder and set builder. He has assisted Jan van der Merwe on an ad hoc basis since 1999.

Strijdom van der Merwe

CIRCLES WASHED UP BY
THE TIDE

As a Land Artist, I generally use the materials provided by the chosen site. My sculptural forms take shape in relation to the landscape. It is a process of working with the natural world, using elements like sand, water, wood or rocks and shaping these into geometrical forms that participate in their environment, continually

changing until their final probable destruction. I observe the fragility of beauty, while not lamenting its passing. At **Site_Specific** I became aware of the considerable amount of driftwood that washed up on the beach and the continuous depositing of materials during high tide. This led me to the idea of using a rake to draw circles on the beach in various sizes as if they had washed up during high tide just to be washed away during the next tide.

What remains is a photographic image, a fragment of the imagination and a reminder of the capacity, however feeble, of an individual to alter the universe by embracing the ceaseless changing of nature, actively contributing to it, and in so doing, modulating and beautifying the perceptions of those that have witnessed it.

*Strijdom van der Merwe studied art at the Universities of Stellenbosch, South Africa; Hooge School voor de Kunste, Utrecht, Holland; The Academy of Art and Architecture Praha, Czech Republic and the Kent Institute of Art and Design, Canterbury, England. He is a founding member and Director of **Site_Specific** and a recipient of the Jackson Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant. Medal of Honour from the South African Academy of Arts and Science. Nominated for the Daimler Chrysler award for sculpture in Public Spaces 2008. Exhibitions and commissions on invitation have been created in South Korea, Turkey, Belgium, France, Sweden, Lithuania, Japan, Australia, Germany, England, the Netherlands and Italy. He has held many solo exhibitions at various art galleries in the past years and his work has been bought by numerous private and public collectors locally and abroad.*

<http://www.strijdom.co.za>

Mark Wilby

NIËL JONKER

In the manner of an environmental artist shaping wood or moving earth, my **Site_Specific** work emerges from the material and the nature of a place – in this case the holiday setting of the Beacon Island Lifestyle Resort at Plettenberg Bay. I have chosen, through the person and activity of the painter Niël Jonker, to foreground romantic mythologies built around activities of leisure and creativity. The method is a form of realism that shuns techniques of symbolism, metaphor or lyricism. The poetry builds itself from the dynamic interface of subject, site, and – most importantly – viewer. The behaviour of the work is not prescribed, and so readings are open-ended and unpredictable... much like the vagaries of wind and wave.

*The work that Mark Wilby is currently exploring draws on the experience he gathered in various occupations. Following early forays into photography, theatrical scenic services and museum display, he worked for many years in the film industry – mainly as a production designer. A period in the Karoo from the mid-nineties resulted in the establishment of an art gallery and the emergence of his own art practice. He curated the **!Xoe Site Specific** events between 1998 and 2002 and was involved in the establishment and management of the Owl House Foundation and the Kitching Fossil Exploration Centre. A parallel activity at the time was a growing interest in video, not only as a tool for documentation and development, but as a vehicle for creative expression. His relocation to Grahamstown in 2007 coincided with a desire, not only to merge these varied skills, but to formulate a practice that focuses less on product than on the*

potential to be found in blending visual languages and blurring disciplinary boundaries.

<http://www.theymademedoit.co.za/theymademedoit/mark/>

Niel Jonker works and exhibits prolifically. A regular at the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival, he has also exhibited throughout the rest of South Africa at galleries and at festivals since 2004. Jonker has established a cohesive body of oil paintings in various genres and has also produced some very fine smaller bronze sculptures. In his landscape paintings, Jonker chooses to paint “plein air”. The paint-bag always at hand, landscape studies are made on the hoof. From here he is able to transpose natural tone, form and light with assured technique, capturing the soul, spirit and atmosphere of his native land.

<http://www.nieljonker.co.za/>

Right Members of Kranshoek's Comet Choir bow their heads as oom Samuel Jansen dedicates the event in prayer.
Middle right Applause ripples through the crowd at KwaNokuthula
Far right The audience gathered inside the historic Timbershed for the opening of Site_Specific 2011.
Photos: Andrew van der Merwe and Anni Snyman.



Site_Specific engaged with the Bitou communities in numerous creative ways.

Local artists under the leadership of Myfanwy Bekker-Balajadia were encouraged to create their own Land Art throughout the town of Plettenberg Bay. They also set up an exhibition in Myfanwy's studio gallery to complement the Land Art event. Their work is documented on pages 54 to 59.

Erica Lüttich and Boitumelo led a unique community based education programme that helped to bridge the typically divided local populations.

The Bitou Municipality and Plettenberg Bay Tourism supported the opening event at the Timbershed where Lunchbox Theatre and Tshisa Talent organised a show of local performers including the Unlimited Band, Nthambo theatre dancers and DJ Jazztrain.

In a broad-based community driven event in KwaNokuthula, lead by Amos Lwana and Jonicka Gubula, a performance area was set up in the open air near the community centre. What followed was an amazing display of local talent with performances ranging from rap and dance to Italian opera: The Bitou Brothers

A Capella, Hip Hop Rappers, Nakie, Skillz, Mciya & King, Phakamisani Primary Choir and Slow Poison Pantsula delivered superb performances. Most striking was an aria performed by a gifted local performer, Simon Kika – students sat on the backs of their chairs, unable to contain themselves and the entire community accompanied him during the chorus. After his performance Kika received a pop-star-like standing ovation.

In Kranshoek the community banded together under the enthusiastic initiative of Phillip Damonds – creating craft and food stalls, as well as providing entertainment and music fortified by the sound system provided by local entrepreneur Justin Bernado and DJ Charlie. The Comet Choir, Riel Dancers and the Field Band all contributed to a festive atmosphere. Oom Sammy Jansen, elder of the Griqua National Church, opened the event with a prayer, as the first Land Art sculpture in the Eden to Addo Corridor was unveiled.

Since the event, township tours are making regular stops at the Kranshoek *Aartmoeders* sculpture – demonstrating the viable connection between conservation and art as a potential tourism income source for the Kranshoek community.



THE ELEPHANT RIDER

by Anni Snyman

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Land is soil is ground is dust. Dust to dust. The land is the beginning and the end of existence. We are from it, and we will return to it. The land is the basis of wealth, the source of food, the provider of shelter. Without the land, we cannot live. There is no doubt that we belong to the land, as fleas belong to their dog.

Yet our early twenty-first century culture is almost completely devoid of opportunity to acknowledge our true and indebted relationship with the land. Gone are the harvest festivals and the midwinter solstices welcoming the return of the sun.

We know the names of ancestors and gods, but the pathways to their company are treacherous

and have fallen into disrepute. Our debt to the earth has no cultural avenue of expression, and the pervading vehicles of religion frown upon those who would bow their heads down to gaze upon the land in awe.

Yet somehow, here in Plettenberg Bay, one of the most beautiful and diverse places on earth (a veritable melting pot of ecological biomes and home to almost every conceivable human race, culture and lifestyle), a Land Art event became a vessel of transformation. On the surface it looked like a Land Art event. We created art.

We supported the artists and the art-making process. We applauded the art. Yet deeper down, we were involved in something much more profound. We were bringing homage to the land.

We were doing so in public, together, and without prejudice or judgment.

Communitas is a Latin noun referring to an intense community spirit characteristic of people experiencing liminality together. Liminality is described as the transitional state between two phases, a void where individuals are “betwixt and between”. This moment takes community to the next level and allows the whole of the community to share a common experience, usually through a rite of passage, sometimes through an ordeal such as war, or through working together towards a great goal – building a cathedral or sharing a pilgrimage.

The **Site_Specific** event in Plettenberg Bay was such a moment of liminality. For one brief week,

the normal social patterns were set aside, and everyone, regardless of their standing, wealth or grouping, brought something – their art, their cooking, their hospitality, their company, their support, their attention, as a gift to each other and in honour of the land that supports us all.

A highly contested municipal election took place in Bitou during the week of **Site_Specific**, yet we experienced a feeling of great social equality, solidarity and togetherness that transcended political rivalry.

On the day of the launch, over 300 people, drawn from the area, attended the multifaceted opening event that extended over a full day. People walked barefoot and with childlike

joy along well-known and newly discovered paths alike. Spontaneously building driftwood sculptures when taking the dogs for a stroll. One visitor walking in awe amongst the artworks on the beach exclaimed: “One doesn’t know what is art and what is nature, so one looks at EVERYTHING!” It was clear from her shining eyes that EVERYTHING was beautiful.

A pilgrimage transcends historical, geographical and social boundaries – it encourages people to move (literally and metaphorically) from their normal everyday lives and enter, however temporarily, different worlds. After such an experience, there is a chance that the people involved, and the community itself, could return renewed, even transformed.

During **Site_Specific**, the usual direction of commuting that flows from KwaNokuthula, New Horizons and Kranshoek into the town of Plettenberg Bay was reversed when the residents of Plettenberg Bay made their way to the outlying townships in a pilgrimage to offer their attention and their presence, to marvel at the outpourings of art, music, dance and hospitality.

In KwaNokuthula the crowd at the mud-sculpture throne swelled at the singers and the dancers. First the cars and the people came. Then the cattle sauntered closer and lay down, keeping their ears tuned towards us. A billy goat lead his retinue of she-goats to the edge of the field – keeping a safe distance, pretending to be foraging in the long grass while inspecting the

unusual activity. A few dogs stopped sunning themselves, to sniff inquisitively at our feet.

Then the hadedas and the sparrows, the seagulls and the plovers contributed their flight and sounds to the scene. The wind rustled in the poplars and we all cried when Phakamani Primary's little voices sang "Funiculi Funicula-a-a-a-a!".

At Kranshoek the weather held off while oom Sammy spoke beautiful English, welcoming us in the midst of the Griqua community that founded itself through pilgrimage.

This community, defined by its inherited in-between-ness and hovering on the edge of mountain and sea, opened its arms to us.

After a prayer of thanks, visitors and locals alike set off for the sculptures. Most left their cars – like pilgrims entering a sacred space. They felt it was more appropriate to go on foot – or maybe they just enjoyed being human, humbly walking together.

A storm brewed, yet still, hundreds of people streamed down the streets of Kranshoek to the edge of the cliff to see the artwork. They were met by a little boy riding on the back of an elephant. He was four years old, eating an apple. His name was Kairos.

It was only when I got home and could check Wikipedia, that the significance of his name struck me. *Kairos* is an ancient Greek word

meaning the right or opportune moment (the supreme moment). The ancient Greeks had two words for time, *chronos* and *kairos*. While the former refers to chronological or sequential time, the latter signifies a time in between, a moment in which something special happens.

We were truly experiencing something special – an in-between moment of equality and respect. Our interconnectedness was tangible and it extended way beyond the couple of hundred humans hugging each other, standing at those rocks in the freezing wind.

It didn't surprise me to learn that *Kairos* also means weather in both ancient and modern Greek. Thus the rain was unleashed, ending one

of the most severe droughts the area of Bitou had ever experienced, blowing us all home, back to our normal lives.

Now, two months after the event, when people speak to me about the event, they are still lit with a mysterious energy, a smile, a glow, or even a hint of tears. It is extremely difficult to explain or put the experience into words, but something had touched us. We had entered a void, acknowledged a debt, paid homage, experienced *communitas* and we had been blessed by *Kairos*.

30 July 2011



Myfanwy Bekker

SHADOW PLAY

SANDBLASTED MESQUITE WOOD FROM BOREGO DESERT, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. GLASS, RIVER PEBBLES, CLAY.

Myfanwy Bekker Art Studio

This is a contemplative piece whereby the real interest of an object is its ever-moving ever-present shadow... to which we pay so little attention.

Our individual shadows, in all their complex and delicate beauty, are always totally unique and could be our most significant truth, in as much as they are our reflection... stretched, distorted, shrunken, ever changing, reacting simply to the position of the light.

Photo: Anja Wiehl



Matthew Brouckaert

BITOU-VILLE

ROAD, PAINT

Stofpad

The Stofpad is a historic route between Plettenberg Bay and Knysna. The first 1.5 km of the dirt road (stofpad) was tarred approximately eight years ago, creating a misnomer. In February 2011 the tarred section was marked with a solid white line. The effect of the marking was dramatic. The entire experience of the newly marked road altered my perception of the road and its passage through our landscape. By marking the dust road about a kilometre after experiencing the unmarked road, I hoped to echo the experience.

We painted a dividing white line on a 200 m portion of Stofpad. The intention was that the line would be in accordance with the standard road marking convention. The various authorities were informed of my proposal although “permission” was neither withheld, nor granted.

The title *Bitou-Ville* relates to a personal fantasy of a cluster of homesteads which occur up the stofpad which could almost be called a village but never has been. The road marking would define the area and give birth to the concept. The idea of “painting” the landscape transforms the environment into a canvas and alters your relationship with it.

photo: magnificentsouthafrica.com

Zane Coetzee

CONTAINING THE CONTAINMENT

STICKS, STONES

Traffic Circle on Piesang River Road

The more energy man spends to contain nature, the more energy man will need to spend on containing the containment.

For my artwork, I used wattle to represent nature and the existing rock on the traffic circle to represent man. I divided the circle in half: On one side I placed bent sticks and spears, speaking of man's interference creating an unhealthy co-dependent relationship. On the other side a single tree represents nature's independent relationship to man, where it is left to flourish in its own way. The centre of the circle with its lamp post surrounded by rocks interwoven with sticks, represents an interdependent relationship with nature, shining a light on a better future for man and nature.

Photo: Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau



Ingrid Coerlin

FLYING EARTH I, II, III

PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINT ON ART WEAVE PAPER

Myfanwy Bekker Art Studio

“Flying earth and flying time.”

Only the image remains! A reminder of what you've left behind and in the end, nothing matters anymore!





Willie Gouws

JOINING HANDS, HEART AND SOUL

WATTLE STICKS, ROPE, GRASS

Plett Market on Main

My favourite medium is wattle – this alien species invades our indigenous forests and it is everywhere – free, supple, versatile and durable. My Land Art piece portrays a joining of hands, heart and soul with mother nature and her family: signalling that we are ready to learn to understand, perhaps to peer deeper into her shapes, shadows and reflections.

Photo: www.magnificentsouthafrica.com

Angus Greig

REVENGE OF THE FYNBOS

WHIRLIGIG, FYNBOS, PINE TREE

Ebenezer Estate

There are six plant kingdoms in the world, the Cape Floral Kingdom is by far the smallest plant kingdom covering only 90 000 square kilometres, about the size of Portugal. Fynbos makes up 80% of this small plant kingdom. This Fynbos (fine bush, fine leaves), is the most species diverse kingdom in the world, boasting almost 9 000 species, 70% (6 300) of which is endemic i.e. found nowhere else in the world. To put this in perspective, the British Isles, which is three and a half times bigger than the Cape Floral Kingdom, only has 20 endemic species.

Fynbos needs to burn and is adapted to do so about once every 15 years. If it does not burn and there is sufficient wind protection and rain, it will be replaced by indigenous forest. With each fire, about 30 metres of forest edge is burnt and

replaced with Fynbos. This creeping movement of the Fynbos and forest can best be described as a dance, slowly moving this way and that over the mountains and coastal plain – a cycle that might take hundreds or even thousands of years to repeat. Ravines, gorges and rivers are moist and provide wind and fire protection and consequently are nearly always covered in forest. Thus a beautiful dance is slowly played out before our eyes, but far too slowly to be noticed by us mere mortals.

With the introduction of the alien pine timber industry, this cycle has been disrupted and truncated by these invasive trees that do not permit the indigenous Fynbos to carry on the dance it knows best. Consequently, I thought it only appropriate to construct a Fynbos whirligig and set it spinning on top of one of these pine invaders! Each time the wind blows, it turns – cocking a snook at the alien on which it stands.

Fynbos shall overcome!

Photo: Anni Snyman





Amos Lwana & the KwaNokuthula Land Art team

(Jonica Gubula, Linda Gusha, Lonwabo Maphitiza, Sposethu Phillips, Masondo Mbeki, Siyabulela Mathyila, Dumisani Leleki, Nyaniso Dyasob)

NOKUTHULA

MUD, TWIGS, TWINE, PEBBLES

Various locations in KwaNokuthula

We created a character named Nokuthula as our township tour theme that carries a dual meaning in isiXhosa. To us KwaNokuthula means both a village of silence as well as the home of Nokuthula. Our wish is that our work will encourage an integration of the split between our culture and nature.

We erected landmark sculptures around accessible tourist points of KwaNokuthula. Nokuthula is a mud sculpture

symbolising the good health, love, safety and protection a mother breathes upon her children, as Nokuthula is a mother overseeing the peace and tranquility of KwaNokuthula. This sculpture stands at the entrance of KwaNokuthula.

Nokuthula's home is the skeleton of a traditional Xhosa hut erected near the now derelict old dairy. It symbolises the home KwaNokuthula offers all who are destitute.

Nokuthula's chair is a traditional Xhosa throne made of mud. It stands across the street from the Simunye Community Centre. This symbolises the works and services that Simunye Community Centre has accomplished.

Photos: Erica Lüttich and Anni Snyman

Darren Lyon

ANCESTRAL SHIP

STICKS, STONES, METAL, TWINE

Public Fountain in Main Street

This installation in a public gathering place in Plettenberg Bay speaks of the loss of memory and culture, through a symbolic narrative that aims to remind viewers of our ancient human connection to the area, and of our collective past. Illustrated through spear shafts mounted with replicas of stone tools left by the Khoi-San people in Plettenberg Bay, it uses the existing "ship" feature as reference to the arrival of change, which left only vague memories of "primitive" implements in its wake.

Altered by the elements, the spears represent effigies of our ancestors, who ask for a moment's silence of the viewer; silence to hear and feel, to reconnect with place; to connect with our shared history and culture. Thrusting forth from the abandoned water feature, which itself launches towards the sea view, the installation aims to renew the space for what it was intended: a gathering area for both the present day and future ancestors.

Photo: Darren Lyon

(The photo far right by Kazim Karaismailoglu illustrates an installation of *Ancestral Ship* in a nearby lagoon.)



Fanie Möller and Lello Incendiario

L'AGONIA
THE AGONY AND THE WISDOM

TREE TRUNKS, OLD ROOTS, DOOR AND FRAME, WOODEN STEPS, TABLE WITH METAL INSERTS, BONSAI TREES
Quarry Lake Estate

L'Agonia represents the agony of man. Set among the debris of decaying trees and roots, shackled to the way we do things, it invites the visitor to cross over through the portal of the hand-crafted medieval door, supported by former roots. Enter into a sea of green, and from there, tread softly through the path of once majestic trees, now standing silent in their graves, each flanked by the quiet, strong ancient hardwood bonsai. Reminders of the wisdom and strength accumulated through the years of patience and evergreen youth of the wise, they are a representation of what was and what can be. The lifeless trunks juxtapose this idea, representing what is happening on the planet right now. At the end of the path, one reaches the centre of this succulent sea of green, to stand before the table of wisdom. The table has been given voice through inspirational words and solid statements of the divine.

Photo: Lello Incendiario



Kate Muller

THE WHALE – AN INVITATION TO SEA

DRIFTWOOD

Lookout rocks

“Built from driftwood, the outline of a whale rests as a frame to the ocean – it is an invitation to dream, to perceive and to contemplate through this sentinel’s great form.”

The original vision was to mount a driftwood whale on a rocky outcrop against the vast blue ocean, but a storm had other ideas and the bones were washed out to sea. The next day I could not find the tree bones of my whale anywhere on the beach.

I wrote this poem when I realised the bones were really gone from what I thought was a safe keeping place:

With a whale
my bones washed out to sea
and what came back
was a remembering of me

I had wished for the whale to be a viewfinder for others to see through too, so I created a simple reminder from the wood washed up on the beach... Remember who you are.

It was a moment of self realisation, of seeing what art really means to me and how much the earth speaks, relishing itself in expression through creativity. Each piece of wood found its place in the construction of the form. It was a glorious day at play with the ocean and in meditation with the whale.

Photo: Kate Muller



Klaus Oppenheimer

THE BATTLE OF ISANDLWANA

PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINT
Myfanwy Bekker Art Studio

The Anglo-Zulu War's first major encounter between the British Empire and the Zulu Kingdom took place on 22 January, 1879.

This photograph honours one of the British that died in that battle.



Dee Pelham-Reid

BITOU DICHOTOMY

WIRE, SYRINGES, CONDOMS, BEER CANS, LITTER AND OTHER DETRITUS

Tree in public court yard

God creates beauty, nature, intelligence and knowledge. Man destroys, abuses and defiles this creation in urban environments. We live in the most beautiful part of the world which is paradoxically corrupt and poverty stricken, rife with racism and abuse; linked together through the tension between these opposites.

photo: www.magnificentsouthafrica.com



Marty Reddering

TANKWA KAROO

PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINT
Myfanwy Bekker Art Studio

A selection of images capturing the rich textures and contrasts found naturally in the Tankwa Karoo. I was drawn to the remote harshness and simplicity of the environment, where the light magically added to the contrast of existing forms.



Stephen Rosin

CO₂N: A CONVENIENT LIE

GRASS
Old Nick's

It has been conveniently claimed that global warming or climate change is caused by man-made CO₂ emissions. The artist suggests through this Land Art piece that there is less to this claim than meets the eye and that we could be falling for one of the greatest scams or cons in human history. Evidence that seems to contradict this claim is now beginning to emerge, suggesting a less than rigorous scientific approach to begin with. Promoting carbon tax as a solution, despite evidence to the contrary, seems nefarious to say the least. It appears the green movement has been hijacked by greed, with the real cause of climate change possibly being as simple as the sun's activity.

It started as global warming, but with global temperatures now suggesting otherwise it has been conveniently renamed "climate change". Nobody can deny that the climate, well... changes, and as a consequence no one can avoid paying the ubiquitous tax either.

Photo: Anja Wiehl



Malcolm Solomon

BARCODED AFRICA

BRANCHES, PAINT
Central Beach

As this event would help to “brand” and market Plettenberg Bay, I thought that the icon of a barcode would be quite an interesting concept, and to give it an African slant I hid a Zebra in the barcode.

It strikes me, though, that marketing Africa too well could be problematic: Too much branding could destroy the very thing that makes Africa what it is and we should be careful not to follow the Western template too closely, blindly bulldozing our way into the future under the banner of “progress” only to end up with a decimated environment.

As a barcode really makes no sense to anyone at all and needs to be read by a laser from a specific angle, so too does Barcoded Africa need to be seen from a certain angle for the Zebra to come into focus.

Photo: Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau (model: Lara Kirsten)



Jean Sparg

MADIBA'S 90 TREES

HAND WRITTEN STRIPS OF FABRIC, SURVIVING
TREES OF THE ORIGINAL MADIBA'S 90 TREES
New Horizons

Several years ago Jean Sparg initiated the establishment of an indigenous tree park on a strip of land between the township of New Horizons and the N2.

For the event, Jean and the Boitumelo facilitators created an interactive **Site_Specific** intervention by assisting children of Formosa Primary and members of the public to create messages on prayer flags that they tied to these young trees – dedicating their wishes and reconnecting with nature.

Photos: Erica Lüttich

Anja Wiehl

UNTITLED

PEBBLES, METAL DRUM
Traffic circle on Marine Drive

Turning into Plettenberg Bay via Marine Drive, the little traffic circle I chose as my site is the first thing one comes across on entering town. Yet it is an open circle merely covered in pebbles. My idea was to utilise this space to create a “welcoming” sculpture that would frame the sliver of ocean view seen looking down Marine Drive. The material on site being rock, I thought to build a piece of thick wall reminiscent of the remains of an old city wall with a circular window framing the view like a lens focusing on an object. However the task of carefully stacking round pebbles one by one rather reminded me of a Tibetan prayer wall (and perhaps my thoughts housed one too many curses during the two days of construction which made the wall collapse shortly before completion)!

Photo: magnificentsouthafrica.com



Anja Wiehl

TRANSPARENCY & DIS-ARRAY

THORNS, GLUE, PLEXIGLAS
Myfanwy Bekker Art Studio

I live surrounded by thorn trees, which at times become challenging to manage. These two works speak of my personal journey with thorns. I transformed my normally destructive and uncontrolled manner of interaction with thorny branches into a creative one, carefully arranging the delicate thorns into ordered patterns. To celebrate the simple shape and beauty, I used glass/Plexiglas that would not detract from the thorns as a base medium.

Photo: Anja Wiehl

Site_Specific was a meeting of artists, gifting their talent, skill and time to the landscape and extended community of Bitou. For each artist it was an opportunity to experiment and develop new concepts in a non-competitive and supported environment. In turn, this process received innumerable gifts in the form of extensive local support and participation throughout the week.

Artists, **Site_Specific** team members, Boitumelo facilitators and the documenting team were hosted by The Beacon Island Lifestyle Resort, Amakaya Backpackers, Ebenezer Estate, Emily Moon River Lodge, Treehaven and Myfanwy Bekker Art Studio. Members of the press and photographers were accommodated by Kurland.

The Island Diner provided breakfasts for the artists, and Woolworths donated food for lunches the entire week. The Plettenberg helped with a lunch for the Boitumelo craft workshop as well as one for the artists. Mellville Corner gave us access to a venue for the Boitumelo workshop and evening lectures. The Plett Market on Main provided us with a venue for dinners that were supplied by local artists Willie Gouws, Dee Pelham-Reid and Stephen Rosin of the Pie Shop. The River Cafe provided us with a much needed breakfast the morning after the event.

The welcoming dinner-with-a-view was hosted by Angus Greig of Ebenezer Estate. A delightful celebration dinner at the end of the week's work was provided by the graceful Kurland Estate and no one will forget the closing bonfire ceremony at the Brouckaerts of Wittedrift where Mariella Rossi read her poem entitled "Forest Floor" and Lara Kirsten gave a performance of Grond – eight assembled poems (by poets Ingrid Jonker, Antjie Krog, Diana Ferrus, Ian McCallum, Aimé Césaire, Pablo Neruda, Carina Stander and Lara Kirsten). The poems deal with themes of heritage, identity, oneness with and respect for the earth. After performing the poems in a soil-covered body, she buried a printed version of each poem in the soil. These memorable social events were documented by Andrew van der Merwe in the accompanying photographs. While Margaret O'Connor furiously produced press releases and Reney Warrington created daily descriptions of the event on her blog, our own video team headed by Ben Hemson Struthers and Nelson Ikeh, assisted by Nicky Oosthuizen and Mario Kolbe, shot hours of video footage for a documentary edited by Meijer Janse van Rensburg and sponsored by PC Janse van Rensburg. To view the video, please visit <http://sitespecific.org.za>



PC Janse van Rensburg, Jan van der Merwe and Hannelie Coetzee at Kurland



Angus Greig at Kurland



Angus Taylor and Rina Stutzer at Ebenezer

CELEBRATORY DINNERS AT EBENEZER ESTATE AND KURLAND | 61



Charles Levin at Ebenezer



Gordon Froud at Ebenezer



Marty Reddering and Carol Surya at the bonfire



Calligraphy by fire light



Lara Kirsten performing Grond

BONFIRE CLOSING CEREMONY AT THE BROUCKAERTS'



Helen Mudge



Mariella Rossi reading Forest Floor



Robyn Brouckaert, our host at the
Bonfire Closing Ceremony



Urs Twellmann

Photos: Andrew van der Merwe

Site_Specific 2011 was made possible by the unpaid participation of all the artists described in this catalogue, the enthusiastic efforts of **Site_Specific** team members and the generous contributions of many individuals and entities who contributed time, goods, money, goodwill, advice, materials, food – everything that is needed to make an event such as this succeed. We thank you all for every effort and each item that helped us to celebrate the beauty of Plettenberg Bay.

Individual contributors:

Mac Ainslie
Ayanda Ashes
Robert Auersperg
Kenji Balajadia
Peter Behr
Myfanwy Bekker-Balajadia
Justin Bernado & DJ Charlie
Joan Berning
Matthew and Robyn Brouckaert
David Butler
Sean Butterworth
Cheryl Carolus
Daron Chatz
Carmen Clews
Phillip Damonds
Larry Damonds
John Dlamoni

Estelle Dippenaar
Stephen Drew
Nyaniso Dyasob
Jan Erasmus
Margie Ford
Angus Greig
Murray Greig
Willie Gouws
Jonica Gubula
Linda Gusha
Ben Hemson-Struthers
Abigail Hewu
Elizabeth Hewu
Alan Hodgson
Nelson Ikeh
Jade Holing
Oom Samuel (Sammy) Jansen
Meijer Janse van Rensburg
Johan Jerling
Andreas Kahlau
Simon Kika
Lara Kirsten
Lisa Knight
Irmela Kohlsdorf
Mario Kolbe
Oppelhoof Allan Le Fleur
Dumisani Leleki
Paul le Vack

Charles and Carol Levin
Sue Lipschitz
Jofre Lottering
Trevor Lottering
Derrick Lubner
Tony Lubner
Amos Lwana
Roy MacGregor
Alan Majavie
Jonathan Malan
Deon Mama
Lonwabo Maphithiza
Siyabulela Mathiyila
Masondo Mbeki
Dave McRae
Jim McCullugh
Simon McLean
Enoch Medea
Karin Michaels
Jacques Moolman
Don Muller
Henry Myburgh
Elizabeth Olivier-Kahlau
Adrian Olivier
Nicky Oosthuizen
Stuart Palmer
Dee Pelham-Reid
Sphosethu Phillips



Participants of the Boitumelo Craft workshop prepare to plant their flags on the beach in front of the Beacon Island Lifestyle Resort – The Beacon Island was a key sponsor of the event – providing accommodation for the invited artists for the duration of the event.

Sally Plockhooy	Lauren Scheepers	Byron Terblanche
John and Olivia Poluta	Eunice Sifile	Caroline and Peter Thorpe
Meredith Randall	David Solomons	Timothy Twidle
Johan Rautenbach	Jean Sparg	Di Valentine
Mark Read	Christy Strever	Chris von Christierson
Trent Read	Constance Stuurman	Reney Warrington
Stephen Rosin	Dave Swart	Anja Wiehl
Carol Sachs	Gerry Swiegers	Charmaine Wild
Galeo Saintz	Renate Swinkels-Brouwers	

Companies, groups and Business Sponsors:

AmaKaya Backpackers Lodge

Bay College

Beacon Island Lifestyle Resort

The Bitou Brothers A Capella

Bitou 10 Education and Development Foundation

Bitou Municipality

Blue Hills Nursery and Bird Farm

Boitumelo Project

Bramon Wines

Chocolateshoebox

Circa Gallery

Comet Choir

Cyber Graphics

Ebenezer Estate

Ecodoc Africa

The Eden to Addo Corridor Initiative

Emily Moon River Lodge

Europa

The Field Band

Genesis Steel

Habbies Supermarket

Hello Plett

Hip Hop Rappers Nakie, Skillz, Mciya & King

House of Embroidery

Indalo Conservancy

Imfene traditional dancers

JC Studios

JoJo Tanks Pty (Ltd)

Kahlaucorp

Kranshoek Community

Kranshoek Primër

Kranshoek Stone Masons

Kurland

Lunchbox Theatre

Lutheran Community Outreach Foundation

magnificentsouthafrica.com

MAID – Make An Immediate Difference

Melville Corner

Midas Earthcote

Mitchells Brewery

Moosa's Salesroom

The Orca Foundation

Phakamisani Primary

The Pie Shop

The Print Shop

Plett Market on Main

The Plettenberg

Plettenberg Bay Tourism

Rand Merchant Bank

Red Art Projects

River Side Café

Robberg Coastal Corridor Land Owners Association

Robberg Fine Foods

Sea View Enterprises

Seafood Safari

Sentinel Steel

ShowMe Plett

Skaftien

Slow Poison Pantsula

Studio 5

The Timbershed Restoration Project

TreeHaven

Tshisa Talent

Vantell Brickworks



Site_Specific Team Jozi celebrates the conclusion of a wonderful event. From left to right: Margaret O'Connor, Heather Greig, Erica Lüttich and Anni Snyman.

Site_Specific Team:

Angus Greig – Host, Sourcing of Art materials and equipment, technical assistance and Plettenberg Bay community liaison

Heather Greig – Event Coordination & Sponsorship as well as personally making lunches for the entire crowd, Monday to Friday!

PC Janse van Rensburg – Support & Transport, keeping spirits up and delivering lunches with style.

Erica Lüttich – Community Liaison and Education, facilitation of the Boitumelo Craft workshop

Margaret O'Connor – Marketing Communications and extensive media networking

Anni Snyman – Project Coordination and Administration

Strijdom van der Merwe – Inspirational Creative Director & Artist Liaison