

# Investec Cape Town Art Fair 2018

15th–18th February 2018

Two exciting new museums in Cape Town—Zeitz MoCAA in the historic Silo building on the Waterfront, and from May, the newly designed Norval Foundation—have revitalised South Africa's art world, attracting pan-African and world attention.

This brings a new dynamic to the 2018 edition of the Cape Town Art Fair, now sponsored by Investec, and ART FIRST is very pleased to participate (Stand C6) with a two-part presentation.

Contemporary documentary photography, introducing the work of the legendary duo, **Carol Beckwith & Angela Fisher**; a previously unexhibited, poignant series, *Objects of Reminiscence*, by **Graeme Williams**; and rare works from the private portfolio of film maker and conservationist **Kim Wolhuter** form one part. For the other, we feature a remarkable conceptual dialogue between **Karel Nel** and the renowned English text artist, **Simon Lewty**; then **Jack Milroy** has completed two Cape botanical cut book constructions, and there is a new body of figurative work based on the smokers and drinkers of today's Paris by **Kate McCrickard**.

**Beckwith & Fisher** are in the throws of completing their second, defining, double-volume book of photographs, covering the last 14 years and encompassing 35 ceremonies portraying the passage of life from birth to death across the African continent. *African Twilight: Vanishing Rituals and Ceremonies* is to be published by Rizzoli, New York, in October. Works of breath taking beauty and dignity from their limited edition fine art portfolio make their first appearance in South Africa, to be shown alongside the powerful black and white wildlife photographs of the equally legendary **Kim Wolhuter**. Global awards and recognition have been showered on each photographer and it is a privilege to bring them onto a shared platform at the CTAF.

The photographs display an absorption, a dedication from decades of passionate work investigating each of the subjects—human ritual and ceremony, wild life survival, and Africa's rapidly changing society, its structures and politics—charging the distilled photographic images with a sense of intense, direct encounter in a specific moment in time.

**Nel** and **Lewty** came to know one another's art through being represented by ART FIRST for over 30 years and they have sustained a dialogue of ideas and mark making and a mutual appreciation which has led to this intuitive conversation on the walls of the stand. While Nel has travelled the world, visiting its most far-flung regions, Lewty has never left the shores of England. Yet their work shares a spirit of place, of concept, of pre-linguistic essences that are expressed through the mark-making of draftsmanship. Their output is drawing, not painting. Their materials are pencil, crayon, pen, pastel, pigment, earth, and their surfaces can be textured with the most exquisite subtle layerings.

**Nel's** drawings stand almost three metres tall; *Voids and Vanishing Points* and *Point and Line to Plane: an Astronomical View* pay direct tribute to Kandinsky's 1926 philosophical treatise on abstract art, as well as to the formative encounters and the challenges of enormous intellectual complexity relating to deep time, deep space and dark matter and energy which are central concerns of the COSMOS Project. Nel has been resident Project artist since 2004, working alongside a team of international astrophysicists who are in the ambitious process of mapping two degrees of the universe.

**Lewty's** pair of texts are also tall and thin, though under two meters, and their evocation of time—deep time—and its mysterious passing is through vivid poetic phrases, repeated as in a litany, line after line, like a formula, or a musical chorus. His works enter the dialogue with Nel's at the point where art and science and poetry resonate through their visual manifestations. *A Timeless Litany* and *Pages from a Beach Diary* take their place beside *Voids and Vanishing Points*, exemplifying forms of visual thinking that are every bit as valid as musical notation or mathematical formulae, but which offer in *addition* an aesthetic pleasure, an intuitive visual understanding beyond language or formal knowledge.

Lewty and Nel stand alone, free from fashionable *isms*, impossible to pinpoint, private, modest, but known to the most sophisticated collectors and museums around the world.

Throughout Africa the use of the ready-made, the art of recycling, repurposing, is essential to its art, its novel sense of design, its sculpture. One thinks of El Anatusui's staggering work with bottle tops in Nigeria, of Willie Bester and Walter Oltmann, or Willem Boshoff in South Africa. Early in the 20th Century the Cubists embraced collage, Schwitters developed 'mertz', the Dadaists turned things upside down, and Marcel Duchamp put a urinal on a pedestal, signed it and got us to look at it all over again. **Jack Milroy's** cut book constructions emerge out of this heritage and he brings to the CTAF a representation of distinguished books on local wild flowers, in the form of two towering *Flowerfalls*. Milroy repaginates the books, releasing the Cape Sandveld flowers in one, and in the other, the flowering plants of the Tsitsikama Forest (illustrated by M Courtney-Latimer, the same person who in 1938 discovered the great *Coelacanth* in East London) to cascade downwards, escaping their definitions in English, Afrikaans and Latin. His virtuosic interventions with a scalpel give endless pleasure and celebrate in a new, slightly subversive way, the very beauty that the scientific and careful botanists sought to catalogue and preserve in the first place.

**McCrickard's** urban cafés and bars are Parisian, but they are universal too, for her individuals are types, they are characters we recognise, from unkempt smokers to the sad and gentle toper, or the quiet woman with her eyes downcast. We recognise them from our own 'hoods' in our own cities, or from museum walls (Degas' *Absinthe Drinker*), and for McCrickard, drawing them rapidly in situ then painting and evolving them in her studio, on canvas or on the fine Japanese paper of her monotypes, they are inventions. Yet we also know they are real.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### ART FIRST

Please visit [www.artfirst.co.uk](http://www.artfirst.co.uk) for further details about the artists, their exhibitions, publications, the collections that represent them or contact us directly

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### INVESTEC CAPE TOWN ART FAIR

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**KAREL NEL**

**Voids, Vanishing Points**, 2018

pastel and pigment on bonded fibre fabric  
280 x 60 cm



**KAREL NEL**

Shown on left

**Voids and Vanishing Points**, 2018

pastel and pigment on bonded fibre fabric  
280 x 60 cm (on left)

And to the right

**Point to Line to Plane:**

**an Astronomical View**, 2018

pastel and pigment on bonded fibre fabric  
280 x 60 cm

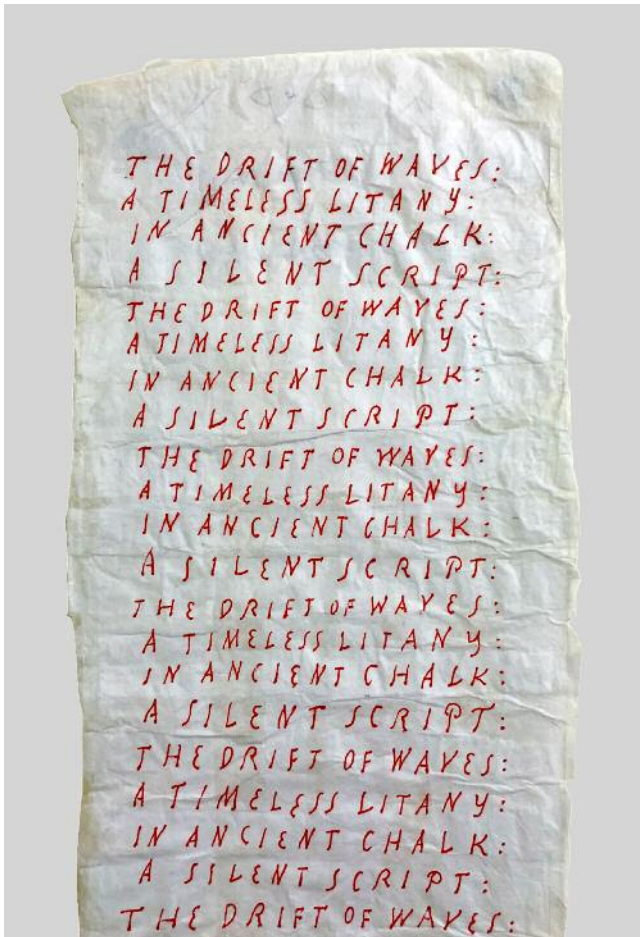




KATE McCRICKARD  
**Barfly** (detail), 2017  
oil on canvas, 80 x 61 cm

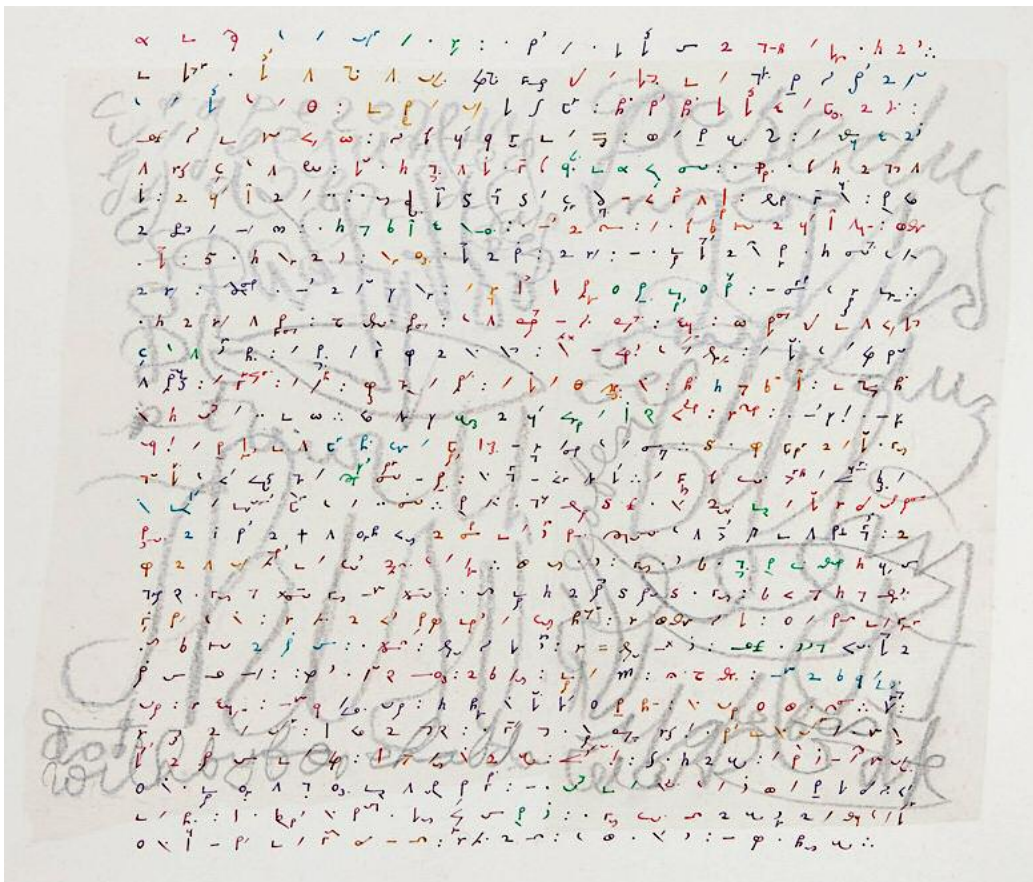
KATE McCRICKARD  
**The Lady Drinker**, 2017  
from the **Drinkers Series 1-4**  
oil on Japanese paper with frottage  
and offset drawing, 38 x 33 cm

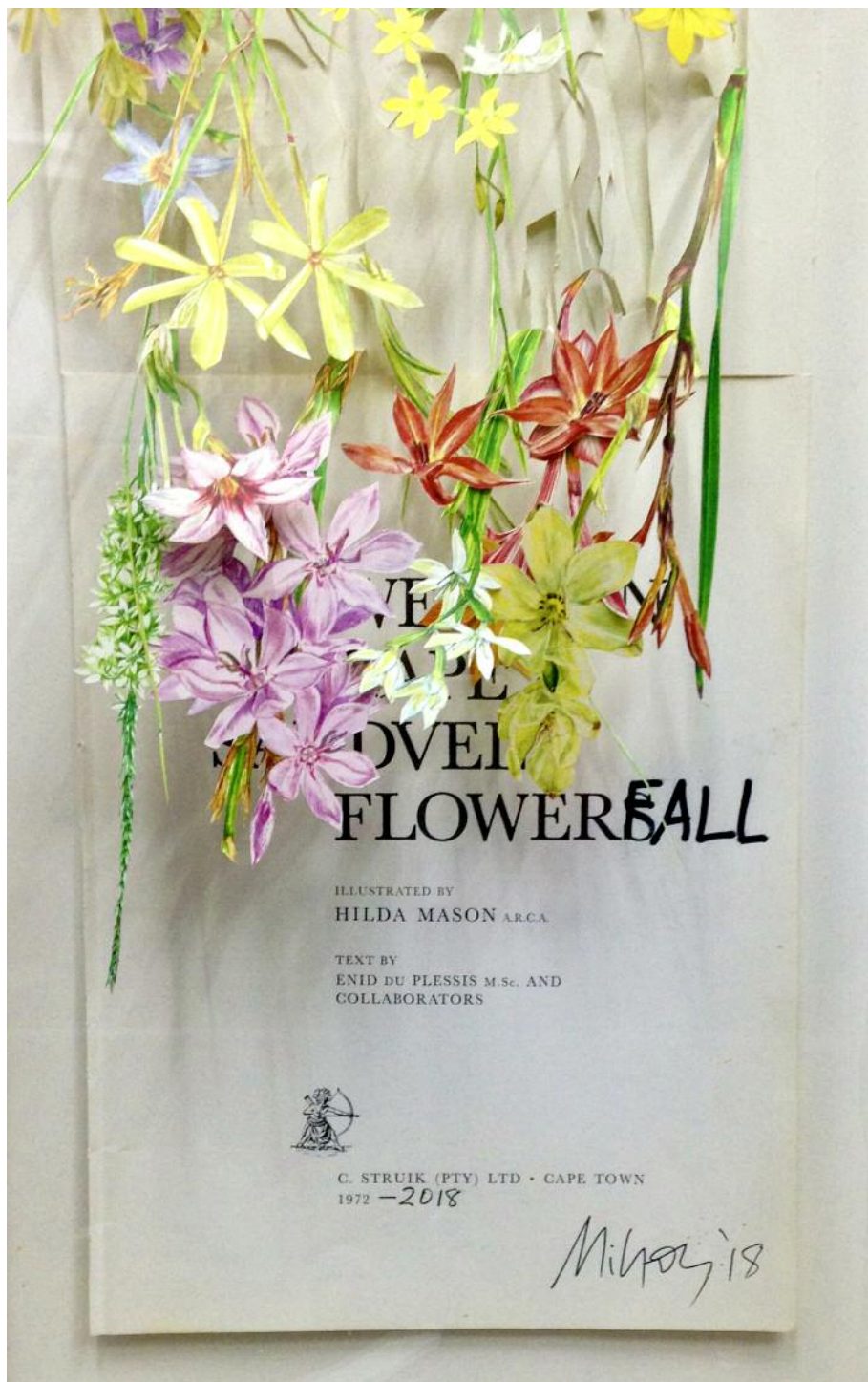




**SIMON LEWTY**  
**A Timeless Litany** (detail), 2017  
 red ink on tissue, 150 x 20 cm

**SIMON LEWTY**  
**Notations from a Script for a Phonetic Play (I)**, 2012  
 ink, acrylic, graphite, 46.5 x 56.5 cm





**JACK MILROY**

**Flower Fall III (detail), 2018**

'Western Cape Sandvlei Flowers', 1972

cut and constructed book

205 x 30 x 10 cm





**CAROL BECKWITH  
& ANGELA FISHER**  
**Turkana Woman, Kenya**  
photographic print  
140 x 95.5 cm  
edition of 10

**GRAEME WILLIAMS**  
**Objects of Reminiscence Series**  
photographic print  
54 x 80.4cm  
edition of 5





**KIM WOLHUTER**  
**Cheetah**, 2015  
photographic print  
120 x 80 cm  
edition of 10