

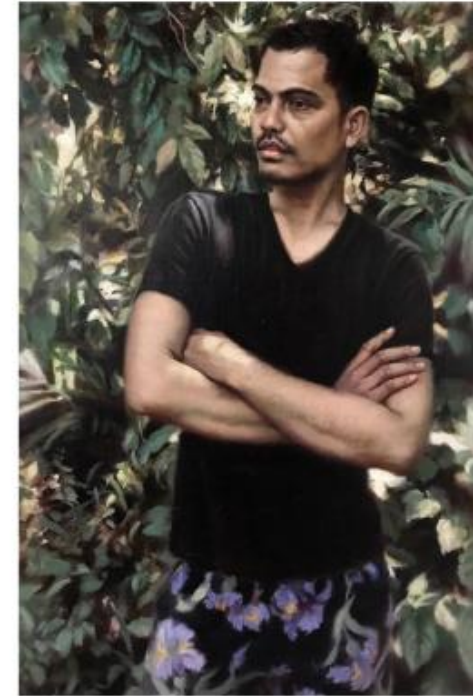
MACHINE IN THE GARDEN



Heidi Fourie, *At loose ends*,
Oil on board, 45 x 69cm, 2019.



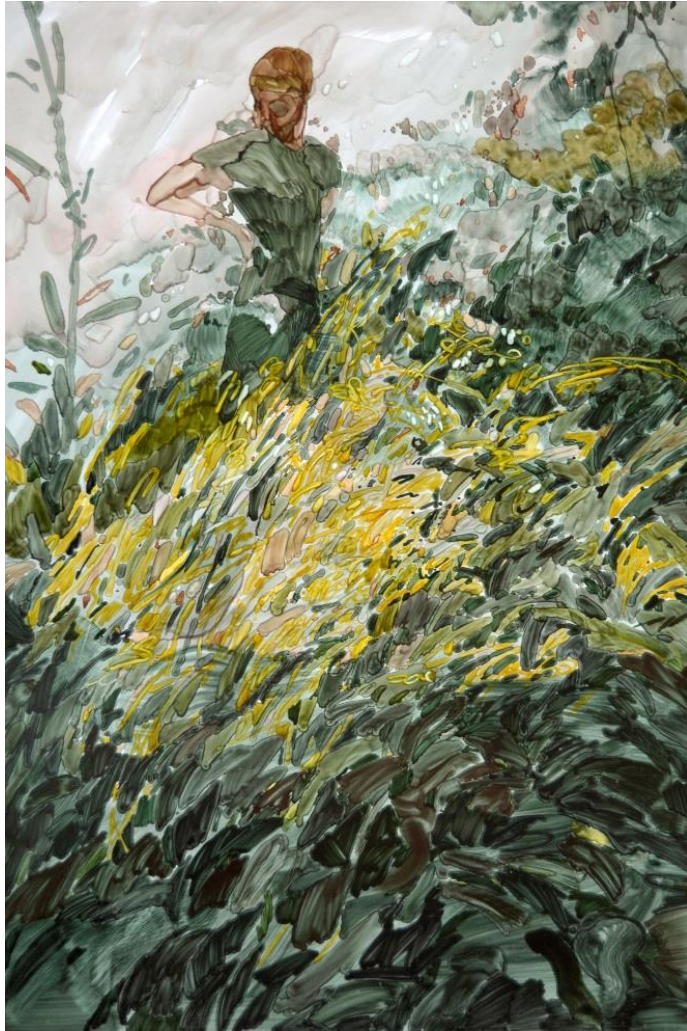
Allen Laing, *#yesfilter*,
Various woods, Approx 118 x 33 x 50cm, 2019.



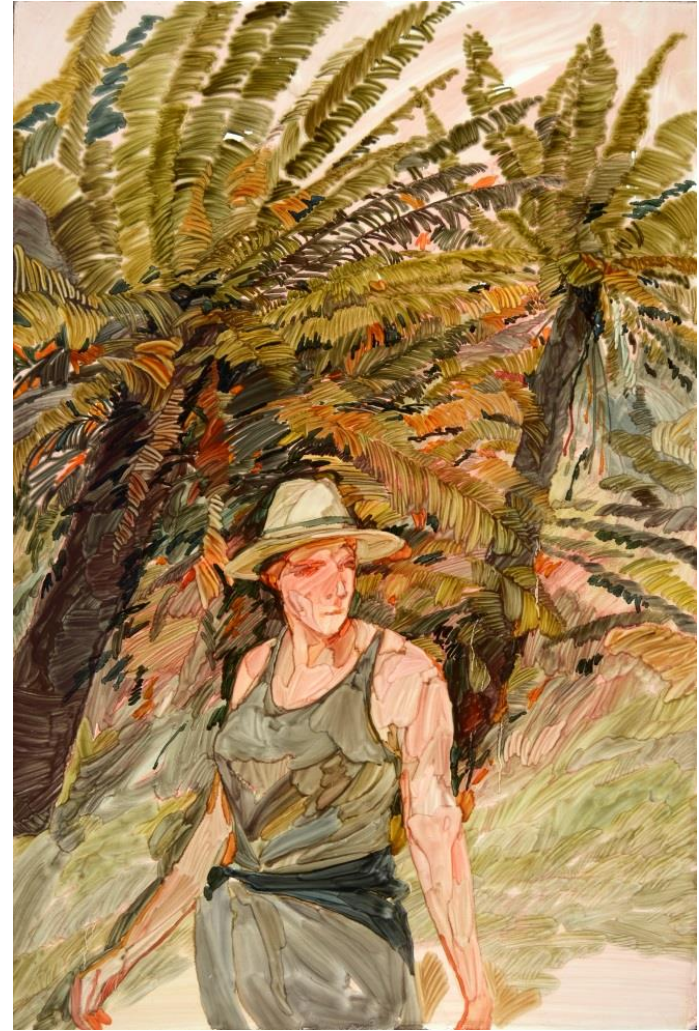
Jaco van Schalkwyk, *Homage to a fellow traveller*,
Oil on Belgian Linen, 76 x 40cm, 2019.

HEIDI FOURIE, ALLEN LAING, JACO VAN SCHALKWYK

HEIDI FOURIE



Heidi Fourie, *At Loose Ends*, 69 x 45 cm, Oil on board, 2019, Framed, R 8 800.00 (Excl. VAT)



Heidi Fourie, *A Surveyor*, 69 x 45.5 cm, Oil on board, Framed, R 8 800.00 (Excl. VAT)

Across Pretoria stretches the magnificent Magalies mountain range. Allen and I often run or walk a route on the section that we can see from our apartment, the section stretching from the quarry next to the N1 highway to the Wonderboom Nature reserve. We see it undergo periodical changes. One afternoon before we set out, we saw a glowing red spot and smoke rising from golden dry grass. As the wind was only slight we could venture in to get a closer view of smouldering dry foliage. After the fire the landscape was transformed into shades of black and pinkish stone, exposed as they had not been for some time, black stick lily or “Bobbejaansterte” protruding from amongst warm stones. We feel safe and at home on this mountain. During one session of photographing Allen, dark clouds drew and small hailstones almost drove us under an overhang, scribbled with tippex by highschoolers.

Some time ago, probably just before the previous election, I had a dream of a expansive piece of golden fabric, hanging from a ledge, blowing in the wind, and I felt the urge to climb up it, grasping the folds, with expected difficulty. The way the golden fabric shone in bright sun light was entrancing, like a golden waterfall. I set out to recreate this waterfall on our beloved mountain with golden fabric, draped over the overhangs. Allen fought against the wind to control the golden drapery reminding me of my struggle with its folds in the dream.

This series can be considered a tribute to the Magalies, a celebration of its rocks, plants, and occasional inhabitants, human and animal. The Golden “dodder”, lichens, trees and charred grass. The countless hours we spent, gazing at Pretoria CBD in the grey distance against ever changing backdrops. Perfectly parallel to the stretch lies our apartment building. Throughout the day, I glance up from my easel and look out the window at the mountainside. Some late afternoons I look back at the building from the mountain top. A trans-seasonal back-and-forth. I often ponder the future of its state and accessibility and that of many places we are currently free to roam.

Henry David Thoreau writes, in his essay, *Walking*:

But possibly the day will come when it [the landscape] will be partitioned off into so-called pleasure-grounds, in which a few will take a narrow and exclusive pleasure only,--when fences shall be multiplied, and man-traps and other engines invented to confine men to the _public_ road, and walking over the surface of God's earth shall be construed to mean trespassing on some gentleman's grounds.

Thoreau describes the walker, Saunterer or Holy-lander as one who walks “out into nature” not only for the purpose of exercise but as necessary to our “search for the springs of life” on which we can easily miss out on if we “swing dumbbells around” in the confines of the built up environment.

The term “Machine in the Garden” evokes my psychological tension between my dependency on technological devices and systems and my animal nature, my craving for the smell of earth and foliage, of which I only catch an occasional whiff on a particularly windy day in my 4th floor apartment, especially when I am not wearing a paint fume respirator. Even when escaping to the tops of the mountains and valleys afar, we are but machines, never letting go of our devices, bottles, thick protective soles and machine stitched polymer threads and plastics.

Our frequented stretch of the Magalies is our Garden in the middle of the Machine called Pretoria. When you run its paths, and need to focus only on the approaching arrangement of rocks, you get a sense of tunnel-vision, like being in a racing game, objects blurred in your periphery, you forget for a moment everything except where and how you will place your next stride. Allen is usually there with me. He becomes the subject in the garden, scurrying around and browsing for trees, fruits, detached pieces of wood and plant.

Leo Marx, in his book *The machine in the Garden: Technology and the pastoral ideal in America* (1964) delves into the universal trope of Technology intruding in the untainted natural landscape. This intrusion can also reflect the psychological tension between our search for technological sophistication and material excess and yearning for natural simplicity.

I am also reminded of Talking Heads' song "*(Nothing but) flowers*" as they, tongue-in-cheek address this tension:

Here we stand
Like an Adam and an Eve
Waterfalls
The Garden of Eden
Two fools in love
So beautiful and strong
The birds in the trees
Are smiling upon them
From the age of the dinosaurs
Cars have run on gasoline
Where, where have they gone?
Now, it's nothing but flowers

There was a factory
Now there are mountains and rivers
You got it, you got it

We caught a rattlesnake
Now we got something for dinner
We got it, we got it

There was a shopping mall
Now it's all covered with flowers
You've got it, you've got it

If this is paradise
I wish I had a lawnmower
You've got it, you've got it

Years ago
I was an angry young man
And I'd pretend
That I was a billboard
Standing tall
By the side of the road
I fell in love
With a beautiful highway
This used to be real estate
Now it's only fields and trees
Where, where is the town
Now, it's nothing but flowers
The highways and cars
Were sacrificed for agriculture
I thought that we'd start over
But I guess I was wrong

Once there were parking lots
Now it's a peaceful oasis
You've got it, you've got it

This was a Pizza Hut
Now it's all covered with daisies
You got it, you got it

I miss the honky tonks,
Dairy Queens, and 7-Elevens
You got it, you got it

And as things fell apart
Nobody paid much attention
You got it, you got it

I dream of cherry pies,
Candy bars, and chocolate chip cookies
You got it, you got it

We used to microwave
Now we just eat nuts and berries
You got it, you got it

This was a discount store,
Now it's turned into a cornfield
You've got it, you've got it

Don't leave me stranded here
I can't get used to this lifestyle
Songwriters: David Byrne
(Nothing but) Flowers lyrics © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc

Sources consulted:

<http://www.thoreau-online.org/walking>



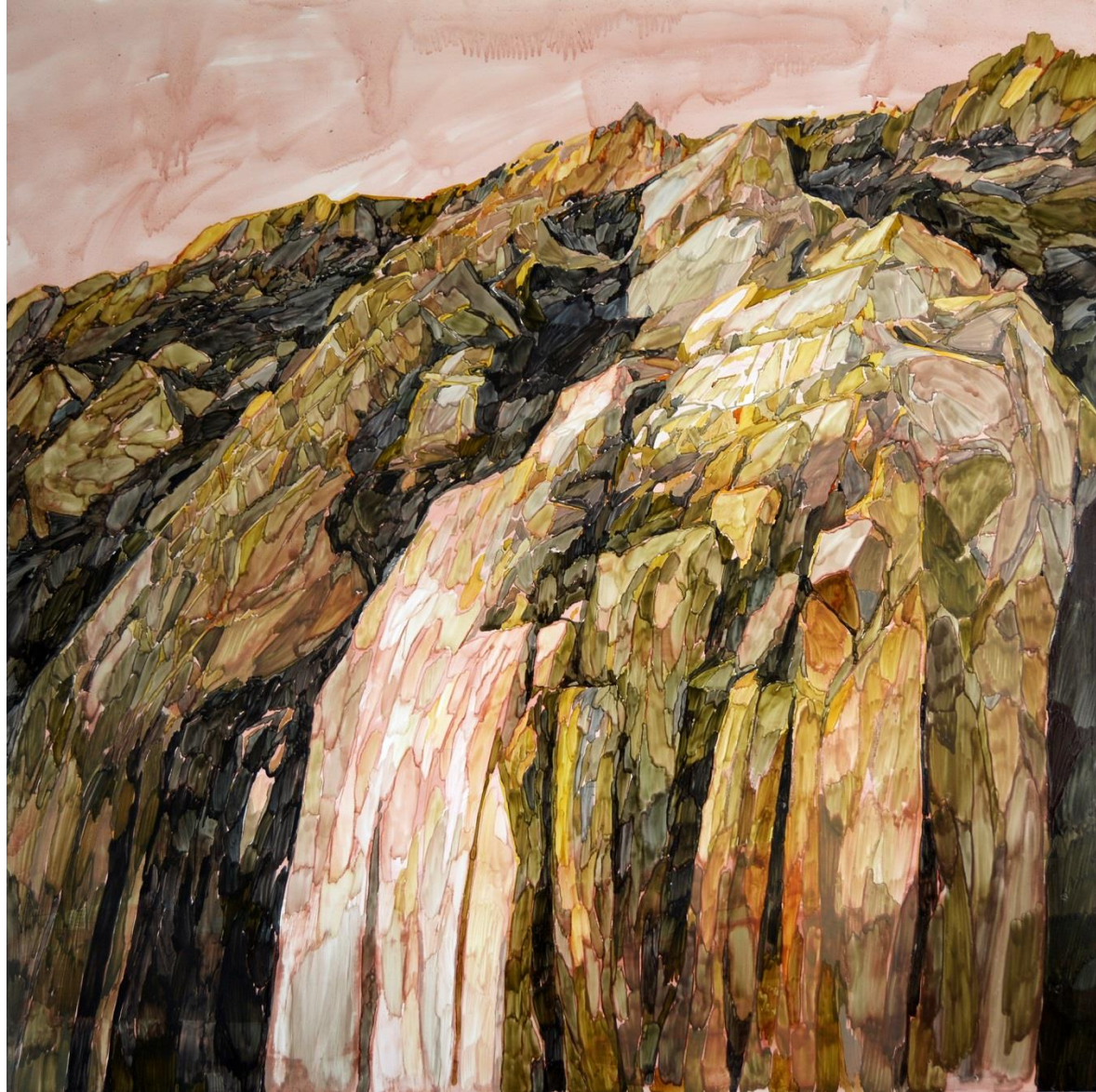
Heidi Fourie, A Pleasant Reviewer, 15 x 183 cm, Oil on board, Framed, R 9 800.00 (Excl. VAT)



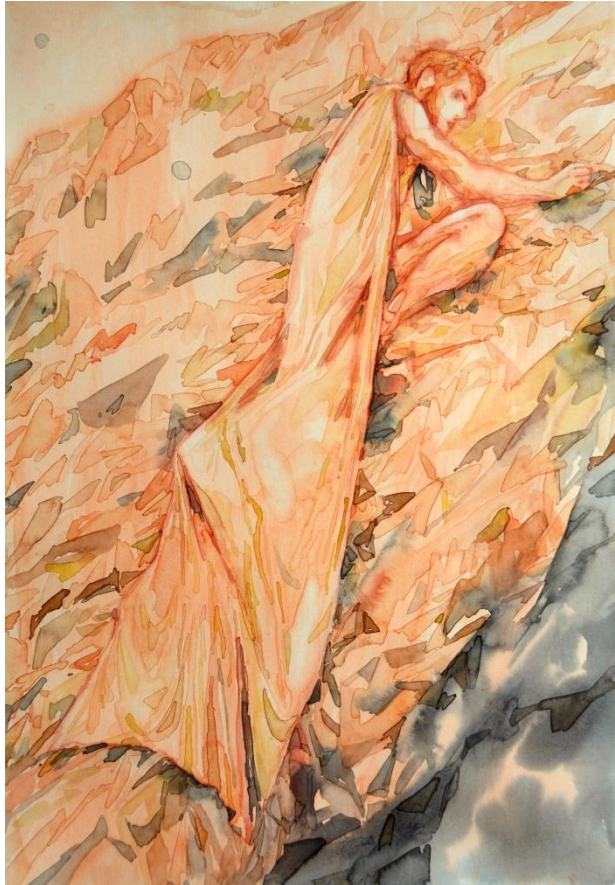
Heidi Fourie, All Man's Improvements, 183 x 91,5 cm, Oil on board, Framed, R 22 400.00 (Excl. VAT)



Heidi Fourie, Comparative Freedom, 183 x 91.5 cm, Oil on board, 2019, Framed, R 22 400.00 (Excl. VAT)



Heidi Fourie, Direct Us Aright, 91.5 x 91.5 cm, Oil on board, 2019, Framed, R 16 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



Heidi Fourie, Keep his Dust in Your Eyes, 42 x 29.7 cm, Watercolour, 2019, Framed, R 6 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



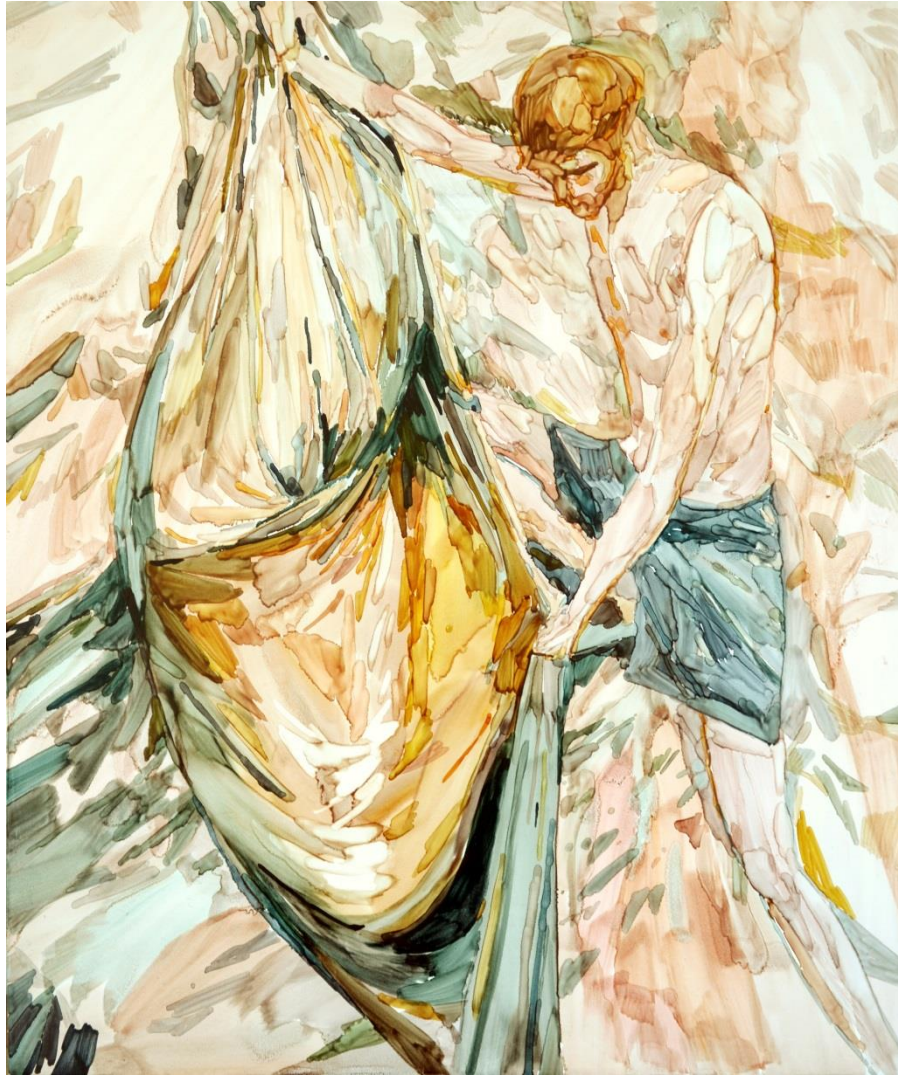
Heidi Fourie, Natural Remedy, 42 x 29.7 cm, Watercolour, 2019, Framed, R 6 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



Heidi Fourie, The Tints of Flowers, 45.5 x 69 cm, Oil on Canvas, Framed, R 8 800.00 (Excl. VAT)



Heidi Fourie, A Harmony Discoverable, 86.4 x 56 cm, Watercolour, 2019, Framed, R 8 200.00 (Excl. VAT)



Heidi Fourie, My Obligations to Society, oil on board, 55 x 45 cm, 2019, Framed, R 7 800.00 (Excl. VAT)

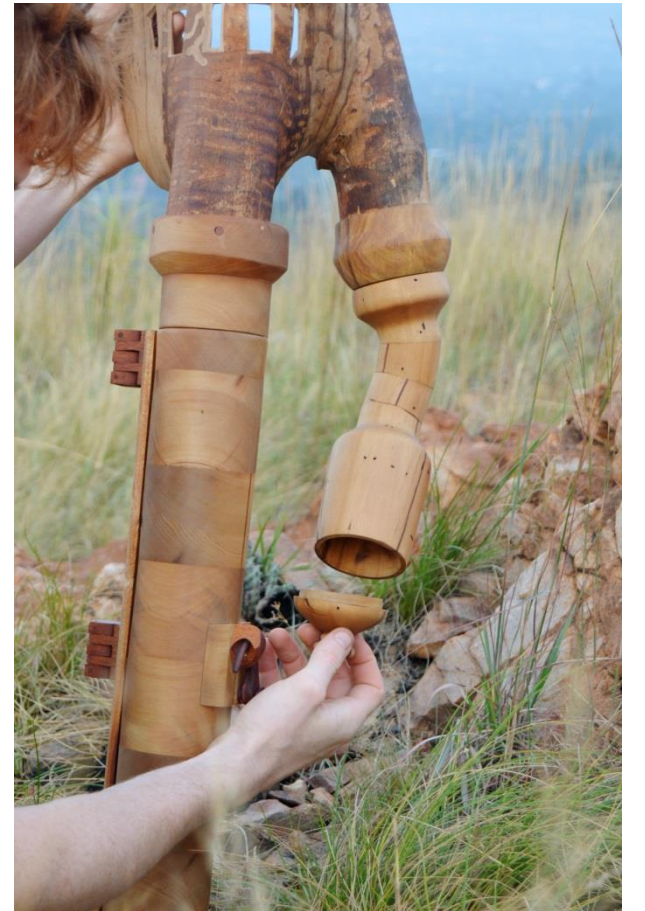


Heidi Fourie, The Dream, 21 x 29.7 cm, Oil on board, Framed, R 6 700.00 (Excl. VAT)

ALLEN LAING



Allen Laing, #yesfilter, various woods (London plane, genuine yellowwood, Brazilian Ironwood, Olive, Merbau), Size Approx 118 x 33 x 50 cm, 2019



The machines are far too present in our gardens. They are embedded so deeply now that any protest against, or criticism of them and the systems that create them is inherently fraught with contradictions and hypocrisies. I want to rage against the smaller machine that I can't let go of while driving the bigger one, and I resort to recording my thoughts on another machine which is tied into a global machine network.

I explore the tantalising and frustrating paradox of living with a powerful computer almost grafted to my skin. The problems of the social and ubiquitous internet are emergent: every small actor and factor intends only to maximise their own profit and happiness in a seemingly innocent way, but this results in a psychotic casino theme-park of envy, rage, boredom and falsehood all hidden under the pastel tones of a hipster aesthetic.

My works are playful reactions to these frustrations and confusing duplicities. In response to the filthy haze that my consumer lust spits out of motor-vehicles and factories, I created a wooden air-filtering gas mask, whose little compartments may be filled with soft mosses and fragrant natural leaves, herbs and spices. Then, to make sure this object is desirable and sensible in the material world that I live in, I baptized it with an insecti-fungicide borne in a volatile solvent base, and waxes produced in large industrial complexes, to ensure that posterity will have the privilege of gazing upon my insightful object.

In researching the negative effects of phones on our lives, and the absurdity of our enslavement to them, I spent hours glued to the little screen. I read the Bible verses about the armour of God on my holy, living Samsung, at some poorly designed website. I read about the mediaeval romance of the pre-Raphaelites and the simplicity of the Arts and Crafts movement on my mass-produced device. And then, to give myself a break from making cool objects out of wood, I played a pathetic little game on my phone where I run around an island collecting wood and stone to make tools to make cool things out of wood. But of course, the sheer pointlessness of the repetitive grinding led me to speed up the process by watching adverts so that I could spin a virtual wheel to get virtual wood to build my virtual axe more quickly. Ridiculous, isn't it.

My antidote to all of this is to think and act like a child, to make fun. Not to make fun of, in a jeering or hurtful way, but literally to make a fun and funny thing. This is my only path to absolution and freedom from the sins of the phone that are passed to the son. So I embrace the complex nature of what I do, revel in the moment of creation, the moments of touching and smelling the wood, revel in the likes I get on Instagram, and the genuine happiness I see in viewers of my work when they laugh and marvel at the sacred beauty of living wood before them. The trees in the garden are the last line of resistance against the machine, and as they block its advance, they welcome us, their wayward children.



Allen Laing, #yesfilter, London plane, Genuine Yellowwood, Brazilian Ironwood, Olive, Merbau, Purple Heart, 220 x 33 x 50 cm, R 49 000.00 (Excl. VAT), Price with the bust in bronze , R 95 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



Allen Laing, *Safe Space Lignin Lens*, Brazilian Ironwood, Merbau, Kiaat, Karee, 180 x 52 x 70 cm, R 41 000.00 (Excl. VAT), Price of the Arm in Bronze, R 107 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



Allen Laing, *Mind Blowing Selfie Sword (You won't believe number three!)*, Genuine Yellowwood, Merbau, Kiaat, Karee , 180 x 180 x 30 cm, 2019, R 39 000.00 (Excl. VAT),
Price with the arm in bronze R 100 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



Allen Laing, PrisLiMa_2 Karee, Oregon Pine, Bauhinia, Brazillian Ironwood, Merabau, White Oak, Mulberry, 180 x 40 x 70 cm, 2019, R 45 000.00 (Excl. VAT), Price with the torso in bronze R 121 000.00 (Excl. VAT)

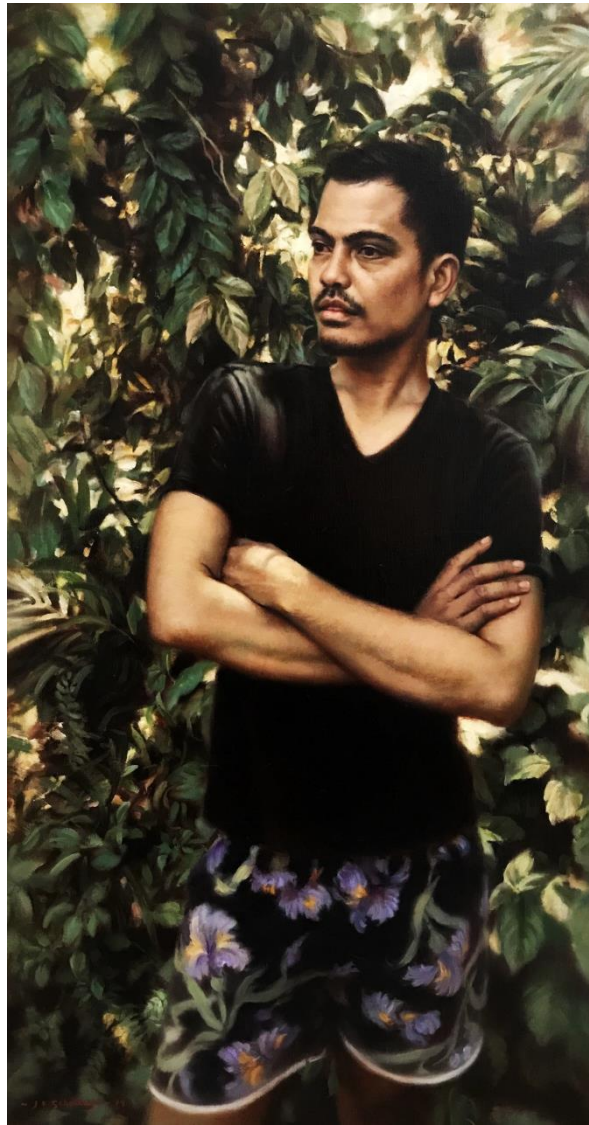
As a 'rational', global, white South African I experience a lack of mystical elements in my life. Through my art I discover what I have lost as child, when fantasy and hope were still alive.

Important to my work are narrative, fantasy and absurdity, used to address issues in ways that don't burden me emotionally. Playfulness makes problems malleable.

The materials and techniques I use are rooted in a love for wood and its characteristics, and a desire to form it in the most excellent and beautiful ways that I can. In my performances I want to engage people, give scale and context to my work, and understand what I'm communicating on an intensely physical level. My costumes and contraptions are often uncomfortable and difficult to use, and the entire performance is akin to a kind of ascetic ritual.



JACO VAN SCHALKWYK



Jaco van Schalkwyk, Homage to a fellow traveler, 76 x 40 cm, oil on Belgian Linen, 2019, Unframed, R 41 750.00 (Excl. VAT) .



Jaco van Schalkwyk, Curios from the City of Gold I, (Self-portrait), Oil on Belgian Linen, 48 x 20 cm, 2019, Unframed, R 24 350.00 (Excl. VAT)

Reminiscent of 19th century Romantic painting in their depiction of sublime landscapes, the meticulously real-ized paintings of Jaco van Schalkwyk nevertheless retain their own identity and contemporary relevance. Van Schalkwyk considers the troubled relationship between man and the natural world he inhabits, bearing witness to the disastrous effects human activity has had on the natural environment. In his vast, absorbing canvases, van Schalkwyk presents desolate, uninhabited spaces that are simultaneously unsettling and poignantly beautiful. His interest in the human interaction with the natural environment has since been extended to his recent stay in Bali, where ancient traditions and connections to the natural world are contrasted with pollution and neglect. Draw-ing upon this new stock of imagery, van Schalkwyk now looks to expand his observation of the human-nature relationship with considerations of notions of the exotic, the fetish and the souvenir.



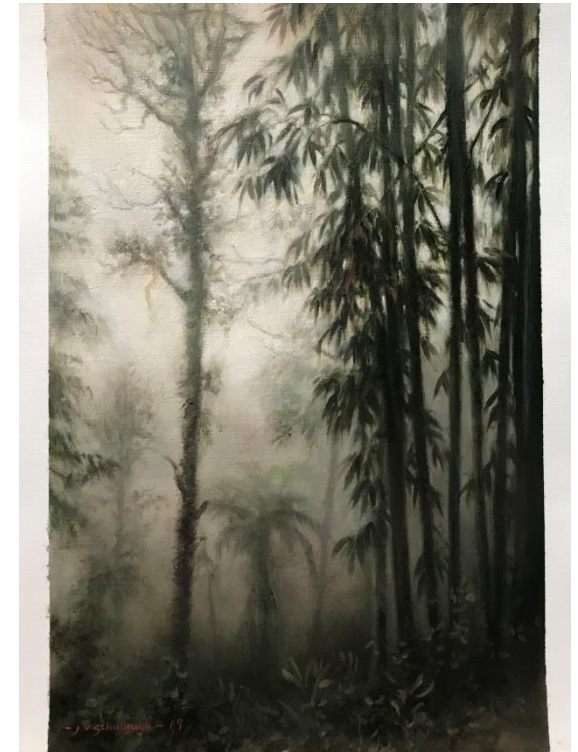
Jaco van Schalkwyk, A Road not taken, Oil on Belgian Linen, 150 x 120 cm, 2019, Unframed, R 70 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



Jaco van Schalkwyk, Thickest Jungle Study II, 40 x 30 cm, oil on paper, 2019, Unframed, R 10 780.00 (Excl. VAT)



Jaco van Schalkwyk, Thickest Jungle Study IV, 40 x 30 cm, oil on paper, 2019, Unframed, R 10 780.00 (Excl. VAT)



Jaco van Schalkwyk, Thickest Jungle Study V, 40 x 30 cm, oil on paper, 2019, Unframed, R 10 780.00 (Excl. VAT)



Jaco van Schalkwyk, A New Eden, Oil on paper, 65 x 50 cm, 2019, Unframed, R 21 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



Jaco van Schalkwyk, A Change of Scenery, 65 x 50 cm, Oil on paper, 2019, Unframed, R 21 000.00 (Excl. VAT)



Jaco van Schalkwyk, Thickest Jungle Study VII, 30 x 40 cm, 2019, Unframed, R 10 780.00 (Excl. VAT)

GALLERY



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