

Shape of Now

'Shape of Now' runs concurrently with the Investec Cape Town Art Fair at 99 Loop Gallery this February, curated by international art strategist Virginia Damtsa. The group exhibition presents primarily South African-based artists alongside a select group of international voices. Featuring nine artists, the exhibition brings together the familiar and the unfamiliar - places you have visited, people you remember, memories you imagine, and worlds that exist only through colour, form, and emotion.

Through strong visual languages, vibrant colour palettes and compelling imagery, the works ask whether you are looking in from the outside or if you are already inhabiting the worlds they create. 'Shape of Now' demonstrates how today's artists articulate the questions of tomorrow, grounding the present in something both recognisable and transformative. How their stories open pathways into your own.

The exhibition focuses on Cape Town-based artists working within a sociopolitical contemporary context, engaging with themes such as the enduring traces of history, stark social inequalities, intersections of land and identity, and the city's distinct mosaic of cultures. Their works reflect the layered conditions that shape Cape Town today - its beauty, its tensions, and its continual transformation.

99 LOOP



BARRY YUSUFU
If the Cactus Pricks I, 2024
Oil on canvas
152.4 x 152.4 x 2.5 cm
ZAR 330,000

99 LOOP



BARRY YUSUFU
If the Cactus Pricks II, 2024
Oil on canvas
153 x 152.5 x 2.5 cm
ZAR 330,000

99 LOOP



CHRIS DENOVAN
Riders of the Low Plains, 2025
Oil, acrylic and spray paint on canvas
140 x 180 x 5 cm
ZAR 80,000

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GIHANSA GALHENAGE
where do we go, 2025

Used-tea bags, metal round bar, black cardstock, and LED lights
variable

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MHLONISHWA ZULU
Shadow of the abstract, 2025
Oil and acrylic on canvas
184 x 171.5 cm / 187.5 x 174.5 x 5 cm framed
ZAR 32,000

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MHLONISHWA ZULU
The fruits thereof, 2025
Oil and acrylic on canvas
60 x 90 cm / 62.5 x 93.5 x 5 cm framed
ZAR 15,000

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NAZEER JAPPIE
Self-Portrait with Clawed Hand, 2025
Oil on board
91 x 67 cm / 93.5 x 69.3 x 3.6 cm framed
ZAR 30,000

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NAZEER JAPPIE

Self-Portrait with Death in the Window, 2024

Oil on board

35 x 30 cm / 37.2 x 32.3 x 3.6 cm framed

ZAR 10,000

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NAZEER JAPPIE

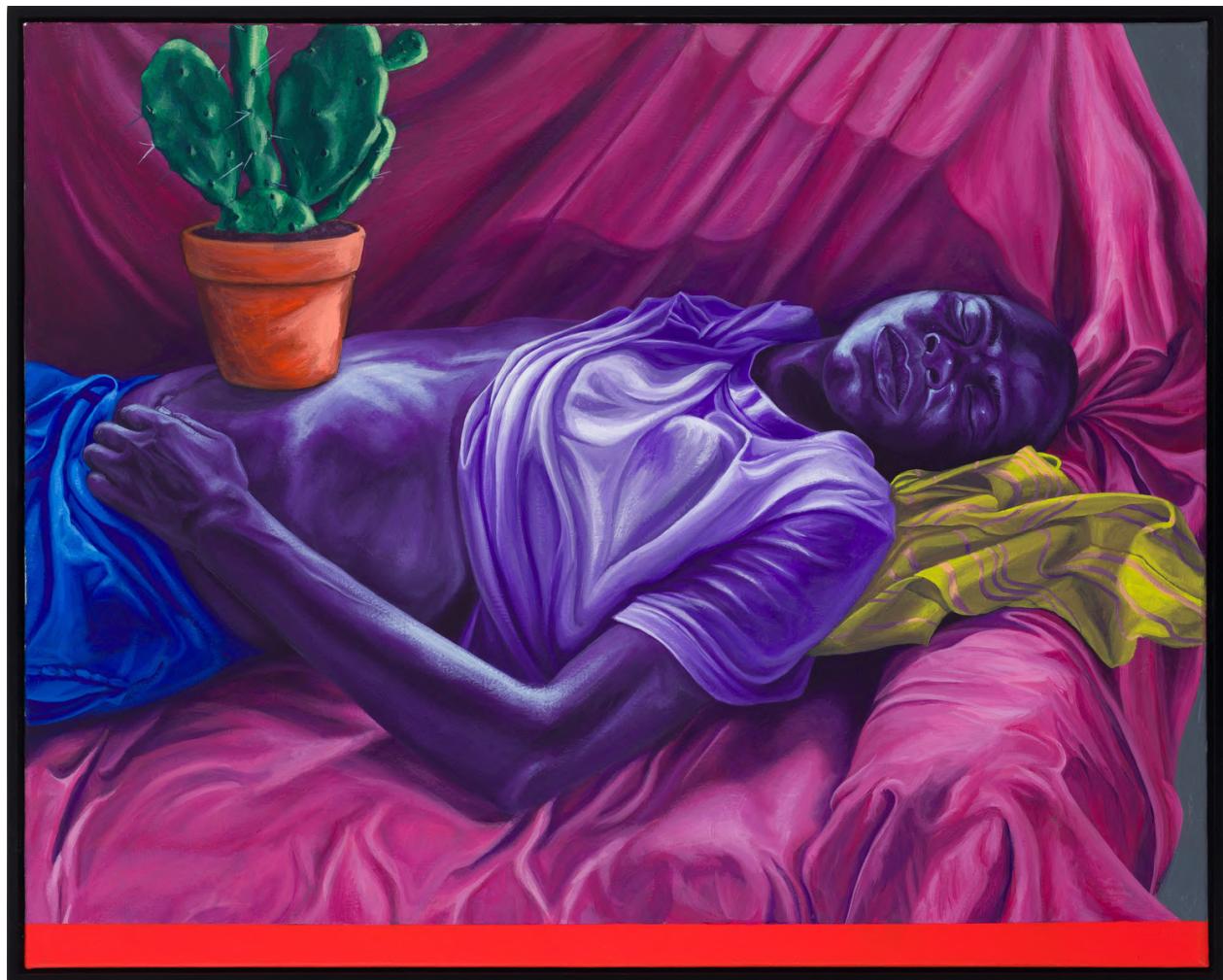
Self-Portrait surrounded by Fire, 2024

Oil on wood

40.5 x 59.5 cm / 42.5 x 61.5 x 3.5 cm framed

ZAR 18,000

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QHAMANANDE MASWANA
Soft and silky thorns, 2024
Acrylic on canvas
63.2 x 78.5 x 3.5 cm framed
ZAR 92,000

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WEN WU

When language giving birth to another language, 2015/25

Oil on Canvas

25.5 x 30 cm / 27 x 32 x 3.7 cm framed

ZAR 315,000

99 LOOP



WEN WU

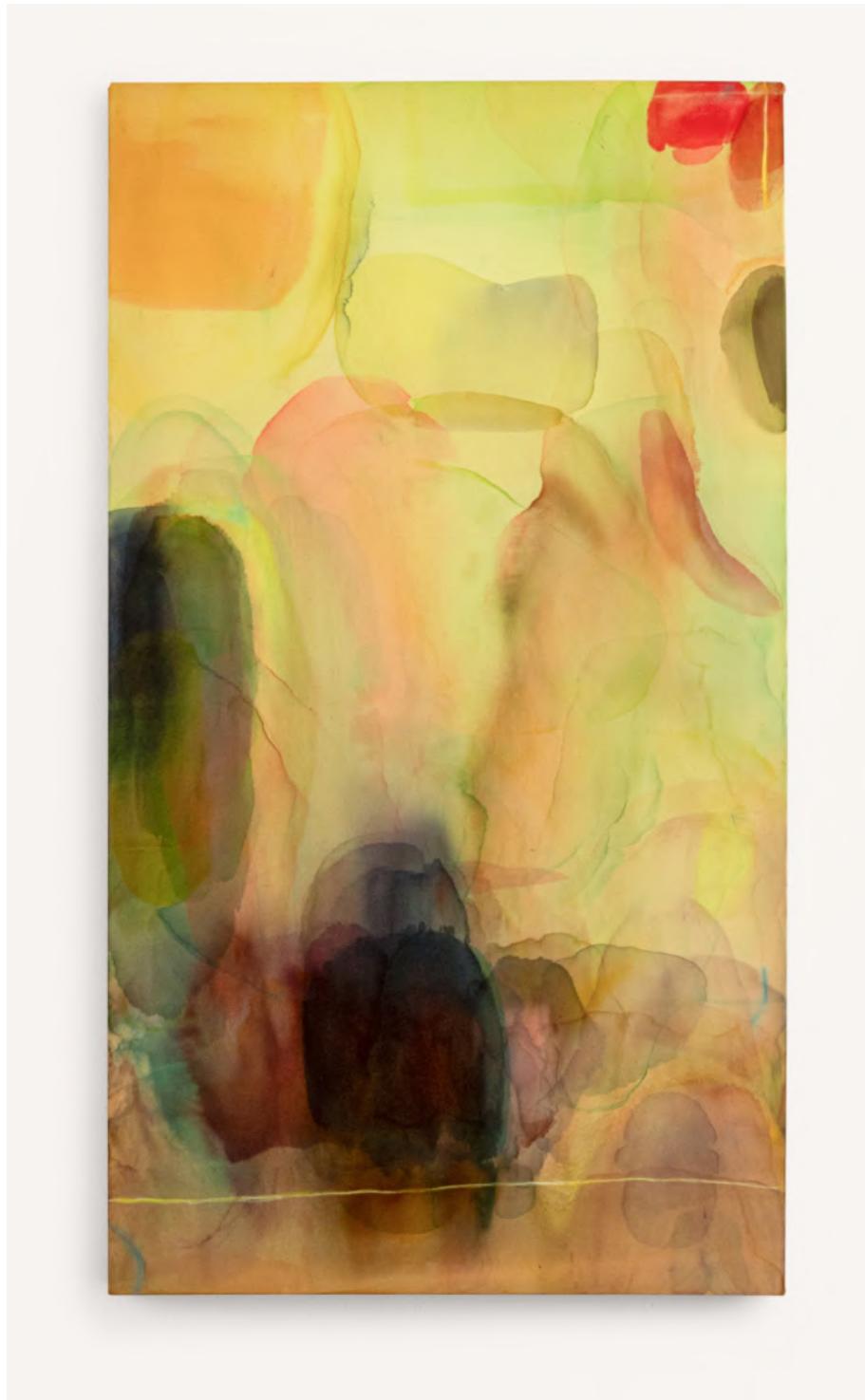
She opens the door of the eternity past, 2015/25

Oil on Canvas

30.5 x 25.5 cm / 32 x 27 x 3.7 cm framed

ZAR 315,000

99 LOOP



XANTHE SCOUT LARDNER-BURKE

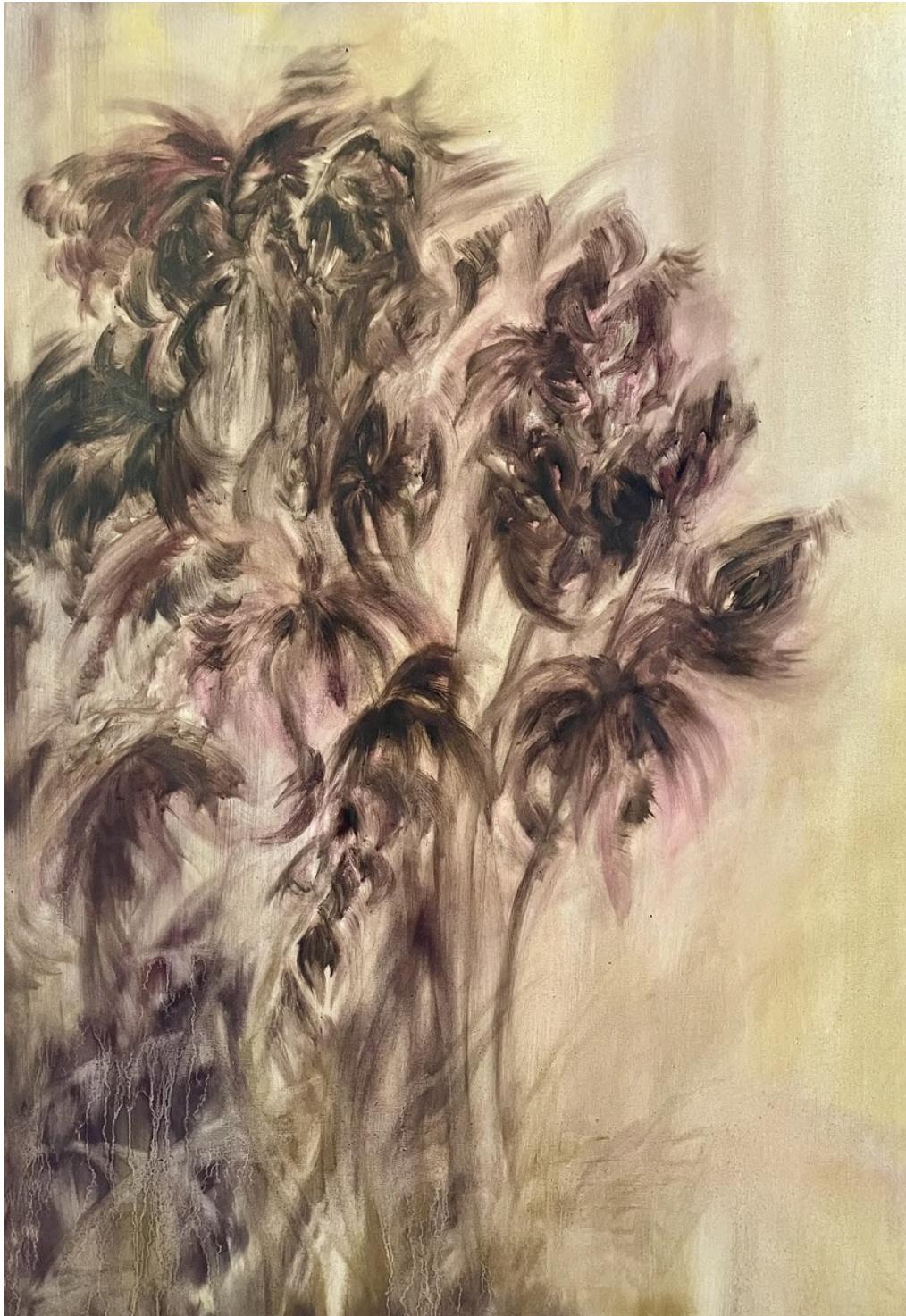
River Crossing, 2025

Ink, liquid pigment, silk paint, soft pastel & varnish on polysatin in beechwood frame

135 x 75 cm / 136.5 x 76.5 x 3.5 cm framed

ZAR 42,000

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ZARAH CASSIM

The Fall, 2024

Oil on canvas

86.5 x 62 x 4 cm framed

ZAR 43,000

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ZARAH CASSIM
Jungle Jewel, 2020
Oil on canvas
30.5 x 27 x 3 cm
ZAR 18,000

About the Artists & Curator

Barry Yusufu (b. 1996), Nigerian — creates emotional, intimate works exploring identity and the human spirit.

Chris Denovan (b. 1983), South African — paints expressive works revealing vulnerability, character, and inner life.

Gihansa Galhenage (b. 2004), Sri Lankan — builds symbolic, medium-driven installation exploring intersections of familial and national history.

Mhlonishwa Zulu (b. 2002), South African — creates expressive, colour-driven works merging tradition and contemporary life.

Nazeer Jappie (b. 1998), South African — paints scenes from everyday life, surrealistically reimagined with tenderness and depth.

Qhamanande Maswana (b. 1991), South African — creates powerful portraits exploring spirituality and self-representation.

Wen Wu (b. 1978), Chinese — paints precise, poetic portraiture capturing presence and quiet intensity.

Xanthe Scout Lardner-Burke (b. 1998), South African — creates dreamlike canvases mixing stillness, intuition, and light.

Zarah Cassim (b. 1992), South African — paints soft, atmospheric landscapes pieces blending memory, nature, and abstraction.

Virginia Damtsa is an internationally-recognised curator, art dealer, cultural strategist and director of Visual Arts at London Cultural landmark Town Hall with over 30 years of experience and twenty years co-director of Riflemaker Gallery, London. Having worked with major artists and institutions across Europe, the UK, and the US, she is celebrated for her visionary exhibitions and her ability to build meaningful global cultural connections.