

SULGER-BUEL GALLERY



Vivien Kohler

Born 1976 in Cape Town, South Africa

Lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa

Vivien Kohler is an experimental mixed media painter based in Johannesburg, South Africa. The concept of liminality; the liminal city and its people, lies at the core of Kohler's work, which explores migration, marginalization and displacement in the urban landscape of post-Apartheid South Africa.

Kohler constructs two and three dimensional assemblage pieces; appropriating discarded material, painting naturalistic figures and detailed replications of packaging material (a layered visual metaphor signifying transience, migration, displacement), to articulate challenging social and economic circumstances that affect those on the periphery. "My works do not hide the realities of the unfair perception, but symbolically display it in relations to the liberating verdict of the human spirit". Fascinated by man's ability to transcend 'the conceptual decay', he captures with gentle rawness the complexity of the human disposition. His work seeks to illuminate the duality of lived

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experiences by depicting, with an air of surreality, meditative moments of the individual, mentally cocooned from, yet physically enveloped by life's detritus.

Kohler received his National Diploma in Fine Art from the Ruth Prowse School of Art and Design in Cape Town, 2000. He has exhibited in art fairs and group shows across South Africa and internationally, including *Is There Still Life* curated by Prof. Michael Godby; *OFF Africa* (2014) and *Trop Comprendre* at Sulger-Buel Lovell (2017) curated by Andrew Lamprecht. He has produced four solo shows to date shown in South Africa; *r3:FORM4re* in 2019 (Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg); *Residuum* in 2016 at Ilse Schermers Art Gallery, Cape Town); *De(re)tritus in 2014* (Lovell, Cape Town); and *Given to Fly* in 2012 (AVA Gallery, Cape Town). Kohler has also exhibited two solo exhibitions at Sulger-Buel Lovell namely *Clay Opera* in 2017 and *At the Still Point of the Turning World* in 2018 curated by Andrew Lamprecht. He has received numerous awards: the It Web/Brainstorm competition in 2012 with his entry commissioned by Vodacom; in 2013 he was the winner of the Lovell Gallery artist competition; and he was the winner of the Thami Mnyele Best Sculpture award in 2017. His work is housed in both private and public collections, the latter including the Nando's Collection, the Hollard Collection, SAB and Fusion UK. He has an impressive number of artworks sold (close to 80% of all he has produced).

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Education

- 2005 *UMSI Workshop* (Sponsored by Everard Read Gallery and Truworths),
The Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2004 *Open Doors Workshop*, The Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town, South
Africa
- 2003 *Art of Worship Workshop*, City Hall, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2000 ND: Painting, Ruth Prowse School of Art, Cape Town, South Africa

Awards

- 2017 Thami Mnyele Sculpture Award
- 2013 Lovell Tranyr Competition winner
- 2012 Brainstorm 2013 Calendar Competition winner (Entry commissioned by
Vodacom)

Achievements

- 2013 Nominated to Curatorial Panel for State of the Art
- 2006 South African Art Times Featured Artist - January 2006 (Sponsored by
Dala)
- 2004 Nominated to Cape Town Festival Visual Arts Committee

Commissions

- 2016 *Untitled* (9 x 80m Mosaic), Commissioned by Art Afrique Gallery, Tswane
House, Pretoria, South Africa
- 2012 *Door 5* (81cm x 201cm Painting), Commission by Lisa King Gallery for
Christian Barnard, Cape Town, South Africa
- Untitled* (Painting), Vodacom, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Untitled* (Sculpture), Collect-A-Can, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2011 *Charity Art Project* (Cape Homemakers Expo), CTICC, Cape Town, South
Africa
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Africa
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- 2008 *Charity Art Project* (Cape Homemakers Expo), CTICC, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2007 *The Mulanje* (Painting), Safmarine, *The Mulanje* (Container Ship), Cape Town, South Africa
Untitled (Painting), Depart of Economic Development and Tourism, Venue, City, South Africa
- 2006 *Untitled* (Painting), The Southern Sun Hotel, V & A Waterfront, Cape Town, S.A
The Meru (Painting), Safmarine, *The Meru* (Crude Oil Tanker), Cape Town, S.A
- 2005 *Untitled* (Painting), South African Breweries (SAB), Sandton, Johannesburg, S.A
Castle of Good Hope (Painting), Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Cape Town, South Africa
Joe Gqabi Memorial Project (Clock Tower mosaic), V & A Waterfront, Cape Town, S.A
- 2002 Cover & inner page illustration, AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development) Diary (2003 Edition)
- 2001 Posters & illustration, AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development)
- 2000 *Untitled* (Mural), Design for Living Fair, Cape Town, South Africa
Untitled (Mural), McDonalds (Blue Route), Cape Town, South Africa
- 1999 *Untitled* (Mural), Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital (Burn Ward), Cape Town, S.A
Untitled (Mural) (With local artists Paul Hendricks, Donovan Ward and Black Noise/Mak 1), Lansdowne Library, Cape Town, South Africa
The Spirit of Art, One City Festival, Cape Town, South Africa and later at the World Parliament of Religions, Good Hope Centre, Cape Town, South Africa
- 1998 *Untitled* (Mural), Brooklyn Chest Hospital (Children's Ward), Brooklyn, Cape Town, South Africa

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Permanent Installations

2016 *Untitled* (9 x 80m Mosaic), Commissioned by Art Afrique Gallery, Tswana House, Pretoria, South Africa

Residencies

2013 Assemblage's NewARC, Newtown, Johannesburg, South Africa

2006 Good Hope Studio, The Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town, South Africa

Solo Exhibitions

2019 *r3:FORM4re*, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa

2018 *At the Still Point of the Turning World*, Sulger-Buel Lovell, London, United Kingdom

2017 *Clay Opera*, Sulger-Buel Lovell, London, United Kingdom

2016 *Residuum*, Ilse Schermers Art Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

2014 *De(re)tritus*, Lovell, Cape Town, South Africa

2012 *Given to Fly*, AVA Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

Select Group Exhibitions

2019 *Know this place*, Kwazulu Natal Society of Arts (KZNSA) Gallery, Durban, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa

Speaking truth to power (Fierce Pop!), Compagnie Theater, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Unresolved Category, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa

2018 *What is South Africa, even? Vol. 2* curated by Carlyn Strydom, Bag Factory, Johannesburg, South Africa

Nano 2.0, Barnard, Cape Town, South Africa

Contemporary African Pop, Pop-up exhibition series, Johannesburg, S.A

2017 *Is There Still Life?*, Old Town House, Cape Town, South Africa

Sounds and the City, Hazard, Johannesburg, South Africa

Prints on Paper, Klein Karoo Nationale Kunstefees, Outdshoorn as well as the Witwatersrand (Wits) Art Museum, Johannesburg, South Africa

Turbine Art Fair (Sulger-Buel Lovell), Johannesburg, South Africa

35 Years: Trailblazers, Lizamore & Associates, Johannesburg, S.A

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- 2016 *Between Light & Shadow: Rights of Passage*, Sulger-Buel Lovell, Cape Town, South Africa
Suddenly a Dissident, Guns & Rain/Point of Order, Johannesburg, S.A
I OBJEKT, Art It Is, Johannesburg, South Africa
Reverie, AGOG, Johannesburg, South Africa
Nugget Square, SOMA, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2015 Turbine Art Fair (Sulger-Buel Lovell), Johannesburg, South Africa
Black History Month, Lambeth Academy, London, United Kingdom
Hogan Lovell's Africa Celebration, London, United Kingdom
- 2014 *OF(F) AFRICA*, Sulger-Buel Lovell, London, United Kingdom
Turbine Art Fair (Sulger-Buel Lovell), Johannesburg, South Africa
Art South Africa, British Consulate, Cape Town, South Africa
What's going on, Lovell Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Art wakes us up in the morning, Lovell Gallery, South Africa
- 2013 *Lovell Tranyr Competition Exhibition*, Lovell Gallery, Cape Town, S.A
Ithuba Arts Fund Competition Exhibition, Cape Town, South Africa
New Voices, Lizamore & Associates, Johannesburg, Cape Town
- 2012 *Ingekleur*, AVA Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Impromptu, Assemblage Studios, Johannesburg, South Africa
Indulgences, The Art of Business, Cape Town, South Africa
As seen on TV, Sibisi Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
Jhb Fashion Week, Sibisi Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
Revolution 2012, Sibisi Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2010 *Winter 2010*, Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, South Africa
Good Hope Art, Artscape Theatre, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2009 Group Exhibition, AVA Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2008 *Is There Still Life?* curated by Professor Michael Godby, Sanlam Art Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Soul of Africa, Hosted by the Development Bank of SA, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2007 *Is There Still Life?* curated by Professor Michael Godby, Sanlam Art Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Face (In) Cape Town, The Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town, South Africa

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- Making Space* (X-Cape), The Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town, S.A
The Future of Design (Bond Choice Bench Art Project), CTICC (Cape Town International Convention Centre), Cape Town, South Africa
- 2006 *Umsi*, AVA (Association for Visual Arts) Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Artscape Theatre Group Exhibition (Hosted by SA Art), Artscape Theatre, Cape Town, South Africa
POSITIVE, Sun City Resort, North West Province, South Africa
The Future of Design (Bond Choice Bench Art Project), CTICC (Cape Town International Convention Centre), Cape Town, South Africa
- 2005 *SAB Group Exhibition*, SAB (South African Breweries), Johannesburg, S.A
Absolute Finale, AVA (Association for Visual Arts) Gallery, Cape Town, S.A
Open Studios, Greatmore Studios, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2004 Group Exhibition, Beautiful Butterfly Art Gallery, Cape Town, S.A
Truworths Group Exhibition, Truworths Head Office, Cape Town, S.A
Pop Up, Obz Café, Cape Town, South Africa
Open Studios, Greatmore Studios, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2003 *Ero-Sensual*, Grosvenor Villa Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2000 *New Signatures Art Competition* (Exhibition), Art B. Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, S.A
Tableware (Ruth Prowse School of Art Exhibition), Metropolitan Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2001 *Walking the Streets*, Cape Town, South Africa

Festivals

- 2006 Grahamstown Festival, Makana, South Africa
KKNK (Klein Karoo National Arts Festival)
- 2002 Spier Summer Arts Festival, Spier Wine Estate, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2003 Cape Town Art Festival (Art Walk), Cape Town, South Africa
- 2004 Cape Town Freedom Parade, Cape Town, South Africa
- 1999 *The Spirit of Art*, One City Festival, Cape Town, South Africa

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Select Reviews, Features & Articles

- 2019 Business Arts South Africa, *Found Objects: The Figurative Works of Vivien Kohler*
- 2018 Artthrob, [Out The Box: A Profile of Vivien Kohler](#) By Nolan Stevens
Sunday Times, [Artist Vivien Kohler uses discarded cardboard to tell Jozi's hidden stories](#) By Andrew Miller
- 2017 Bubblegumclub, [Vivien Kohler: the power of dreams](#) By Christa Dee
Out the Box: A Profile of Residuum | Solo Exhibition by Vivien Kohler By Hendrik Theron
- 2014 Art Africa, [In Conversation with Vivien Kohler](#) By Siobhan Keam
Art Africa Magazine, [Sulger-Buel Lovell Gallery Launches with OF\(F\) AFRICA Exhibition in London](#)

Video Documentation

- 2019 SABC Digital News, [Exhibition reflects on the outdated philosophies of South Africa](#)
- 2014 Monomotapa Films, [De\(re\)tritus Vivien Kohler](#)
Sulger-Buel Lovell, [De\(re\)tritus by Vivien Kohler](#)

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