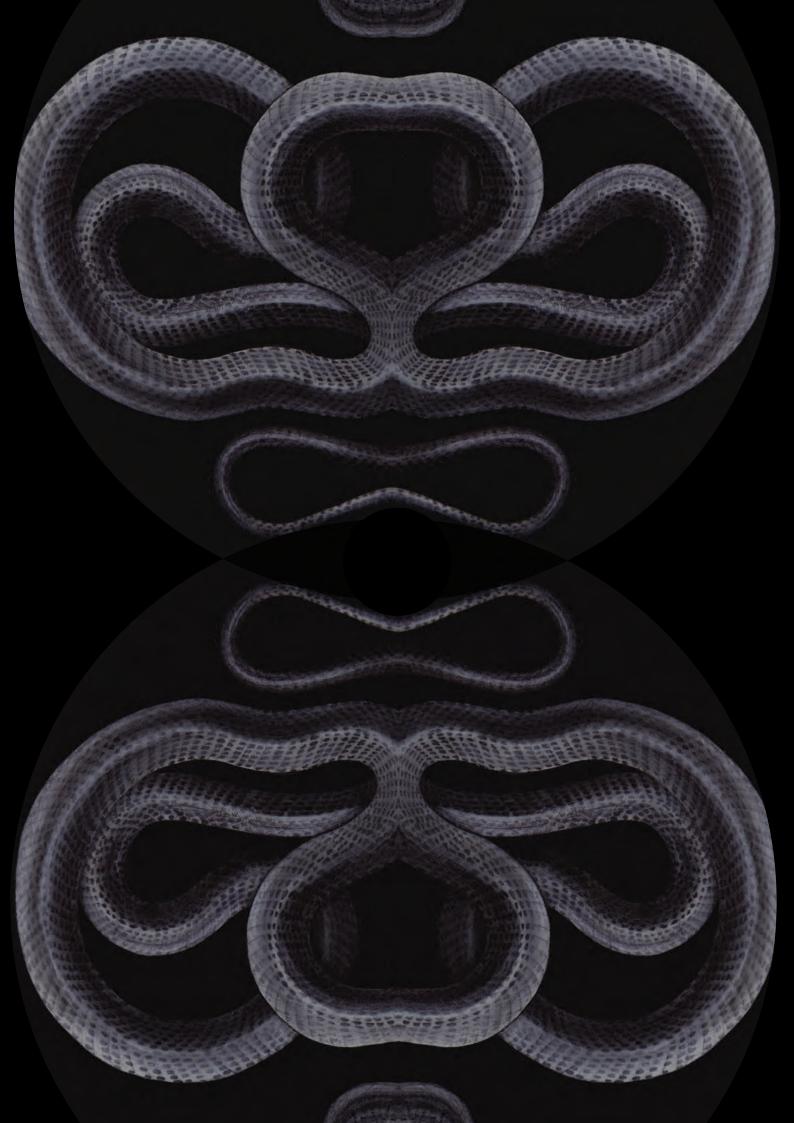


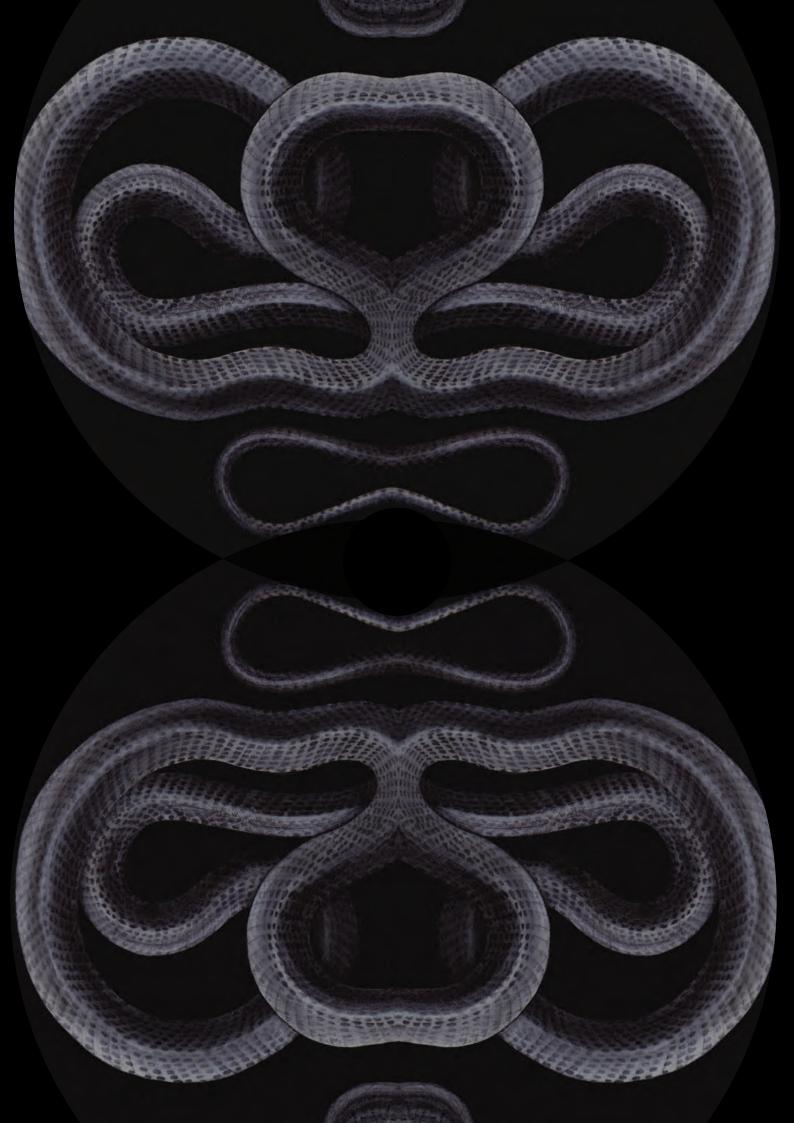
# INVOKING THE WILDLING

# INVOKING THE WILDLING















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Conceptualisation / Sketch book

Invoking the Wildling



## Introduction



### Introduction



I was born and raised in Namibia. I come from the desert, a place of sublime Nothingness. A space is highly conducive to the imagination. I remember finding unknown rock paintings on camping trips with my Father and brothers, Joost and Aren. The blistering heat of the desert burned my skin and setting my heart alight. Yet somehow I always hungered for more, never feeling like I fit in with my peers, and eyes set on unknown horizons. I took the plunge into the unknown and worked and travelled in Europe (mainly Germany, Austria and Switzerland) after graduating high school at the end of 2014. Those three years were extremely challenging and eye-opening. Digesting that much culture after being raised in the desert seemed all consuming! After being fiercely independent for so long I yearned to return to the safety and comfort of the presence of my supportive mother, whom I have not lived with since I was in grade 9. This was about the same time my mother had just launched her gallery in the heart of Cape Town's city bowl; GalleryOne11.

This was the catalyst of my decision to move back home and finally begin my lifelong dream of pursuing an art career.

I began studying in 2018 and have participated in as many creative opportunities I could get my hands on over the last 4 years!

Finally, I have been able to let my roots grow and the creative energy flow!

While assisting in the gallery under the guidance of my powerhouse mother, I have started and ended an artist Collective called The Leap Collective with my esteemed colleague Nicolene Burger, we ran a variety of creative events above GalleryOne11 in 2019 with a collective of beautiful local artists.

I have solidified a freelance career as a tattoo artist and dabbled in numerous creative events all over Cape Town.

2020 was an arduous journey of Introspection, with the uncertainty of the pandemic looming over all of our lives. My busy life in the city came to a screeching halt as we took refuge at our Guesthouse outside of Worcester in the Breede Valley. Again I returned to the vast mental space that only a space interwoven with nature can provide.

On the 27th of April my grandmother Suzanne Van Zyl passed away, and due to Covid regulations, I was not permitted to see her off in the hospital. Her presence was integral to the experience of our guesthouse and it seemed that her spirit helped me awaken to the great Wild Seed within. Her death was a turning point in the awakening of my spiritual self, along with the close relationship I was fostering with the natural elements around me. Intuitively I began creating a 1 x 3m high bricolage of natural found objects, each pertaining a certain symbolic meaning to me. An empty bird's egg and a weaver birds nest signifying life death and rebirth, a branch signifying reaching for the skies. Some roots and soil signify the act of staying grounded. I only worked on the piece in sync with the cycles of the moon or other significant astrological events. On June 6th 2020, the night of a full moon in Sagittarius I BURNED the final artwork to the ground in ceremony with my mother. We danced around the fire and cried in each other's arms watching the dying embers. My familiar Jackson, a really old dog my mom had found wandering the streets on a cold winter morning around the time I had just started this piece, had somehow managed to sneak out of his enclosure and accompanied us during the ceremony. This artwork was my mourning process for my grandmother. It was a deep binding ritual for my mother and me, and a huge cathartic release of burning something I had spent over 3 months creating. I felt reborn in some mysterious and magical way.

I became aware of the deep value of ritual practice and intentional actions, and how impactful these can be on the psyche.

This was my induction into the green witch life. Those 7 months spent on the farm felt almost dreamlike. I was extremely hesitant to return to the city.

And once I did, Jackson soon disappeared off of the farm with no trace.

After 2020 I felt extremely solidified into my being. As a green witch, I have rediscovered the power of the wild divine feminine energies that had been slumbering within me for years!

I took this year by storm, the pandemic and the passing of my grandmother magnifying how important it is to chase after your desires in full force while you still can. To live unapologetically and stay true to yourself and the ones you love.

This year I co-curated the very first Hearty exhibition, an exciting and new gallery and event location in Woodstock led by the inimitable Lea Debbah, which has since then grown into a staple weekend location for Cape Town's creative youth.

I participated in several of Hearty's events and other creative markets in and around town.

The majority of this year I spent working alongside Aimee Pullon, on coordinating and organising the efforts for our university years' fundraising. We had a series of successful Early Friday events at the Waiting room on Long street, and a variety of Thrift Sales on campus grounds.

The magnum opus of our fundraising though was the Silent Auction we held virtually on a website called BidPro. With the help of the amazing artists that donated their work for auction (like Jane Alexander, Mary Sibande, Bernie Searle, Beezy Bailey and so many more) we were able to raise over R300 000!

This task seemed near impossible due to the many impediments we faced due to the pandemic, yet somehow with an extremely small team of helpers, we were able to overcome the hurdles we faced. The funds raised go directly towards the graduating year's catalogues, with a large chunk remaining as our year's contribution towards the Michaelis Bursary Fund.

Alongside all of this, I co-curated a show called Motion Bandits with Jared Aufrichtig and my mother Marita Schneider at GalleryOne11.

The show concentrated on skateboard artwork, reusing broken and damaged skateboards and turning them into art. Jared had organised a spectacular showcase of established artists to participate in the show, like Roger Ballen, Faith47, Farai Engelbrecht, Risk, Ray Barbee, Tyler B Murphy and more, while I called up my fellow emerging creatives to participate like Amber Alcock, Ghilian Chevelu, Lorcan Berg, Amazing Ace, Masablack, Romi Flowers and more.

The show was aimed at raising funds for a Charity called Ladles of Love, and we managed to raise about R15 000 from this show alone which ran from the 18th of September until mid-October.

So while this year has been extremely difficult to juggle the many projects I put on my plate, I am proud of myself for daring to hunger for more than the status quo.

If historians and others won't write about me and my achievements so this is the opportunity I am taking for myself. Putting my story into words which will be published and shared with those who are willing to receive,

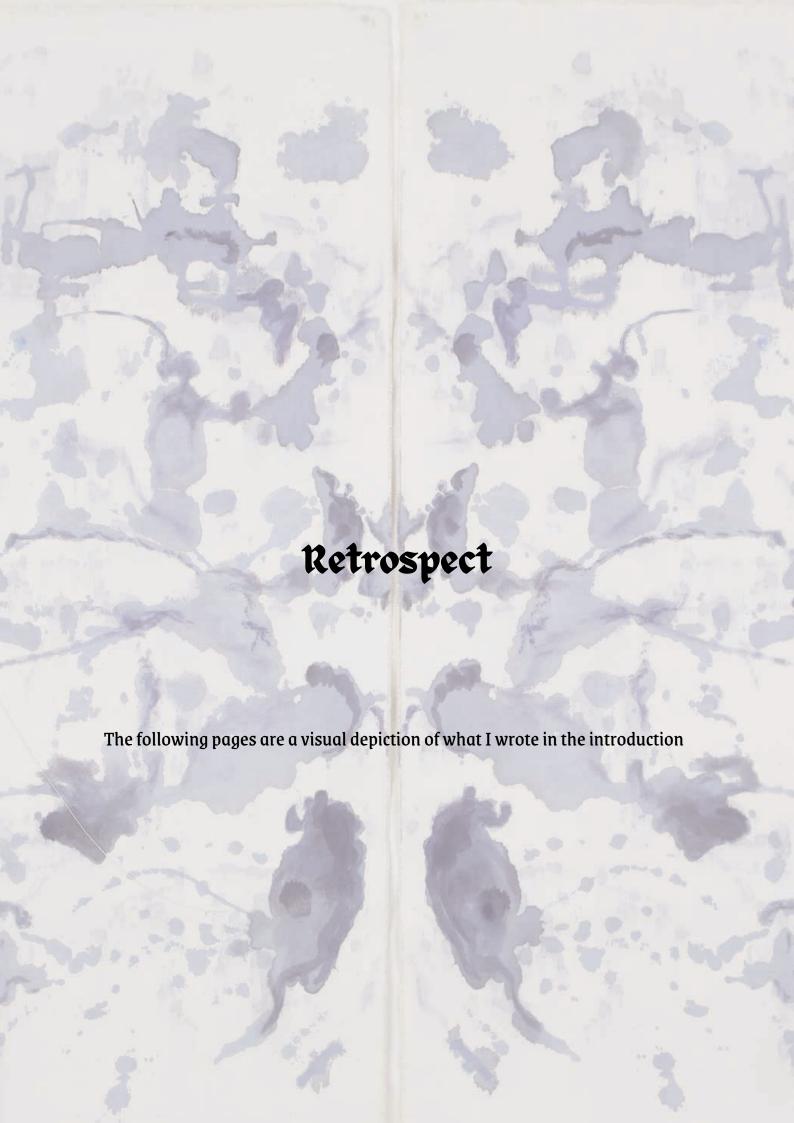
All of this while still working closely with my supervision group in university led by Kurt Campbell, on developing the fingerprint of a creative practice which I will be implementing once I graduate from this institution.

I want to thank everyone person who has been an integral instrument in the progress of my creative career. To those close friends who provided a much-needed distraction from when things got too serious. To the new energies that have bought and supported my work, validating me in a way that solidified my decision to become creative.

I give thanks to those who take time and energy to engage, to exchange creative energy. To try and find your meaning in this work which lies so close to my own experience.

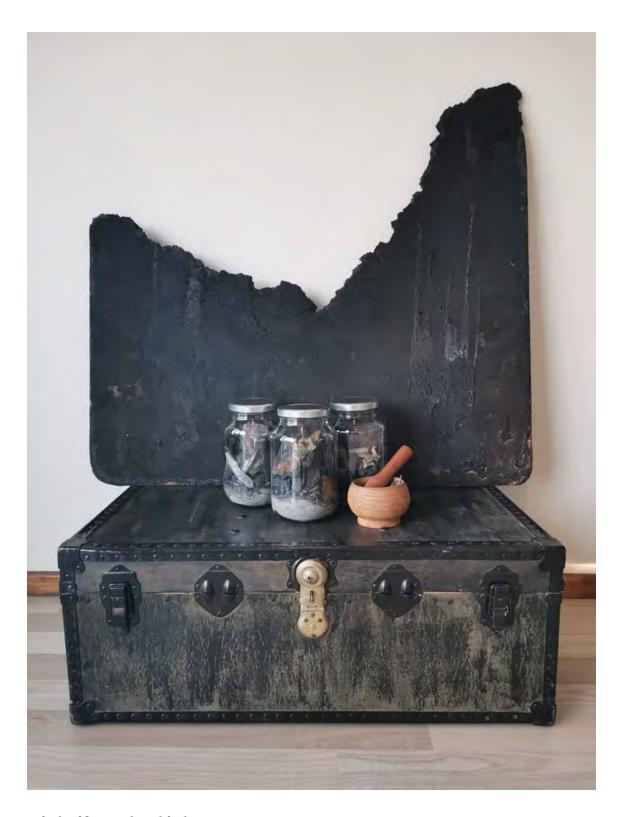
Finding beauty in the mundane, in the dark.

I welcome you Wildling. Thank you for being here.









### **Birth Life Death Rebirth**

The cycles of life as explored through this artwork.

The creation was it's birth, It's life was the Burn, it's death the charred piece of wood that remained, and the rebirth the variety of artworks and inspiration I took from the artwork /performance after it's completion.

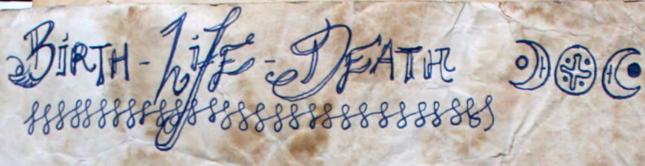
This is where my obsession with mirror imagery really came to the forefront.











Change is the only constant as we travel through the true stages a life. BIRTH UPE DEATH
YOUTH MATURITY OFD AGE

DEATH needs to happen in order for new beginnings to be born and gain life.

The death of my step grand mother on the 27 of April the spiritual practice of house since then implemented, huge internal growth has nappened over these last 5 months. Gircen Witch craft has awoken something beautiful within me!

I started working on a huge aboundoned board on the farm, collecting interesting pieces of neutre natural symbolic objects U

A bicrolage of semi sentimental objects / objects J nove ascribed a significant meaning to the street of the ground!







My very first explorations of drawing organic symmetry, these symbols came to me after a deep meditation in May 2020.

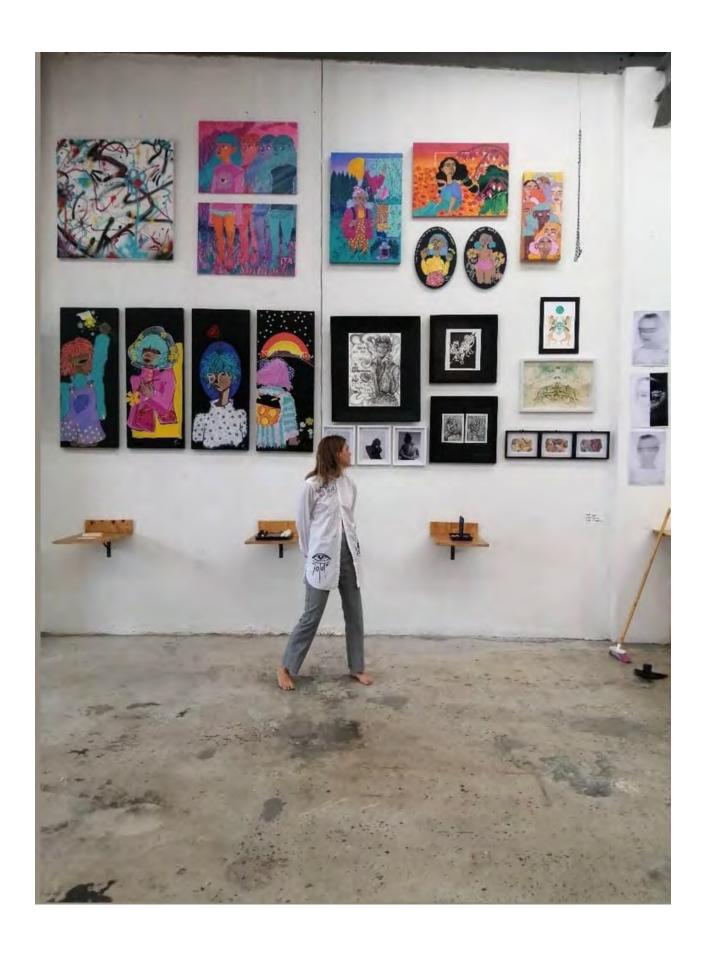












Posing in front of the Wall curation I co-ordinated for the first Hearty exhibition in Woodstock in April 2021. Hearty is run by Lea Debbah, a friend and esteemed creative events colleague.



Me captured by Justin Fife aka ANY in front of the "Green Luck Dragon" mural I created for the City Bowl Park skate bowl in Cape town in early 2021. This is where I met Jared Aufrichtig and South Africa's own skate legend Dallas Oberholzer who is the owner of the City Bowl skatepark.



Me captured by Joshua Abrahams aka Supertramp at a subsequent Hearty event where I created this piece as a live painting.



The Michaelis Silent Auction event poster.

Aimee Pullon and I had been working on the coordination of this project since January 2021. I ended up designing and creating the entire media package for the event including social media posters, infographics and banner designs. You can find more on Instagram: @michaelisgraduates







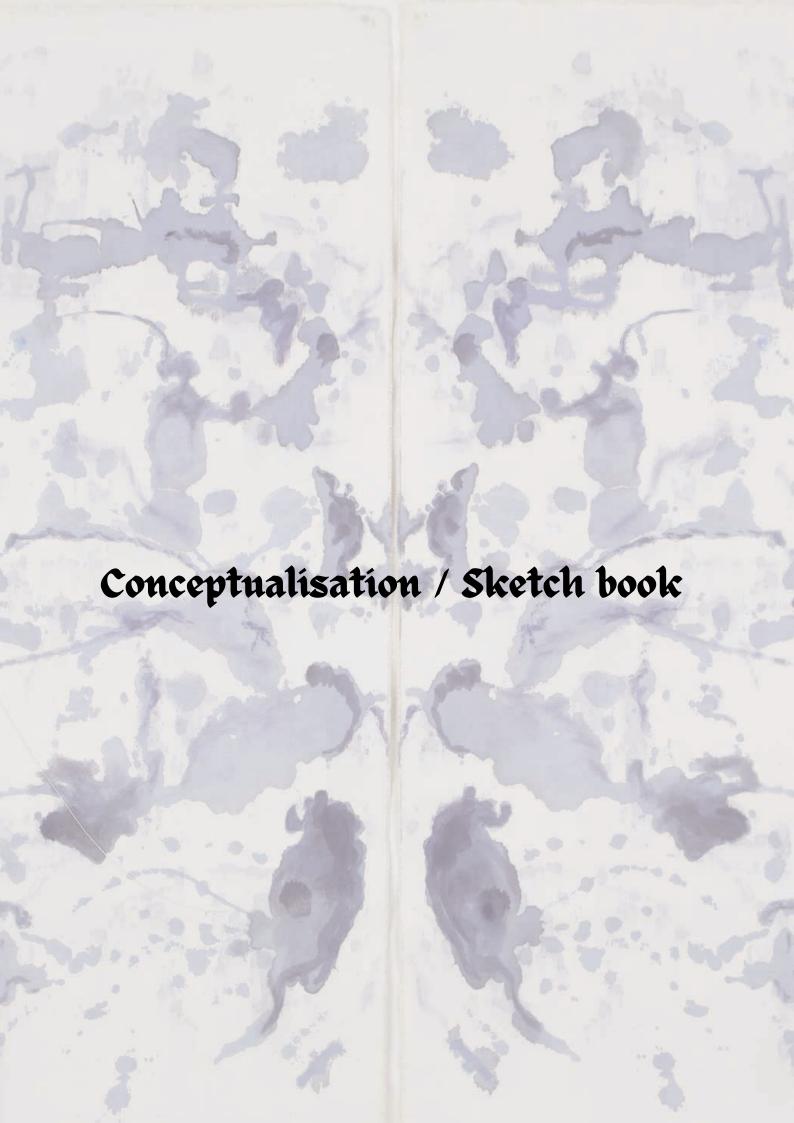
Top left: Motion Bandits Exhibition event poster - Top right: Me captured in front of my artwork submission for the show. Bottom: Artists of the show posing in front of one of the galleries walls.

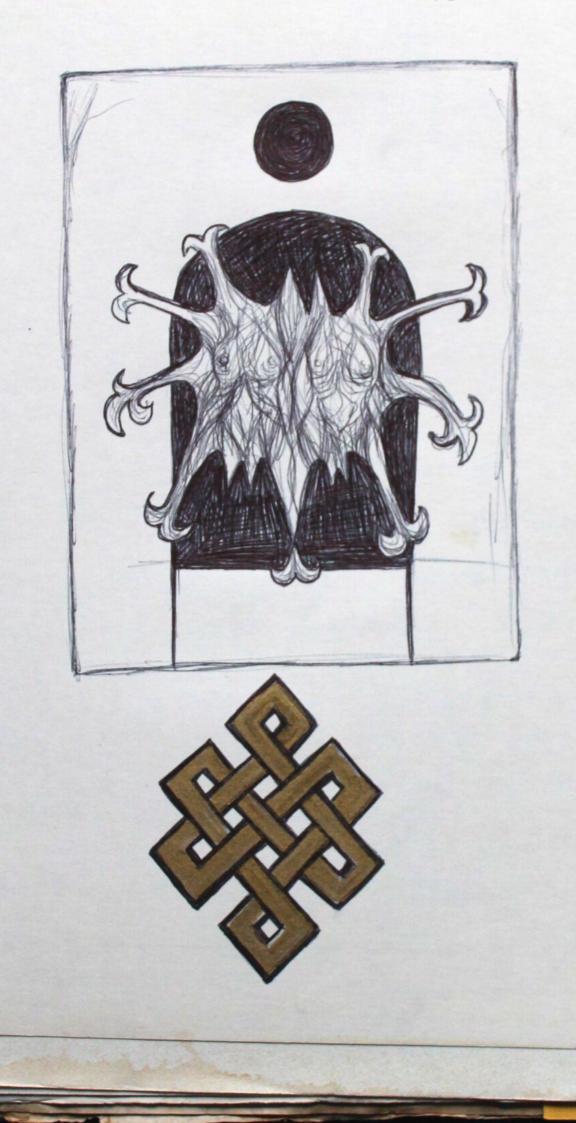
Farai Engelbrecht, Livia Schneider, Jared Aufrichtig, Marti McFly.

Photographs by Jariiid Matthew Naidoo.



"The Devil's Claw Alchemy"; 2021 Oil and mixed media on a repurposed skateboard; 210mm x 800 mm My artwork submission for Motion Bandits; inspired by my current style and thematic interests.









The four elements and their directions:

N five

W A Eair

water

S

earth

East: air - yellow - represents

protection, fows, devity, sharp precision, the mind

protection, fows, devity, sharp precision, the mind

new beginnings, The Down + power of sun

Images of sun, smoking (smudging harbs feathers.)

atherme Athame or sword regical tool

South = earth - green - brown - represents:

kninkledge, strength, wisdom of ancestors, Elders,

Lew, person of grounding.

Salt, crystals, earth, goddesses, circle

pentacte (I will use catcle)

West: water - blue - represents

emotions, Intuition, spirituality, dreams + subconcious

water bowls, chalices shells symbols of heart +

spirit + perception Chalice

North = red - represents

sexuality - rebirth, passion transformation, change intensity faire realm of imagination creative force red condle red ribbon, wand

Richard Long inspired floor is installation

North Fire Ash I Borned pieces of word East West Water cathers sea shells seawed

> Earth Soil/Salt?

> > South

Double Spiral - represents the inner & outer journeys in our lives

+- 1.5m diameter

Nature's creativity is the wealth spring of human creativity.

We come from nature dlmost as its firest work of art emerge out of nature dlmost as its firest work of art "Terence Mclienna on opening the doors of oreativity" we are a production of nature consolidating emerging properties by focusing

The Shaman - unites the doctor, the scientist + theartist only human figure which?

one single notion of earegiving + creativity.

This notion has been suppressed + subdued lobscured artist has been relegated to the position of an artisan lentertainer (designer of objects.

The notion of the artist as a mystic figure travelling into the unknown and coming back to tell others of what he has learned, has been hist since the age of medieval renaissance conception of at.

Romanticism - new permission to explore the irrational surrealism - to dissolve conceptual boundary of ordinary expectation.

Aldous Huxley-The Art of Seeing

The Art of Seeing- understanding patterns of nature. Nature as an engine of novelty.

We interpret + express novely of human context. Humans have the ability to imbue objects with meaning. taking an object and making it transform through thought processes and mental consideration. what makes the human tanguage animal transcend an Language gives us the ability to share these mental thought processes Language is the unique tool of the autist with others. Art is a form of cognitive activity which transcends the domain of animal organisation and into domain of a genuine relationship with Shamans in all time and places have relationships to transcendental entities (ancestors/angels etc) "Is the muse " our contemporary transcendental entity? only artists are allowed to follow muses One of the most disempowering things done to us by male dominant where is to make our history disappear. Disempowered by history and science, which are faculties of logic + ego - intuition magic + esoteric

\*Where is a plot against the expansion of consciousness.

language is a babblefield over which the fight of expansion of consciousness. What we cannot say - we cannot communicate.



Arts task is to remind ous of our moral vision nural vision comes from subconcious - not from Arts task is to save the soul of man kind (it is our sacred duty to travel into the realm of the subconscious and bring back the lessons learned there to our community) Political ideology has been calling the shots (even in art) of A world of ideology can be transcended when we reconnect to the 3 tier cannon of aesthetics—

the good, the true, the beautiful. Nature is not nute - man is deaf. of the through psychedelics we can open our eyes tears to the me ever evolving rovice of nature. The muth of mystery is slowly breaking down the male dominating paradigm. Each artist is an antannae of the transcendental other. We can save the world through the pursuit of nearing, realizing we are not an aberration but a necessarry tool for collective global anathening.

It is my sacred duty as an artist to bridge the gap between reality and that which we deem transcendental.

Transcendental languages - Intuition

- Dreams
- Psychic abilities
- Telepashy

Occult studies help to access that which has been hidden are or deemed as irrational. In our male dominated societal paradigm which favours science + the ego the other has been suppressed and subdued to due to its irrationality." Mysticism and magic cannot be logically deduced in empirical terms and thus seem to be discarded in mainstream conversations. This is why I am drawn to the archetype of the female shaman. A shownown embodies the archetype of the doctor, the scientist + the artist. The care taker is associated with that of the feminine nurburing energies. Thus my fascination with the archetype of the old wise crone, the witch. To be a shaman is to have a relationship with transcendental entities - ancestors langels/ etc. In modern times we have lost our connection to our Shamounic ways. We favour the material realm

red condit red noon, we

over the transcendental.

This is plain to see in the artworld, especially in the post modern movement if early tables doth century.

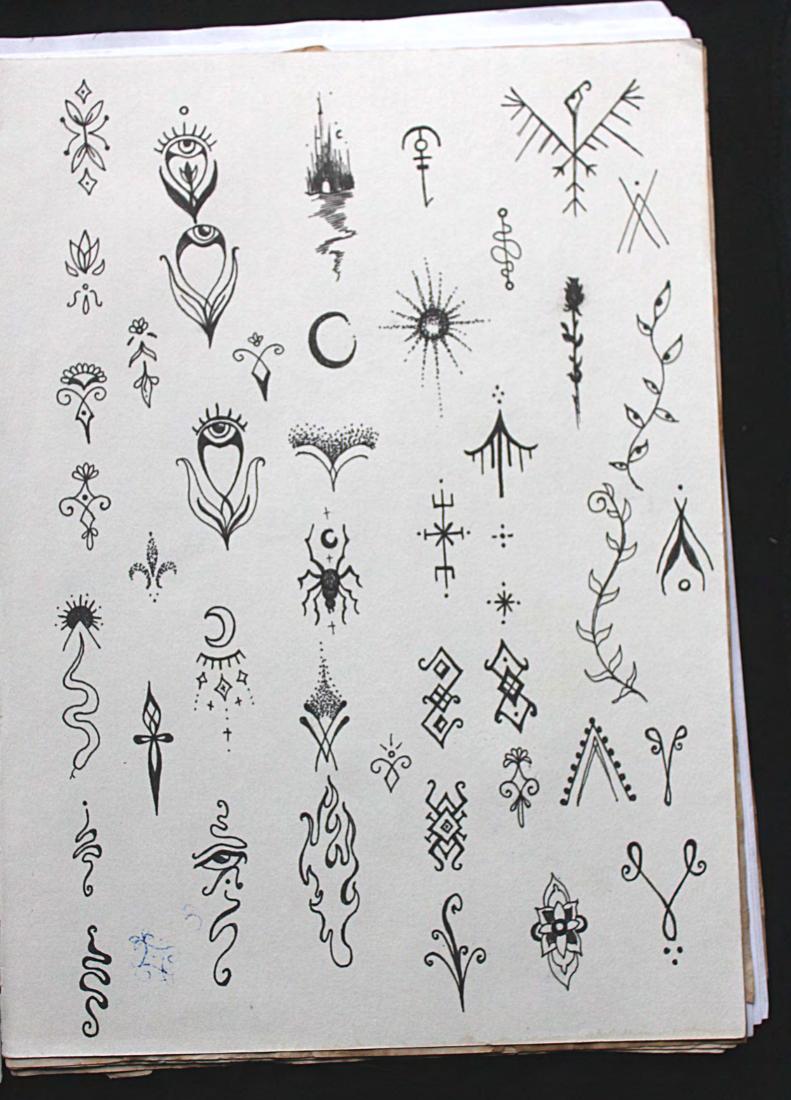
with my work of aim to remind the viewer and colleagues of our intrinsic connection to nature to mature to and the transcendental. We are borne from nature, our conciousness and gift of self reflection is a tool for regaining our connection to the mystical truths of the universe. We need to return to the ways of the shamanic - deepen our connection to our mother earth and the "other" father, the realm of transcendance.

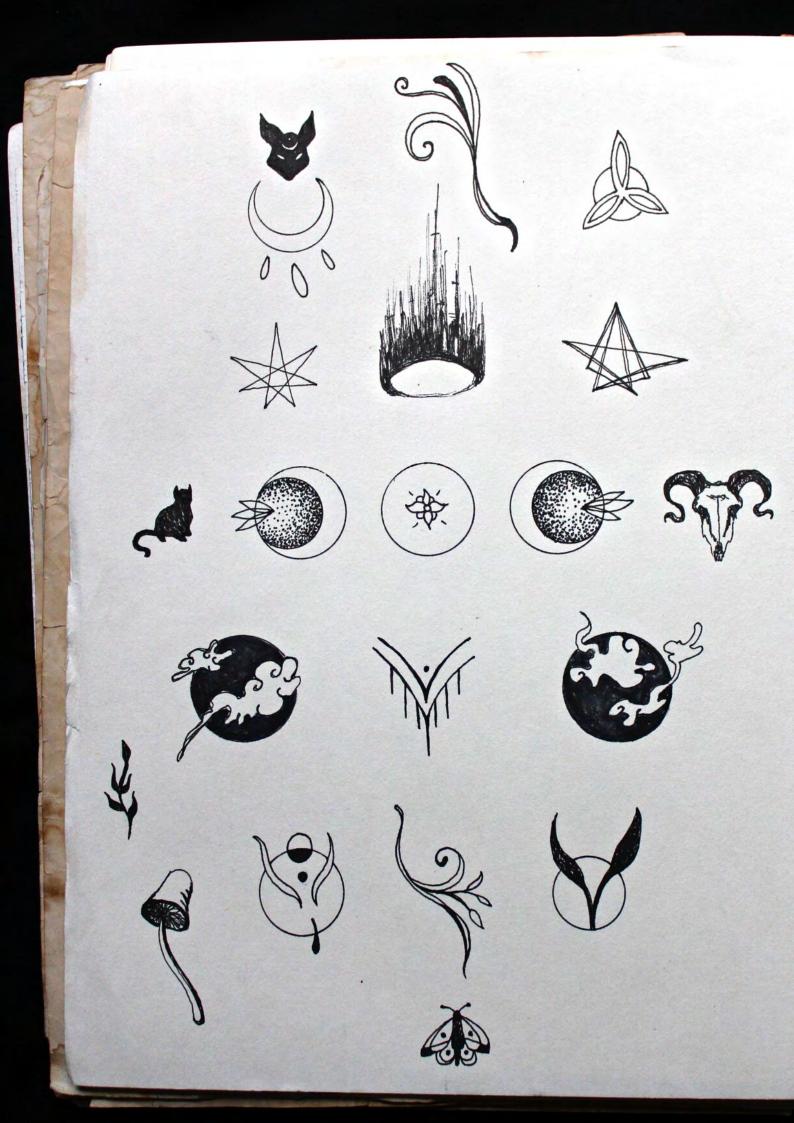


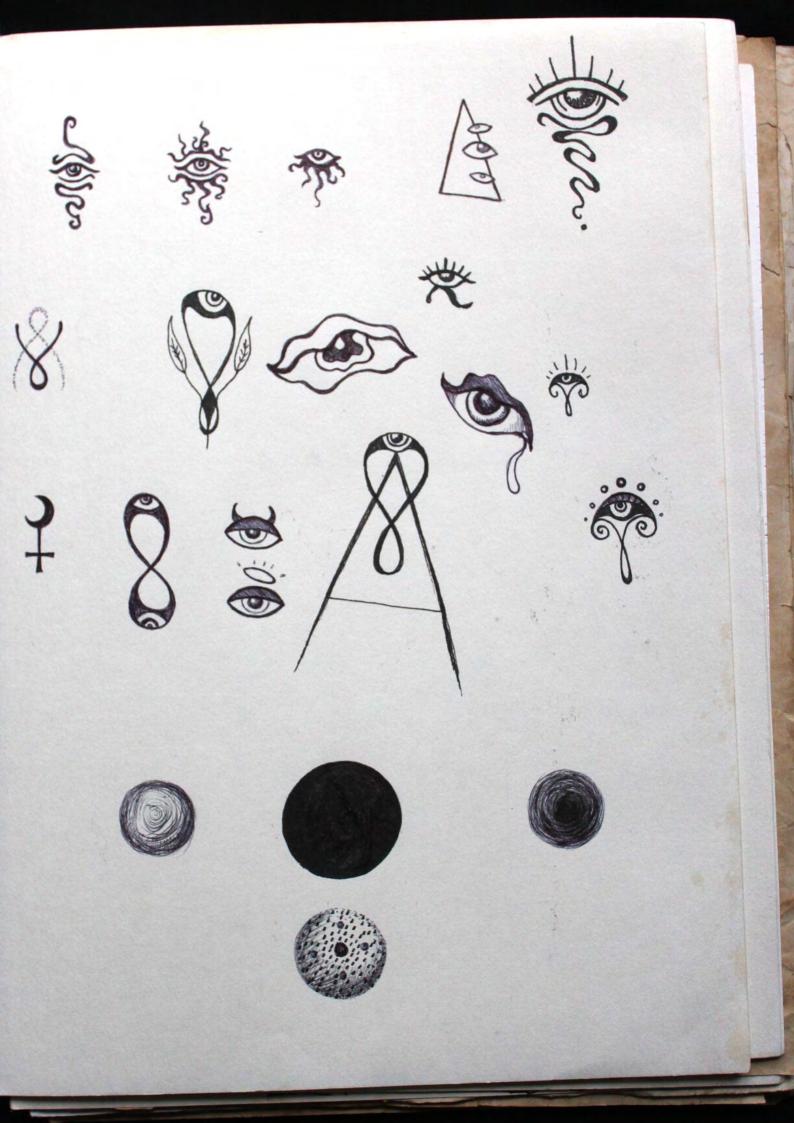


The witch's mark. XX X Carried into wood or stone usually near doorways or windows as a form of protection against evil spirits. The This was a common practice in medieval Europe where occult practices were a part of daily life. apotropaic symbols were also called: apotropaios a greek word Cho. bu. Ri - "I plea the primer of the universe here". · daisy wheel - six petal flower usually drown with compass · overlapping V's - marion marks - stemming from invocations of Virgin Heary for protection opentagons, mazes, crosses and diagonal lines other forms of production - concealments - hiding charms away in buildings. 











Invoking the Wildling



## Artist Bio



Livia Schneider's work beckons the viewer to return to the ancient wisdom of nature and the occult. While painting is her main focal point, her work takes the form of various multidisciplinary formats. Schneider's work aims to identify the divine feminine powers all around us, with a focus on alternative spiritual practice and natural healing. Her recent stylistic endeavours are mirror images in digital and paint format, bringing forth a sense of taming the chaotic patterns and energies found in nature by giving it the order of organic symmetry. This stylistic approach is inspired by the psychological studies done on the Rorschach inkblot test and the phenomenon of free association when looking at organic shapes.

Livia's work is intuitive and sensual, with a conceptual focus on the psychology and emotional catharsis we achieve through art. Her work aims to acknowledge the ancient wisdom of nature and indigenous knowledge gleaned from her experience of living and growing up in Africa

## Invoking the Wildling



Magic to me is discovering wonder in the mundane.

By exploring that which we usually suppress or disavow due to negatively othering that which we do not understand, we can unearth the many beneficial secrets of esoteric knowledge.

Finding the connection between two seemingly disparate worlds and detailing the similarities through my creative vocation is the aim of my work. I am the result of cultural hybridity, a western looking millennial female with deep roots in Africa, the wonderful and magic environment I have called my home since birth. Much of my life seems like a dance between dualities in all shapes and forms. Originating from the Namibian desert, my Wanderlust is calling me to the European forests to discover how these two worlds will collide. My art and creative expression is my tool for documenting the focal point of that collision. We fear the unknown, fear the darkness. But the darkness is our place of origin, and the place to which we will return. My work focuses on the healing energies found in nature and the wild divine feminine, with a touch of darkness. To me mirror images hint at something otherworldly, creating patterns and free associations that vary in interpretations from viewer to viewer. My current creative vocation was birthed from a place of darkness. When My grandmother passed away in April 2020, a huge internal shift happened.

Next two Pages:
"Memento Mori"
2021
Oil paint on wooden panel
300mm x 470mm







"Black Cat Temple of Bones"
2021
Found Cat Bones and Soil from Sacred Circle
510 mm diameter

To deal with the reality shifts due to the global pandemic and the passing of my grandmother, I began practising green witchcraft. I began working with the elements of nature to heal myself of the personal and collective trauma I was experiencing.

When planting a seed, we place it in the dark, when meditating and closing our eyes to rest, we return to the darkness. We are carried in our mother's womb in darkness before entering a life of light. With art as my therapeutic tool, I alchemise the darkness I witness within myself into something constructive. By engaging in ritual practice in my everyday life I summon the wisdom of the raw power of nature by interacting with the five elements: Fire, Air, Earth, Water, and the Spirit. I am an eclectic green witch, which means that I engage in several forms of witchcraft, with a tendency to work with the elements of nature. To me witchcraft is a tool for reprogramming the mind to think differently, to uncover the mystery within the banal. It acts as a tool that can connect the conscious and subconscious mind by creating new connotations and meanings to objects and practices, giving them a deeper meaning and value. Before creating, I do a womb meditation. The womb is considered the ultimate birthplace of unlimited creativity, for it carries life into existence. (A fact I learned while attending Josie Thorne's Full Moon Sacred Women's Circles throughout this year; see reference at the end of the text).

By connecting to that intimate energetic field, I ground myself in the creativity which already exists within me. To me, art is the definite proof of magic for we as artists create a symbolic language of emotions out of nothing, or as explained in further detail below, by communicating "with the muse". Artists commune with that transcendental realm of inspiration, for the sake of sharing the lessons, learned there with our community. Nature represents unlimited creativity to me, for there is never the same pattern occurring twice. As the legendary Terence McKenna articulates in his 1990 Lecture called "Opening the Doors of Creativity", nature is the origin of human creativity and logic.

By intertwining my ritual practice into my creative methodology, I have discovered various ways of engaging with the 5 elements, from having a daily morning routine, to building altars to connect with my ancestors and spirit guides, to recording my creative interactions with the elements on wooden disks in the form of art. These disks are tactile recordings of my interactions with the elements, an emulation of the mark makings the different elements make in nature. I aim to exhibit these pieces horizontally, as they resemble disc worlds or magic ritual circles. The disks showcase how there is no barrier between my rituals and my artistic practice. These disks act as a starting point for the viewer to understand my deeply personal and interactive relationship with the natural elements.

"Element Disks: FIRE"

Fire Disk 1; Fire Disk 2; Fire Disk 3

2021

Ash, Mixed Media on Wood

330 mm diameter

"Element Disks: EARTH

Earth Disk 1; Earth Disk 2; Earth Disk 3

2021

Soil from Sacred Ground; Mixed Media on Wood

330 mm diameter

"Element Disks: WATER"

Water Disk 1; Water Disk 2: Water Disk 3

2021

Mixed Media on Wood 330 mm diameter "Element Disks: AIR"

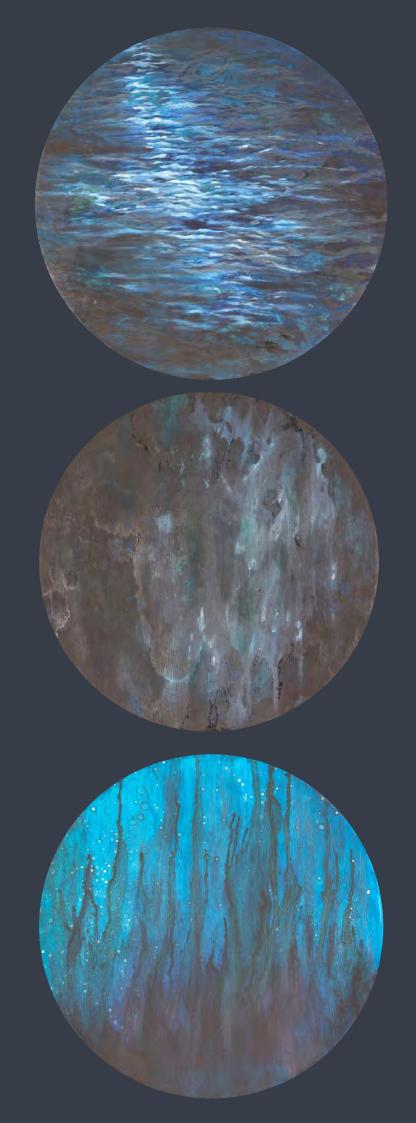
Air Disk 1; Air Disk 2; Air Disk 3

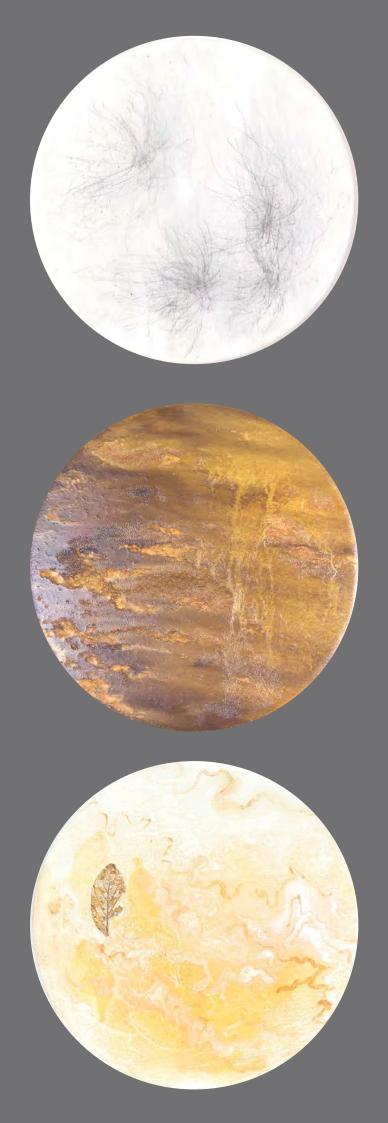
2021

Mixed Media on Wood 330 mm diameter









Using the words "magic" and "witch:" can cause a lot of confusion. The demonisation of the wild woman and the witch archetype due to colonisation and industrialisation will be explained in further detail later in the text. What I would like to make apparent in my work is that magic is perfectly natural and has been an intrinsic part of humanity since the dawn of time. As outlined in the popular "The Green Witch" book/manual by Arin Murphy Hiscock; Magic is not an illusion, nor is it an artificial manipulation of unnatural forces. Magic is in fact, the conscious and intentional use of natural energies to help attain a better understanding of the world around us for the sake of harmonising yourself and others to the world's energies (Murphy-Hiscock, 2017, pg. 24.).

Here I would like to refer to a notion put forth by Terence Mckenna in a lecture he offered on "Opening the doors of Creativity" in 1990; Mckenna likens the modern artists' role in society to that of the ancient archetype of the shaman.

The ancient shaman acted as a scientist, doctor, and communicator with the transcendental realms. With the aid of spirits, ancestors, dreams/visions the shaman took the lessons learned from mystical realms and shared them with their community for collective healing/ understanding. In the age of technology and science, the artist is one of the only individuals who communes with the transcendental realm and shares the lessons learned through their art. The artist communicates with this place beyond reason by engaging with what we define as "The Muse", and nobody bats an eye. In another context, this reasoning could be called lunacy, but in the context of creativity, the artist is exempt from madness. Mckenna continues that because of this power, the artist must be the mirror of society, to remind humans that we are of this transcendental realm. Our very consciousness and logical reasoning come from an inexplicable place. A realm of continually evolving novelty, such as which we can witness most evidently in the everevolving temperament and adaptability found in nature. We are not an aberration of nature. We are nature's envoys, but our masculine dominant social paradigm has suppressed this familiarity for the sake of industrial/capitalistic evolution. (McKenna, 1990)

With these notions in mind, I am inspired to remind my viewers of their wild origin. No matter how civilised we deem ourselves to be, we all carry that wild enigmatic seed within us. This reasoning inspired the piece below, titled "Wild Seed emerging". The subject in the centre is a Harpagophytum procumbens also known as the Devil' claw due to the hooks which cover its fruit.



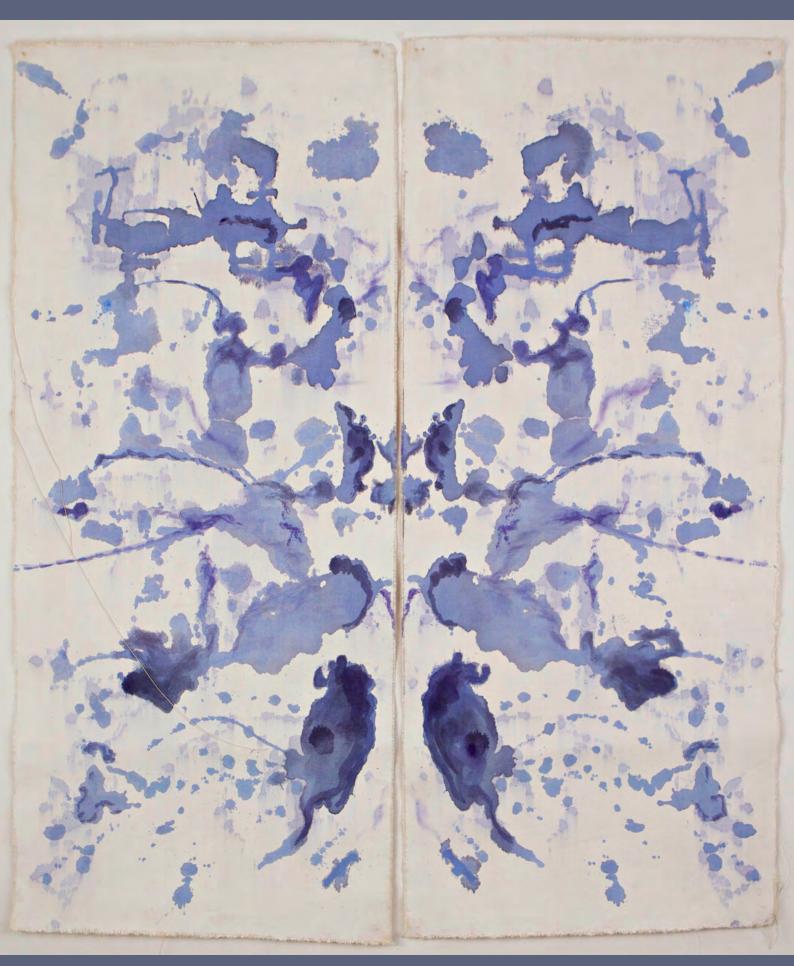
"Wild Seed Emerging" 2021 Oil Paint on Canvas 795 mm diameter Green magic is the art of learning to recognise the ebbs and flows and rhythms of life and nature. Recognising times for growth and times of stillness and identifying how these forces can offer lessons for our understanding. By engaging in ritual practice, like building altars and intentional engagement with the magical natural elements we can discover all around us, we can lead a more conscious, inspired and intuitively awakened life. By accepting that you are a contribution to the grand symphony of nature you can rebalance your life and start to apply that balancing to other areas of life (Murphy-Hiscock, 2017, pg. 25.). My work aims to make these practices accessible through a unique visual language, showcasing how simple it can be to access these magical phenomena within ourselves and in nature.

Art is the mirror of the collective consciousness. We use it as a tool to navigate the many ineffable experiences of the human condition. Visual cues are used to signal messages and emotions that span across social boundaries and time (Mckenna, 1990). My creative practice acts as a contact point that beckons the viewer to return to the ancient wisdom of nature and aims to help uncover the many magical practices which have been demonised globally due to colonisation and industrialisation. While painting is my focal point, my work takes on the form of various multidisciplinary forms.

I aim to identify the divine feminine powers around us, with a focus on alternative spiritual practice and natural healing methods. I am particularly intrigued by mirror imagery. By emulating mirror images through my painting style, I bring forth a sense of taming the chaotic patterns and energies found in nature and society by giving them the order of organic symmetry. This stylistic approach is inspired by the psychological studies done on the Rorschach inkblot tests and the phenomenon of free association when looking at organic shapes.

To me, symmetry is the ultimate feast of pleasure for the eyes, while creating new patterns with the help of free association. With this in mind, it is interesting to consider how we live in a world based on dualistic ways of thinking. Especially when it comes to othering or demonising as mentioned earlier in this essay, but also when it comes to seeking harmony and concord. Most of our relationships are based on symmetry and balance, the yin, and the yang. Empathy, Anger, and most other sentiments rely on this balance to function. When someone tells you "I Love you" it almost feels wrong not to say "I love you, too ". This is explained further after the following artworks which seek to address these ideas.





"Roscharch Ink Blot Test 1" 2021 Mixed Media on Unstretched Canvas 530 mm x 1240 mm



"Roscharch Ink Blot Test 2,3,4"
Triptych
2021
Mixed Media on Unstretched Canvas
730mm x 960 mm





The "Love or Hate?" diptych pictured above is a visual examination of symmetry in relationships. According to the case study explained in an article by Marie Hartwell-Walker on Psych- central website (see Bibliography at the end of text) it seems as though most of our relationship structures are based on response or feedback loops which are either Symmetrical or Complementary. Much like homeostasis functions in our cells, human relationships work on feedback loops which aim to balance one another out. Symmetrical relationships function on communication and reactions which mirror one another, while the complimentary relationship dynamic functions by one participant either yielding or supporting towards the other. The emotions must be kept in balance for the relationship to be successful. In the artwork above, one can't really tell if the skeletons of the two sabre cats are about to embrace in a wrestle for dominance or are calling out for each other in heart rendering longing in the transcendental ether.

Previous two pages;
"Love | Hate"
Diptych
2021
Oil Paint on Canvas
300 mm x 140

The text which has been a pivotal turning point in my creative journey is "The Farmer and the Witch, Uncovering the seeds of Indigeneity" by Nala Walla.

In the essay, Nala Walla defines how even the most civilised person carries a wild seed of Indigeneity within themselves. This seed carries the core truth of wild ancestral knowledge and respect for the land we live on and the community we share our lives with. The uncovering of this seed is pivotal for the personal growth of every individual.

Within the framework of this essay, indigenous people are deemed to be persons that have a deep ancestral relationship with a specific piece of land or area (Walla, 2013). Other words used to describe indigenous people are aboriginals, natives, and original inhabitants. Globally indigenous peoples have been displaced from their original homes, causing a loss of identity and cultural knowledge and practices due to the global slave trade and colonisation. This loss of culture is a direct consequence of western colonial social structures being forced upon these people, and in turn, has resulted in the hybridisation of cultures across the world, often rooted in western ontological views (Walla, 2013). Countless indigenous people were dehumanised for living independently of the colonising state's societal norms, as a means to justify these individuals' subjugation. This was a tool implemented globally for the sake of privatisation and industrialisation of the land. This led to the suppression of those who had intimate knowledge of the land they inhabited, especially farmers and healers or soothsayers living independently from westernised cultural beliefs. These people were labelled as witches and heathens as their ways of living did not align with the hegemonic belief systems of the colonising states, which often catered to patriarchal social tendencies. This was a direct attempt at undermining any form of self-sustainability and individualism in the wake of industrialisation. The farmer has been made into a fool, the soothsayers and healers into demonic instruments and women living alternative lifestyles were deemed as witches. These labels were often aimed at people of colour and anyone who did not align with the nation-states social norms. Whilst this demonisation of the farmer, the witch and femininity has been largely successful as is evident in pop culture, the persistence of these archetypical figures in our culture is a testament to their power. Nala Walla continues that by deconstructing the bad connotations placed on these archetypes by western society, we can begin the laborious yet rewarding journey of recovering the wild seed within ourselves.

The disparity of wealth is the biggest socio-political issue we face within the contemporary moment, with an ever-growing wealth gap that only continues to perpetuate the marginalisation of minority groups by keeping them in the workforce through identity and culture disruption elaborates Nala Walla. Traditional and Indigenous ways of living were not believed to be beneficial to the broader economy of the nation-states and thus these ways of living were deemed as less than. This style of Othering was and is still being used to this day as a tool to subdue resistance against the exploitation of indigenous land and people for the gain of financial, social, and economic control. Instead of focusing on the real issues like unequal distribution of wealth and the environmental impacts of industrialisation, it is easier to shift the blame onto scapegoats like "witches, Jews, terrorists" to ease general societal stress. (Walla, 2013). This tactic has been employed over millennia, driving us further away from the wild seed within. The author continues how the loss of indigenous knowledge systems are one of the root causes for the many ecological and socio-political crisis we experience today, and the only way to find solutions to our modern-day problems is to fully realize our connection to the earth and to reconnect with that core seed of indigeneity that lies dormant within us all. One of the items that has encapsulated my creative interest in many ways is the Devil's claw; the seed pod of a plant that is indigenous to Namibia and is used as a homoeopathic remedy to help fight inflammation and other ailments. This object embodies everything I have mentioned in this essay. Visually, the centre Devil's claw pod looks like a female ribcage to me. This is a plant that survives for years in the desert with no rain, the seed pod's tenacious thorns forcing its way into animal fur to ensure its propagation and therefore survival. Even though it is so tenacious it has the power to heal, the origin of the knowledge of this medicine comes from the original inhabitants of the southern hemisphere, the Khoi San people. The name of the seed pod would make many turn away and relegate it as an evil object, but it possesses healing properties and embodies ancient indigenous knowledge. This pod embodies the tenacity of the wild divine feminine forces of Mother Earth to me. I first came across this object as a child when I was hiking on a farm in Namibia. I remember immediately being bewitched by this thorn and the name "Devil's claw". It has always been on my mind since then, I used soil from my homeland in Namibia to contextualise the subject in my painting on the next page, titled "The Divine Feminine on home soil" Oil and mixed media on canvas. This is probably the most important painting within my body of work as it encapsulates the wild divine feminine, the uncovering of lost indigenous knowledge of the land and has a close link to my home country.





"The Divine Feminine on Home Soil"
2021
Oil Paint and Sand from the Namibian Desert
on Canvas
1700 mm x 1700 mm





Diptych 2021 Oil Paint on Canvas 2 x 400 mm diameter circles

Another surprising source of medicine with links to my homeland is the venom of one of the top human killers of the Southern Hemisphere, The Black Mamba. According to this article written by James Gallagher published by BBC in 2012, the venom of Black Mambas could be a better solution to painkiller medication than morphine, as it resulted in fewer side effects and a lower level of addiction in tests run on mice. (Gallagher, 2012).



This case study makes me question what other natural killers could have the medicinal healing power to replace some of the harmful substances we use as medicine in our modern age.

This inspired the following diptych titled "Black Mamba Venom Medicine" Oil on canvas.

Continuing the journey of investigating the contact point of dualities and the investigation into misunderstood or taboo practices/knowledge, I introduce The Witch's mark Video performance piece. (Still of the performance pictured to the right) https://youtu.be/irdP9MmmGI4 (YouTube hyperlink)

Title search: Engaging with the taboo: The Witch's mark Video performance piece by Livia Schneider aka SCHLIV002

In this video, I am tattooing myself with a Witch's mark. These are called Apotropaios, a Greek word that translates into "Turning away evil". These marks have been found carved into countless walls in houses all over the world, but most predominantly in Europe, specifically dating back to medieval times. These symbols were traditionally carved around the entrances of a house like above a door or beside a window, to prevent evil spirits from entering. Moreover, the witch's mark was used as a way of determining whether a person was a witch or not during witch trials (like during the legendary Salem witch trials), these marks could be a birthmark, a mole or scars. Many people, but especially women who did not fit into Christian patriarchal societal tendencies, were killed because they were deemed as wicked witches. Many indigenous people in Europe and worldwide for that matter were called unholy heathens or witches for the sake of disempowering them to take over their land and sovereignty as explained in detail earlier in this text. Tattoos themselves are taboo but correlating them to the witch's mark in these two different ways imbues it with a deeper significance. I aim to demystify taboo subjects as these with this performance. Witches are not evil; tattoos are not a blood covenant to the devil but an act of self-reclamation. Traditional tattoos date back to hundreds of indigenous traditional practices, and like so many things, witches' marks have been demonised and misunderstood when initially they were used as a tool for protection. This performance places the aforementioned ideas into the contemporary moment, by using new-age technology and a state-of-the-art tattoo machine to decorate myself with a protective symbol from medieval times.



My exhibition space aims to be a place of reprieve, I will be playing a sound in the space

which uses Binaural beats and the sounds of nature to create a calm and meditative

environment. I will have projection playing which encompasses all the different elements

in one video, using mirror imagery to stimulate and create alternative narratives in the

viewer's mind. This video acts as an introduction to the space and as a reminder to protect

the magical natural environments we call home.

Name on Youtube to search: Invoking The Wildling - SCHLIV - without sound -

#TOHELLWITHSHELL

https://youtu.be/3ENQ\_EeDDGE

The Video starts with an explosion at the Cullinan Diamond Mine, one of the biggest

diamond mines in South Africa, and continues to shots of nature and wildlife with small

imprints of human intervention in those scenes. The drone footage is courtesy of James

Stroud (aka Streezy artist).

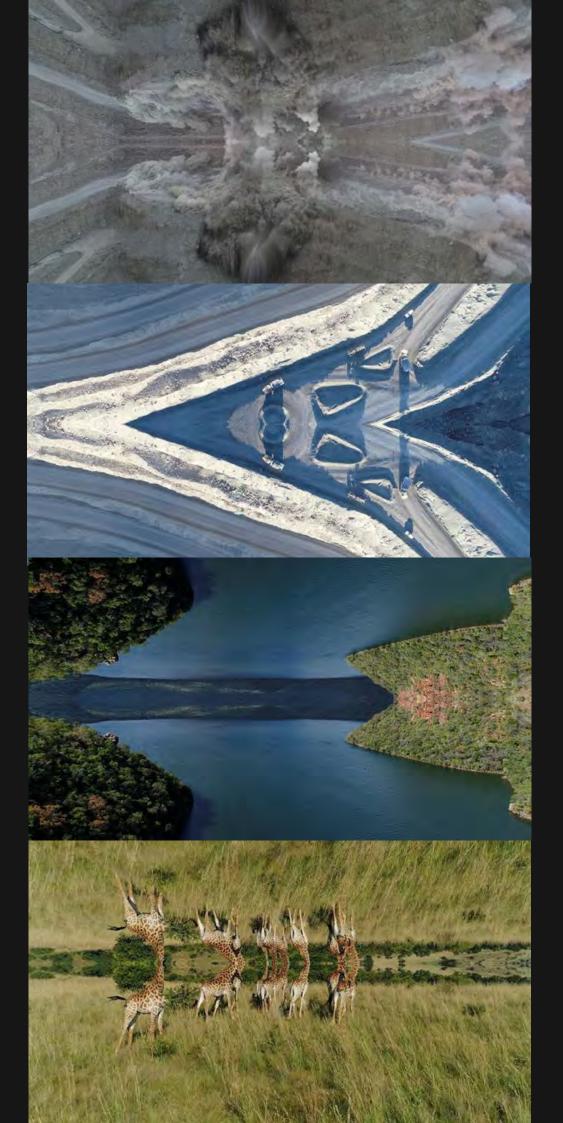
"Invoking the Wildling"

2021

Video Projection Installation on to canvas

Created in collaboration with James Stroud, Lorcan Berg, Storm Hartley

Canvas size: 2000 mm 1260



Video Write up:

We Object to Shell and CGG Seismic Surveys on RSA Coast!

Follow the link below to sign an important petition to stop Shell from destroying our beautiful South African coastline during whale migration season!

https://tinyurl.com/2ncu5452

Invoking the Wildling -

She is the one beckoning you to connect.

She is the one who makes you dig your toes in the sand,
look up at the glistening stars in the night sky,

And watch the dying embers of the flame late into the night.

Heed the call of the Anima. The divine feminine which has been suppressed due to the violence of patriarchical hierarchy enforcing the choice of one of the polarities of duality. She is calling out to you.

She beckons you to shatter those polarities and find commonality within the liminal space....

Industrialisation, capitalism and science have taken the world by storm, yet we have neglected the journey within. The enigmatic esoteric knowledge which is carried through human history for millennia.

The knowledge that we are ONE with pachamama. That we are ONE with a transcendental plane of creation and imagination.

We are not an aberration or seperate from the natural world around us. Our very logic and reasoning comes from an ever evolving space of unlimited potential. Such continuous novelty is only present in the harmony of the cycles and rythms of nature, yet still we wonder of the origin of our reason.

With this video I invite you to meditate on your place of origin. Meditate on that wild seed that lives within you. Within us all.

Remember the wisdom and healing of the earth. Remember that by saving and protecting the earth and nature around us we can save ourselves.

This drone footage was shot by James Stroud aka Streezy artist in and around South Africa.

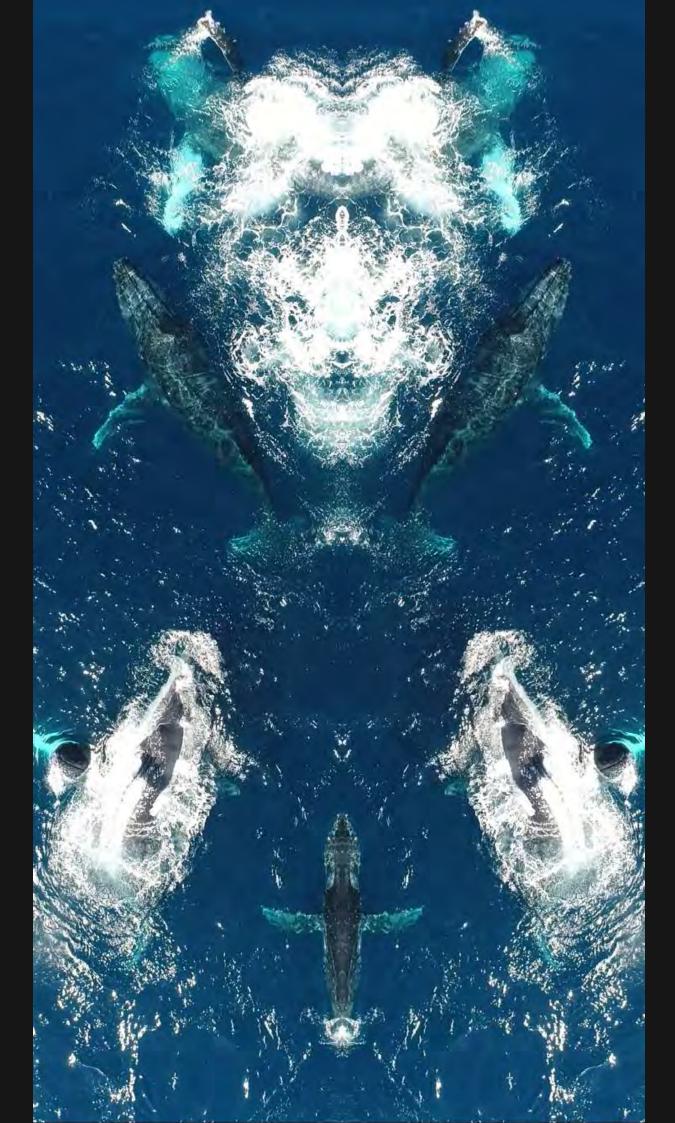
The video edit was done Lorcan Berg.

And a sound accompaniment is in the making by Storm Hartley.

Concept, direction and execution is by me, Livia Schneider.

I want to thank each and every person involved in this project. I feel so blessed to share creative space with you all.

Thank you.





"The Element of the Spirit" Mid year exam installation 2021

Exhibition Floor Installation Soil, Feathers, Leaves, Seashells, Ash; laid out in a spiral on the floor. As a final touch, I will be creating an even bigger installation than during the mid-year review of a spiral made from the 4 different elements which signify the 5th element of Spirit. (pictured to the left) This is partly performance and an installation piece, as the installation is quite a lengthy process and catalyses a meditative state when I engage in the creation of this piece. The spiral represents the continuous internal and external journeys we go on in life.

Installation view of the Spirit Spiral during the mid-year review.

Once the final installation is complete, I use a homemade smoke smudge stick of herbs from our family's farm to cleanse the space energetically and charge the space with my intention. Smudge or smoke sticks are used in many spiritual practices to cleanse a space and aid in spiritual connection. This is how I invite the 5th element of the spirit into the space.

Intuitive and sensual, my work seeks to recognise the ancient wisdom of nature and indigenous knowledge gleaned from my experience of living and growing up in Africa. I aim to deconstruct the demonisation of witchcraft and highlight the importance of alternative belief systems within the current societal paradigm. The practise of various forms of witchcraft creates alternative curations of knowledge and belief systems existing independently of colonialist narratives that still dominate society and spirituality to this day. Modern-day witchcraft has catalysed a vast return to indigenous knowledge systems and ontologies, contributing significantly to global decolonial practices. (Nala Walla, 2017)

In conclusion, I hope this body of words can encapsulate the ongoing journey of self-discovery and demystification I have been embarking on in my creative experiments. By investigating the themes of feminism, mysticism, witchcraft, taboo, and the spirit I have experienced exponential internal growth and hope to make these lessons accessible to others through my art.



Want to learn more about being a witch?

Here are some resources I would highly recommend:

The Green Witch: Your Complete Guide to the Natural Magic of Herbs, Flowers, Essential Oils, and More
Book by Arin Murphy-Hiscock

Women who Run with the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Women Book by Clarissa Pinkola Estés

The Farmer and the Witch: Reclaiming the Seeds of Indigeneity
Online Essay by Nala Walla

"Opening the Doors of Creativity" - Terence Mckenna Lecture from 1990 available on Youtube

Follow Annette Muller and her teachings: https://www.annettemuller.love/courses

Attend Women's Circles hosted by Josie Thorne: https://www.sync-in-flow.com/

For Inquiries or Queries please feel free to contact me!

All artworks in the last chapter of the book are for sale.

I would be beyond excited to engage in creative collaborations of all kinds.

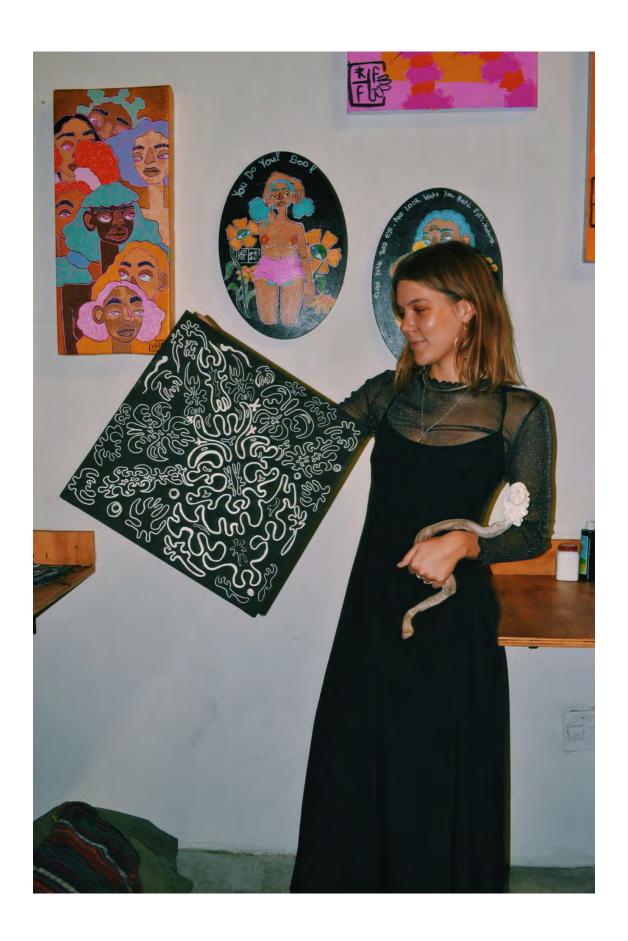
Engaging in creative conversations is one of my passions in life so please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, or ideas to discuss.

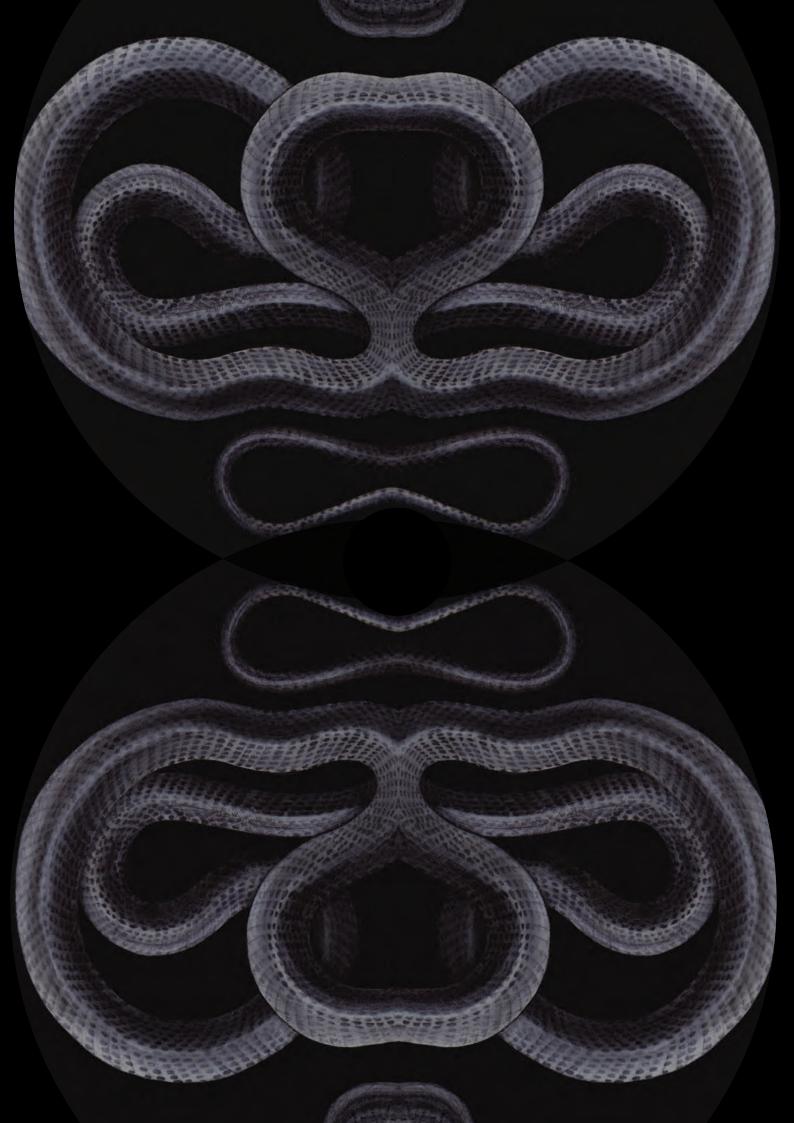
If you like you can follow me on Instagram @livia\_von\_namibia and follow my creative journey online.

My website will be launching in December so keep your eyes peeled for that!

Email: liviavonnamibia@gmail.com

Whatsapp: +27 734838437





Thank you to each and every person who has been a part of my creative journey!
From friends and family over seas, to the ones close to me.

Each one of you are a part of the process through your support, feedback and by simply having my back and validating me when I needed it.

Special Thanks to

My Mama Marita Schneider

My brothers Aren and Joost

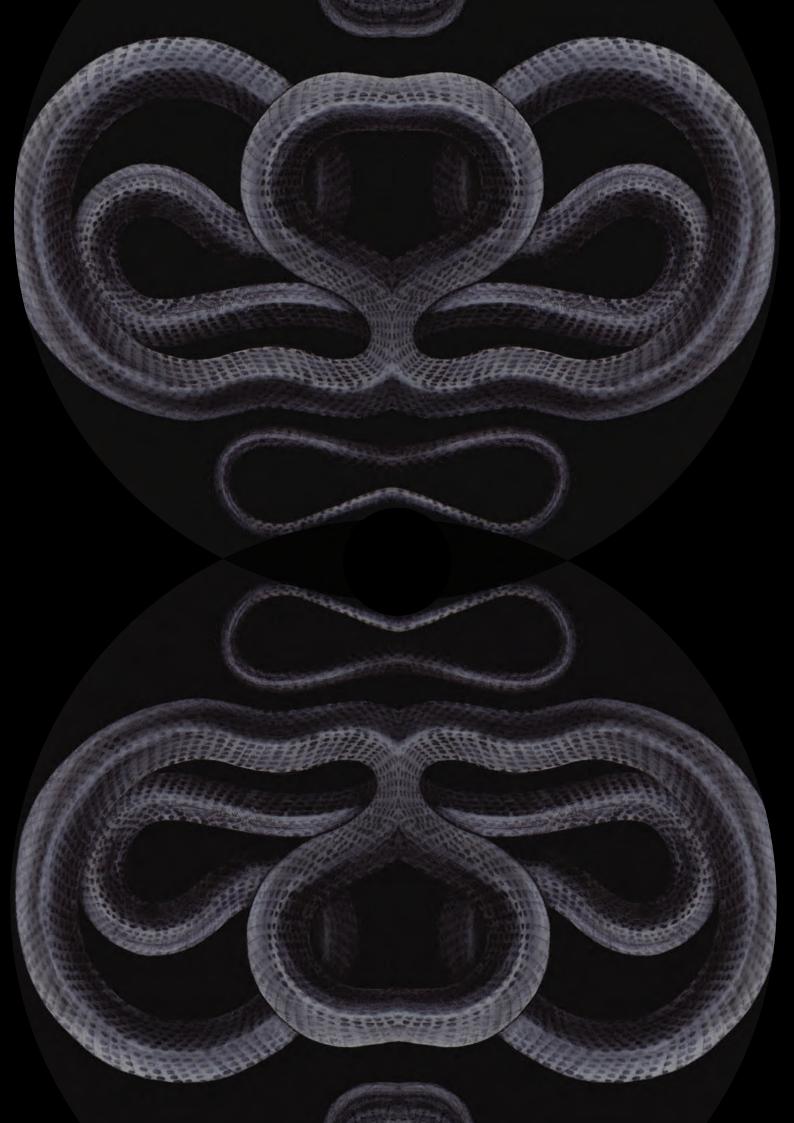
Andries LeGrange

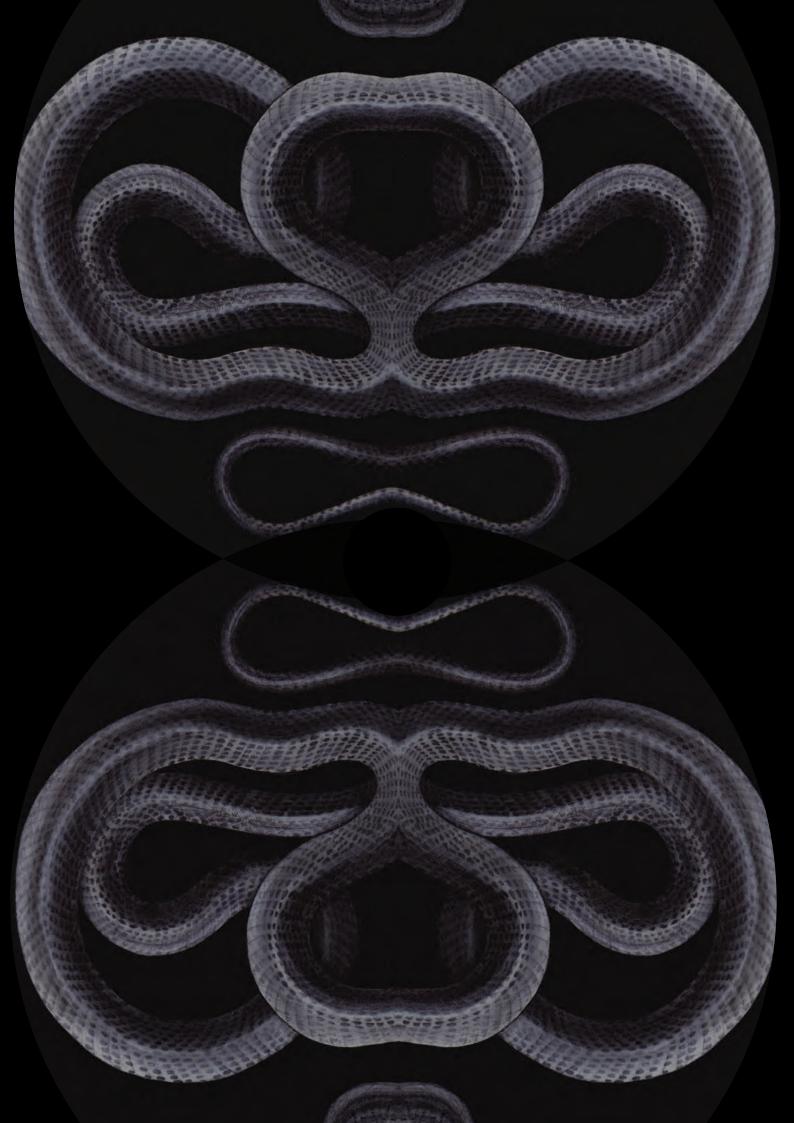
Matt Uwe Dahms

Jurie Moolman

THYS

Rebecca Moolman
Cara Van Niekerk
Amber Alcock
Aimee Pullon
Nicolene Burger
Robyn Steyn
James Stroud
Lorcan Berg
Storm Hartley







## THE LIZARD QUEEN