

MADE ROUTES  
Mapping and Making

Vivienne  
KOORLAND

Berni  
SEARLE

Curated by  
Tamar Garb

## Made Routes: Mapping and Making

Tamar Garb



*Made Routes* is premised on an echo. Invoking the exhibition *Trade Routes* at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Johannesburg Biennale in 1997, it refers back to this formative moment while altering its scope and scale. More than the replacement of a few consonants, *Made Routes* offers a partial reading of the earlier event through the work of two of its participants, as well as an homage to its Artistic Director Okwui Enwezor, who died in March 2019. The South African artists Vivienne Koorland and Berni Searle were both selected to be part of *Trade Routes*. Here we revisit, for the first time, some of the pieces they showed on that occasion, alongside more recent work that dialogues with their earlier concerns.

Subtitled ‘History and Geography,’ *Trade Routes*, in Enwezor’s words, involved a meditation “on the meanings of territory; the character of national affiliation and citizenship; how the flow of labour and multinational capital interact.” It addressed “patterns of migration from the local to the national to international sites.” It set out to question the rhetoric of globalisation and the dissonant “chords, anxieties, tensions and disturbances it had unleashed as well as the promise of a ‘post-national’ understanding of place and culture, citizen and stranger, amidst the flows and movements of modernity.”<sup>i</sup>

*Made Routes* picks up on the conjunction of ‘Mapping and Making’ from the ambitious remit of Enwezor’s undertaking.<sup>ii</sup> While his curatorial adventure involved six shows, nearly 140 artists and two cities, here we address the subtheme of cartographic contiguity and its material manifestations in the work of two artists who have consistently turned to the schematic scaffolding and suggestive underpinnings of maps, routes, plans and grids as well as life-laden materials and grounds.<sup>iii</sup> For Enwezor, art provides a space for “mapping new incarnations of the world” that neither illustrate nor theorise an argument but rather

**Above:**

Brochure for 1997 Johannesburg Biennale, The Electric Workshop, Johannesburg

**Below:**

Banner for 1997 Johannesburg Biennale located outside the Leerdam Tower of the Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

offer made and materialised imaginings of possible futures and refashioned pasts.<sup>iv</sup> In *Trade Routes*, both Searle and Koorland revisited colonial and imperial structures, registering the oppressive histories they embody at the same time as altering their rhetorical power and purpose. Central to both was the notion of ‘home,’ the ‘comforts’ it embodies and the shapes it connotes, however monumental or fragile they may be.

Searle’s *Com-fort* (1997) was shown in one of *Trade Routes*’ satellite shows (**Fig. 1**). Held at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town, ‘Life’s Little Necessities’, curated by the American Kellie Jones, focused on ‘women’s work’ from the 1990s, foregrounding sculpture and installation designed to activate its environment and context.<sup>v</sup> No building could have been more pregnant with meaning in the post-apartheid aura of the late 1990s than the Castle, a pentagonal fort built in the late 1660s by the Dutch East India Company and the oldest existing colonial building in South Africa. Over the years it had been repurposed, from housing settler élites, local prisoners and workers to operating as a colonial administrative centre and military headquarters of the South African Army in the Western Cape. Every schoolchild raised in Cape Town under Apartheid had the names of its five bastions encrypted like a mantra on their memories. Leerdam, Buuren, Katzenellenbogen, Nassau, Oranje: the titles of William III were recited along with the two times table, now recalled in a recent painting by Koorland (**Fig. 2**). During Apartheid, the Castle loomed as a forbidding edifice in a decrepit, de-populated downtown, symbolising the authoritarianism and strength of the State. A bastion of white supremacist bombast, it silenced everything but its own militarised might. My own memories of it are fraught and filled with anxiety. I stood there in 1974 waving my terrified brother off to the army as a new recruit under compulsory conscription. It was a place that filled us with fear.

By 1997, the Castle had been co-opted to the new democratic dispensation. Now functioning as an unlikely art-space alongside a military museum and café, it also provided a home for the recently integrated Cape Town infantry and various local ceremonial activities. But it remained haunted by its history and past. To take on the distinctive shape of the Castle as Searle did in *Com-fort* was to confront its semiotic and affective load.<sup>vi</sup> But to do this in the basement of the building in what were the original kitchens of 'Block B,' was to register its symbolic power as a shape, a sign and a space while referencing the labour of those whose subterranean and buried lives subtended and sustained its authority. These are materialised in *Com-fort*'s aromatic and ephemeral materiality. Made in poured paprika, it sat on the old stone floor, like a red-brown pool of pigment – a spice-filled, scent-rich form that reproduces the ground-plan of the colonial edifice while referencing the trade routes and commerce that engendered its very existence.

Crucial as a half way point between Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds, Cape Town was, in Enwezor's words, the place where globalisation began.<sup>vii</sup> And *Com-fort* registered the commodities, the communities and the cost involved. When it was originally installed in 1997, each of the five points of the Castle's powdery silhouette bore a resin-cased object that referenced the lives of local inhabitants. Holding a vase, a buoy, a nest, an ostrich egg and a tree stump, each cast 'box' resonated too with resin screens and still lives situated in the adjacent spaces that also registered local experience (**Fig. 3**). From clothes and skins to fish tails and trowels, the accretion of local stuff spoke to indigenous voices, once reified and silenced in museum show cases and vitrines, made concrete by a recording of a 25,000-year-old 'Bushman' dialect that played unobtrusively in the background of the basement, producing a sensory amalgam of smell, sound and sight.





Fig. 4

At the heart of Searle's spice-laden silhouette, a menacing presence was inserted in the form of a circular mass of barbed wire (Fig. 4). Half hidden and partially cloaked in paprika, it suggested the carceral economy and forms of exclusion/ subjection on which colonial sedimentation was based. One year later, Searle was to register the conflation of commodities and corporealities in her powerful *Colour Me* series, but here it was her own head and shoulders that were covered and caked in spice (Fig. 5). Like the pigments and tints of the studio or the exotic seasonings that travel from afar, Searle's 'coloured' body is made to read as a commodity to which value or meaning is ascribed.

For Koorland, *Trade Routes* provided the occasion to show two monumental mind maps that reference the cartography of colonialism. (Figs 6 & 7)<sup>viii</sup> These were exhibited facing one another in Enwezor's 'Alternating Currents,' which he co-curated with Octavio Zaya. Housed in an old industrial building in downtown Johannesburg, The Electric Workshop, the exhibition took on the core themes of the biennale: globalisation, displacement, migration, exile, identity, hybridity, placelessness, nationality, citizenship and home.<sup>ix</sup> In her letter to Enwezor written just after his studio visit in February 1997, Koorland wrote: "These two paintings reference cultural, geographical and metaphysical dislocations and grand historical and geo-political themes. Talk about GLOBALISATION AND LOCALISATION!"<sup>x</sup> Both of the *Local Monuments* works invoke African localities through words and inscriptions. But these are overlaid on European texts and sources, placed alongside classical facades and 'gothic' citadels so as to create unlikely and disruptive contiguities, both of time and place. Africa and Europe rub up and against one another dissolving distance and refusing the separation that continental logic demands.

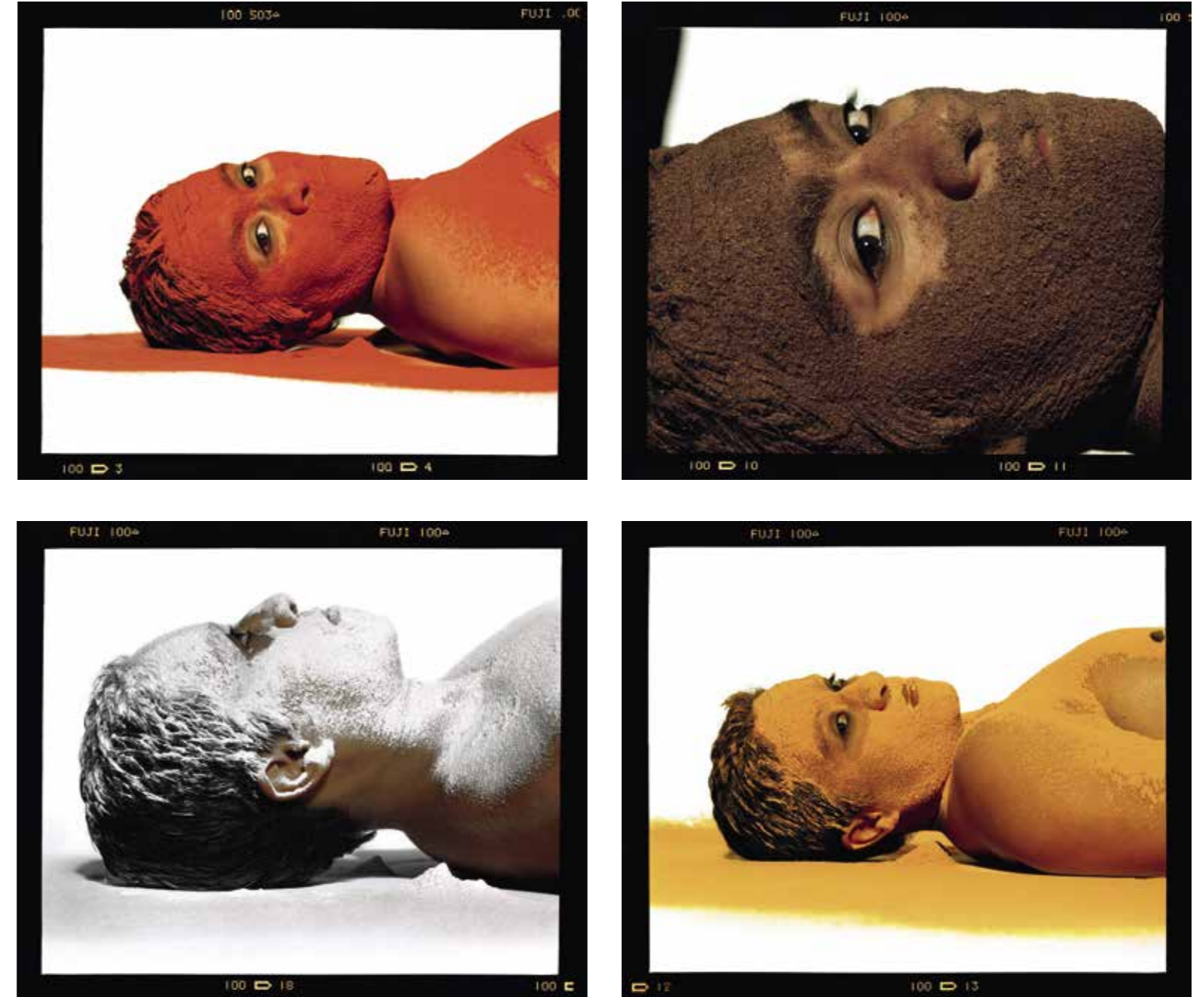


Fig. 5

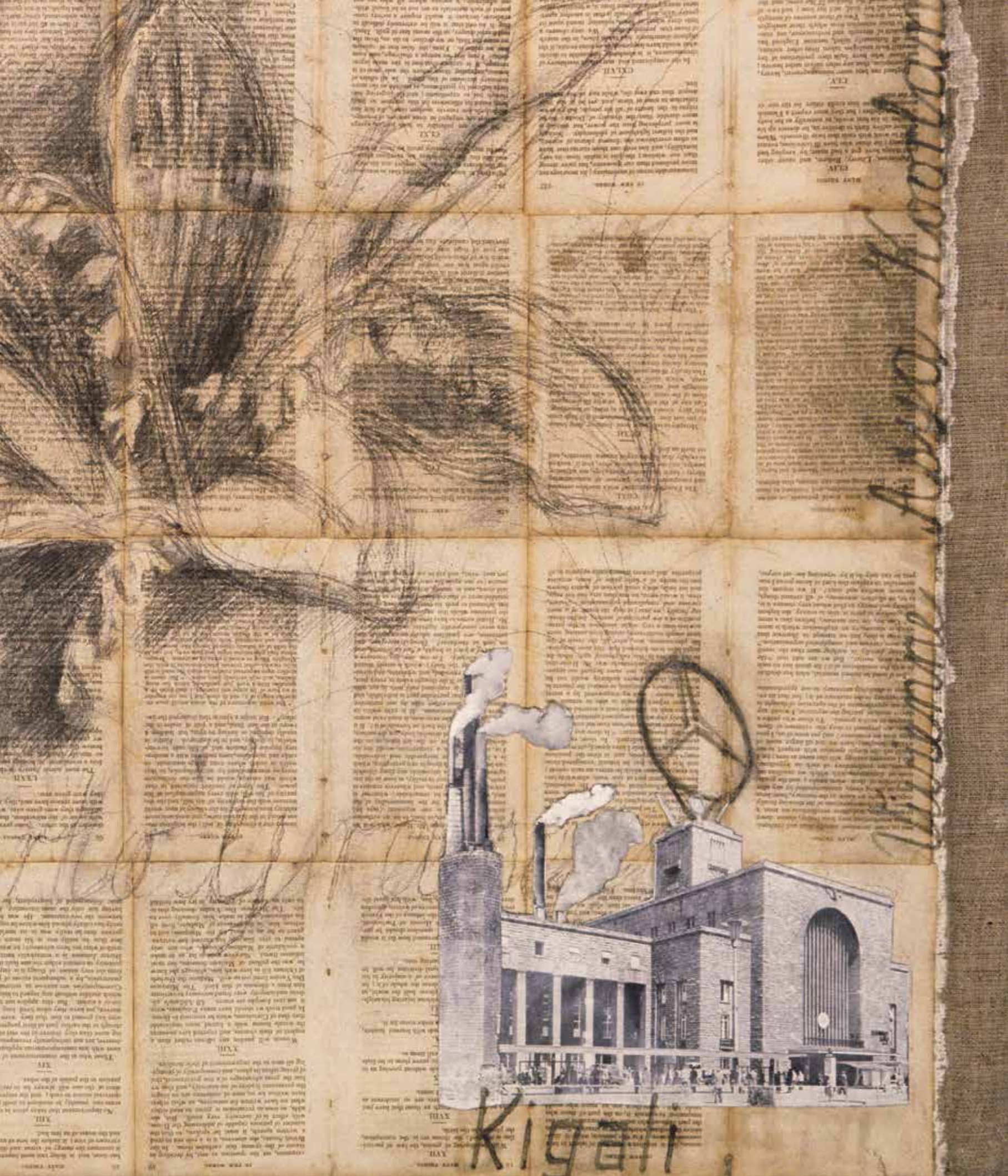




*The Local Monuments 1: Childhood* (1995) has its purloined pages, stuck onto burlap inscribed with Koorland's characteristic found alphabets and written in the cursive script of the ingénue learning to master her 'hand' (Fig. 6). These peep out at the edges of the work but are mostly obscured by the pasted pages of books that form the dense ground or the grid of representation. Dotted across the page-scape are collaged edifices, culled and recomposed from a pre-World War I compendium of 'Great Buildings of the World,' as well as tourist postcards from the same era. Koorland shows no respect for their 'integrity.' Instead she delights in remaking them, inserting the Brandenburg Gate (Berlin) as the midsection of another imposing structure, or placing the minareted Blue Mosque (Istanbul) atop the decaying Colosseum (Rome), like so many defunct and displaced memorials. Each configuration bears a flagpole or column culminating in mostly obsolete flags. They stand not so much for specific landmarks but for the process of memorialisation itself.

Alongside each structure Koorland inserts hand-painted place-names, taken from ordinary Cape Town locales that have none of the status of the flag-toting hybrids yet powerfully furnish the artist's imagination with key markers of personal remembrance and myth. We see Good Hope Seminary, the name of Koorland's primary school; Rosmead Avenue, where she grew up; and the Booth Memorial Hospital, where she was born. Inconsequential and trivial as insignia, these are nevertheless the markers of 'home,' recorded from the vantage point of the 'homesick' emigrant who has neither flags nor plaques to mark the places and pointers of youth. Amongst the personalised signposts are place-names with more public and political resonance: Polsmoor Prison, Hiddingh Hall, Roeland Street Jail. But even these share the surface with private and intimate tokens such as 'Pagoda Inn,' the name of one of the few Chinese restaurants of the time,

Fig. 6 detail



or 'Spotty,' a beloved dog-shaped structure on the roadside, once familiar to generations of local children. The esoteric sits alongside the overblown. Memory has its own scale. Deflating the pomp and ideological overload of 'great' architecture, the toponyms provide an idiosyncratic route through space, navigating the landmarks of European history with a story that comes from the self.

*The Local Monuments II: Central Africa* (1997) constitutes another personalised map but without the autobiographical inscriptions of childhood (Fig. 7). In that sense it mirrors the experience of Africa from the vantage point of a white South African child, raised under the yolk of Apartheid, for whom both 'Africa' and 'Europe' were made to seem equally remote. This map overlays African and European signifiers, plotting them in imaginary proximity. The lush vegetation is taken from the central panel of Jan van Eyck's Ghent altarpiece, *The Mystic Lamb*, and is magnified in hand-drawn charcoal alongside cut-out photographs of grandiose European buildings culled from a Cold War-era tourist publication entitled *Germany*. Koorland has combined ill-fitting elements from different structures, producing overblown edifices, 'chimney monuments,' which culminate in smoke creating an unlikely industrialised landscape. Across the surface the names of African cities are plotted: Maputo, Accra, Lagos, Entebbe, Kigali – forbidden terrain for South Africans raised under Apartheid-era exclusions and international ostracism.

By 1997, South Africa had emerged from its pariah status, the Johannesburg Biennale a marker of its newfound place and position in the world. But for many South Africans, 'Africa' remained a phantasm, its cities associated with exoticism on the one hand and media-saturated *miserabilism* on the other. Both are conveyed in Koorland's map. For alongside the evocative

Fig. 7 detail



place names and transposed lilies of the valley, overladen with Christian symbolism and erotic allure, sits a newspaper photograph of a lone, mine-mutilated African child. It is collaged and 'suspended' in the top left-hand corner of the map, beneath five World War II poison gas balloons that inject violence into the scene. Africa and Europe collide, wars connect, bodies and beings bear the brunt. On the bottom right-hand corner of the map, Kigali sits underneath an imposing classical construction, surmounted in Koorland's hand by the logo for Mercedes Benz (**Fig. 7 detail**). Colonialism comes freighted with capitalism, and it is this that subtends the map.

Nowhere is this better distilled in Koorland's oeuvre than in *Gold Africa*, a map painting in which the very materiality of the continent appears made up of one of its signatory and coveted commodities (**Fig. 8**). Covered in gold, Africa shines in the night sky, its riches providing a glossy veneer at the same time as registering its 'value' as a resource ripe for extraction and exchange. Like Searle's *Com-fort*, the stuff of the work signifies as much as the image it projects. A castle made of paprika, a continent made in gold pigment, a burlap sack once used to carry spice and grain now repurposed as the ground of a map: these materials register the many trade routes and made routes traversed by people and goods.

When Searle was invited to remake *Com-fort* for its installation at Richard Saltoun Gallery, she decided to rethink its domestic dimension, discarding the resin-locked, everyday objects that had resonated with the installation at the Castle. Gone too is the partially concealed barbed wire that once sat at its core replaced now by a cheap, gaudy blanket discoloured and disguised in the spice. The blanket does double service here. Symbolising personal protection and the quest for warmth, it invokes the homeless

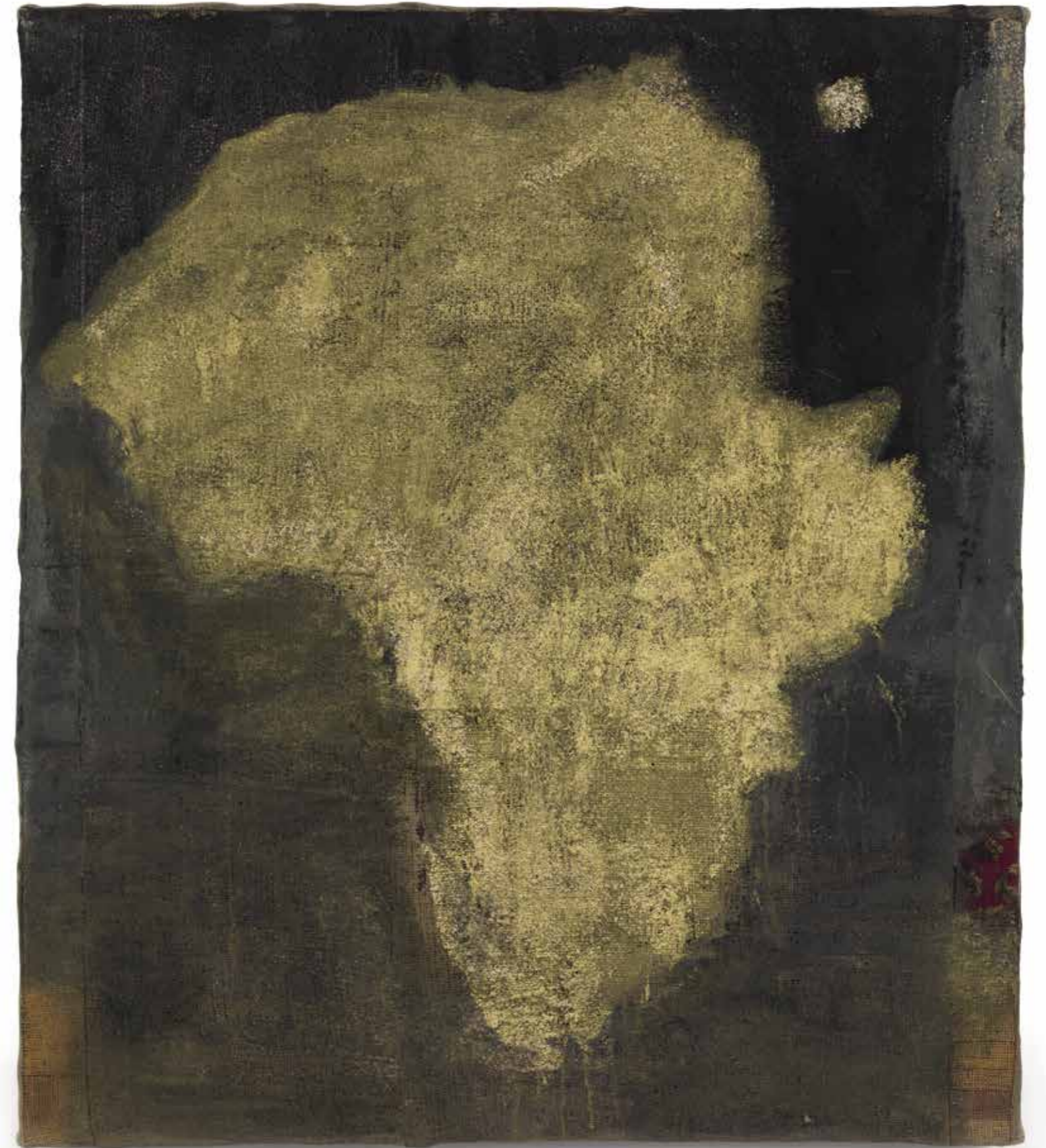


Fig. 8

itinerants who now seek shelter alongside the ramparts of the fort, placing their humble covering at its heart. But it also connects this work to a more recent photograph and video piece that address the struggle for sustenance and survival along the once-rich river that stretches along the Cape flats, reaching from coast to coast.

*Black River* (2019) shows a blanket-shrouded woman, seen from the back, who looks out at an apparently idyllic scene (**Fig. 9**). The grass is saturated green, the sun gleams on the water ahead. The growth is abundant and rich. But on closer examination it is clear that the situation is stranger and more unnerving than the colour-drenched image would initially suggest. Arranged on the grass in the foreground are some half-dead, grotesque-looking creatures, catfish caught in the fast-flowing river ahead, but now grounded and snaked on the bank. Plopped alongside them are discarded golf balls while a blue plastic bag sits half-hidden in the grass. There is nothing arbitrary or serendipitous about their presence. Rather, like the cardboard protective layer on which the figure rests, they are props, meant to speak to the broader context in which the scene unfolds. For the river that looks so promising at first is on closer examination being strangled by invasive hyacinths that both hug the shore ahead and advance into the water below making it impossible for local fishermen to haul in their catch from the bank. And the golf balls (rescued from the overgrowth surrounding adjacent estates and courses) and municipal bag (recycled and sold at traffic lights) speak to the informal economy that subtends the lives creatively eked out along the banks. Carefully composed for the camera, Searle's blanketed silhouette is posed alongside these tokens of resourceful recycling, while environmental damage and stilled life parade as picturesque and photogenic performance.





The very same blanket wafts, enigmatically, into *As The Crow Flies*, a 2017 video work that invokes the ecology and economy of the area while harnessing the technologies through which it is tracked (**Fig. 10**).<sup>xi</sup> Using Google Earth, the piece starts in Table Bay at the mouth of the Salt River on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean, traversing industrial heartlands, railway tracks and dense housing offset by golf estates and country clubs along the way (**Fig. 12–17**). Eventually the river, whose name changes to the Black and the Liesbeeck, goes underground and re-emerges as a network of urban canals. Searle's flyover footage follows the river's progress until it disappears, then tracks the landscape across densely populated terrain to the Indian Ocean coast at Strandfontein, reserved, during Apartheid, as a 'coloured' beach for the displaced and disenfranchised inhabitants of the Cape Flats. Orientating the computer-derived image to centre 'Athlone' at its core, Searle's mapping of 'home' via Google allows familiar names to sit reassuringly over the earth, but the distance and detachment from above as well as the matter-of-fact imposition of the labels mean that the information-rich, computer-derived footage only superficially charts the lay of the land. It is in the second half of the video that the human inhabitation of the landscape is felt through footage that is shot from below. Now looking up, seagulls are seen overhead while pink flamingos wade in the shallows of the water. But the bird life and beauty of the environment sit alongside its corrosion and consumption, a rich but finite resource for the livelihoods it must sustain. The cat-fish lie dead in the grass, soon to be sold in the fish market and served in the West African restaurants nearby. Golf balls, half-hidden beside them, remind of the repurposing of leisure for the scavengers and *glaneurs* of the Flats, and the fish-guts, flung to the paved roads by the seagulls, lie like carrion on the grey ground, a necessary dystopian signifier of flesh that is rotting, discarded and lost (**Fig. 11**). Soon though the rich floral of the



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12, 13, 14



Fig. 15, 16, 17



blanket washes over the landscape creating a colourful, if kitsch, counterpoint to its ineluctable and lamentable decline. For, the video seems to suggest, one creature's trash is potentially re-made as another's host or home and the life cycle of the river goes on, ending full circle where it started as it flows back into the sea.

If *As the Crow Flies* appropriates the latest digital technology to specify the particularities and peculiarities of a place, stretching as it does between oceans and bays, across flats and tracks, along a winding and serpentine vein, then Koorland's *Pays Inconnu* uses a different but equally mediated technology through which to imagine the over-determined surface of the earth (**Fig. 18**). Where in 1997, she had invented a cartography of cut-outs, brick-like pages, borrowed images and words, plotting the surface of the work like an explorer for whom present and past are fused, in her recent, more literal transcription of an historic and well-known map of southern Africa, she revisits the colonial imaginary through reproducing its material effects. Working from François Le Vaillant's famous *King's Map*, made in the 1780s for Louis XVI, Koorland freely interprets her source replacing the tracks and place-names of the explorer with an inventory of beasts who, though quoted from the original, appear strangely liberated from the taxonomic economy of Enlightenment rationalism to parade proudly across their terrain.<sup>xiii</sup> For the eighteenth century cartographer, who was also a hunter and collector of specimens, map-making was a form of 'mastery,' a means of making this 'unknown country' penetrable and manageable as 'knowledge' that could serve the interests of European élites. The result is a marvel of observation, invention and curiosity-driven design. But accompanying the cartographer's diagrams and drawings and notations came stuffed giraffes, birds and eggs. Dead specimens were part of the spoils of scientific scrutiny and the violence of



*PIPERA INCONNU*  
*Visione Hoja Koorland*  
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Enlightenment epistemology is only superficially hidden beneath its aesthetic veneer.

Koorland approaches Le Vaillant's map with due deference and respect. Its delicate and fact-filled intensity provides the basis for her subtle departure from its now compromised and contingent control. Viewed from the perspective of ecological ruin and species decimation, *The Kings Map*, with its diverse animals and plants, provides an inventory of paradise and plenitude. But already embedded in it, through vignettes, labels and lines, are the conditions for the decimation of this world. To 'know' the land and its inhabitants and to corral them into representational order and decorous design seems now, with hindsight, like a premonition of the inevitable destruction to come. Koorland's paean to the rationalist languages of cartography (here there is none of the metonymic disruption and paratactic play of her earlier maps) provides a fitting forum for her exploration of its terms. With her customary use of quotation and citation, she inhabits the language of the map, mimicking its contours, cartouches and shaded borders in magnified and amplified form.

But where Le Vaillant's creation was drawn on a measured grid in ink and wash, betraying no physical or indexical trace of the lives and the landscape it tracked, Koorland's stitched and stained surface carries the actual burden of its own material history and life. Made on recycled burlap that once held grain or spice, the material of *Pays Inconnu* bears the imprint of its former function as well as a trace of the journey it has made. Tattooed into its weft and warp are horizontal, faded green stripes that now form part of the plane on which the animals graze. And stencilled into its surface is part of the commercial label that reveals its origin and use: 'BEY PLC' and 'ETHIOPI' are visible alongside 'GRADE 2' amongst other numbers and letters. The effect is to undercut



the historical and semiotic resonance of the pictorial precedent with the assertion of an immediacy that is both physical and felt. Made from material once transported on the backs of others, once filled with the products of their labour, once exported in the holds of ships, *Pays Inconnu* is not only an image. It represents the material residue of the past, its trace, touched by the hands of those who worked the soil that forms the ground of mapping.

This realisation takes us full circle, back to the paprika-laden silhouette of *Com-fort*, installed in the Castle of Good Hope and invoking the inhabitants of this land and the circuits of exchange through which their lives and merchandise have passed. Made of a condiment that characterises spicy, local cuisine, *Com-fort* speaks also to the commodities that have fired global commerce and trade and made this port a pivotal point on the map. In 1997, the critique of globalisation was in its infancy. *Trade Routes* represented one of the first iterations of its material and aesthetic unravelling. And it was a visit to Cape Point, where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans are said to meet, that prompted Enwezor to make this his Biennale theme.<sup>xiii</sup> It was here, at the southern tip of Africa that he decided to focus on “the meeting of worlds,” he later wrote. “I wanted to make an exhibition that took globalisation as its point of departure... It would be of the globalisation of art, trade routes of arts and culture, circulating like commodities, merchandise, objects and artefacts.”<sup>xiv</sup> It would transcend the usual national imperatives and find a way to place South African contemporary art in dialogue with the rest of the world.<sup>xv</sup> It would go beyond the provincial and parochial to address the interconnectedness of people and things. Koorland and Searle produced work for the occasion that thematised the ‘meeting of worlds,’ using icons, words and materials that captured the locality of their birth-place, at the same time registering its connectedness to broader cartographies, markets

and histories. These themes have remained integral to their practice. Mapping and making from found materials and re-purposed archives, weaving poetry and politics together, their routes are made in a history and from a place that is and always was both local and global at once.

## Footnotes

- i. These ambitions were laid out in Enwezor's 'Concept' statement for the Biennale, published in the programme package given to all participants, 1997, p. 2.
- ii. *Trade Routes*, in the words of its Executive Director Christopher Till, intended to "establish the Biennale as the premier contemporary art exhibition on the African Continent." See the Preface to its monumental catalogue, *Trade Routes: History and Geography*, Johannesburg, 1997, p. 4.
- iii. Enwezor hired six curators to take charge of the six shows. They included Octavio Zaya, Colin Richards, Gerardo Mosquera, Kellie Jones, Hou Hanru and Yu Yeon Kim. See *Trade Routes: History and Geography*, 1997, pp 63–385.
- iv. See Okwui Enwezor, 'Introduction, Travel Notes: Living, Working, and Travelling in a Restless World', *Trade Routes: History and Geography*, 1997, p. 7. Enwezor invokes the metaphor of 'mapping' in relation to the curatorial endeavours of the biennale: "I hope the astute mediations and explorations of the artists could serve as primers for mapping new incarnations of the world and synchronously organised futures. Such mappings provide the key impetus of this curatorial endeavour where responsibilities are shared, while leaving room for individual curatorial maps to be drawn."
- v. See Kellie Jones, 'Life's Little Necessities: Installations by Women in the 1990s', *Trade Routes: History and Geography*, 1997, pp 286–289.
- vi. As Searle wrote in her proposal for the project: "The geographical, economical and political significance of the Castle makes it an appropriate site in terms of the broad concerns of the 2nd Biennale as elaborated on by Okwui Enwezor in exploring issues of 'immigration and migrancy, citizenship and foreignness, nation-ness and nationalism, territoriality and deterritorialisation ... colonialism and post-colonialism...'" See Berni Searle: 'Draft Proposal for Installation,' artist's archive.
- vii. Enwezor made this point in his introduction to the catalogue, "Travel Notes: Living, Working, and Travelling in a Restless World' in *Trade Routes: History and Geography*, 1997, p. 8. I have dealt with the position of Cape Town as the nodal point of modernity's global reach in relation to Searle's work in Tamar Garb, 'Revisiting the 1860s: Race and Place in Cape Town and Paris' in H. Clayson and A. Dombrowski, *Is Paris the Capital of the Nineteenth Century? Essays on Art and Modernity*, London, 2016.
- viii. These were shown alongside twelve other works making fourteen exhibits in all.
- ix. Enwezor lists these in his introduction to *Trade Routes: History and Geography*, 1997, p. 9. They are also spelled out in the letter that Zaya and Enwezor wrote to the invitees.
- x. See letter from Koorland to Enwezor, Friday March 21, 1997.
- xi. An earlier version of *As the Crow Flies* was commissioned by the Centre for Humanities Research, University of the Western Cape, for the exhibition *Athlone in Mind*, curated by Kurt Campbell at the Castle of Good Hope. The exhibition formed part of the annual meeting of the Consortium for Humanities Centres and Institute held in Cape Town in 2017. It was accompanied by a catalogue edited by Campbell and Heidi Grunebaum, which contains a number of speculative essays on 'Athlone' as a place and concept.
- xii. For a detailed discussion of this painting and its relationship to its eighteenth-century source, see Tamar Garb's essay 'Mapping, Making, Marking: Plotting the Work of Kentridge and Koorland' for the exhibition *William Kentridge, Vivienne Koorland; Conversations in Letters and Lines* at Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, 2017, pp 61–66.
- xiii. Enwezor, like many others, erroneously believed that it was at Cape Point that the Indian and Atlantic currents collide. That in fact happens between Cape Agulhas and Cape Point, but it is a powerful myth that still filters many a visitor's experience of the spectacular premonitory that overhangs the bay.
- xiv. See 'Reflections', Enwezor's interview with Joost Bosland and Michael Stevenson, published in *Trade Routes Revisited* (2012) Stevenson, Cape Town and Johannesburg, 2012, p. 11.
- xv. This ambition did not always meet with the approval of local critics and politicians. Criticism of the show was extensive with many commentators arguing that it had not adequately addressed South Africa's particular history and political challenges and that it was too focussed on artistic élites and international audiences at the expense of home communities. For a useful collation of critical responses, see *Trade Routes Revisited* (2012) Stevenson, Cape Town and Johannesburg, 2012, pp 22–30.

## List of works

[Fig 1.] Berni Searle, *Com-fort*, 1997, Installation view, Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town

[Fig 2.] Vivienne Koorland, *Castle I*, 2019. Oil and phosphorescent acrylic on stitched linen, 68.6 x 62.2 cm

[Fig 3, 4.] Berni Searle, *Com-fort*, 1997 (detail), Installation view, Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town

[Fig 5.] Berni Searle, clockwise from left: *Untitled (red)*, *Untitled (brown)*, *Untitled (white)*, *Untitled (yellow)* from the 'Colour me' series, All 1998, Lightjet on Fuji Crystal Archive Matt paper, 42 x 50 cm each

[Fig 6.] Vivienne Koorland, *The Local Monuments I: Childhood*, 1995, Oil, paper and glue on linen, 270 x 228 cm

[Fig 7.] Vivienne Koorland, *The Local Monuments II: Central Africa*, 1997, Oil, charcoal, paper and glue on linen, 270 x 228 cm

[Fig 8.] Vivienne Koorland, *Gold Africa*, 2011, Oil and pigment on burlap and linen, 94 x 83 cm

[Fig 9.] Berni Searle, *Black River*, 2019, Archival pigment ink on cotton paper, Image: 110 x 165cm; Sheet: 112 x 167cm

[Fig 10–17.] Berni Searle, *As the crow flies*, 2017–2019 (stills), Single channel HD video, Edition of 5 +1AP

[Fig 18.] Vivienne Koorland, *Pays Inconnu*, 2016, Oil and twine on stitched linen and burlap, 244 x 266 cm

## Vivienne Koorland

Born in Cape Town, South Africa in 1957, Vivienne Koorland's hand-hewn, habitually recycled paintings – along with her maps, poems, songs and entire stories – explore the vexed problematic of language and the impossibility of narrative in painting. Eschewing conventional objective painting practice on the one hand, and pure abstraction on the other, her representations on linen and stitched burlap of highly acculturated kitsch images of plants and animals, words, musical notes and quotations address the contested terrain of collective experience through overdetermined revisions of history, while trafficking in the tropes that signify them. Regarding herself as a de-skilled 'History Painter' whose project is subverting prevailing constructions of history, in a collision of accident and purpose where no trace is deemed too insignificant, she re-makes drawings, fragments and markings by often deracinated forgotten persons or unwitting artists into monumental paintings as an act of triumph and validation over rupture, ruin and annihilation.

Koorland graduated with a BA in Fine Art and Art History from the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town in 1977, after which she travelled to West Berlin to complete her Meisterschulerin (MFA) at the Hochschule (now Institut) der Kunst in 1981. She then spent two years at the Ecole des Beaux-arts in Paris, before arriving, via Bayreuth, to Columbia University in New York where she obtained her MFA in Painting and Printmaking in 1984.

Prominent exhibitions include 'William Kentridge and Vivienne Koorland: Conversations in Letters and Lines,' Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, UK (2017); 'Shifting the Gaze: Painting and Feminism,' The Jewish Museum, New York, NY, USA (2011); 'HomeLands/LandMarks: Contemporary Art from South Africa,' Haunch of Venison, London, UK (2008); 'Reisemaalheurs (Travel Woes),' The Freud Museum, London, UK (2007); and 'Contents, Songbooks and Other Paintings,' College of Staten Island, New York, NY, USA (2004). Koorland exhibited fourteen paintings in Okwui Enwezor's Alternating Currents: 2nd Johannesburg Biennale, 1997.

## Berni Searle

Born in Cape Town, South Africa in 1964, Berni Searle works with photography and the moving image. Often but not exclusively using herself in her work, she performs for the camera, producing works that explore issues of self-representation, the relationship between personal and collective identity and narratives connected to history, memory and place. While her works are often explored in dialogue with the socio-political legacy of South Africa and in relation to current day realities, her use of metaphor and poetic ambiguity transcend the specificity of context, drawing on shared human emotions associated with displacement, vulnerability and loss. The politics and poetics of place have always been of central concern in her work.

Searle has a master's degree from the University of Cape Town's Michaelis School of Fine Art, where she is a Professor and Director. Her work was featured in the 49th and 51st Venice Biennale (2001 and 2005 respectively). Previous exhibitions include 'Distance and Desire: Encounters with the African Archive at the Walther Collection,' Ulm, Germany (2014–2015); 'Earth Matters at the National Museum of African Art,' Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., USA (2014); 'Pictures by Women: A History of Modern Photography,' Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, USA (2011); 'Figures and Fictions,' Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK (2011); 'HomeLands/LandMarks: Contemporary Art from South Africa,' Haunch of Venison, London, UK (2008); 'Global Feminisms,' Brooklyn Museum, New York, NY, USA (2007); 'New Photography,' Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, USA (2007); and 'Personal Affects, Power and Poetics in Contemporary South African Art,' Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, NY, USA (2004).

In 2019, Searle was artist in residence at the Maitland Institute, Cape Town and the 'Featured Artist' at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown. In 2014, she was the Rockefeller Bellagio Creative Arts Fellow, and in 2015 she won the Mbokodo Award in the Visual Arts category. She was short-listed for the Artes Mundi Prize in 2004 and was the recipient of the Standard Bank Young Artist Award for Visual Art, South Africa in 2003, as well as the Minister of Culture Prize at DAK'ART in 2000.

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MADE ROUTES  
Mapping and Making

Vivienne Koorland  
Berni Searle

30 August—26 September 2019

**RICHARD SALTOUN**