

THERESA JO

Bio

Theresa Jo is a multi disciplinary artist based in Cape Town. She is the co-founder of Artvark Gallery in Kalk Bay which opened its doors in 1998. She completed her BA Jewellery Design degree at Stellenbosch University in 1982, and began working as a jewellery maker.

She completed a residency at Cite' Internationale des Arts, Paris (1985-1986) after which she returned to Cape Town. During this period, she designed the popular *Artvark Cutlery Range*. She went on to focus her practice on steelwork, etchings, ceramics and photography.

Theresa designed the well-known life-size 3D steelwork figures (8 in total), which form a permanent installation at Greenpoint Track A, and the steel wall panels at Knightsbridge in Century City. On the West Coast her seated steel sculpture, *Faan, a part of Kom Sit* (2015) resides, created for the *Stellenbosch Wordfees* initiative.

Themes that Theresa addresses in her practice include the beauty of everyday objects, her connection with nature and the plight of women as the preservers of life as well as notions around 'women's work'. This sentiment finds its footing in works such as *5 to 5*, depicting water being fetched by a group of women from 5 in the morning until 5 in the afternoon. This work formed a part of *My Obsessie – Die Emmer* installation at *Woordfees* (2019).

Artist Statement

Theresa Jo centres her work around themes of the beauty of everyday objects, her deep-seated connection with the natural environment surrounding her home in Cape Town, and socio-political and environmental concerns. In particular, she engages with the plight of women as preservers of life and ideas surrounding 'women's work'.

She describes her process of creating work as 'intoxicating'. Her artistic practice is unintentional, nearly meditative and distinctive. Her playful and explorative engagement echoes through her approach to materials. Theresa's unconventionality bends the rules, forming fresh, inspiring combinations resulting in one of a kind artworks unravelled through innovation and tenacity.

Her motivation is described by Joseph Campbell, "A profound respect for inherited forms has generally suppressed innovation." In relation to her etching and mark-making, she appreciates the interplay of aspects surrounding control and the unknown informing her process. It is this challenge, "to move from complete chaos on your desk to a sterile environment where mishaps are fatal", that she finds rewarding.

Theresa follows the tenet of "Undisciplined imagination with disciplined execution". This, in her view, unites the polarities of discipline – the element of uncontrollability in relation to the monoprint and the precision of etching work.

Against the backdrop of severe drought, her work lays bare the significance of an ordinary bucket as a ritualistic object; a symbol of life-giving. Showing the way in which this object is condensed as a tool that transfers feminine wisdom intergenerationally. Theresa is also interested in the preservation of the art of the San people.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Born: 1959, South Africa

Lives and works: Cape Town

EDUCATION

1982 — BA Jewellery Design, Stellenbosch University

1985–86 — Residency, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2019 — My Obsessie – Die Emmer, Woordfees, Stellenbosch

1987 — Etchings from Paris, SAAA Pretoria

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2022 — Sense of Place, Gallery 2 (The Printing Girls)

2022 — Print Show, David Krut Projects

2021 — Sculpture Garden, Franschhoek

2020 — Hermanus FynArts

2018 — 9th International Printmaking Biennale, Douro, Portugal

2016 — Animation, Nagte in die Tuine van Spanje

2013 — La Calaca Press Exchange, Texas

2013 — Greatmore Studios Residency Exhibition

2011 — Finalist, Vuleka Competition, ArtB

2010 — Triennale de Chamalieres, France

2008 — Messe Munich

1988 — Artists from the Cité des Arts, SAAA Cape Town

1985 — Anti-Racism Exhibition, Seine, Paris

PUBLIC ART & COMMISSIONS

2015 — FAAN (Stellenbosch Wordfees)

2014 — Curved Wall Panels, Century City

2013 — Feminine Burglar Bar

2013 — Track A (Green Point)

2012 — 800m Steel Wall Panels, Century City

RESIDENCIES

1985–86 — Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris

2013 — Greatmore Studios, Cape Town

MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS

Craft Art Africa — Susan Sellschop

Craft Art 1 & 2 — Dr Elbie Coetzee

Something Different — Orange Publishers

25 Yeas 25 Prints

https://www.wantedonline.co.za/art-design/2023-08-09-revealed-on-womens-day-a-passion-for-printmaking/#google_vignette

