

EVERARD READ

LIBERTY BATTSON

(b. Benoni, South Africa)

Liberty Battson is inspired by Modernism, more specifically the Modernist theories around abstraction and the pursuit for 'truth' and 'true art'. The artist uses statistics as an everyday way of representing 'the truth'. For almost two years, Battson has focused her research on Google, statistically the most used search engine, and tracked what users wanted to know the numbers of/ truth about. Topical issues such as xenophobia, ISIS and the refugee crisis are coupled with Aliens, Fidget spinners and Instagram. For example, one month Zuma is the most searched and be replaced by zombies the next, then to Zimbabwe as the most popular search item – as we choose what is relevant or search-worthy. In tracking what gets bumped off, moves up or remains, and recording the results, Battson aims to reveal something a little honest and closer to a truth. The data reflects current affairs and is constantly changing. Statistics are not only the subject matter of her work but also govern the abstraction – the colours and lines that represent these search patterns on the internet.

Battson takes her notion of tracking data into stripes one step further as viewers are now encouraged to decode the paintings by simply looking at the art and responding to how it makes them feel. Inspired by the notion of the physical effects of standing before colours much like Rothko, Kelly and Newland were investigating, Battson translated the searched truths onto the canvas using the theory of physical effect of colour. Before decoding the paintings viewers can now theoretically stand before these high gloss stripes and feel emotional ties to the art. Viewers are able to decode the painting via matching the colours of the video projection on display to the same colours on the artworks.

More recently, Battson has used Dadaism as her source of inspiration, producing ready-mades and using unconventional ways of transferring paint to canvas. Battson focused on celebrating abstraction and the century since the birth of the idea. Battson focuses on the aesthetic of abstraction to conceptually address bigger issues. It is in the audience's interest to decode the artwork through the playful engagement.

Liberty Battson is a conceptual artist born and raised in Benoni, South Africa. She matriculated from St. Dunstan's College in 2009 and obtained her BA(FA) with distinction for her work with automotive paint on canvas in 2013 from the University of Pretoria.

Battson has most notably won the 2014 Absa L'Atelier competition, was a 2013 Sasol New Signatures Merit Award winner and a merit award recipient for painting in the 2012 Thami Mnyeale Fine Arts competition.

QUALIFICATIONS

2013 BA Fine Arts University of Pretoria, with distinction.
Standex Qualified spray painter (level 2)

EXHIBITIONS AND AWARDS

2021 *Offering*, group exhibition, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa

2020 *The Fix*, solo, Everard Read, Johannesburg
Don't Ask Me Where I'm From, Aga Khan Museum, Canada

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- 2019** *On Being*, group exhibition, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa
Art's OK, solo, Everard Read, Franschhoek
TRIPE, collaborative installation, Absa Gallery, Johannesburg
Don't ask me where I am from, Galleria delle Prigioni, Treviso, Italy
Winter Collection, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa
- 2018** *Dada Data - A 100 year celebration of Abstraction*, Everard Read, Cape Town
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Everard Read, Cape Town
FNB Joburg Art Fair, Everard Read, Johannesburg
Innibos National Arts Festival, Nelspruit
- 2017** *Off the wall: A Group Sculpture Show*, Everard Read, Johannesburg
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Everard Read, Cape Town
Southern Abstract, Everard Read, London
Inside out, two-person show, KKNK Oudtshoorn
Curator of *The Confessional*, Absa Gallery and KKNK
Spectrum, group exhibition at CIRCA Gallery, Johannesburg
Truth Sleuth, solo exhibition at CIRCA Gallery, Johannesburg
FNB Art Fair, Everard Read, Johannesburg
Winter Collection, group exhibition, Everard Read, Cape Town
- 2016** Solo exhibition at Absa Gallery
Venice Architecture Biennale (Cool Capital)
FNB Joburg Art Fair, Johannesburg
Turbine Art Fair, Johannesburg
- 2015** Solo exhibition at Absa KKNK art festival
Nominee for Absa KANA Award
Solo Exhibition at Clover Aardklop National Art Festival
The Summer Exhibition, Knysna Fine Art Gallery
- 2014** Absa L'Atelier overall winner
Cool Capital Biennale
- 2013** PPC young concrete sculpting awards 2012 Fans Favourite winner
Turbine Art Fair
SASOL New Signatures 2013 merit award winner
Thami Mnyele Fine Arts painting merit award winner

RESIDENCIES

Two-Month residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris 2013-2014, awarded by the University of Pretoria.

Seven-month return to Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris 2015 in conjunction with the Absa L'Atelier first prize.

Two-week residency at Mas de Gravieres, Provence, France 2018.

Curator of a three-week residency at Mas de Gravieres, Provence, France 2019 awarded by the organization.

COLLECTIONS

Numerous private collections

Telkom Corporate Art Collection

Sasol Corporate Art collection

Ellerman House Private collection

University of Pretoria collection

Absa Corporate collection

Nando's Corporate collection (London)

Imago Mundi Luciano Benetton collection (Italy)