

BIOGRAPHY

PETER VAN STRATEN

Peter van Straten was born in 1972 in Johannesburg. He lives and works in Cape Town. Tragicomedy is Peter van Straten. Few contemporary South African painters have managed to combine such painfully poignant, personal truths with the outrageous misfortune and hilarity of the human conundrum, by magnifying the foibles and follies of brave, clueless protagonists in grave, forbidding landscapes. Van Straten's socio-political farces avoid overt finger-pointing, and so delve into the heart of what it is to be human. He investigates paradoxes: futility and hubris; creativity and destruction; design and coincidence; indifference and longing, and all from the very personal stance of a bemused yet defiant soul assaulted by the complex stimuli that constitute life.

"Nothing ruins a grandiose sense of self like a hyperactive sense of irony. I am prevented therefore from uttering with any seriousness an ambition that is non-the-less heartfelt: to celebrate, with a single iconic image, each uniquely intriguing facet of human existence. This task would of course take many lifetimes, and while I might conceivably have many lives it is doubtful whether I would remember my task from one life to the next; becoming instead the postmaster at Wellington, then a bureaucrat in Bangladesh, followed by a housewife in Durban – each without the slightest interest in illustrating the human condition. For this reason I am driven by a deep sense of urgency in this lifetime – straining against the undertow of time to expand my understanding of the light bulb moments I am determined to illustrate. Luckily for me I find the story of Sisyphus more amusing than tragic, and my favourite word in the English language is Nympholepsy, which, to paraphrase the Oxford dictionary, is ecstasy or madness caused by pursuit of the unattainable.

If anything it is reassuring to know that one's journeying will never be threatened by something as crass as destination, and it is pure bliss to paint that journey."- Peter van Straten

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

- 2022 *Towards the Astonishing Edge*, Everard Read Franschhoek
- 2021 *Obsession of Art*, Netherlands.
- 2020 *The Obsession* Gallery, Netherlands.
- 2019 *Rivers of Life* Obsession of Art Gallery, Netherlands
- 2018 *Magic by Image* - Obsession of Art Gallery, Netherlands.
- 2017 *Spotlight on Peter van Straten* - 20th solo exhibition, at The Obsession of Art Gallery, Netherlands.
- 2012 *Encounters on the Edge*, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna
An invitation from the depths, Casa Labia Gallery, Cape Town
- 2011 *The man on the street*, Everard Read, Cape Town
- 2008 *The Bends*, Knysna Fine Art Gallery
The Silence and the bell, Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town
- 2007 *Mystic Eye*, I-Art Gallery, Cape Town
Luminous mysteries David Brown Fine Art – Johannesburg.
- 2003 *Intimate History of Everything*, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna
- 2002 *Buckle your Seat-belt, Dorothy*, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna
- 2001 *Namaste* as part of the "Walking the Street" Festival - Observatory
- 2000 Third I Gallery
- 1999 *To Hell with Reality*, Intecaf, Observatory, Cape Town
Stellenbosch Chelsea Gallery, Wynberg
Clouds, Amani Wine farm, Stellenbosch
- 1998 Chalk Farm Gallery, London Labuschagne Residence, Durbanville
- 1997 Chelsea Gallery, Wynberg Arts Association, Bellville
- 1996 *Ad-verts* at Primart, Claremont

1993 Mellville Visual Arts Foundation, Melville

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

- 2021 *Return* Exhibition with Bowen Boshier, Cape Gallery.
Reco/Verso group exhibition, Breytenbach Centre, Wellington.
Persistence of Vision, Knysna Fine Art.
- 2020 *Wild, wild life*, Glen Carlou Gallery, Paarl
- 2018 Everard Read Winter Group Exhibition
20th Anniversary, Knysna Fine Art Gallery.
Drought, Artvark Gallery, Kalk Bay.
Illusive Reality, Cape Gallery, Cape Town.
- 2017 *Dream now, dream not*, the annual Winter Solstice Exhibition, The Cape Gallery
Reality Check, Everard Read, Cape Town
Hieronymus Bosch in Africa Exhibition, Woordfees, Stellenbosch
Summer Show, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town
Moor Gallery Franschoek
- 2016 *A Certain Kind of Madness* exhibition, Imibala Gallery, Somerset West
Break the Spell – Spreek die Woord exhibition – Woordfees, Stellenbosch
Spotlight on Peter van Straten – Obsession of Art Gallery, Netherlands.
Vernissage, Moor Gallery Franschoek
- 2015 Exhibition with Paula Vize and B. Ernest Manfunny at The Cape Gallery
Contemporary Masters exhibition, Obsession Of Art Gallery, Netherlands
Kunstenaar as Outeur, Klein Karoo Kunstefees
Exhibition with Bowen Boshier: Cape Gallery
Equus, Cavali Estate, Stellenbosch
BYOID, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna
Woordfees, D Street Gallery, Stellenbosch
- 2014 *Threshold*, annual Winter Solstice exhibition at The Cape Gallery
Grande Provence Estate, Franschoek
Groot Constantia wine estate, Cape Town
Re-phrase/de-code, D Street Gallery, Stellenbosch
Ressessie, Klein Karoo Kunstefees
Magicus, D Street Gallery, Stellenbosch
Cavali Estate
- 2013 *Possessed*, Everard Read, Cape Town
Summer show: Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town
D street Gallery
- 2012 *Winter exhibition*, Everard Read, Cape Town
Wild Life - Subtle connections, Cape Gallery, Cape Town
Other Worlds, Intoto, Johannesburg
- 2011 *15th Anniversary*, Everard Read, Cape Town
Art in mind, Brick Lane Gallery, London
- 2010 *Threshold*, Everard Read, Cape Town
- 2009 *Sex, Power & Money*, Everard Read Cape Town
The City Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town.
- 2008 *Beyond Matter*, Menier Chocolate Factory Gallery, London
- 2007 *These Four Walls*, Cape Town
- 2006 *David Brown Fine Art* Johannesburg.
- 2004 *'10' celebrating a decade of democracy*, Everard Read, Cape Town
- 2001 Graffiti Gallery, Cape Town
Telling Tales, Third I Gallery
Tastings - Klarity Gallery
- 2000 *Artists from the Cape*, Old Arts Gallery, University of Pretoria
Catharsis, Johannesburg

EVERARD READ | FRANSCHHOEK

Falling Awake, collaborated with Heel Arts Collective for the Once City Many Cultures Festival, Cape Town

- 1999 Lightworkers Conference - New York, USA
Peter Visser Antiques
- 1998 Peter Visser Gallery, Cape Town
- 1995 With Gail Catlin - Primart, Claremont
- 1992 Grahamstown Festival

AWARDS:

- 2011 Finalist, Sovereign Art Award Africa
- 1992 Murati Award for Best Student
- 1989 Sanlam Student Art Award

COMMISSIONS:

- 2010 Landscapes on the walls of the Da Vinci Hotel, Sandton, Johannesburg
- 2000 Statue of the Virgin for the Roman Catholic Church, Kimberley
- 1997 Two works for the home of Mr Mac Maharaj

PUBLICATIONS:

- 2021 Publication in Holland of "Achtbaan" book, with Stef Bos.
- 2013 Short story "Ventriloquist Voice" adapted for theatre by Callum Tilbury, and performed at The Little Theatre, UCT
- 2007 Magazine feature: Habitat Magazine (November/December issue)
- 2005 Contributor to "The Creative Block," Hollard insurance, Johannesburg.
Interviewed for "Kuns Kafee" SABC3.
- 2003 Contributes drawings to "Fooding about with Topsis"- an artists' recipe book by renowned chef Topsis Venter.
Included in "The Collector's Guide to Art and Artists in South Africa"
- 2001 Launches satirical newspaper "The Observer"
Featured on first Episode of "Innertainment" - SABC
Featured as first "artist of the week" at launch of Global Arts Information
Featured artist in first publication of "AHUM" magazine.
Short stories included in "Urban One," published by Spearhead.