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DIVING SKIN DEEP

SaySay.Love

Known simply as SaySay.Love, the artist tackles notions of identity, life and beauty through his creative works.

For most of my life, I hadn’t recognised that I am not able to see in 3D. For me, it was always normal to see as I perceive the world, and that is how I express it in my pictures. For me, it doesn’t matter what your eyes can see. In my pictures, I see the world through my heart,” says SaySay.Love.

The artist produces abstract art “where the fantasy and the inner freedom starts.” SaySay.Love explains, “Expressing my inner soul, my abstract world, is grown out of the real world” of his lived experiences. He values the brevity of the present moment, in which we need to be present, as we straddle between the distractions of the past and the future.

SaySay.Love describes himself as a philanthropist. “I think there could be a change for the better. As an activist, as an artist, I can only try to raise awareness and get the seed into our brains.” Being a bi-annual Cape Town resident, SaySay.Love feels the pressures of the on-going drought, especially at its peak last year. “We all felt how essential water is. Having no water, it felt like love disappeared and the base of our existence was about to be taken away.”

“My water series journey is not finished yet,” says SaySay.Love, who questioned the substance, “which is liquid, transparent and has no real form.” All of the photographs captured are done so using his perfectly “imperfect” iPhone. The artist is no stranger to the bounds of art, having lent his work to a haute couture collaboration.

SaySay.Love’s current ‘Skin Deep’...
exhibition is an exploration of the visceral experience, whereby unbridled expression of our innermost fears and desires. Using an AI-assisted painterly approach in combination with digital photography, SaySay.Love shines light upon the archetypal twins of the psyche, dancing on the edge of the raging chaos while moving gently to the tune of the tamed and civilised mind.

The ‘Skin Deep’ series steers away from perfection, making use of deliberate manipulation. Each canvas shatters a dark mirror of restraint and breaks the window wide open into the wilderness of each subject’s soul, bringing it out to the shadow and onto the surface — a self-portrait of the unconscious. “Looking at these pictures for a moment, they take me on a journey into the deepest darkest parts of my psyche. The place where all the pain, anguish and dark thoughts have, at some point, resided.” He says, “My voice roars” and then my eyes find the light ... I know with every fibre of my being, that love always wins, me a human filled with unfathomable love... Equilibrium is restored.”

Talking about one’s ‘darker side’ often conjures up the worst side of humans, “but perhaps our darkest fantasies shouldn’t be understood as all that demonic. Or at least that they can be much more compassionately appreciated as audacious, disinhibited, primitive, grandiose, or hedonistic – as opposed to, say, degrading, disgraceful, or nefarious.” He continues, “We all are driven by emotions, and they have been created out of our omens. Our emotions creating thoughts and those thoughts are forming our reality of how we see the world.”

‘Skin Deep’ is a departure from his previous body of work titled ‘Intimate Loneliness: Sex with things’ as the artist explores the darker side to identity. In that body of work, he uses photographs of mannequins as symbolism of the world that we currently live in, emphasising a
disconnect from reality. When looking at the emotional expression of a face, it “really depends on the angle from which we see,” says SaySay.Love. A mannequin’s expressions do not change, but different angles give us different perceptions, “So when I take pictures, I capture a mood.”

SaySay.Love, a German-turned-Capetonian, expresses his love for the country, and the ever-present energy of Ubuntu. “Even with all the difficulties and uncertainties in South Africa … here, a human being, a soul, counts much more. And, of course, there is the beauty of nature. That is unique to me. All of that fills my heart with love, and because I see the world with my heart, I am much more sensitive to receive love, and, of course, that enables me to give back love.”

For more information on the artist and his work, visit www.SaySay.Love.