The Art of Abstraction

SaySay.Love on making waves
By Sean Streak

"Abstraction is real, probably more real than nature. I prefer to see with closed eyes."
– Josef Albers

The definition of Abstract art is as follows: "relating to or denoting art that does not attempt to represent external reality, but rather seeks to achieve its effect using shapes, colours, and textures."

Capturing abstract imagery in his work, German-born SaySay.Love creates images of water that encompass emotion. Using his iPhone camera as his medium of choice – his work speaks of Cape Town's severe water crisis, while presenting his unique take on creating art.

While film and digital cameras have stood at the apex of photographic art, SaySay is testing the limits of this medium, and the impact of his abstract graphic works pay testament to this. SaySay's exhibition 'THE GIFT OF WATER' featured at GalleryOne11 late in 2017, demonstrated how far the medium has come, particularly in relation to high-end professional cameras. 'THE GIFT OF WATER' also did more than just transform the currents and unpredictable nature of water and the ocean into the artistic realm – it raised awareness around the value of this natural resource.

One such artwork that captures this tension around the current drought is Foreboding. Water shrouded in hues of dark currents draw the viewer into this void-like work – enticing one to ponder it further. The top half of the work appears to be chaotic and full of motion, while the lower half seems to be calm and ordered. Rich colours seem trapped behind a veil of darkness – visible yet unable to breach the folded contours that form out of the flowing water. These opposing vertices combined with the colours and title instil a strong sense of discomfort – a sort of fearful apprehension of what might lie below the surface. SaySay's work may be uninhabited by traditional portraiture or structures, but run rampant with emotion and thalassic imagery. SaySay's work is not only abstract in nature – but is often paired with poems that he himself writes – using these as guides to give insight to his works.

SaySay has been working closely with local not-for-profit organisation, Lalela. The organisation uses art to uplift at-risk youth, and designs a more certain future for them through the funding of creative expression. His support of Lalela speaks to his activism, where through his work he strives to make a difference.

SaySay's 'THE GIFT OF WATER: CHAPTER III' runs from the 22nd February until the 4th of March, 2018, at the Melrose Gallery. The exhibition is hosted in collaboration with Lalela, and all proceeds will go to the not-for-profit organisation.
'FOREBODING'
WATER SERIES, 2017

ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT ON HAHNEMUHLE BARYTA PAPER
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