



JODY PAULSEN

Artist Room

17.12.20 - 23.01.21

smac

PARADISE FOUND:

AN EXPLORATION OF VISUAL CULTURE THROUGH THE WORK OF JODY PAULSEN

Greeted by bright yellow walls, Jody Paulsen's works hold focus - they enclose and encompass the passerby, with figures towering above and flowers abundantly tumbling out of their vases - flourishing amidst the chaotic pulsations of colour that attempt to contain them. Even with the limitation of chromatics, Paulsen's floral arrangements sprout wildly out of their vases like sheaths. Paulsen's work is a cross section between the contemporary and the traditional - still lives as colour studies, flower arranging as meditation - taking the form of *Ikebana* - the ancient Japanese art of 'making flowers alive', a practice that dates back to traditional arrangements made for altars. In keeping with this, Paulsen's nudes speak back to the idea of a virginal Madonnas enmeshed with their modern-day contemporaries when the trope of the bond girl emerging from the ocean on a deserted island meets the characters we come across on reality TV shows, such as *Love Island*, and *Ex on the beach*, where the desire for virility transcends the need for innocence in a chosen one.

Paulsen's visual code picks up on the world around him. On entering his *Artist Room*, we are confronted by a trifecta of women assembled

from fruit cocktail slices - the holy trinity of saturated sunburnt hues. The *Juicy* girls emerge from the shimmering ocean like a mirage. The water behind them quivers in their heat as Lizzo's *Juice* echoes in their memory, 'No, I'm not a snack at all. Look, baby, I'm the whole damn meal'. Paulsen's paradise is constructed through mimesis. A by-no-means 'natural' red-head is flanked by two box-blondes - they stand alongside each other as one unit - like a nativity panel in a church looking down from its heavenly perch. The *Juicy* girls glorify the notion of the nubile woman emerging from nature as an icon of purist femininity - where the further away it moves from the natural and toward the obscure the more these women become parodies of themselves - with eyelashes so heavy they can barely blink. Within this arrangement, the smart girl trope, *Tasty* (2020), watches the panel of Madonnas from the corner of the room like a wallflower. With pears and coconuts for skin, she is an edible version of Jackie O, wrapped tightly in a pussy bow, beaming from pear to pear. 'She doesn't need the others, she's going to be just fine,' Paulsen comments. She is exonerated from the pack.

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Clique culture springs forth again in Paulsen's coming of age montages, spanning outwards to explore the vulnerability of boys and their almost inevitable descent into gangsterism on the Cape Flats. *Brothers with Imperfect Timing* (2020) references a documentary on Abdullah Ibrahim, a pianist and musician who hailed from Mannenberg - making note of how he associates the loss of innocence with the place he grew up in, eventually leaving South Africa. Paulsen collages gang signs alongside military insignia, pointing out the convergence of violence across cultures, speaking back to how colonial rule and its legacy have influenced the current landscape of toxic masculinity in South Africa.

4 Spoilt Boyz (2020) is a coming of age drama, engaging in multiple acts. Paulsen describes the work as encompassing 'Coloured boyhood nostalgia' complete with the Jumpman from the original Nike Air Jordan's campaign. Here, the Jumpman is beheaded midair by the words 'Dead or Alive' strung across his waist like a literal checkerboard finish line that cuts both the body, and the artwork in

half. The visual symbology of the lower panel's diorama is encased in a stamp-like trimming, distancing the imagery both in space and time. It is removed from the present but brought into focus with the depiction of the Kramat of Mohamed Hassen Ghaibie, situated in Cape Town on Signal Hill. The image is placed front and centre as a site of memory and spectacle, tying together religious rituals with other boyish ritualistic followings with the likes of sports teams, souped-up cars as status symbols and the depiction of the fast and the furious. Live fast, die young is the pervasive narrative of the vernacular - words often written in vinyl on the back windshield of the car, with prayer beads or a tiny plastic Jesus swaying over the dashboard.

A Thing of Beauty (2020) focuses on a building which used to be called the Luxurama, located in Park Road, Wynberg in Cape Town - a mixed race cinema that served multiple generations over the course of the apartheid era as a meeting place of civic duty and a hub of political awareness. In its peak, it had the largest screen in the country while also functioning as a theatre for performances of

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various kinds. For Paulsen, the Luxurama is reminiscent of the nostalgia as experienced by his mother for whom the space was a gathering place and held many good memories. But the Luxurama was more than that to many, as a space that instigated public awareness of the atrocities of 1985, the year in which student protests resulted in the arrest and conviction of seven youths aged between 14 and 18 who were detained, charged with treason and imprisoned in Pollsmoor, a maximum security prison, for two years as a way of making an example of them. The incident sparked a shift in the political climate, which banded communities together who were previously pitted against each other. The physical space functions as an icon of solidarity and community - Paulsen's work is an ode to the space as a memorial and proposition of the building as a heritage site.

Paulsen's felt collages are politically aware and have a way of exploring culture through its visual footprint with nuance and ease. In flattening images, he summarises, in his caricatures, he levels the playing fields, even in his loudest works, his palette is limited. The works

present as odes to brighter days, postcards to the past and to the future that bear witness to the barrage of visual media that assault us in our everyday commutes. Paulsen takes note of the language of the memoir, and translates it into tapestries of billboard dialect, ready for instant consumption, enticing in the softness of the folds of the felt, and the familiarity of repetition.



Jody Paulsen | Artist Room | 2020 | Installation View



Jody Paulsen
4 Spoilt Boyz
2020
Felt Collage
253 x 279 cm



Jody Paulsen
Brothers with Imperfect Timing
 2020
 Felt Collage
 255 x 227 cm



Jody Paulsen
A Thing of Beauty
2020
Felt Collage
263.5 x 218 cm



Jody Paulsen
4 Spoilt Boyz (Detail)
2020
Felt Collage
253 x 279 cm



Jody Paulsen
Midnight Blue and Ivory I
 2020
 Felt Collage
 89 x 64 cm



Jody Paulsen
Midnight Blue and Ivory II
 2020
 Felt Collage
 76 x 58 cm



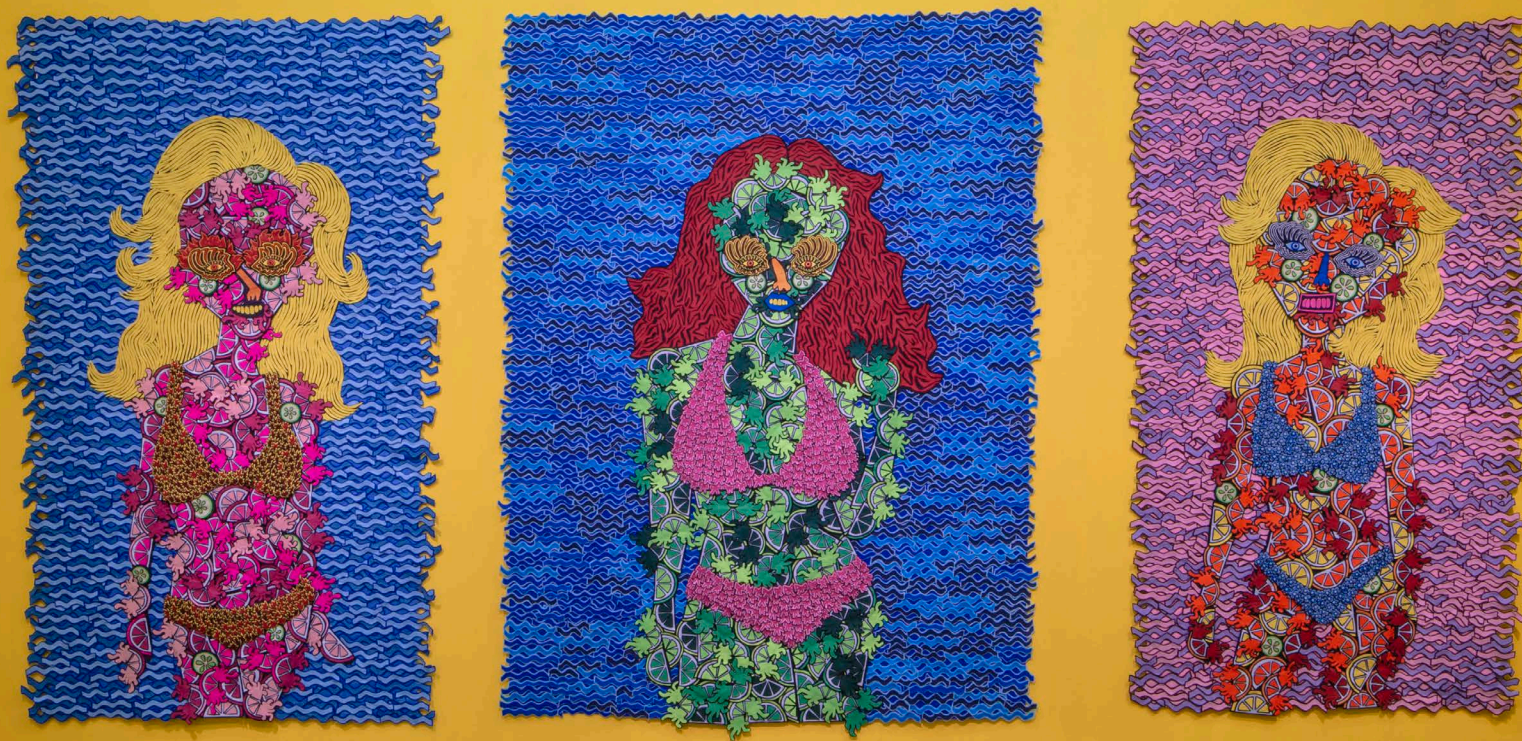
Jody Paulsen
Midnight Blue and Ivory IV
 2020
 Felt Collage
 82 x 64 cm



Jody Paulsen
Midnight Blue and Ivory III
 2020
 Felt Collage
 79 x 59.5 cm



Jody Paulsen
Midnight Blue and Ivory I (Detail)
2020
Felt Collage
89 x 64 cm



Jody Paulsen | Artist Room | 2020 | Installation View



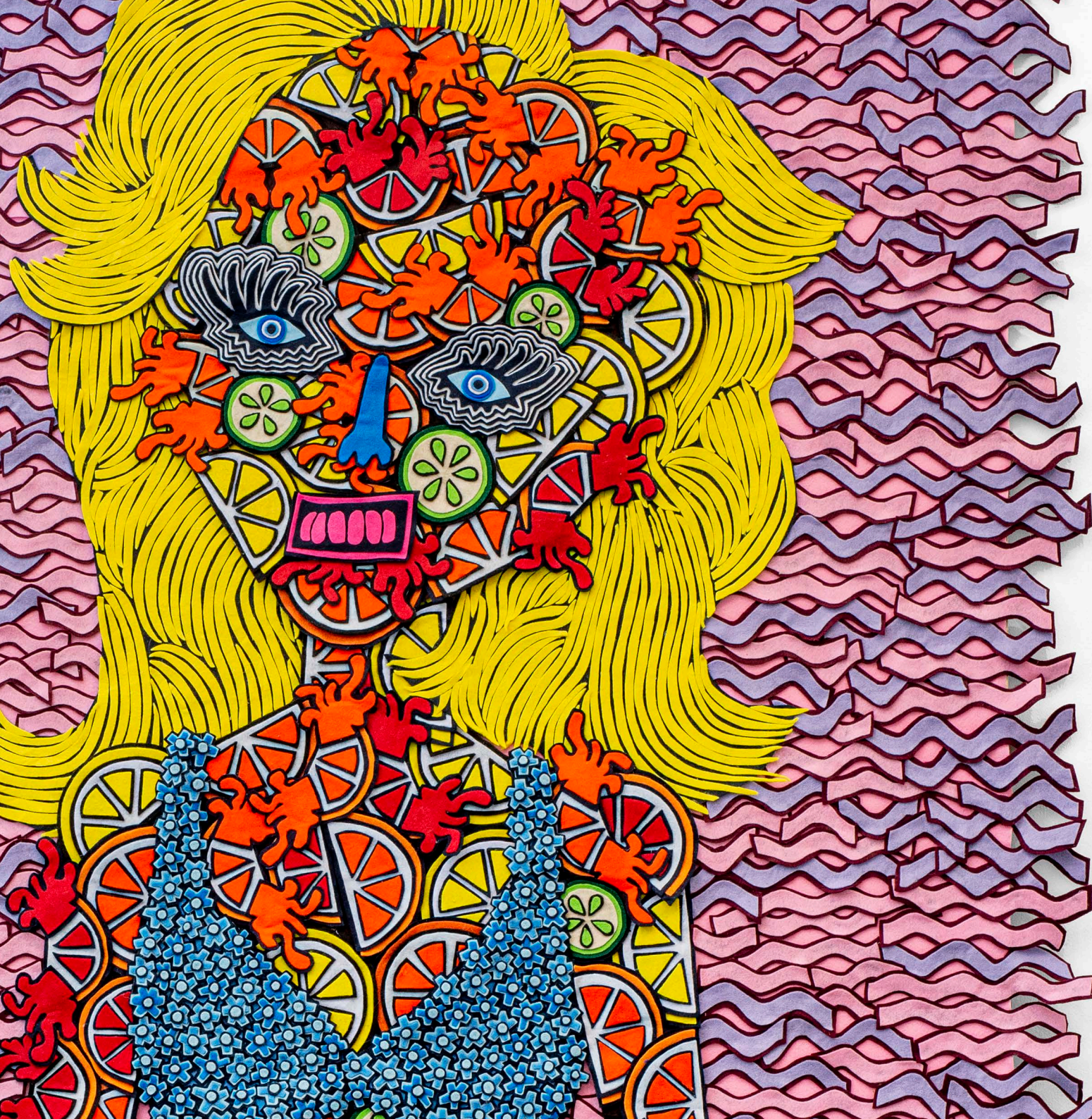
Jody Paulsen
Juicy II
2020
Felt Collage
247.5 x 156.5 cm



Jody Paulsen
Juicy III
2020
Felt
251 x 190 cm



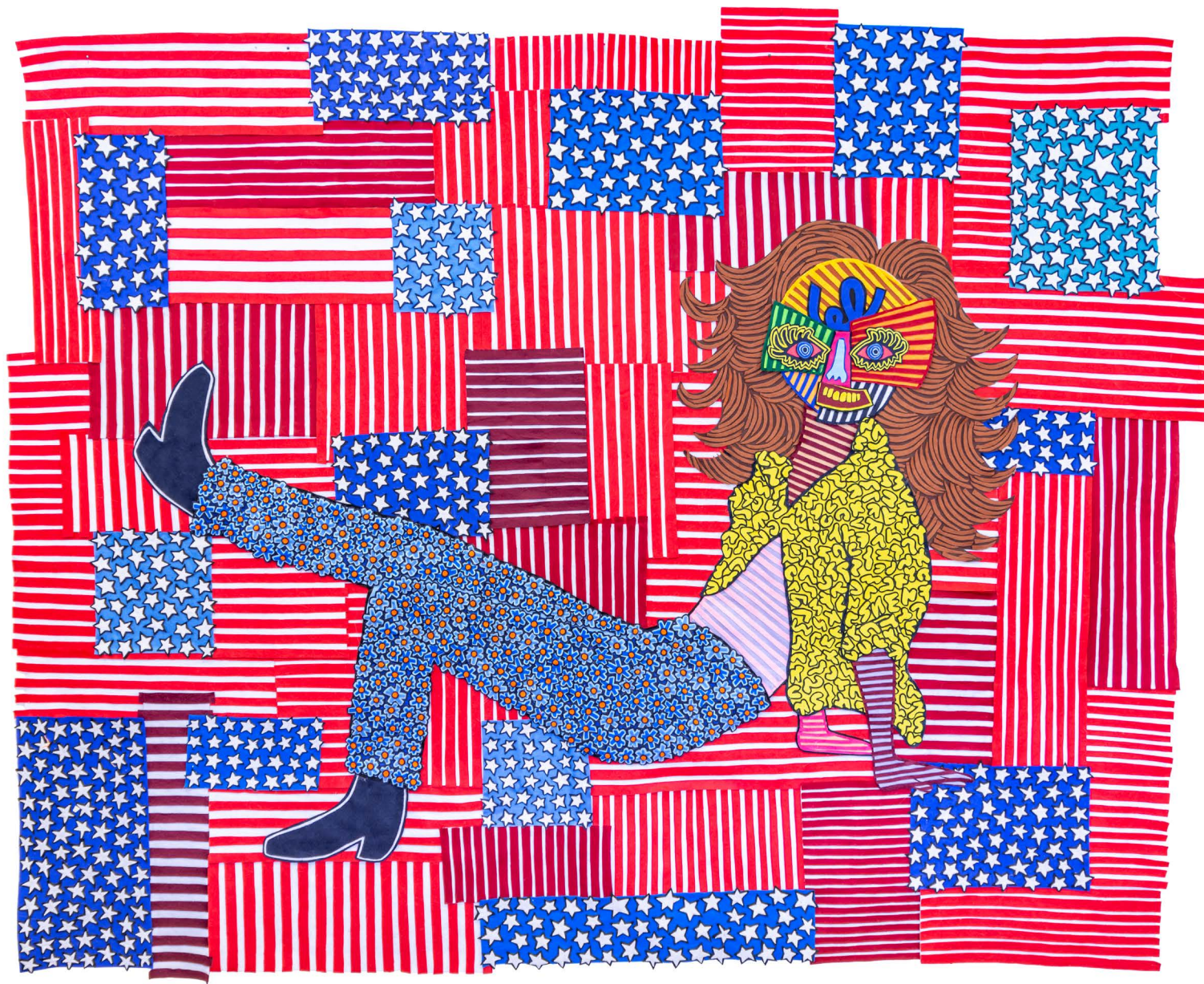
Jody Paulsen
Juicy I
2020
Felt Collage
238 x 139 cm



Jody Paulsen
Juicy I (Detail)
2020
Felt Collage
238 x 139 cm



Jody Paulsen
Tasty
2020
Felt Collage
132.5 x 117 cm



Jody Paulsen
American Woman
2020
Felt Collage
190 x 240 cm





Jody Paulsen
Memphis Bouquet
2019
Felt Collage
140 x 105 cm



Jody Paulsen
Houseplant
 2020
 Felt Collage
 83 x 53.5 cm



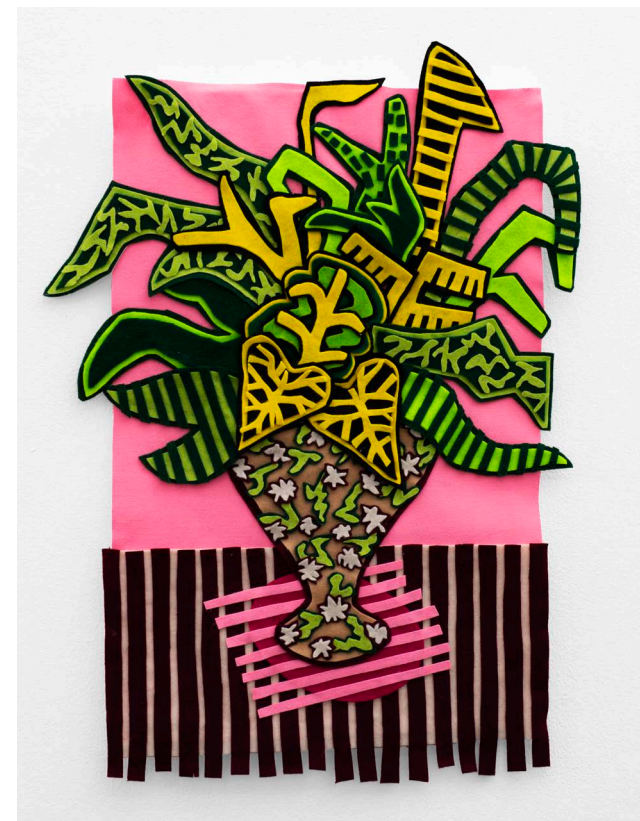
Jody Paulsen
Yellow
 2020
 Felt Collage
 61 x 44 cm



Jody Paulsen
Stripey Blue Arrangement
 2020
 Felt Collage
 78 x 56 cm



Jody Paulsen
Black and Yellow
 2020
 Felt Collage
 75 x 45 cm



Jody Paulsen
Stripey Pink Arrangement
 2020
 Felt Collage
 79 x 59 cm



Jody Paulsen
Strandfontein Pavilion Study
2020
Felt Collage
132.5 x 103 cm



Jody Paulsen | Artist Room | 2020 | Installation View

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Jody Paulsen was born in 1987 in Cape Town, South Africa, where he continues to live and work. In 2009 Paulsen graduated from the University of Cape Town's Michaelis School of Fine Arts specialising in Print Media. He was awarded the Katrine Harris Print Cabinet Award in the same year. In 2012 Jody Paulsen received the Jules Kramer Departmental Scholarship Award and went on to complete his Masters Degree with his solo exhibition *What You Want, Whenever You Want It* in 2013. Paulsen opened his first solo exhibition, titled *Pushing Thirty*, at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town, followed by a solo presentation, hosted by SMAC Gallery, at UNTITLED, Art at Miami Beach in the USA, both in 2017.

Paulsen's participation in group exhibitions in 2020 includes: *Materedality* at Iziko South African National Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa, *Gather* at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa, *A Show of Solidarity* at SMAC Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa, and SMAC Gallery's group presentation at the Investec Cape Town Art Fair in Cape Town, South Africa. In 2019, SMAC Gallery presented Paulsen's solo body of work at the Armory Show as part of the Focus Section in New York City, USA. Group exhibitions in 2019 include: *Dress Up, Speak Up: Regalia and Resistance* at 21c Museum Hotels in Cincinnati, USA and *Radical Love*, at the Ford Foundation Gallery in New York City, USA. Paulsen presented his solo exhibition, *Water Me*, at SMAC Gallery in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2018.

Notable group exhibitions include: *After the Thrill is Gone: Fashion, Politics and Culture in Contemporary*

South African Art, curated by Andrew Hennlich, a travelling exhibition starting at Richmond Centre for Visual Arts, Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, USA; *Passion Fruit*, at Temporary Storage Gallery in New York City, USA; all in 2018; *All Things Being Equal* at Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA) in Cape Town, South Africa in 2017; *Making Africa: A Continent of Contemporary Design*, curated by Amelie Klein and Okwui Enwezor travelling to the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany and Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain in 2015.

In 2012 Paulsen and the fashion designer Adriaan Kuiters collaborated to create the fashion line AKJP. Together they have presented numerous collections at events including: Pitti Uomo 89 in Florence, Italy and the Vogue Fashion Dubai Experience at The Dubai Mall in Dubai, UAE in 2015. In 2019 Paulsen collaborated with Neil Barrett to present their Men's Spring 2020 runway collection. Paulsen continues to expand and present new collections, internationally and locally.

Paulsen's work forms part of numerous significant public and private collections, including Zeitz MOCAA in Cape Town, South Africa; Matthais & Gervanne Leridon Collection in Paris, France; Sovereign Art Foundation, in Hong Kong, Singapore, UK, Guernsey, South Africa; The Royal Portfolio Collection, in Cape Town, South Africa and the 21c Museums Hotel in Louisville, USA.



JODY PAULSEN

CURRICULUM VITAE

smac

BIOGRAPHY

Born 1987, Cape Town, South Africa.
Lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa.

EDUCATION

- 2013** Master of Fine Art Degree (MA), Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2009** Bachelor of Fine Art Degree (BA), Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa.

AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

- 2016** *ImpACT Award for Design*, The Arts & Culture Trust, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2015** *Emerging Designer of the Year*, South African Fashion Council, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2014** *Sovereign Art Award*, Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town, South Africa.
InAWE Artist Residence Programme, InAweStays, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2012** Jules Kramer Departmental Scholarship Award, University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2009** Katherine Harries Print Cabinet Award, University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2020** *Artist Room*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2019** *The Armory Show* (SMAC Gallery), Piers 92 & 94, New York City, USA.
- 2018** *Water Me*, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2017** *Untitled Art Miami Beach*, (SMAC Gallery), Miami, USA.
Pushing Thirty, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2013** *What You Want, Whenever You Want It*, Michaelis Galleries, University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2020** *Gather*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Investec Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
A Show of Solidarity, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
Matereality, Iziko National Museum of South Africa, Cape Town, South Africa.

- 2019** FNB Art Joburg - MAX Section (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Dress Up, Speak Up: Regalia and Resistance, 21c Museum Hotels, Cincinnati, USA.
Radical Love, Ford Foundation Gallery, New York City, USA.
Filling in the Gaps, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2018** *Wish You Were Here*, SMAC Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
Making Africa: A Continent of Contemporary Design, curated by Amelie Klein & Okwui Enwezor, [Travelling Exhibition], Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque, USA; Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, USA.
After the Thrill is Gone: Fashion, Culture and Politics in Contemporary South African Art, curated by Andrew Hennlich [Travelling Exhibition], Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, USA.
Passion Fruit, curated by Brooklyn Fire Proof Gallery, Temporary Storage Gallery, New York City, USA.
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2017** *After the Thrill is Gone: Fashion, Culture and Politics in Contemporary South African Art*, curated by Andrew Hennlich [Travelling Exhibition], College of Wooster Art Museum (CWAM), Wooster; Richmond Centre for Visual Arts, Kalamazoo, Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco, USA.
X: Part III, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
X: Part II, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
All Things Being Equal, Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), Cape Town, South Africa.
Making Africa: A Continent of Contemporary Design, curated by Amelie Klein & Okwui Enwezor, [Travelling Exhibition], High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA.
- 2016** FNB Joburg Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
UPSTART/STARTUP, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.

- Cape Town Art Fair (SMAC Gallery), Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), Cape Town, South Africa.
- Making Africa: A Continent of Contemporary Design*, curated by Amelie Klein & Okwui Enwezor, [Travelling Exhibition], Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain; Kunsthal Rotterdam, Netherlands.
- 2015** *Young, Gifted and Black*, curated by Hank Willis Thomas, Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- FNB Joburg Art Fair, (BRUNDYN+), Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Fashion as Art*, The Pavilion, Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), Cape Town, South Africa.
- Making Africa: A Continent of Contemporary Design*, curated by Amelie Klein & Okwui Enwezor, [Travelling Exhibition], Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein, Germany; Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain.
- First Donations*, The Pavilion, Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art African (MOCAA), Cape Town, South Africa.
- Do You Have Barbaric Tastes*, curated by Nicola De Ribou & Le Commissaires Anonymes, 4TH Edition of POPPOSITIONS, Canal Warf, Brussels, Belgium.
- Forming Impressions: The Ghost in the Machine*, Association for Visual Art (AVA) Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2014** *Zigzags, Skulls and Bananas – Oh and Max*, W | E Projects, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Anyway, The Wind Blows*, BRUNDYN+, Cape Town, South Africa.
- FNB Joburg Art Fair, (BRUNDYN+) Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- This is Happening Now*, Gayfield Creative Spaces, Edinburgh, UK.
- START Art Fair, (BRUNDYN+, Saatchi Gallery), London, UK.
- MiArt Fair, (BRUNDYN+), Fiera Milano City, Milan, Italy.
- Infecting the City*, Public Arts Festival, Africa Centre, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Cape Town Art Fair, (BRUNDYN+), The Pavilion - V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2013** *Ceci n'est pas une Summer Show*, BRUNDYN+, Cape Town, South Africa.
- In Good Company*, Universtiy of Cape Town Irma Stern Museum, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Bazaar*, curated by Matty Roodt & Matthew Alexander King, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2012** *Mistakes*, curated by Chris Van Eeden, Kerry Chaloner & Matthew King, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2011** *The Night Show*, Goodman Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2010** *Sasol New Signatures Award: Top 100 Finalists*, Pretoria Art Museum, Pretoria, South Africa.
- Swallow My Pride*, Blank Projects, Cape Town, South Africa.

- 2009** *Greatest Hits*, Association for Visual Arts (AVA) Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2008** *Print '08 Myth, Memory and Archive*, Bell Roberts Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa.

FASHION COLLECTIONS & COLLABORATIONS

- 2019** Neil Barrett and Jody Paulsen - collaboration (Men's Spring 2020 runway collection), Milan, Italy.
- 2017** Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen (A/W 2018 Spring Collection, Woolworths Style by SA), South African Menswear Fashion Week, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2016** Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen (A/W 2016 Collection), South African Menswear Fashion Week, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen (A/W 2016 menswear Collection), Pitti Uomo, Florence, Italy.
- 2015** Adrian Kuiters + Jody Paulsen (S/S 2016 Collection, Vogue Italia: Who is on next), Vogue fashion Dubai Experience, Dubai Mall, Dubai, UAE.
- Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen, (S/S 2016 Collection), New York Fashion Week, New York City, USA.
- Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen, (S/S 2016 Collection), Mercedes Benz Fashion Week, Africa Fashion International, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen, (A/W 2015 AK+JP Collection), Cape Town, South Africa.
- Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen, (International Fashion Showcase), London Fashion Week, London, UK.
- Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen (S/S 2015 Collection), Design Indaba Fashion Show, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2014** Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen (A/W 2014), Edinburgh Fashion Festival, Edinburgh, UK.
- Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen (A/W 2014 AK+JP Collection), Mercedes Benz Fashion Week, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 2013** Adriaan Kuiters + Jody Paulsen (S/S 2014 AK+JP Collection), Mercedes Benz Fashion Week, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Adriaan Kuiters, (Artist's Print Collaboration, Julia Rosa Clark, Georgina Gratrix, Jody Paulsen), Cape Town, South Africa.

SELECTED PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

Joja, A.M. 2019. *Psychology of colour, texture*. Mail & Guardian [online]. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-01-18-00-psychology-of-colour-texture>. 18 Jan 2019. [Accessed 18.01.19].

Indrisek, S. 2017. *10 Emerging Artists to Discover at Untitled*, Miami Beach. Arsty [online]. Available at: <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-10-emerging-artists-discover-untitled-miami-beach>. [Accessed 18.01.19].

O'Toole, S. 2017. Artforum - *Critics' Pick*. Artforum [online]. Available at: <https://www.artforum.com/picks/smac-art-gallery-cape-town-66551>. [Accessed 31.08.2017].

Thesen Law, M. 2017. *Late Stage Capitalism Luxe*. Adjective [online]. Available at: <http://www.adjective.online/2017/03/23/late-stage-capitalism-luxe-m-thesen-law/>. [Accessed 31.08.2017].

Pollak, L. 2017. *A Sisyphean Push: Jody Paulsen's 'Pushing Thirty'*. ArtThrob [online]. Available at: <https://artthrob.co.za/2017/02/21/a-sisyphean-push-jody-paulsens-pushing-thirty/>. [Accessed 31.08.2017].

COLLECTIONS

Iziko South African National Museum, Cape Town, South Africa.

Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA), Cape Town, South Africa.

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas, USA.

Sovereign Art Foundation, Hong Kong, Singapore, UK, Guernsey, South Africa.

21 c Museums Hotel, Louisville, USA.

Matthais and Gervanne Leridon Collection, Paris, France.

Hollard Collection, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Scheryn Art Collection, Cape Town, South Africa.

The Royal Portfolio Collection, Cape Town, South Africa.

Nando's Collection, London, UK.

Gerald Hatinger Fine Arts Collection, Vienna, Austria.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact SMAC Gallery for more information or any other queries.

STELLENBOSCH

1st Floor, De Wet Centre
Church Street
Stellenbosch, 7600
T +27 (0)21 887 3607

CAPE TOWN

1st Floor, The Palms
145 Sir Lowry Road
Woodstock
T +27 (0)21 461 1029

smac

info@smacgallery.com
www.smacgallery.com