

Katrine Claassens | Golden Miniatures & New Oil Paintings

Katrine Claassens's art reflects her interests in climate change, extinction events, planetary boundaries and animal agency. As an artist she has led workshops, given public lectures and curated exhibitions all over the world from the Arctic to Antarctica. Katrine also works with governments, think-tanks, academia and NGOs to navigate the complex and shifting landscape of the climate crisis. She has a Master's degree in Climate Change from the University of Cape Town and an Honour's degree in Visual Art from Stellenbosch University.

The 'Golden Miniatures' series is a project started in 2011 by Claassens. The artist came across a tombstone dated to September 29, 1935 dedicated to circus animals that had died in a fire. The tombstone was engraved "Buried here/Circus Ponies/ Victor, Prince, Nancy, Rosie and Squibs/Also Zebra Charlie/ We think they must have souls." It was that last line that launched this years-long project of painting circus animals escaping. Across gold leafed landscapes - a menagerie of animals take flight from the dust, noise and shackles of captivity and find freedom and joy in the wilderness. In painting them free, these small works ask forgiveness and grace for what we have done to the animals.



KATRINE CLAASSENS

Circus Pony and Star Flowers (The Night Escape), 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

19.5 x 19.5 cm

Framed: 27.5 x 27.5 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 6,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS

I'll Follow You (The Deer), 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

32 x 23.5 cm

Framed: 40.5 x 31.5 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 8,500



KATRINE CLAASSENS

Escape Of The Tiger (We'd Hide Among The Lemon Trees), 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

31.5 x 24 cm

Framed: 40.5 x 31.5 cm

ZAR 10,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS

Midnight's Zebra, 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

14.5 x 14.5 cm

Framed: 23 x 23 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 4,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS

Escape Through Cyprus And Blossom Trees, 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

32 x 24 cm

Framed: 40.5 x 31.5 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 8,500



KATRINE CLAASSENS

White Horse And Tulips (Escape of the Circus Pony), 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

30 x 23 cm

Framed: 37.5 x 30.5 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 10,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS

At Night We Made A Quick Escape Through The Stars, 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

19.5 x 19.5 cm

Framed: 27.5 x 27.5 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 5,500



KATRINE CLAASSENS

Deer Amidst The Blossom Trees, 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

15 x 15 cm

Framed: 23.5 x 23.5 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 4,500



KATRINE CLAASSENS
Small Giraffe (New To The World), 2024
Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper
13 x 10.5 cm
Framed: 21.5 x 18 x 3.5 cm
ZAR 3,500

99 LOOP



KATRINE CLAASSENS

Zebra And Pink Blossoms, 202423

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

15.5 x 15.5 cm

Framed: 23.5 x 23.5 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 4,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS
Pink Sky At Night, 2024
Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper
22 x 18.5 cm
Framed: 30 x 27 x 3.5 cm
ZAR 5,500

99 LOOP



KATRINE CLAASSENS
Sunbird & Aloe, 2024
Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper
16 x 16 cm
Framed: 18.5 x 18.5 x 3.5 cm
ZAR 4,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS
Flamingos Rest Beneath Palms, 2024
Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper
30.5 x 23.5 cm
Framed: 40.5 x 31.5 x 3.5 cm
ZAR 10,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS

The Orange Tree Provided Shelter (Escape of the Circus Pony), 2024

Acrylic on 23 karat gold on archival cotton paper

25.5 x 17.5 cm

Framed: 33.5 x 25.5 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 6,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS
The Sweet Water Sea Swans, 2024
Oil on canvas
65 x 55 cm
Framed: 67.5 x 57.5 x 5.3 cm
ZAR 24,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS
The Golden Pheasant, 2024
Oil on board
30.5 x 40.5 cm
Framed: 32.5 x 42.5 x 3.5 cm
ZAR 21,500

99 LOOP



KATRINE CLAASSENS
Flash Daffodils, 2024
Oil on board
21.5 x 28.5 cm
Framed: 23.5 x 30.5 x 3.5 cm
ZAR 7,500

99 LOOP



KATRINE CLAASSENS
I Never Knew You, 2024
Oil on board
30.5 x 23 cm
Framed: 32.5 x 24.5 x 3.5 cm
ZAR 20,500

99 LOOP



KATRINE CLAASSENS
Indigo Bird / Blue Budgie, 2024
Oil on poplar wood
20.5 x 15 x 4 cm
ZAR 5,500



KATRINE CLAASSENS

Newlands Blossom Tree (The Third Point Of Life), 2024

Oil on board

20.2 x 25.4 cm

Framed: 22.2 x 27.2 x 35 cm

ZAR 8,500

99 LOOP



KATRINE CLAASSENS

*We Left The Old Stories And Firestorms And, Close To Your Breast, Perhaps Too Close For
Some Of Us, We Went To All The Other Places, 2024*

Oil on board

35.5 x 28 cm

Framed: 37.5 x 30 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 19,000

99 LOOP



KATRINE CLAASSENS
Water Flamingo, 2024
Oil on poplar wood
23 x 30.5 x 4 cm
ZAR 17,500

99 LOOP



KATRINE CLAASSENS
Yellow Budgie, 2024
Oil on linen
30.5 x 25.5 cm
Framed: 33 x 28 x 3.5 cm
ZAR 19,000



KATRINE CLAASSENS

I Remember You As If You Were Underwater, 2024

Oil on board

35.5 x 28 cm

Framed: 37.5 x 30 x 3.5 cm

ZAR 19,000

Artist's Statement:

"As an artist, my place is with the storytellers, and we urgently need new stories for the world we are walking into.

My works are love letters to a muted natural world. Every system on Earth is now defined by human activity, with all planetary boundaries necessary for a liveable world being rapidly and dangerously breached. In my oil paintings and videos, I look to the tenacity and beauty of the life that persists, seeking to tell a story of a world that is always shifting and dissolving beyond our grasp.

I draw inspiration from my studies in climate change, chance encounters with urban nature, extinction events past and present, and internet memes, combining these influences to create works that witness the quirks and tragedies of our time, evoking love for the ecologically rickety world we have shaped.

My mediums are oil painting and video. I adhere to traditional archival oil painting methods and materials as an attempt to grasp time and memories in preservation for the future. I use video as a complementary medium that offers a more direct and vulnerable way to address the flickering, tangled stories of our time.

My most recent exhibition explored the lives of animals and plants peripheral to us in time (as with those that are extinct or endangered) or space (as with urban nature). I looked at how pigeons and feral parakeets scratch at a kind of phantom limb for the species that are no longer with us such as the passenger pigeon and the South Carolina Parakeet.

For my exhibition before that, I joined a scientific cruise to Antarctica and painted with the melting sea ice collected by scientists to make space to remember, to mourn, and most importantly, to empathize with the place where the old world melts and a new world is cracked into existence. Other exhibitions include a series of paintings that used memes, images from neglected twitter accounts and stills from popular GIFs to explore the internet as a place of solace but also of tranquilizing escape. Also featured in my work are peri-urban and suburban landscapes and the animals found in these places - with paintings that explore the utter audacity of life that tenaciously survives (or even thrives) in the most human of landscapes.

As well as studying art, I have a master's degree in climate change and work to advance climate policy for energy, agriculture and economics in Canada and South Africa. An important part of my practice is working together with people to find new ways of thinking about our changing world. To this end, I've worked with climate scientists, policymakers, children, and students from the Arctic to Antarctica using art to make space for the humour, the magic, the utter joy and the utter despair that's there when we meet the world where it's at."