

EVERARD READ

CAPE TOWN

Thania Petersen

(b. 1980, Cape Town)

I am addressing 'identity' in contemporary South Africa where we have too easily accepted the labels that apartheid and post apartheid have given us. I stake my claim to my lineage and through my work I am reclaiming our heritage as individual people with a history of our own.

Thania Petersen is a multi disciplinary artist whose discourses focus on photographic 'self portraits', installations and multi sensory based performance. A direct descendant of Tuan Guru (an Indonesian Prince in the late 1700's brought to South Africa by the Dutch as a political exile), Petersen explores the universal themes of personal and historical identities by reconstructing herself in various guises often invoking 'what remain from our ancestors rituals and history in our lives today'. From an intensely personal perspective as an Indonesian 'Malay' woman and mother, Petersen adopts a breath and diversity of theatrical personas – a mythological Queen, a botanical Goddess to various personal reflections of her childhood growing up as a girl in a secular Muslim society. Her reference points include the history of African colonial imperialism, contemporary westernized consumer culture, her deeply personal Cape Malay heritage, and the legend and myths of Sufi Islamic religious ceremonies.

Having studied at Central Saint Martin's College of Art in London from 2001-2003, Petersen trained in both Zimbabwe (2004) and a year later in South Korea (with renowned Korean ceramist Hwang Yea Sook), she subsequently participated in the South Korean Ceramic Biennale that same year. From 2000-2007 Petersen remained the resident painter of props and costumes for the London based Yaa Asantewa Arts Group at the Notting Hill Gate Carnival, before settling back in Cape Town full time. In 2015 Thania has been featured with Brundyn+ at the Cape Town Art Fair and with the AVA at Johannesburg Art Fair. *I AM ROYAL* marked her first solo exhibition at the AVA Gallery in August this year. This year sees her partake in various exhibitions including *Studio* at the South African National Gallery and a highly anticipated first solo presentation at Everard Read, Cape Town.

EDUCATION

- 2001-2003** BTEC Sculpture Central Saint Martin's College of Art, London, UK
2003 -2004 Studied under Sylvester Mubayi, Harare, Zimbabwe
2004-2005 Studied under Hwang Yea Sook , Yeojoo, South Korea

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2016** *Surface and Subtext*, Everard Read Cape Town, South Africa
2015 *AVA Gallery booth*, Johannesburg Art Fair, Sandton, South Africa
I AM ROYAL - Solo Exhibition, AVA Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Brundyn+ Gallery booth, Cape Town Art Fair, Cape Town, South Africa
2005 *The 3rd World Ceramic Biennale*, Ichon World Ceramic Center, Kyongg Province, Korea
2003 *Annual Group Exhibition*, Central Saint Martin's College of Art, London, UK
2001 *Carnival Group Exhibition*, Tabernacle, Notting Hill Gate, London, UK

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Yeojoo City Collection, South Korea

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AWARDS, GRANTS, AND WORKSHOPS

2001 Carnival Costume Workshop, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK

RECENT PUBLICATIONS AND REVIEWS

2015

Brett Seiler, 'Thania Petersen in conversation with Brett Seiler', Art Throb, September 16, 2015
<http://arthrob.co.za/2015/09/16/thania-petersen-in-conversation-with-brett-seiler/>

Ashraf Jamal, "Malay Barbie", Financial Mail, August 20 2015
<http://www.financialmail.co.za/life/art/2015/08/20/art-malay-barbie>

Malibongwe Tylio, "Artists we Love", VISI lifestyle online, August 6, 2015
<http://www.visi.co.za/lifestyle/artists-we-love-thania-petersen/>

Debbie Loots, "Seven spots to see art in Cape Town", Mail and Guardian, 30 July 2015
<http://mg.co.za/article/2015-07-30-seven-places-to-see-art-in-cape-town/>

Jeremy Fox, "I.D. Parade: Me, myself and I", The Times, July 28, 2015
<http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2015/07/28/ID-Parade-Me-myself-and-I>

Jamie Waddington, "Skattie Celebrates Thania Petersen", ELLE July 24, 2015
<http://www.elle.co.za/skattie-celebrates-thania-peterson/>

Malibongwe Tyilo, "The Past reveals the Present", VISI magazine June/July issue, 2015
<http://www.elle.co.za/skattie-celebrates-thania-peterson/>

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