

EVERARD READ

CAPE TOWN

SASHA HARTSLIEF

(b. 1974 Gauteng, South Africa)

Sasha Hartsliief was born in 1974 in Gauteng. At the age of seventeen, she came to Cape Town to study English and Philosophy at UCT. Passionate about drawing from an early age, she is largely self-taught, closely observing other artists and avidly reading up on technique.

Hartsliief had always been passionate about drawing, but the desire to become an artist only crystallised into a decision in 1995, when she enrolled at Cape College under the tutelage of Elizabeth Gunter. Her subjects are often viewed from a philosophical, deeply personal perspective, resulting in striking works that are emotionally charged, pensive in mood and considered in composition. Her subtle investigations into the human condition via the underbelly of Cape Town life somehow strike a chord with us.

"I defer to the classical Masters for inspiration," says Sasha Hartsliief, who admits to placing images painted by the 19th century American Impressionist, John Singer Sargent, next to her easel while she paints. Her muses include the 19th century neo-classicist, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, whose draughtsmanship and linear dexterity provide formal inspiration for her works. But Hartsliief's brushstrokes are more diffuse than the precise, stylized techniques of the neo-classicists. Like the 19th century French Impressionists, she uses brushstrokes to evoke the transience of light, colour and movement. And like her Renaissance and Impressionist forebears, she employs everyday visual devices to explore the way in which atmospheric light and tonal modulations inform a surface, and to evoke atmospheres fraught with symbolic subtexts. But the transience of the captured moment is counterbalanced by the disciplined rigour of Hartsliief's technique and painterly process. She admits to being "obsessively skills-driven and consumed" by her work. Each image becomes a formal study in light, contour and line. Hartsliief's experimentation with *chiaroscuro* techniques derives inspiration from the works by 17th century Baroque masters such as Rembrandt who, through the buildup of *impasto* paint, evoked light and shadow in his portraits as a psychological device, similar to the way in which stage-lighting functions in the theatre. Often seeming to be lit from below, the expressive shading in Hartsliief's portraits tends to converge around the facial hollows, giving the paintings a spatial as well as emotional depth. The eyes of the women in her portraits, in particular, seem inwardly focused.

Since 1999, Hartsliief has exhibited regularly at the Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, including several solo exhibitions. She continues to attract a broad collector base from around the world and is clearly one of South Africa's most exciting young talents.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2013 *Hartsliief New Works*, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa

2012 *Sasha Hartsliief*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Solo Exhibition, Rosendahl, Thöne & Westphal, Berlin, Germany

2011 *Recent Works*, Everard Read, Cape Town

2009 *Sasha Hartsliief - New Works*, Everard Read, Cape Town

2007 *Solo Exhibition*, Everard Read, Cape Town

THE EVERARD READ GALLERY (PTY) LTD • REG No 96/04344/07
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DIRECTORS: • MARK READ • CHARLES SHIELDS

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SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2015** *Summer in the City*, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Homage, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
WINTER, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
EMPIRE, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2014** *Summer Season Part I*, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Winter, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2013** *100*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa

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