

EVERARD READ

BRETT CHARLES SEILER

(b.1994 Zimbabwe)

Through his paintings, Brett Charles Seiler creates an interior world which wavers between desire and anxiety. He explores the male body, domestic space, poetry, Queer history, Biblical symbolism, love and alienation, as well as the possibilities of painting as a medium. His experimentation with material, colour, and line has culminated in a unique and carefully honed style. In his search for materials which are both evocative and easily accessible, Seiler's early paintings included found objects such as old black-and-white photographs and fabric. Though these objects have mostly been stripped away from his most recent paintings, they have been absorbed as visual strategy. The photographs are present in the snapshot-like, narrative atmosphere of the depicted scenes, and in the colour palette and tones. The interest in fabric can be seen in his treatment of the canvas as an important part of the finished work. The rawness of the surface and the sketched quality of the lines add to the feeling that we are witnessing a brief, urgent moment in time which has passed but been memorialised.

Even in the more conventional of Seiler's painted scenes, the void-like backgrounds add an enticing ambiguity to the works. They become otherworldly. In some cases, they offer a vision of an untouched heaven, but more often they have the texture of a dream (or nightmare). You can see familiar objects – a houseplant, a thrifted mid-mod chair, a parquet floor – and yet the surroundings remain alien and unstable. Perspective is unsturdy, with flatness and depth being represented alongside each other. The most fascinating visual element is the male subjects. The lines of the figures feel fragile, as if they could be washed away into their surroundings at any moment. Their poses, and the way that they hold and touch each other, tell stories which are never fully revealed. In looking at Seiler's bodies, I am reminded of Cezanne's group and solo studies of nude, awkwardly-posed but still sensual men. However, the symbolic, narrative quality of Seiler's paintings differs from Cezanne's limited variations of bathers in front of bodies of water.

Seiler's recent series of paintings are rich with visual references. The domestic space is destabilised by what appears to be an apocalyptic event. In one, a man kneels before another, like a sinner asking for Christ's salvation, but also like a man seeking solace from his lover. There are also art historical references, such as a painting within a painting and reclining nudes. Words and poetry are another important aspect of Seiler's practice. His works have included comic but tragic anecdotes, love letters, and references to Queer culture. He references the legendary Fire Island. The 'Coke/cock bottle' which appears often within the paintings and as a sculptural object allows for a moment of erotic humour.

All of these visual elements offer a sensitive navigation of his own experiences as a gay man who has lived through shame and alienation, as well as love – and the joy and anxiety that comes with it. As seen in works such as the *Gay Alphabet* series, Seiler is not afraid to engage directly with the political, but he makes the politics of gender and sexuality feel intimate and immediate. Beyond this personal/political lens, the works are an expression of his passion for artistic practice itself – through both the physical act of painting, and the history of art and culture.

– Khanya Mashabela

Brett Charles Seiler graduated from the Ruth Prowse School of Art in 2015. In addition to his solo shows in South Africa, Germany, the USA, UK and China, Seiler has been included in various group exhibitions and fairs, including a performance piece with Luvuyo Nyawose titled 'Reading Homophobia' (2017) at the A4 Arts Foundation in Cape Town, and the Armory Show and Art Basel with Galerie Eigen + Art. TeNeues published a monograph on Seiler in 2022

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EDUCATION

2015 Graduated from the Ruth Prowse School of Art

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *Upcoming* Museum Bensheim, Germany (October)
I would like to lose it all with you, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2024 I would like to say thank you to all my past lovers, A26 Space, Beijing, China
so many pictures, so little memories, Gallery Eigen+Art, Leipzig, Germany
- 2023 Luke, Warm, Everard Read, London, UK
Riding in cards with boys, Gallery Eigen+Art, Berlin, Germany
- 2022 scenes from an apartment, Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
Oh, Christopher, M+B, Los Angeles, USA
At some point, I thought I was building a home, Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2021 Timber, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2020 Closet, Goodman Gallery viewing room, Johannesburg, SA
Pride or Die, curated by Jana Terblanche, Gallery Lab, FNB Art Joburg, Johannesburg, SA
- 2019 How I forgot the colours of the rainbow, SMITH Studio, Cape Town, SA
- 2018 More scared of what was in the closet than what was underneath my bed, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2016 Macho Man, Tell It To My Heart, Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, SA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *Upcoming* Here: Pride and Belonging in African Art, National Museum of African Art, Washington DC, USA
Upcoming In us is heaven, Southern Guild, Los Angeles, USA
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read & Eigen+Art, Cape Town, SA
- 2024 INNER SANCTUM, Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read & Gallery Eigen+Art, Cape Town, SA
Mangrove Gallery, Shenzhen, China
Beeldhonger, NoHero Museum, Delden, Netherlands
- 2023 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read & Gallery Eigen+Art, Cape Town, SA
The Armory Show, with Gallery Eigen+Art, New York, USA
Art Cologne, with Gallery Eigen+Art, Cologne, USA
Art Basel, with Gallery Eigen+Art, Basel, Switzerland
The Other's Warmth, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2022 Things I'd like to remember, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
In Between Dreams, Gallery Eigen+Art, Berlin, Germany
Das Eigene im Fremden, Museum Bensheim, Germany
Hot House, Sixty Six, London, UK
Rohkunstbau 27, Altdöbern Castle, Germany
The Armory Show, with Gallery Eigen+Art, New York, USA
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Eigen+Art, Cape Town, SA
Seduction, Everard Read, Cape Town
m.T., Gallery Eigen+Art, Leipzig, Germany
- 2021 OASIS, 25th Anniversary Exhibition, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Summer 2021, Everard Read, London, UK
In Your Shadow, SMAC, Cape Town, SA
In Conversation, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA



EVERARD READ

- Space and Place, curated by Khanya Mashabela, Galerie Eigen + Art, Leipzig, Germany
This room glows in the dark while we are asleep, curated by Jana Terblanche, The Vault, Cape Town, SA
Art Cologne, Cologne, Gallery Eigen + Art, Germany
Positions, Berlin, Gallery Eigen + Art, Germany
- 2020 ODYSSEY, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Three Way, KwaZulu Natal Society of Arts, Durban, SA
The Spectacle, THEFOURTH, Cape Town, SA
- 2019 Emphatic Whispers, SMITH Studio, Cape Town
Winter 2019, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Home Affairs, Waterfront Docks, Cape Town, SA
OUTSIDE, RK Contemporary, Riebeek-Kasteel, SA
FNB Joburg Art Fair, online, solo booth curated by Jana Terblanche, Johannesburg, SA
- 2018 One Straight Hour performed for The Main Complaint, Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, SA
Sunday Service, GUS, Stellenbosch, SA
Unfair, The Ruth Prowse School of Art, Cape Town, SA
The Edge of a Thread, Eclectica Contemporary, Cape Town, SA
Close Encounters, SMITH Studio, Cape Town, SA
Not Really, Studio 136 Bree, Cape Town, SA
Multiplicities Vol1: Continuous Unknowing, Assembly Room, NYC, USA
- 2017 Closer than Ever, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, SA
Performance Night, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, SA
One Week, Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, SA
Young Now, Hazard Gallery, Johannesburg, SA
Hold, The Ruth Prowse School of Art, Cape Town, SA
You & I, A4 Arts Foundation, Cape Town, SA
Dislocation, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Salon Show, Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, SA
ABSA L'Atelier Top 100 finalists, ABSA Gallery, Pretoria, SA
- 2016 Falling Into One Another, Ruth Prowse School of Art, Cape Town, SA
New Monuments, Commune.1, Cape Town, SA
Winter Collection, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
One Zero Seven, 107 Long market Street, Cape Town, SA
The Ties That Bind, Bend, Break, Secret Dungeon, NYC, USA
Lip Service with Khanya Mashabela, Open Dialogue Box, Cape Town, SA
Sorry! Please Try Again, Palms Centre, Cape Town, SA
Reading Homophobia, with Luvuyo Nyawose, performance, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, SA
Emerging Painters, Turbine Art Fair, Johannesburg, SA

