

EVERARD READ

BEEZY BAILEY

(b. 1962 Johannesburg, South Africa)

"I am often asked what does that ship, or car, or high heel shoe mean. I am not an illustrator; I release the images that appear before me. Like Picasso, I say that it is not for me to explain the contents of my work; this is for the viewer to do. Each of my works is a frozen dream. Images & legends enter from my subconscious, the world of my imagination. I am a conduit of visual messages greater than me, at best a messenger from God, at worst a Fallen Angel."

Beezy Bailey

Beezy Bailey is a South African artist who works in various media, including painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking and ceramics. He received a fine art degree from Byam Shaw School of Art in London in 1986. Bailey says he creates art "as a balm for a mad world – a corrective for our most lamentable human qualities, including a planet brutalized by extremes of wealth and poverty, environmental ignorance and negligence." Many of his works emanate from his abiding concern with the Anthropocene, the present epoch characterized as the time in which the collective activities of Homo sapiens began to substantially alter the earth's surface, atmosphere, oceans, and systems of ecological recycling.

Bailey has a history of close collaboration with other artists, including David Bowie, Brian Eno and Dave Matthews. In Brian Eno's words: "Beezy makes his art out of joy and laughter (and sometimes out of terror). He is somebody to whom art comes easily and who doesn't feel guilty about it, who revels in his gift and has confidence in it – like a chef gleefully throwing ingredients in by the handful without ever measuring them. He cooks up new worlds, tiny and huge, peopled by bird-women, snake-men, lizard children, and animated vegetables, bursting with bright new music. He makes African jazz in paint, garish as the midday sun, dark as the deepest night."

Often Bailey's works are accompanied by poems, such as the 2016 '1000 Year Dance Cure', in which he exhorts the world to dance a new dance, to abandon that which does not serve us, and to embrace each other in our humanity, and the earth in her service to us. The sources of his imagery are elusive. In his own words: "Frozen dreams, images and legends enter from my subconscious, the realm of my imagination. I act as a conduit for visual messages greater than I am."

Richard Cork, art historian, editor, critic and exhibition curator, says of Bailey, "Looking back over Beezy Bailey's restlessly inventive career, we soon become fascinated by its defiant unpredictability. At every turn his work is filled with surprises and united above all by a fundamental urge to challenge the status quo."

Bailey has been the driving force behind several art auctions benefitting various charitable institutions. In 2004, he organized ART 4 AIDS, an auction which raised over R1 million. In 2009, Bailey, along with Tara and Jessica Getty, organised the Art for Africa auction, held Sotheby's in London. The auction presented for the first time a major offering of works by some of South Africa's leading artists, alongside pieces by some of the foremost contemporary artists from the UK.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2026 Upcoming, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA

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- 2023 Magic Garden, Everard Read, Franschhoek, SA
- 2022 Let There Be Light, Everard Read, London & Boughton House, UK
- 2021 The Love Revolution, Everard Read, Cape Town SA
- 2020 Landing Stars, Hermanus FynArts Festival Artist, SA
- 2019 Solo accompanying the launch of his monograph at Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Performance accompanying the launch of his monograph at Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, SA
- 2018 Light Beyond the Dark, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2016 1000 Year Dance Cure, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2014 Landscapes with a Twist, Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
- 2013 As it is in Heaven, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2012 As it is in Heaven, Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
- 2011 Icon-Iconoclast, Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
Along the Path to Beauty, Chenshia Museum, Wuhan, China
- 2009 Dancing Christ, Spring Art Tour, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2008 Being blown backward into the future, Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
- 2007 Fallen Angels & Other Dreams, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2006 A collection of 45 paintings acquired by the Ojai Valley Museum, California, USA
- 2005 Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
- 2004 Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
Knysna Fine Art, Knysna, SA
- 2000 Back to the Drawing Board, Pa Kua Gallery, Cape Town, SA
- 1999 Abakwetha - Farmer, Warrior, Statesman, public intervention, Parliament, Cape Town, SA
Learning to Fly Again, Beezy Bailey Art Factory, Cape Town, SA
- 1998 Solo exhibition, Beezy Bailey Art Factory, Cape Town
Fabric of the People, street fashion show, Beezy Bailey Art Factory, Cape Town, SA
Beezy Bailey Art Factory and Shop, opening in Cape Town, SA
- 1989 Artist in residence, South African National Gallery, Cape Town, SA
- 1988 Harbour Paintings, The Art Scene, Cape Town, SA
Introducing Beezy Bailey, solo show, Vanessa Devereux Gallery, London, UK
- 1986 First solo exhibition, Art Show Gallery, London, UK

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 10 Years | Summer Show, Everard Read, London, UK
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Matter Matters, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2024 Little Life, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Southern Light, Everard Read, London, UK
110 Year Anniversary, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2022 Spring, Everard Read, Franschhoek, SA
Things I'd like to remember, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Summer Sculpture, Riverhill Gardens, UK
Seduction, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2021 In Conversation, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Double Vision, with Stuart Dodds, Gallery at Glen Carlou, Stellenbosch, SA
Offering, Everard Read, Franschhoek, SA
- 2020 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Masterpiece online, with Everard Read, UK
Staring Straight to the Future, online, in support of the Solidarity Fund, Everard Read, SA
Journeys of the Mind, Everard Read, Franschhoek, SA
- 2019 Context Art Miami, with Everard Read, Miami, USA
Southern Aspect, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2018 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, SA

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- 2017 FNB Joburg Art Fair, with Everard Read, Johannesburg, SA
2017 People & Portraiture, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
Summer exhibition, Everard Read, London, UK
Bronze, Steel & Stone II, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2016 Opening Exhibition, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2015 The Sound of Creation: Sound Paintings by Beezy Bailey and Brian Eno, Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy
- 2014 Itica Pritica, with Dave Mathews, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2013 Itica Pritica, with Dave Matthews, Robert Miller Gallery, New York, USA
- 2012 10,000 Trees Landscape, greening project for the Cape Flats, SA
- 2011 15th Anniversary, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
- 2009 Sex Power Money, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA
One City, Many Cultures, Cape Town Festival, Cape Town, SA
Art for Africa auction, Sotheby's, London, UK
- 2005 The ID of South African Art, Fortis Circus Theatre, Scheveningen, Netherlands
- 2004 New Identities: Contemporary South African Art, Museum Bochum, Germany
- 2002 Brian Eno project
Curated the 'Art for Aids orphans' auction
Vanessa Branson commission - statues and mural in the UK
- 1999 P.T.O - Public monuments reconsidered, various locations, Cape Town, SA
- 1998 Group exhibition, Augsburg, Germany
Driftscapes, Hänel Gallery, Cape Town, SA
- 1997 District Six Sculpture Festival, District Six, Cape Town, SA
- 1996 Through the Looking Glass, Jibby Beane Gallery, London, UK
- 1995 Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, SA
New Afro/Pagan and Work 1975-1995, with David Bowie, Cork Street Gallery, London, UK
Exquisite Corpses, Chelsea Gallery, Cape Town, SA
Africus, Johannesburg Biennale, Johannesburg, SA
- 1994 Vote for South Africa, South African Association of Arts
A show of etchings produced in collaboration with various South African artists including Barend de Wet, Billy Mandindi and Norman Catherine, Hard Ground, Cape Town, SA
Touring print exhibition, Florida State University, USA
Gramercy International Art Fair, New York, USA
- 1993 Love and the Fall of the House of Windsor, with Adam Letch, plus concrete sculptures made in collaboration with Koos Malgas, South African Association of Arts, Cape Town, SA
The Incisive Eye, Arts Association of Bellville, Cape Town, SA
The Cape of Great Hope, Visual Arts Foundation, Johannesburg, SA
Made in Wood, South African National Gallery, Cape Town, SA
- 1992 Landscapes, The Art Scene, Cape Town, SA
Market Galleries, Johannesburg, SA
South African Association of Arts, Cape Town, SA
- 1991 New Directions, Centre for African Studies and Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town, SA
- 1987 Landscapes from France and Namibia, Karen McKerron Gallery, Johannesburg, SA
Standard Bank Drawing Exhibition, Makhanda, SA
- 1986 International Contemporary Art Fair Olympia, London, UK

COLLECTIONS

Beezy's work is represented in the South African National Gallery and numerous private collections in South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States including:

Absa, South Africa
Bidvest, South Africa

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Bzw Bank London, London, England
David Bowie Art Collection, London, England
Durban Art Gallery, South Africa
Getty Family Collection, USA
Investec, South Africa
Iziko South African National Gallery
Oppenheimer Art Collection, California, USA
Sasol, South Africa
Standard Bank Collection, South Africa