



Loni Dräger



"We dwell in the landscape and the landscape dwells in us." – Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Thinking Hand* (Wiley, 2009).

Human endeavour, no matter how sophisticated or advanced, from the invention of the telephone to space travel, is inextricably bound to the four basic elements of earth, water, fire and air. These elements are the wellspring of life, without them we would not exist, and neither would any of our achievements.

My works are based on the abstract forms and textures found in the landscape, the human form and succulent plants – hills and valleys, hips and breasts, undulations, curves, clefts and protrusions. By stripping these down to their essential, abstract forms, similarities are revealed. The artworks focus on these similarities, and specifically on the beauty, subtlety and sensuality of their forms and textures. In this way I negotiate a middle path between land, plant and body, locating congruencies, so an image could be a hill, or a breast, or a bulb, or something else entirely that the viewer identifies on a personal level that is linked to their individual experiences and memories.

While the environment sustains our physical needs and







activities, providing food and water, the foundations for our homes, the substances and materials for our growth and development, it is also a platform for our spiritual experiences. Physical places can take on emotional and spiritual significance – the place of our birth, our youth – the places where the meaningful events of our lives unfolded. It could be the spot where we had our first kiss, a beautiful tree under whose shade we loved, the parking lot where the 'last straw' argument took place, the smell in the air when we walked out with our firstborn child, the landscape whizzing by on a horrendous 'happy family outing'.

Through my work, I aim to create a visual language that shows the deep connection of humans with their landscape, and the beauty that exists in both. I hope to reconnect the viewer to the fundamental importance of our environment, not only in the physical realm, but also in the spiritual sense. There is a presence and power that exists in the landscape that transcends the mere physical, especially those quiet places still untouched by human hand. From a spiritual perspective, the elements take on a deeper significance: they describe not only appearance, but also the creative, fluid and shape-shifting nature of things.

Loni Dräger, Riebeek Kasteel, Western Cape, 2012

Image: (page 3) BATH BITS, 2012

Medium: Sycamore

Size: 180mm x 180mm x 50mm

Image: (page 5) BOXED BITS, 2012

Medium: Sycamore, Walnut, Beech, Maple, Imbuia

Size: 150mm x 150mm x 50mm

Images: (pages 6, 7, 8 & 11) POSTCARDS OF AN EDGE, 2012

Medium: Sycamore

Size: 130mm x 130mm x 20mm (individual blocks, pages 6, 7 & 8)

760mm x 760mm x 100mm (complete size, page 11)

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Map - South Africa

PO Box 39

Groenkloof

0027, South Africa

info@map-southafrica.org

www.map-southafrica.org





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