

Hare's

*an Idea*



Carla Crafford

Guy du Toit

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Hare's an  
Idea...

In der Haas









A Flanagan hare over  
a folded fold-up chair

...In the hare, Barry Flanagan had  
found the perfect metaphor for his own  
elusive character...



Dames en here, leen my u ore en vergun my om ‘n paar woorde te sê oor ‘n onderwerp wat my bitter na aan die hart lê: hase en die hasepad.

Voor ek begin wil ek ‘n oomblik neem om eer te betoon aan invloedryke en inspirerende hase in die geskiedenis, wat in gees (maar helaas nie in vlees nie) vandag hier vergader. Ek praat van hase soos Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-Tail en Peter Rabbit; Bugs Bunny, Roger Rabbit en Benjamin Bunny. Haas Das, Hazel, The Velveteen Rabbit en Edward Tulane. Die March Hare en White Rabbit in Alice in Wonderland, Miffy, The Little Grey Rabbit en die Neutbruin-hasies in Raai hoe lief is ek vir jou? Daar is ook die hele harem vol Playboy-hasies, Rabbit in Winnie-the-Pooh, die nimlike Runny Babbit en Thumper, daardie grys vriendjie van Bambi wat sulke tydlose wysrede kon kwytraak soos: “Eating greens is a special treat, It makes long ears and great big feet. But it sure is awful stuff to eat” en “If you can’t say something nice... don’t say nothing at all.”

Dis haas onmoontlik om al die hase te noem wat deur die jare ‘n belangrike rol in populêre kultuur, kuns en kinderharte gespeel het, maar by ‘n luisterryke geleentheid soos hierdie wil ‘n mens tog vir ‘n oomblik vassteek en dink aan die opofferings wat heldhaftige hase deur die eeue gemaak het om vir ons lewenslesse te leer en om ons okulêr te stimuleer. Om die hasepad te kies is nie net om die vlug te slaan, soos die woordeboek jou sal wil wysmaak nie. Om die hasepad te kies behels veel meer: dis om die pad te betree soos ‘n haas dit sou doen: ligvoets, braaf en met eindelose nuuskierigheid.

Hase en konyne het deur die eeue ‘n algemene motief in die visuele kunste geword. As simbole van hergeboorte, fertiliteit,

*Bibi Slippers wrote the above prose to accompany a hare & bunny exhibition in Wellington (Cape), in 2013.*

sensualiteit, vitaliteit en seksuele begeerte is die assosiasie met hase gewoonlik met die lewe. Maar hase loop ook op ‘n dun lyn tussen lewe en dood. Dink byvoorbeeld aan Peter se naamlose pa in “The Adventures of Peter Rabbit”. In hierdie verhaaltjie sê Mrs Rabbit vir haar aanteelt:

“Now my dears, you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don’t go into Mr McGregor’s garden. Your father had an accident there – he was put into a pie by Mrs McGregor.”

In hierdie opsig herinner hase ons ook aan ons eie mortaliteit, en by die aanskou van hase sal u dalk voel hoe die filosoof binne u begin ontwaak. Soos u met die kunswerke in hierdie uitstalling gekonfronteer word en die hasepad kontempleer wat hulle verteenwoordig, mag die groot vrae in die lewe hulle dalk by u aanmeld. Vrae soos “Wie is ons?” “Waarom is hier?” en “Hasie, hoekom is jou stert so kort?” Ek wil u aanmoedig om nie van hierdie vrae weg te skram nie, maar diep in die hase wat hier uitgestal word se oë te kyk en te vertrou dat daar antwoorde te vinde is.

Hase is padwysers na ‘n sagter wêreld. Om die hasepad te kies is om ligvoets te loop, sonder veel erg aan aardse dinge, tensy jy dit kan eet. Om die hasepad te kies is om los te maak, om te laat gaan.

In die laaste hoofstuk van Watership Down, daardie epiese verhaal van Richard Adams wat die haas-bestaan in soveel detail en met soveel deernis opteken, word die hoofkarakter Hazel deur die dood besoek. Ter afsluiting lees ek graag vir u die laaste passasie uit die boek:

*For a loose - somewhat hary translation into English, please refer to pages 40 and 42.*



*“One chilly, blustery morning in March, I cannot tell exactly how many springs later, Hazel was dozing and waking in his burrow. He had spent a good deal of time there lately, for he felt the cold and could not seem to smell or run so well as in days gone by. He had been dreaming in a confused way - something about rain and elder bloom - when he woke to realize that there was a rabbit lying quietly beside him - no doubt some young buck who had come to ask his advice. The sentry in the run outside should not really have let him in without asking first. Never mind, thought Hazel. He raised his head and said, ‘Do you want to talk to me?’*

*‘Yes, that’s what I’ve come for,’ replied the other. ‘You know me, don’t you?’*

*‘Yes, of course,’ said Hazel, hoping he would be able to remember his name in a moment. Then he saw that in the darkness of the burrow, the stranger’s ears were shining with a faint, silver light. ‘Yes, my lord,’ he said. ‘Yes, I know you.’*

*‘You’ve been feeling tired,’ said the stranger, ‘but I can do something about that. I’ve come to ask whether you’d care to join my Owsla. We shall be glad to have you and you’ll enjoy it. If you’re ready, we might go along now.’*

*They went out past the young sentry, who paid the visitor no attention. The sun was shining and in spite of the cold there were a few bucks and does at silflay, keeping out of the wind as they nibbled the shoots of spring grass. It seemed to Hazel that he would not be needing his body any more, so he left it lying on the edge of the ditch, but stopped for a moment to watch his rabbits and to try to get used to the extraordinary feeling that strength and speed were flowing inexhaustibly out of him into their sleek young bodies and healthy senses.*

*‘You needn’t worry about them,’ said his companion. ‘They’ll be all right - and thousands like them. If you’ll come along, I’ll show you what I mean.’*

*He reached the top of the bank in a single, powerful leap. Hazel followed; and together they slipped away, running easily down through the wood, where the first primroses were beginning to bloom.”*







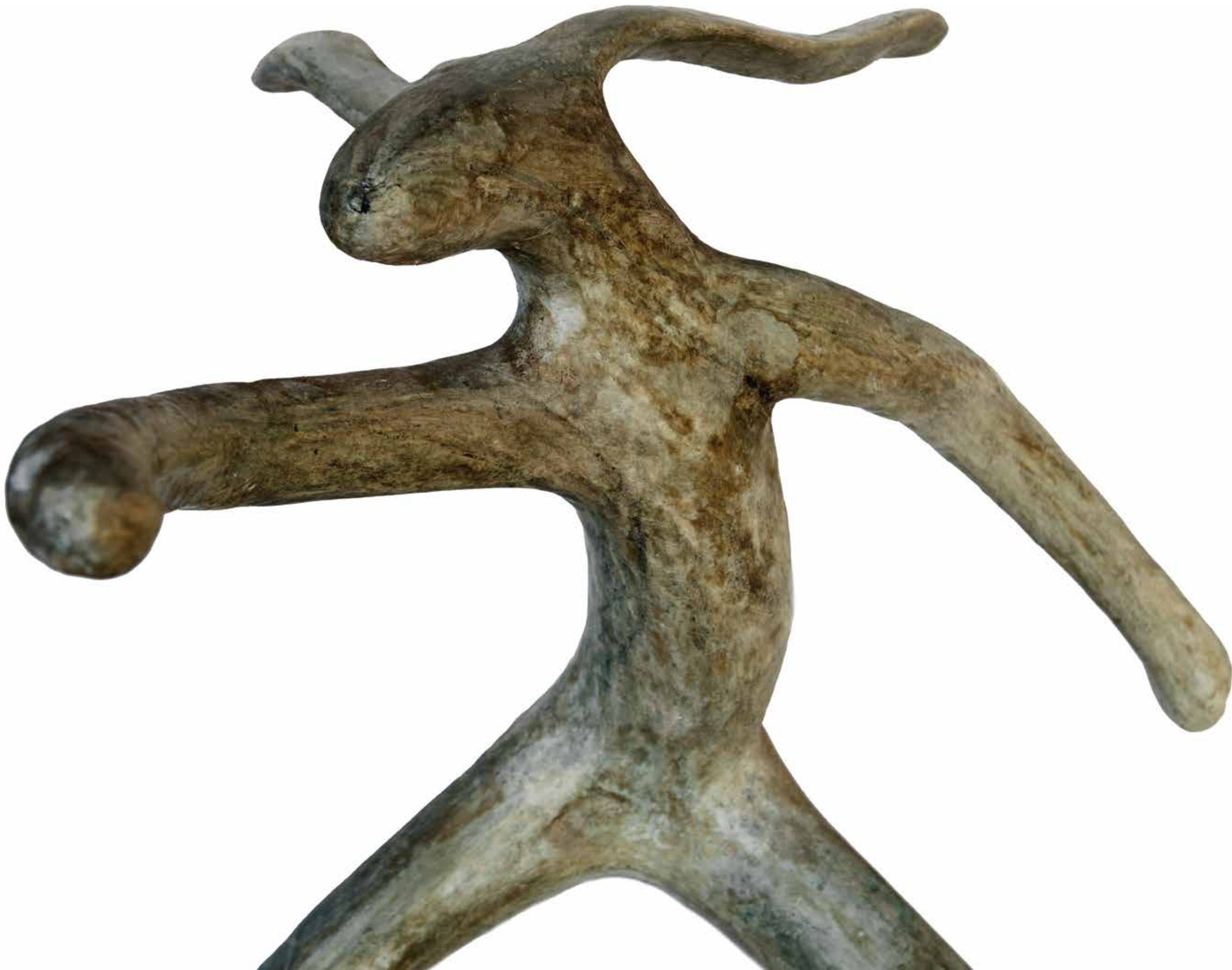
and then



at the  
crack of dawn

































Rakanya riri gore renzara. Tsure aiva nevana (2) vaviri. Akaenda kunotsvaka chikafu okashaiwa. Vana vake vakange vave kuda kufa nenzara. A kafunga zano rekutsvaka naro chikafu.

Munzvimbo maaigara maiva nepurazi rakarimwa maranjisi. Muridzi wepurazi aitora ma Orenji a chinotengesa kudhorobha. Tsure okanagarina mota yemaranjisi.

Akarara muroad seakafa. Muchairi akati ndanhonga Tsure yangu yakafa. Akaitora akaikanda kutirera kwaive nemaranjisi. Tsure akamuka akatanga kutora maranjisi achiisa musaga raive kumashure kwemota.

Apedza akarikanda kunze kwemota ndobva a waruka kubuda mumota. Akatakura maranjisi ake akanopa vana vake. Muridzi wemrota akasvi ka kwaaienda akaona tsure asisimo. Atoba maranjisi ake ndopakapera sarungano.

Selina Muthisi

Please refer to page 55 for a translation of Selina Muthisi's Shona text into English









Ladies and gentlemen, lend me your ears and allow me to say a few words about a subject that lies awfully close to my heart: Hares and avoiding confrontation.

Before I start, I wish to take a moment to honour influential and inspiring hares in history who are gathered here today in spirit (but alas not in the flesh). I am talking about hares such as Flopsy, Mopsy, Cotton-Tail and Peter Rabbit; Roger Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny. Haas Das, Hazel, The Velveteen Rabbit and Edward Tulane. The March Hare and White Rabbit in Alice in Wonderland, Miffy, The Little Grey Rabbit and the nut-brown hares in 'Raai hoe lief is ek vir jou?' (Guess how much I love you?) Then there is also a whole harem full of Playboy-bunnies, Rabbit in Winnie-the-Pooh, the adorable Runny Rabbit and Thumper - Bambi's grey little friend who uttered timeless wise words such as: "Eating greens is a special treat - it makes long ears and great big feet. But sure is awful stuff to eat" and "If you can't say something nice...don't say nothing at all"

It is barely possible to mention all the hares who have played important roles through the years in popular culture, art and in the hearts of children, but at a considered occasion such as this, one wants to pause for a moment and think of all the offerings made through the centuries by heroic hares to teach us about life and also to stimulate us visually. To avoid confrontation is not just to get away from things - as a dictionary will enlighten you. To avoid confrontation - fleeing, entails much more: It is to take the way as a hare would do it: Light-footed, brave and with endless curiosity.

Through the ages, hares and rabbits have become a general motive in the visual arts. As symbols of rebirth, fertility, sensuality, vitality and sexual desire, they are usually associated with life. But hares also tread a thin line between life and death. For example, think of Peter's nameless father in "The Adventures of Peter Rabbit". In this tale, Mrs Rabbit tells her brood:

"Now my dears, you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr McGregor's garden. Your father had an accident there - he was put into a pie by Mrs McGregor."

In this regard, hares also remind us of our own mortality - and while observing hares you too may feel how the philosopher awakens in you. As you are confronted with artworks in here - and the escape route that they represent, life's big questions may knock on your door. Questions such as "Who are we?" "Why are we here?" and "Little hare, why is your tail so short?" I want to ask you not to



shun these questions, but to look deeply into the eyes of the hares that are shown here and to trust that the answers are to be found.

Hares are pointers to a kinder world. The choice to avoid confrontation is to tread lightly, without too much concern about earthly things, unless you can eat them. To choose taking flight is to let go, to be free.

In the last chapter of *Watership Down*, that epic tale by Richard Adams that depicts the hare's existence in so much detail and with so much affection, the main character - Hazel is visited by death.

Here follows the last passage from that book:



*"One chilly, blustery morning in March, I cannot tell exactly how many springs later, Hazel was dozing and waking in his burrow. He had spent a good deal of time there lately, for he felt the cold and could not seem to smell or run so well as in days gone by. He had been dreaming in a confused way - something about rain and elder bloom - when he woke to realize that there was a rabbit lying quietly beside him - no doubt some young buck who had come to ask his advice. The sentry in the run outside should not really have let him in without asking first. Never mind, thought Hazel. He raised his head and said, 'Do you want to talk to me?'*

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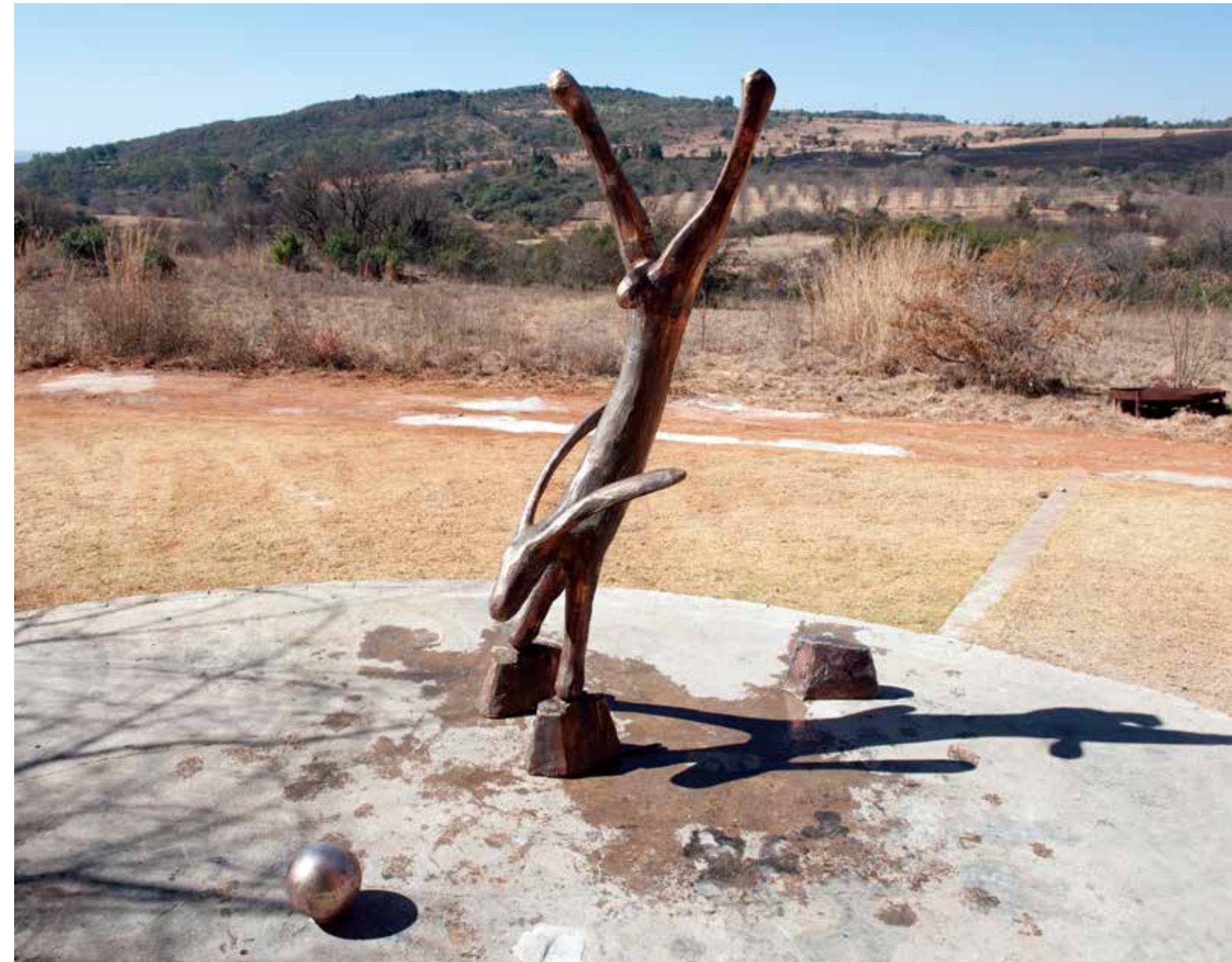
















A long time ago there was a drought in Zimbabwe. Mother hare (with her two kids) found no food after searching in the nearby forest.

She knew that there was an orange farm in the area where a driver from the farm would transport oranges. When the driver took the oranges to sell at the town, she went to lie down in the road - as if dead.

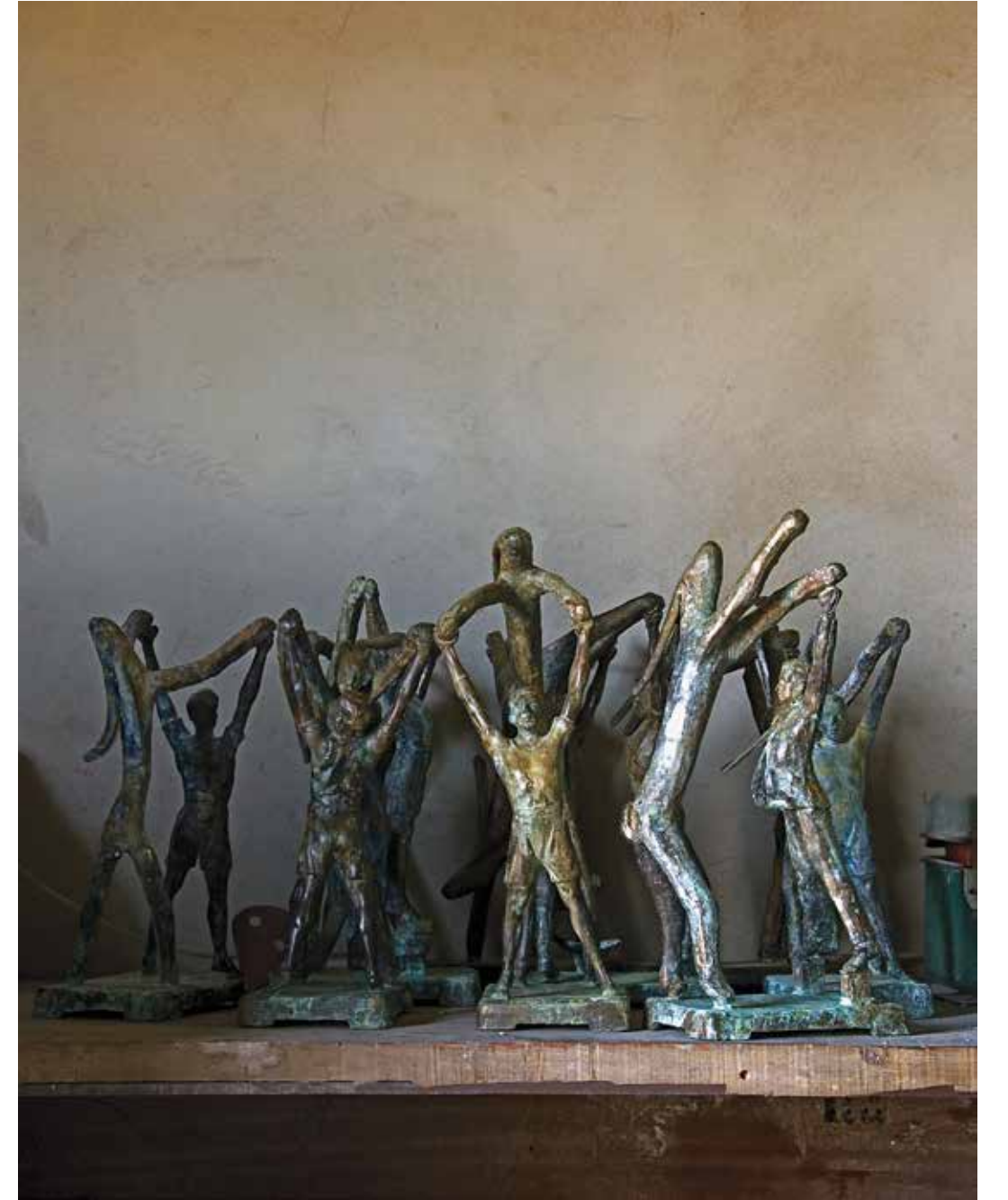
The driver stopped, picked up the hare and put her in the orange laden trailer, before moving on.

Once on the move, Mother hare took some of the oranges and put them into a bag. She then jumped off the trailer with the bag to go and feed her kids.

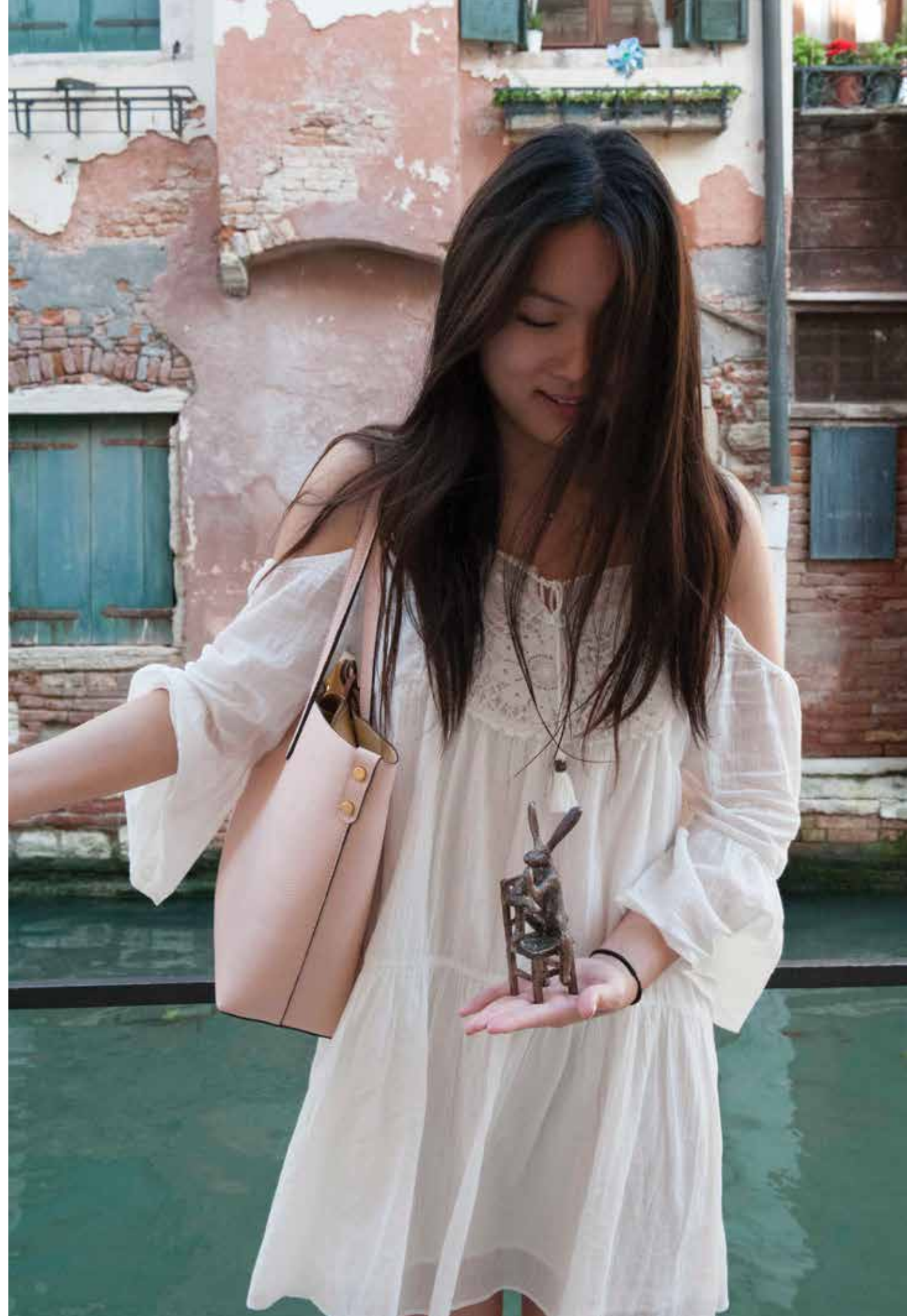
When the driver reached the town, he found the hare missing, and realised that she must have stolen some oranges.



















## Acknowledgements

Thank you Shaun Bettlinger for - even if inadvertently, inspiring the making of this book.

Thank you also to the following persons for their assistance or contributions of another nature:

The Association of Arts, Pretoria, for inviting us to launch this book and exhibition in your gallery, on the occasion of World Art Day in April 2018.

Bibi Slippers - for allowing us not only to use your prose, but to translate it... in a manner, into English.

Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg, for allowing Carla to photograph a reclining hare in your gallery.

The University of Pretoria for your faith in us as lecturers.

Sylvie Groschatau, Anna Mano and other share holders in Graulhet (France) for supporting us in our work and in your community.

Johan Myburg, for your advice on translations.

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Rory Kelly of RPK Fine Art Media, for your advice on the best paper for hand made books.

Selina Muthisi, for your story in Shona about a resourceful hare mother

Peter du Toit, for all your hare raising into bronze.

Michelle Senekal, for all your welding.

Lala Crafford, for your advice regarding illustrations.

Mother nature, for your creation of the hare...







Image reference guide

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Front cover and Page 1, image 1



Second cover, image 2



Inside dust cover, image 3



Page 6, image 5



Page 9, image 6



Pages 10 & 13, image 7



Pages 4-5, image 4

Guy du Toit has created a large number of hares - all cast in bronze. From the first hares in 2004, a variety of sizes and editions have been produced. The hares, all made in Du Toit's studio in Zwavelpoort, have found their way into numerous collections around the world.

Titles, sizes, editions and other information about each piece are omitted here to place emphasis on the visual narrative.

Pages 68 to 71 serve as a quick reference to images and their consecutive page numbers. Pages 72-73 contain additional images that were used for the exhibition HARE'S AN IDEA (in der haas) where this book was launched at the Pretoria Association of Arts in April 2018.

Page- and image numbers are written below images.



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Page 25, image 14



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Page 59, image 39



Page 45, image 28



Pages 46-47, image 29



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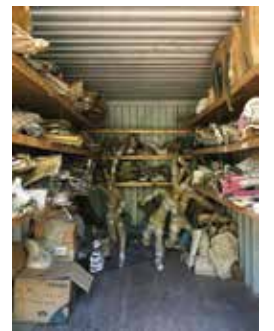
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Pages 50-51, image 32



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Page 79, image 47





Reclining hare in space



Reclining hare on Graulhet leather, France



Reclining hare on Graulhet sofa, France



Reclining hare in Leiden, Holland



Reclining hare in Moonscape, Namibia



Giant Reclining hare on Richmond golf course





GUY DU TOIT has, by dint of steady production and consistently developing work, become one of South Africa's most important and accomplished sculptors. "Liberated" (as he says) by the advent of democracy in South Africa from having to concern himself and his art with the notions of Identity, he has happily turned his attention to "less provincial" pursuits like revelling in form, concept and media for their own sakes. Du Toit uses the unexpected juxtaposition of bronze casts of universal, everyday found (and made-to-look-found) objects to invite his audience to invent dialogue themselves. There is a knowing range to du Toit's work, from the bronze "high art" of traditional sculpture to contemporary installation.

Du Toit was born in 1958 in Rustenburg in the North West Province. He matriculated from Pretoria Boys High School in 1976 and graduated from the University of Pretoria in 1982. He was awarded his BA(FA) Degree with a distinction in sculpture. His work has been exhibited widely, both locally and abroad and is well represented in private, public and corporate collections. He is represented internationally in the Smithsonian Institute, The House of Humour and Satire in Bulgaria, The Montgomery Sculpture Trust, and the Czech National Gallery in Prague. He has been the recipient of various awards, most notably the FNB-Vita award in 1993 and the Sol Plaatjies Sculpture award in 1989. In 2006 he was invited to be Festival artist at the InniBos Arts Festival, Nelspruit and won Best Overall Contribution to the festival.



Du Toit has taught at the Pelmama Academy in Soweto, both Johannesburg and Pretoria Technicons, (now UJ and TUT respectively) and the then Johannesburg School of Art, Ballet, Drama and Music. He has given workshops throughout South Africa and has been involved in community projects, seminars and symposia. He curates and adjudicates exhibitions and guest lectures at a number of institutions. The past few years have increasingly been spent on private and public commissions and in working closely with artists and businesses, especially those involved in design, communications, architecture, advertising and entertainment. Du Toit currently teaches part-time at the University of Pretoria and works full-time from his home and studio in Zwavelpoort, Pretoria and Graulhet, France



## Carla Crafford

Carla Crafford, née Hartman, was born in Kroonstad, South Africa in 1955.

After completing the first year of Architecture at the University of Pretoria, Crafford moved to Cape Town to Study Fine Art at UCT until 1978. Majoring in sculpture required frequent photographic documentation. This awakened her interest in photography of artwork.

In 1981 she moved to Paris, working for Satour. During this time the photograph as an art form took precedence over the photograph as document.

Crafford returned to South Africa in 1987 to work full time on photography, painting and sculpture.

She has been guest lecturer in photography and new media at the University of Pretoria since 1997. She has had five solo exhibitions, has taken part in numerous group exhibitions - locally and internationally, and has had works published in various local and international magazines and books. Her photography of other artists' work – for their own use or for collaborative projects, is an ongoing passion.

It was at the University of Pretoria that Crafford first met Du Toit in 2005, when he had asked her to photograph his sculptures for an exhibition. Since then, Crafford has photographed Du Toit's work on numerous occasions, and at times the two have collaborated on projects for exhibitions, or for other purposes such

as the Venice Architectural Biennale in 2016, the Saadjies project (Amsterdam, Graulhet and Richmond) or Cool Capital ventures.

Crafford lives and works in Pretoria - or wherever the call - from established as well as selected young artists, 'rings' for collaborations, photographic work, video compilations, translations, book binding, curatorship, exhibition introductions or student guidance.

Previous books - all limited editions - by Crafford:

1. 2016: Guy du Toit Discovering the Object
2. 2015: Shooting Range.
3. 2014: Encounters: TTL.
4. 2013: Floor of the Land. (Unique edition).
5. 2008: POSTER - a book inspired by poster theft.
6. 2006: Momentarily\_Endless.

