



SHANY VAN DEN BERG

A Place to Bloom

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14 November – 13 December 2025

ER | 10 YEARS





A Place to Bloom

Everard Read London presents South African artist, Shany van den Berg's new exhibition of paintings and sculptures.

The artist's nudes and floral still lifes are lush and vegetal and exemplify her profound connection to nature, womanhood and her place in the world. For van den Berg, motifs from the natural world centre on the cycles of changing seasons which are mirrored in family lines and individual lives.

Her reclining nudes trace their lineage to the Renaissance masters and the Neoclassical movement – most notably Giorgione, Titian and Ingres – and continue an intimate conversation across time. The curves and palette of her florals might take inspiration from the likes of Georgie O'Keefe, but they are largely the vibrant inventions of her imagination.

Interspersed throughout this catalogue are the artist's musings on the context and inspiration for this new collection of works, and the personal meaning she derives both from her process and from each completed work.





*I arranged her red roses for insomnia
(After Louise Bourgeois ...Insomnia
drawings of red roses)*

oil on board
50 x 40 cm

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These new works revel in the dialogue between the human form and the natural world. I arrange flowers in vases and figures in gardens, with a similar eye for composition, exploring how the curve of a voluptuous vase echoes the sensuous curves of a human body. My intention is to create a sense of harmonious tension, where the cultivated and the wild, the temporary and the timeless, exist in a single, balanced frame. I think of my paintings as both a celebration of colour and form, but also a meditation on stillness and the ephemeral beauty to be found in the quiet, often-overlooked spaces between the domestic and the wild.



Oh! it's a sunny day
oil on board
80 x 60 cm

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My vase het begin groei II
(My vase has begun to grow II)

bronze

Edition of 8

63 x 55 x 55 cm

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Curls and swirls in yellow vase
oil on linen
100 x 100 cm

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My work draws on my responses to the traditions of still life and landscape painting as well as my personal memories as a child, gardening with my mother. It is also nourished by my enduring love for gardens and walking in nature.



A bunch of joy
oil on linen
86 x 86 cm

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My vase het begin groei I
(My vase has begun to grow I)

bronze

Edition of 8

48 x 44 x 44 cm

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A Rose is a rose is a rose
oil on linen
100 x 100 cm

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I think about war and insecurity that plagues our beautiful planet. I painted the pair of white poppies, embracing, as a symbol of the peace I yearn for; the red, larger-than-life, open poppy for remembrance, and the red rose for the love I want to send around the world.



Remembrance
oil on linen
100 x 100 cm

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Embrace on a blue table

oil on board

60 x 40 cm

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Who's there in my garden?
(Female form after Ingres)
oil on board
40 x 60 cm

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The sleeping Venus
(Female form after Giorgione)
oil on board
40 x 56 cm

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Searching for their colour
oil on linen
100 x 130 cm

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Looking through the foliage
(Female form after Velazquez)

oil on board
40 x 60 cm

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Textural arrangement

oil on linen

100 x 100 cm

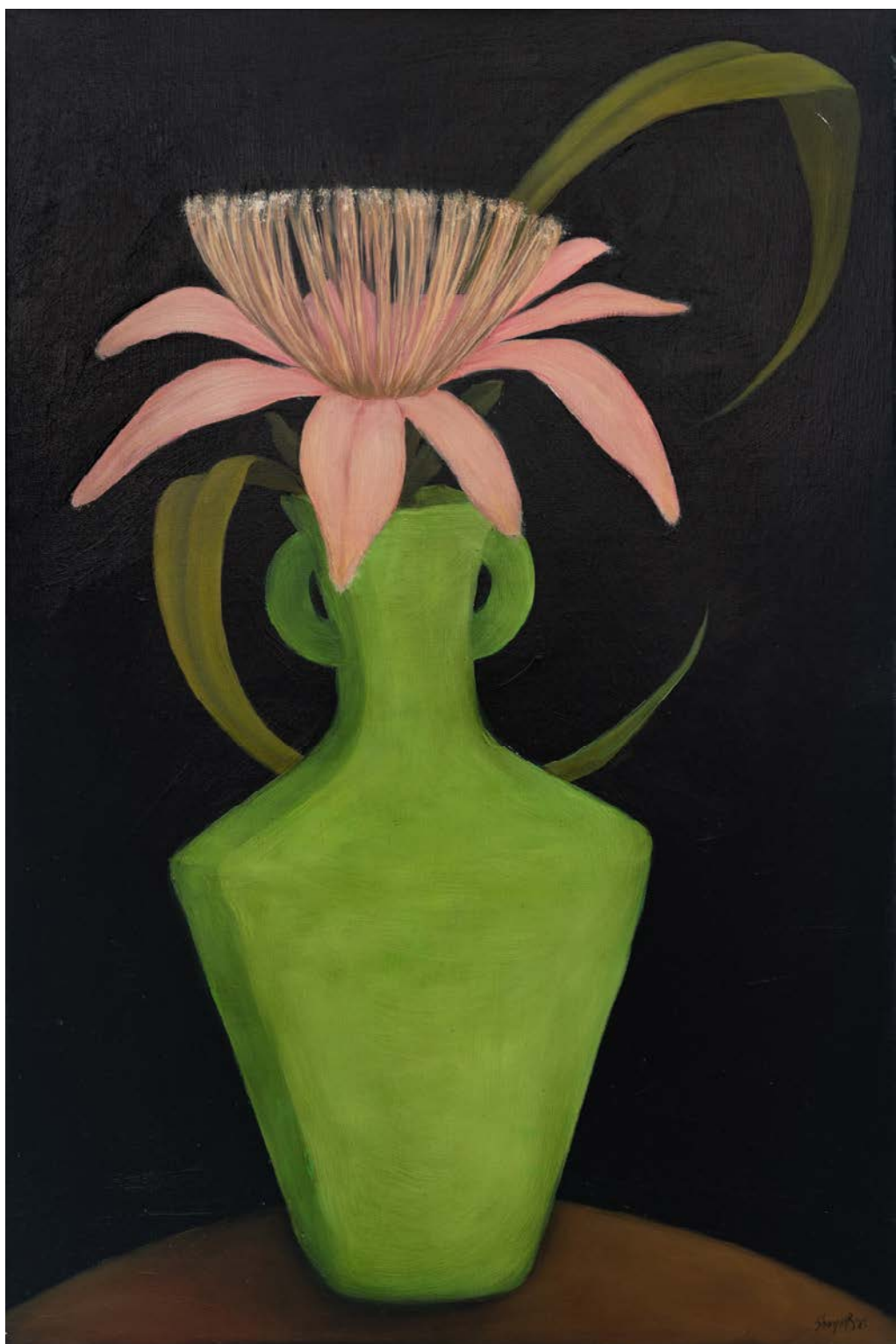
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Dream garden
oil on linen
100 x 130 cm

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He made beautiful vases ... an ode I

oil on linen

60 x 40 cm

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When I set about painting a floral still life, I don't rely on a physical arrangement of flowers. The elements are conjured in my imagination and then I begin researching my fantasy flowers that quench my longing for nature, for joy and for a sense of freedom.

My process with oil paint is essential to this exploration. I need both the richness of layered brushwork and impasto to build a tangible sense of life and texture, but also delicate, thin glazes of paint to capture the ethereal, to evoke a sense of timelessness and stillness.



A perfect bunch from the Western Cape
oil on linen
150 x 150 cm

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Red hibiscus in my orange vase
oil on board
80 x 60 cm

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He made beautiful vases...an ode II

oil on linen

60 x 40 cm

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Pink hibiscus in wavy vase
oil on linen
60 x 80 cm

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Woman with pink hibiscus
oil on linen
40 x 72 cm

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Working with oil paint allows me to build layers of light and colour, striving to capture not just an image, but a feeling – the warmth of sun on skin, the delicate texture of a petal, the hushed atmosphere of a private sanctuary. This work is my personal refuge, an invitation to step away from the noise of the world and contemplate the quiet drama of nature's cycles.

It is my sincere hope that the viewer finds in these paintings, a sense of peace, reflection, and a reconnection to the natural world.



We share this space
oil on board
30 x 30 cm

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She found her place to bloom
oil impasto on board
30 x 25 cm

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Between heaven & earth

oil on linen

130 x 100 cm

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She brings rain and abundance

oil on linen

130 x 100 cm

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Rose's little black vase
oil on board
60 x 40 cm

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Abundance
oil on linen
150 x 150 cm

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SHANY VAN DEN BERG

b. 1958 Riversdale, South Africa

Shany van den Berg's practice centres on contemporary portraiture and figurative work, and stems from her life as a woman, mother of four children and a professional artist.

Renowned for her technical acumen and agility in shifting between portraiture, figurative, abstraction and sculptural work, she explores the critical contemporary themes of womanhood, identity, family, and connectedness to Mother Earth.

Van den Berg's portraiture is most often of women, whose features morph into a composite of the artist and her loved ones, serving as portals to narratives of sacrifice, struggle and ultimately transcendence. The references are delicate and ambiguous: a nude atop a gallery plinth is transposed from stone into flesh and blood, or vice versa; a sheet draped, shroud-like, across an ethereal form emerging from or entering an abyss; hands depicted in gestures of supplication, prayer, self-protection or release; a red scarf or fragile scarlet thread seeming almost to flutter across and beyond the canvas.

Van den Berg's ethereal oil paintings evoke the mood and texture of Old Master paintings, conveying complex emotions,

moods and ideas through meticulous attention to detail, an extraordinary facility with paint and subtle symbolism.

A sense of layering pervades her works, in the imagery itself and through Van den Berg's painterly process. Surfaces are built up of swathes, not painted onto the board but rather, absorbed into it. Shadows are imbued with texture and skins exude an almost viscous sheen. Although unmistakably feminine, some of her forms evoke a sense of animalism through their attenuated bone structure, and an underlying sexuality pervades many of the forms. They suggest recognition, confirmation and the bittersweet knowledge of love, loss and letting go.

Van den Berg has worked as a full-time artist for thirty years. Her practice includes painting on board, linen and found objects, drawing, sculpture, site specific installations, mixed media, three-dimensional work as well as poetry and music.

She is a three-time finalist in the BP Portrait Award at London's National Portrait Gallery. Her work is represented in private collections in the UK, across Europe, South Africa and the USA.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024** *BinneTuin/Garden Within*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2023** *Garden of Her Dreams*, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2022** *Her Garden*, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2021** *nōs/ons*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2019** *Dreampond*, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2018** *Fluisteringe vanaf n Leliepoel/Whispers from a Lily Pond*, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa
- 2017** *(in)filtration of time*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2015** *Al(l)een*, The Gallery at Grande Provence, Franschhoek, South Africa
New works, Gallery at La Grande Provence, Franschhoek, South Africa
- 2013** *Hinterland*, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2011** *Siel van my Vel*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2010** *Solo*, IS Art at Le Quartier Francais, Franschhoek, South Africa
- 2008** *In gesprek met*, Smelik & Stokking, Den Haag, Netherlands
- 2007** *...(h)erken...ken...en...*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Gedagtes wat reis, My Own Choice Gallery, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2006** *Dwaaltuin*, Grande Provence Gallery, Franschhoek, South Africa
Die Fees Gees, Cultivaria at Vrede en Lust Wine Estate, Paarl, South Africa
- 2003** *Construction site*, Limeline Design, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2001** *Vlug in tyd*, Dorp Street Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa
- 1999** *My shadow, my echo, me*, Bang the Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025** *10 Years | Summer 2025*, Everard Read, London, UK
Matter Matters | Artists & Their Media, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2024** *110 Year Anniversary Exhibition*, Everard Read, London, UK
Southern Light, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2023** *What I Feel When I Think About The Cosmos*, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa
Summer, Everard Read, London, UK
Winter, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2022** *Spring*, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa
Things I'd like to remember, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2021** *Offering*, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa
- 2020** *On Being*, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa
Journeys of the Mind, Everard Read, Franschhoek, South Africa
Toe ek 21 was, Toyota US Woodfees, Stellenbosch, South Africa
STILL, Everard Read, UK & South Africa
- 2019** *Selected Artists*, Knysna Fine Art Gallery, Knysna, South Africa
The Ampersand Foundation/21 Year Celebration Exhibition/ A Vision of Jack Ginsberg, UJ Art Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
Southern Aspect, Everard Read, London, UK
Winter, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Synchronous, Knysna Fine Art, Knysna, South Africa
- 2018** *Winter*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2017** Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa



- Winter*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
People and Portraiture, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Summer, Everard Read, London, UK
Winter, Everard Read, London, UK
- 2016** Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
 Opening Exhibition, Everard Read, London, UK
Winter Collection, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2015** *Fear & Loss – Industrial Karoo Group installation*, Pretoria Art Museum, South Africa
100 Years, Die Burger, Cape Town, South Africa
Summer Sculpture Garden, with Everard Read, Mount Nelson Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa
Homage, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Winter, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2014** *Summer Season*, D-Street Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa
Fear & Loss, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, South Africa
Summer of Sculpture III, with Everard Read, Mount Nelson Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa
Magicus, D-Street Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa
- 2013** *Cape Town Re-Imagined*, Suidoosterfees, Cape Town, South Africa
100, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
Universal Suffering, War Museum, Bloemfontein, South Africa
Femininity, curated by Eva Roer, Germany
 SAADA Antique Fair, Pier Rabe Antiques, Franschhoek, South Africa
Hiernamaals/Hereafter, Snee Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa
- Binnehemels*, Red, Black & White, Stellenbosch, South Africa
- 2012** *Small Works*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
A Summer of Sculpture, with Everard Read, Mount Nelson Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2009** *The Great South African Nude*, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa
Sex, Power, Money, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2008** *Confluence*, a two-woman exhibition between China & South Africa, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
 Art Fair Utrecht, Netherlands
- 2006** *Small works*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
 Shany van den Berg/Strijdom van der Merwe, Grande Provence Gallery, Franschhoek, South Africa
- 2005** *Three*, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2002** Shany van den Berg/Alex Hamilton, Bang the Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2000** *A Celebration of Art & Technology*, group show in aid of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, sponsored by Hewlett Packard

COMPETITIONS & PROJECTS

- 2022** Woordfees, Stellenbosch, South Africa in conjunction with Stauss & Co, South Africa
- 2021** Sanlam Portrait Award Finalist: Rust en Vrede Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2019** Sanlam Portrait Top 40 Finalist 'Leah se Water' Rust-en-Vrede Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2016** BP Portrait Award Finalist, National Portrait Gallery, London, UK
 BP Travel Award Shortlisted Finalist, Portrait Gallery, London, UK



Art Patron of MAD Leadership Foundation / Collaboration with students, Stellenbosch, South Africa

- 2013** Fellowship granted by the Ampersand Foundation, New York
- 2011** Bright Ideas Ceramic art, Light from Africa Foundation, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2010** BP Portrait Award Finalist, National Portrait Gallery, London, UK
2 Textile wall artworks, 6m by 2m, made in collaboration with Mogalakwena Art and Craft Centre, Limpopo, for Waterkloof Wine Estate, Somerset West, South Africa
- 2009** BP Portrait Award Finalist, National Portrait Gallery, London, UK
- 2008** Art exchange, Hubei Institute of Art, China
Art Fair Utrecht
- 2007** AAF Amsterdam
- 2005** Sasol New Signatures Finalist, South Africa
- 2004** Community Arts Workshop, with Everard Read, Castle of Good Hope, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2000** Hewlett Packard Project and Auction Johannesburg in support of Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, South Africa
- 1990** Corobrik Ceramic Competition Cape Town finalist

COLLECTIONS

Works included in private collections in South Africa, London, France, Germany, Luxemburg, Caymen Islands and U.S.A

ART RESIDENCIES

- 2023** Residency at Cite Internationale des Arts, Paris, France
- 2013** Fellowship, The Ampersand Foundation, New York, USA
- 2007** Art Exchange, Hubei Institute of Art, Wuhan, China and Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa
- 1998** Lauenberg, Germany

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Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 10 am – 6 pm
Friday 10 am – 5 pm | Saturdays 12 pm – 4 pm

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS
Michael Hall and the artist's studio

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