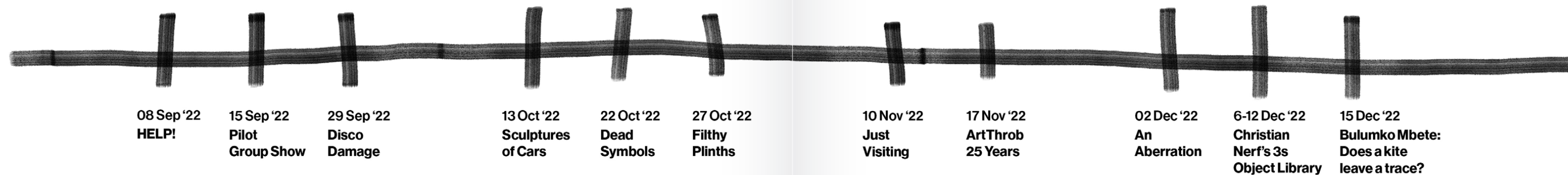


Booth I4

**Investec
Cape Town
Art Fair '23**







Under Projects is an artist-run space for exhibitions and exercises co-founded by Brett Seiler, Guy Simpson, Luca Evans, and Mitchell Gilbert Messina.

For the 2023 International Cape Town Art Fair, Under is invited to inhabit A4's booth. In anticipation of this, a facsimile booth was fabricated at A4 to prototype Under's presentation. This working iteration will be housed at Under Projects (79 Roeland Street) during the Fair.

Culminating in a public-facing survey, the preparation for the event becomes allocated time and space for Under to process their archive with the support of A4's curatorial studio.

Introduction to **Booth I4**

Extract from an ongoing conversation between
Josh Ginsburg (J.G.), Sara de Beer (S.D.B), Zach Viljoen (Z.V) Mitchell Gilbert
Messina (M.G.M), Brett Seiler (B.S.), Guy Simpson (G.S.), and Luca Evans (L.E.)



J.G. The story of Under is quite simple and legible – an independent project space that prizes free play instead of commerce. A4 acknowledges the role of the fair in developing interest in the sector at large. We use our booth to share wide ranging artistic practices that don't fit squarely into the model of the Fair. In this case, we offered our space to Under, if they'd have it, to share their practice and open up a conversation about self-funded spaces and the need for greater patronage in the sector to sustain these non-commercial and experimental spaces. Buying art does not necessarily support the wider community of the arts. There is only one of these – one Under – here at the Fair, in the midst of all these hundreds of artworks, and in some ways this booth is a call, or a wish: that more project spaces may emerge, and be sustained.

M.G.M We are, all four of us, practitioners, with our different trainings and preferences for exhibition-making. To a degree, there's a pitch happening in this booth. There was an increasing cynicism, I felt, amongst fellow artists (and in

the community) about making and sticking to an experimental trajectory. Project spaces exist to encourage the experimental trajectory, but project spaces in the city had all but disappeared.

B.S. We're a Y2K project space in the city. Built to last.

Z.V. It isn't stated enough: how much commercial galleries rely on project spaces to incubate artists and ideas.

M.G.M The politics of the space, of Under, is that we are non-commercial. Showing work and not selling it for me is default as to what a project space should be.

G.S. Anything is for sale at Under but nothing is for sale by us. Selling is a part of it whether we like it or not.

L.E. Money correlates to time. We did so many shows: 11 shows in the space of four months. It was by necessity, based on capacity. Some were up for only two days. They still required installation – deinstallation.

B.S. We romanticise the idea of the project space: that we're all in this together and that having Under to put things in, with the input of people, is the point, or is enough.

G.S. This preparation for the Fair is the first time the four of us are in a space together since October 2022.

S.D.B. So if you could make bullet points...the 'things to do when

starting an artist-led project space', watching Under has shown me that number one should be: "Find a way to make your community shareholders in the space, committed to seeing the project succeed." You did that superbly with the donor boards that are being activated again at the Fair.

L.E. I'm hoping the booth at the Fair works like an incubator. In terms of an archive, we are sitting with different shows and disparate parts; a mess of objects that are odd on their own. I hope that we can find a way to look at the archive beyond the sum of its parts.

J.G. When do you recall artworks in Under doing the work of exposing this principle, or the difficulty of this principle, of 'no sales'?

M.G.M Being weirded out by Igshaan's [Adams] car, and how it suddenly broke a value system. Seeing Zander's [Blom] work [that had been painted straight on the wall] being painted over. People were shocked by that action, because, "That's worth something." Because of sticking to the principle of Under, I could say, "Oh actually that's not worth anything at all."

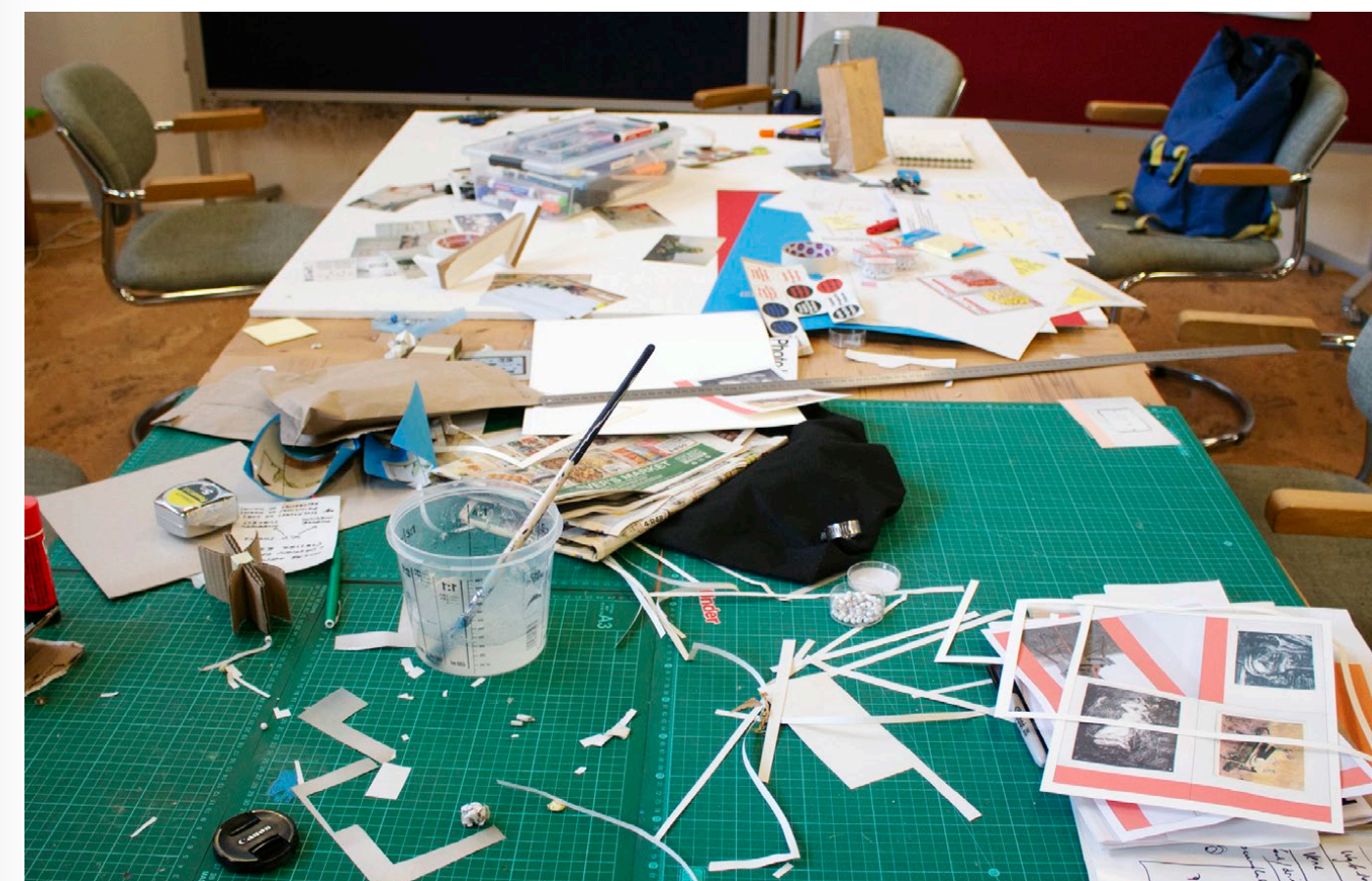
L.E. The tape player – we invited people to do the show and we were unprescriptive; we said, "Give us an experiment." Jared [Ginsburg] arrived with this box and this thing was very precious. He put it on the table. It was the first time we'd curated there, so it was this very exciting moment of

being entrusted with this surprising object. He carefully showed us how it worked. We'd been talking about this project, this space, and suddenly an object appeared that neither of us expected as curators. The trust I felt from an artist bringing that into our space was special.

J.G. It's provocative to think that there's a moment where it's irreversible, where the financial power overrides everything. Under can show collectors that there are different ways to practise and engage as a collector.

B.S. We're asking people to throw money at cardboard.

M.G.M The hubris of taking time during an art fair to think things over!







L.E. Four friends (and a dog) walk into a bar.



B.S. Ok, but there's a backstory; a project space called Mainhouse where Guy ditched me and I was stuck with the rent.

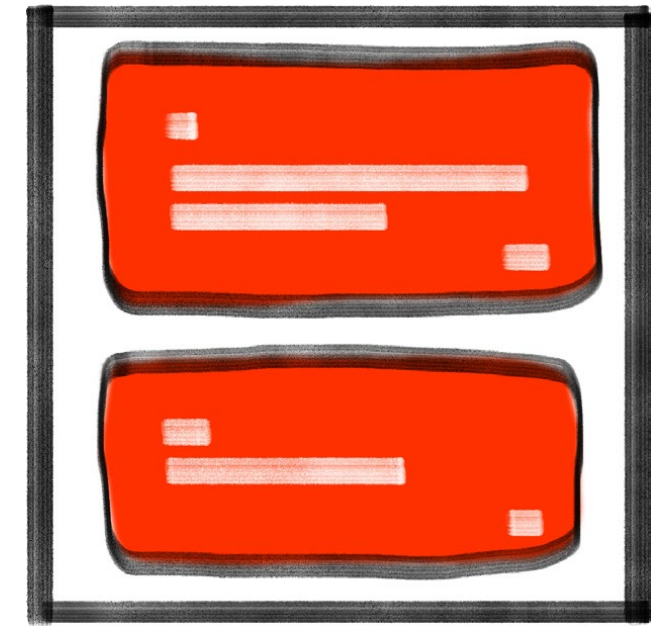
G.S. Then we get to Buitenkant Street. There's a month's rent already paid by a gallery that had a pop-up in the space, and a set of keys. This is the beginning of the "we hand over the keys" narrative.



L.E. But to simplify, and get to the part of Under, four friends

M.G.M. (and a dog)

L.E. walk into a bar.

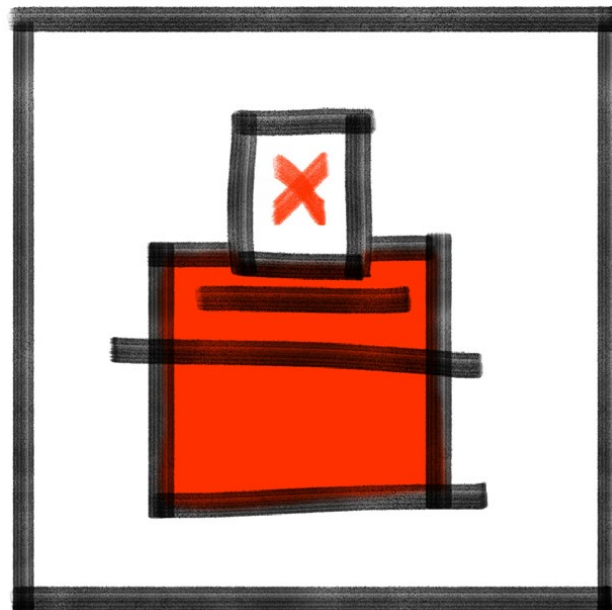


M.G.M. For a long time, there's a dead Whatsapp group.

19 August 2022, 10.03am
"I've just walked past this place on Roeland Street. I think we should take the lease!" (B.S.)

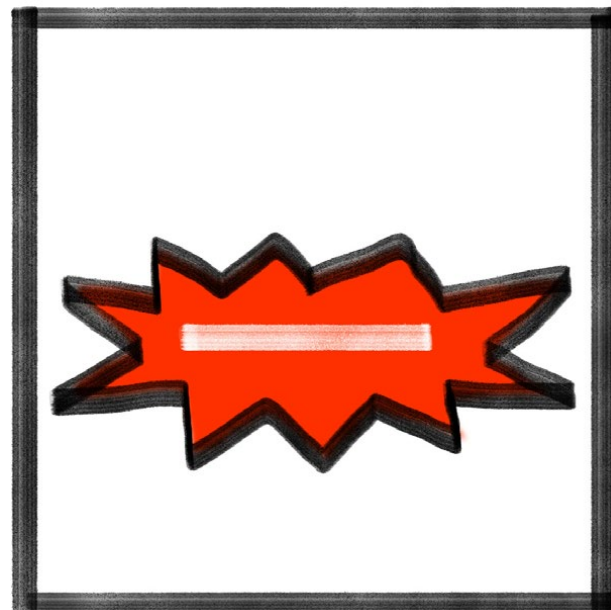
19 August 2022, 10.03–10.18am
"Let's think about everything and confirm end of the day" (B.S.)

19 August 2022, 12:46am
"I've just signed the lease!" (B.S.)



L.E. Before Under there was a list of names. And then a short list. I have it here. Uncle, Common projects, Sports Bar, Golden, Basil, Short, Super, Champagne, Another, Maison, Pilot.

M.G.M Everyone who is an artist in Cape Town weighed in at the Kimberly Hotel. We were very leaky.

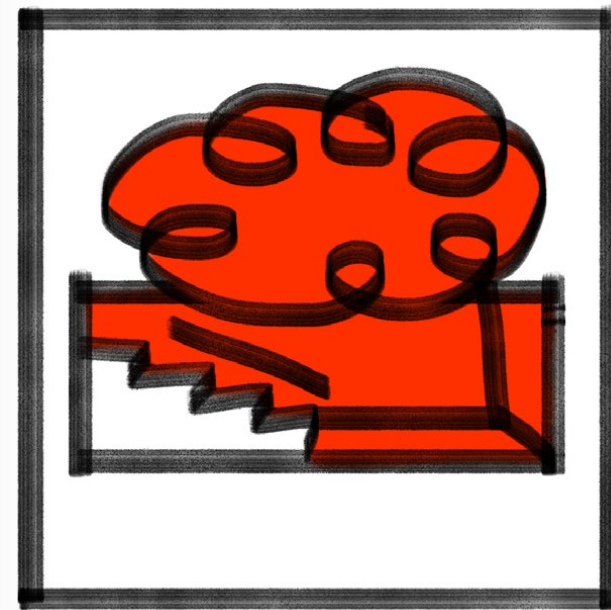


G.S. Eventually, the four of us voted on a Google Form.

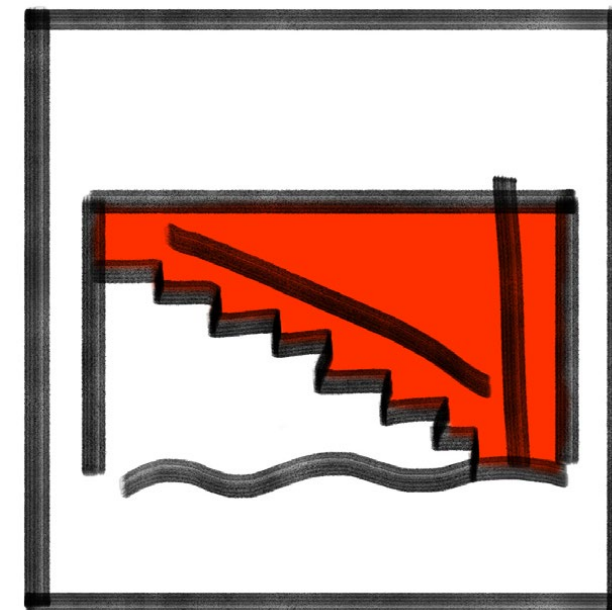
1 September 2022, 16.39am

"Under it is. Everyone happy with that?" (B.S.)

And so, we were Under.



Under Projects Simply put, the space is a basement-level renovated parking garage. So it's under everything.



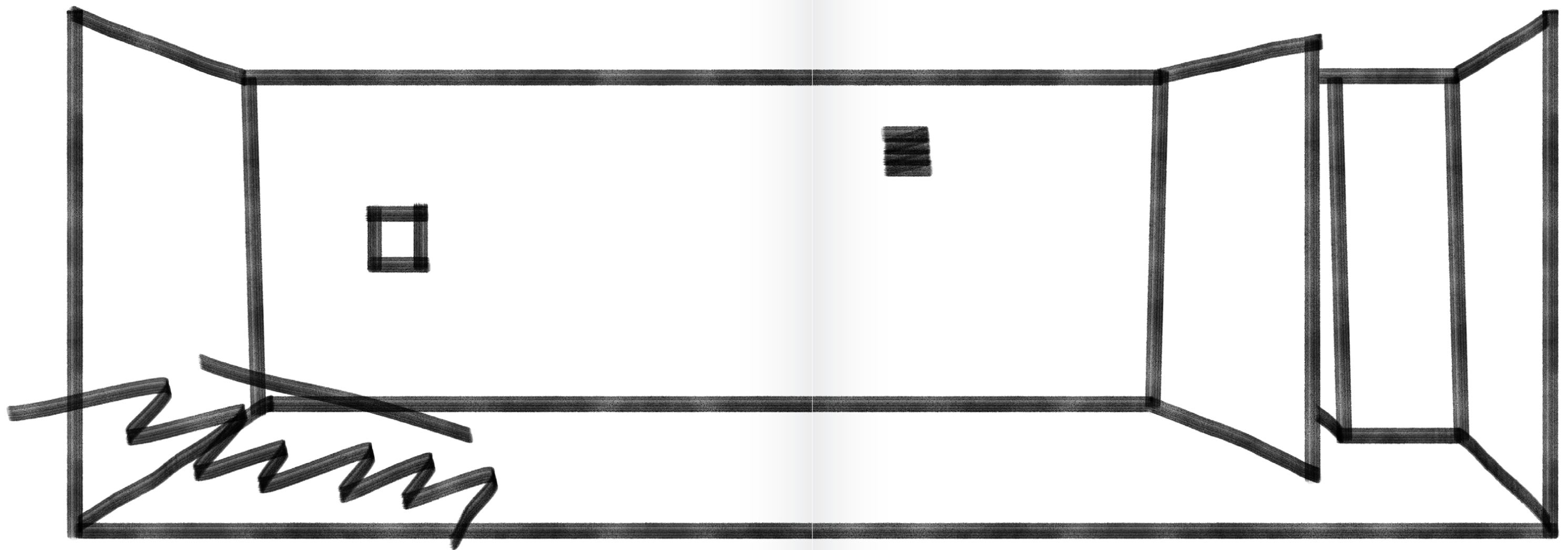
Under Projects We were thinking about notions of the 'underground': "Under the pavement, the beach," as per the Situationist International; 'The Undercommons' of Moten and Harney. Underdogs. What exists below the surface?

Under Projects

organised by Brett Seiler, Luca Evans, Guy Simpson, Mitchell Gilbert Messina

Under Projects is an artist-run space founded by four friends in September 2022. Housed in Roeland Street, Under Projects is organised around the aims of 1) running a space for emerging and experimental projects and 2) developing an acumen around putting shows together quickly. For the time being, Under steers clear of a sales-based model, relying instead on the support of a community of patrons and practitioners who believe that experimental models are necessary to the development of a healthy arts ecology and who wish to encourage an independent project space.

In the first four months of its existence, Under Projects presented 11 exhibitions, showing more than 100 artists and artworks, and engaging in multiple collaborations.



Help!

organised by Brett Seiler, Luca Evans, Guy Simpson, Mitchell Gilbert Messina

Under's debut project invited members of the local arts community to join our network of patrons. With no amount too small, donors' names were written on yellow post-it notes and placed on the wall for Under Projects organisers to later inscribe onto our patron board – an ongoing record of the many individuals whose contributions have helped to recoup renovation costs, pay rent, and facilitate projects in the space.



Thursday 08 September 2022, 18:00–20:00

Pilot Group Show

organised by Luca Evans, Guy Simpson

For Pilot, our first group show, artists were asked to exhibit an experiment, the first step towards a project or a stab in the dark. While still trying to 'figure it out', Pilot proposed Under as a space for process and experiment.

Unathi Mkonto	1
Guy Simpson	2, 3
Matty Roodt	4
Vusumzi Nkomo	5
Jared Ginsburg	6
Lebogang Mogul Mabusela	7
Luca Evans	8
Wendy Fredriksson	9



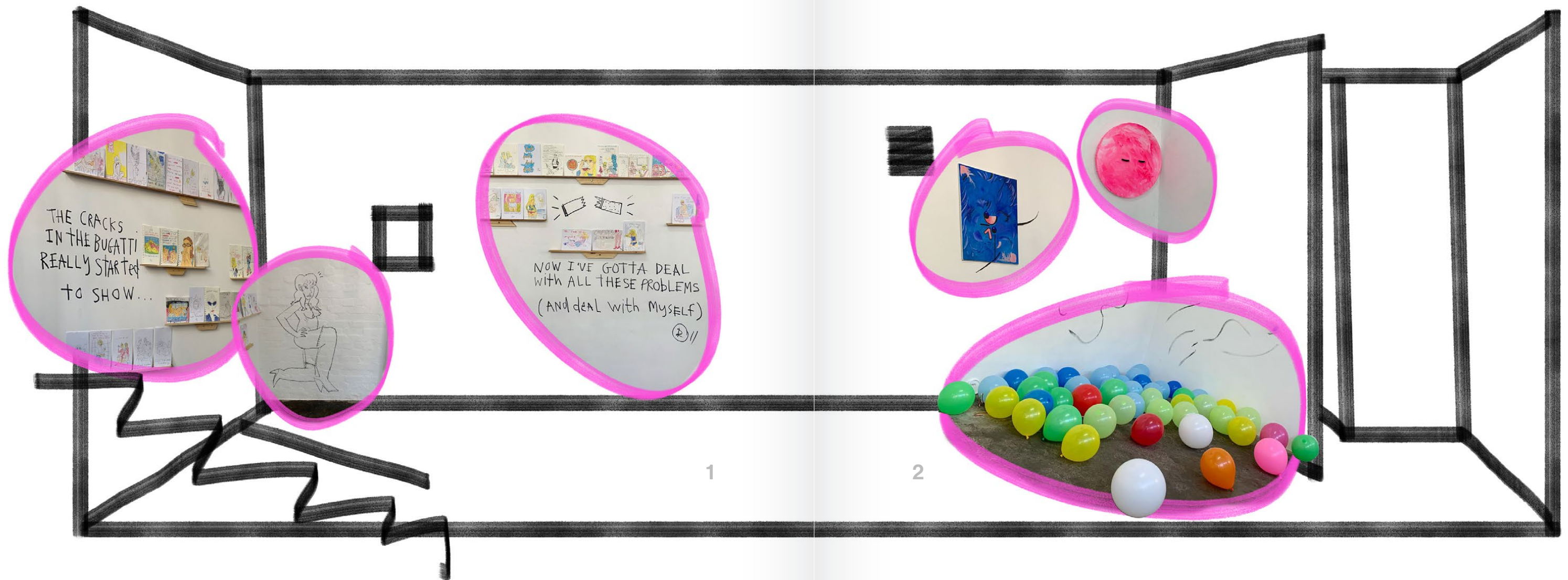
Thursday 15 September 2022, 17:30–20:00
Saturday 17 September 2022, 11:00–13:00

Disco Damage

organised by Brett Seiler, Nano Le Face, Akshar Maganbehari

Disco Damage comprised drawings by Nano Le Face and Akshar Maganbehari. With balloons in the bathroom and text written directly onto the walls, Under was transformed into a house, post party.

Nano Le Face 1
Akshar Maganbehari 2



Thursday 29 September 2022, 18:00–20:00
Saturday 01 October 2022, 11:00–13:00

Sculptures of Cars

organised by Mitchell Gilbert Messina

Sculptures of Cars was a prompt-based show – with artists invited to create new work within the parameters of an imposed medium (sculpture) and theme (cars).



Andrew Edge
Bella Knemeyer
Benjamin Stanwix
Carol Khaas
Christian Nerf
Daisy Darling
Dan Halter
Dominic Pretorius
Ed Young
Evan Wigdorowitz
Georgia Munnik
Gitte Maria Moller
Guy Simpson
H.L. Gene
Hanna Noor Mahomed
Hayden Malan
Igshaan Adams
Jayshal Gajjar
Jean-Marié Malan
Jonathan Garnham
Katie Thomas
Keely Shinnars
Kyle Morland
Lemeeze Davids
Luca Evans
Mark Reichardt
Mark Thomas
Matty Roodt
Melissa Wrench
Mia Darling
Michael Linders
Michael Tymbios
Michaela Younge
Mignonne Busser
Mitchell Gilbert Messina
Nazeer Jappie
Nick Thomas
Oliver Hunter Pohorille
Oscar Keogh
Phillip Newman
Romeiro Hooblal
Rowan Smith
Sandy Harris
Shade x Clubhouse
Shayna Arvan
Sitaara Stodel
Unathi Mkonto
Wendy Fredriksson

Thursday 13 October 2022, 18:00–20:00
Saturday 15 October 2022, 11:00–13:00

Dead Symbols

organised by Dead Symbols

Under Projects hosted DEAD SYMBOLS, a Cape-Town-based, critical sound collective committed to dangerous thinking and sonic vandalism.

“Thinking about sound as theoretical intervention, our occupation will take the form of a durational performance, sonic lecture, improvisation, and study session, as we probe, by way of music-making & reading, the possibilities and implications and stakes of world-endings.”

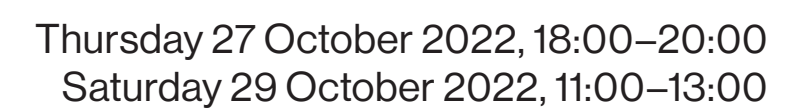
Vusumzi Nkomo
Fernando Damon
Rowan Smith



Saturday 22 October 2022, 13:00–18:00
Sunday 23 October 2022, 11:00–16:00

organised by Filthy Plinths

Mignonne Busser	1
Phillip Newman	2
Melissa Wrench	3

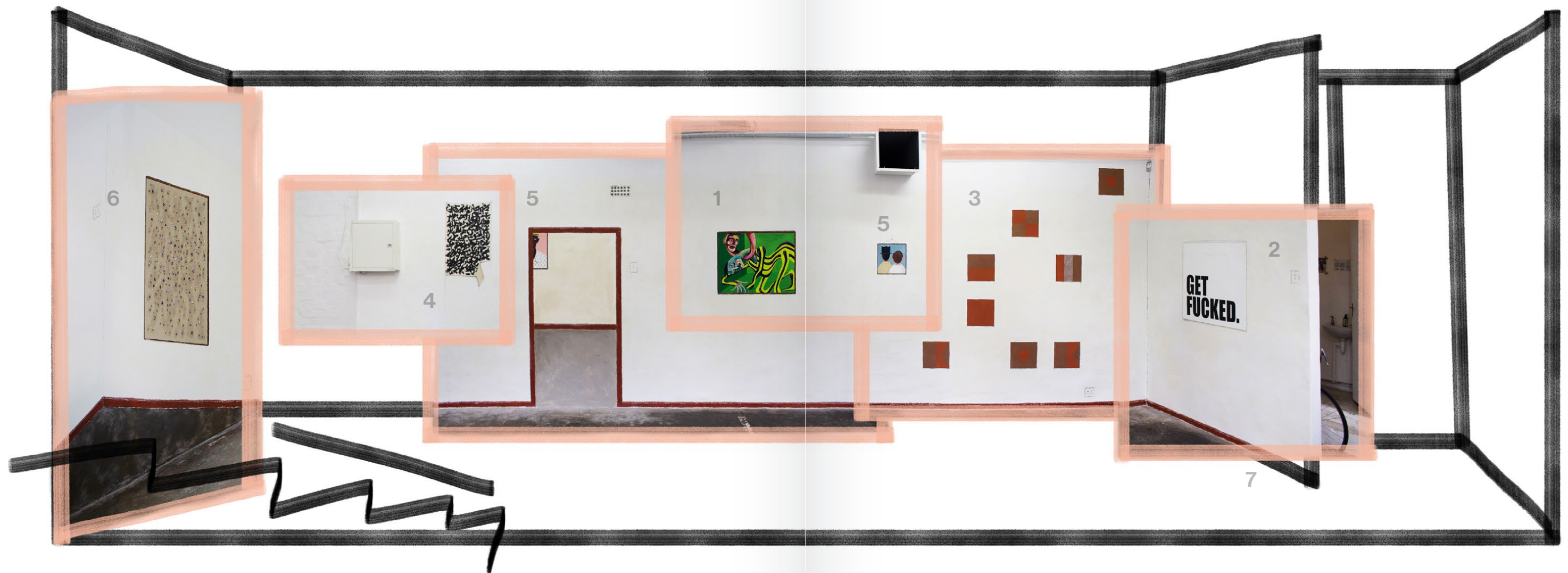


Just Visiting

organised by Guy Simpson

Just Visiting, a group show framed by Guy Simpson, saw artists make in situ works within the confines of a 'living room' that had been drawn onto the walls of Under by Guy in reference to his works on paper. The show was later archived behind layers of paint, the project obscured from view less than five days after the opening.

Dominique Cheminais	1
Ed Young	2
Inga Somdyala	3
Kamyar Bineshtarigh	4
Nazeer Jappie	5
Zander Blom	6
Guy Simpson	7



Thursday 10 November 2022, 18:00–20:00
Saturday 12 November 2022, 11:00–13:00

25 Years ArtThrob

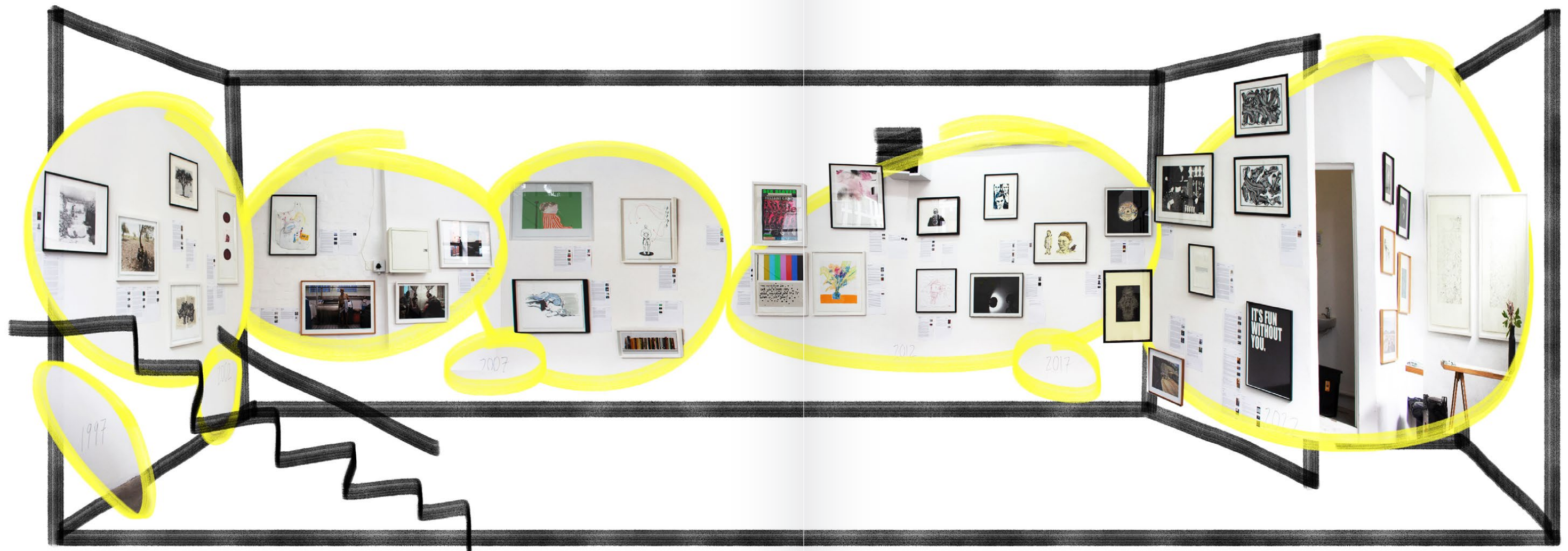
organised by ArtThrob, Keely Shinnars

Hosted by Under, ArtThrob celebrated its 25th anniversary with an exhibition of editions and archives in anticipation of the upcoming publication, 'ArtThrob: 25 Years of Art Writing in South Africa'.

"The website ArtThrob appeared for the first time in August 1997. The aim was, and still is, to bring news of artists, galleries, events and exhibitions to the attention not only to South Africans but to the wider world..." (Sue Williamson, founding editor of ArtThrob).

Ashley Walters
Athi-Patra Ruga
Cameron Platter
Candice Breitz
Chad Rossouw
Claudette Schreuders
Clive van den Berg
Dan Halter
David Goldblatt
Dineo Seshee Bopape
Ed Young
Georgina Gratrix
Guy Tillim
Hentie van der Merwe
James Webb
Jane Alexander
Kemang Wa Lehulere
Lauren Palte

Lisa Brice
Mikhael Subotzky
Nontsikelelo Veleko
Penny Siopis
Pieter Hugo
Richard Mudariki
Robert Hodgins
Sam Nhlengethwa
Senzeni Marasela
Siemon Allen
Sue Williamson
Tracey Rose
Walter Oltmann
Willem Boshoff
William Kentridge
Zander Blom
Zanele Muholi



Thursday 17 November 2022, 18:00–20:00
Saturday 19 November 2022, 14:00–16:00

An Aberration

organised by Max Law

Max Law's An Aberration was one of three shows selected from an open call for proposals that Under held in October.

"Think: failure, mistakes, miscommunication, confusion, incoherence, opacity, monstrosity, anomaly, shame, desire, stasis, slippages, errors, ghosts, fragments, holes, absences. These ideas have a real capaciousness, which is what, I think, makes them interesting. They can be responded to through both form and content, and can be thought through via a range of theoretical and philosophical perspectives."

Linda Stupart	1
Nkhensani Mkhari	2
Youlendree Appasamy	3
Francis Whorrall-Campbell	4
Nolan Oswald Dennis	5
Michaela Younge	6
Grathan	7
Max Law	8
Mitchell Gilbert Messina	9
Thulile Gamedze	10
Oskar Keogh	11
Qondiswa James	12



Friday 2 December 2022, 18:00–20:00
Saturday 3 December 2022, 11:00–13:00

Christian Nerf's 3s Objects Library

organised by: Christian Nerf

This was the second of three shows selected from an open call for proposals. Christian Nerf's ongoing 3s Objects Library comprises cheap purchases, found objects, and precious originals that form installations, sculptures, and performances – all occurring in sets of threes.

Using Under as a studio space, Nerf went about assembling works – “constantly evolving trinities, tripartites, triptychs that occasionally pause before being disassembled and returned to the library.”



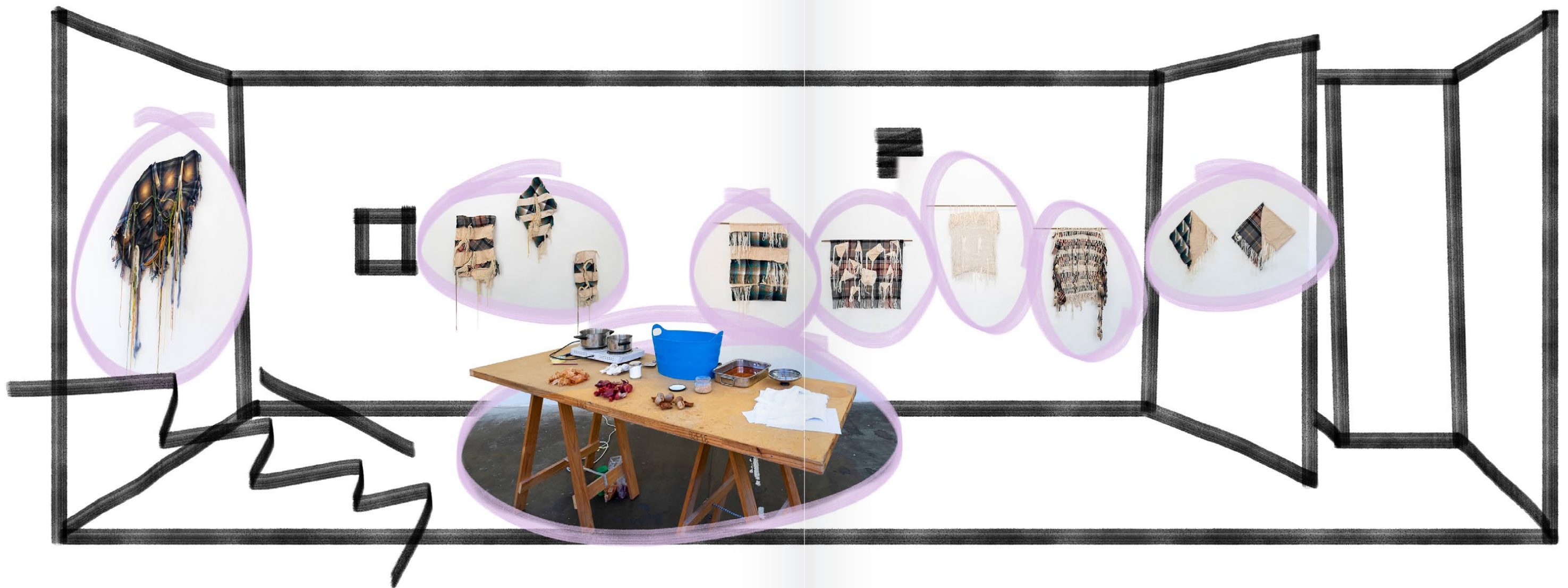
6–12 December 2022
Weekdays 07:00–09:00 | Weekends 09:00–11:00

Bulumko Mbete: Does a kite leave a trace?

organised by Bulumko Mbete

The last of three shows selected from Under's open call for proposals, Bulumko Mbete's *Does a kite leave a trace?* was accompanied by a natural-dye workshop and walkabout hosted by Lemeeze Davids.

"Reconstructing three memories of migration. Tracing love, tracing work, tracing play. Three generations become one. Three intersecting stories. A mother, a daughter, a paternal grandmother."



Thursday 15 December 2022, 18:00–20:00
Saturday 17 December 2022, 12:00–14:00

1



3



2



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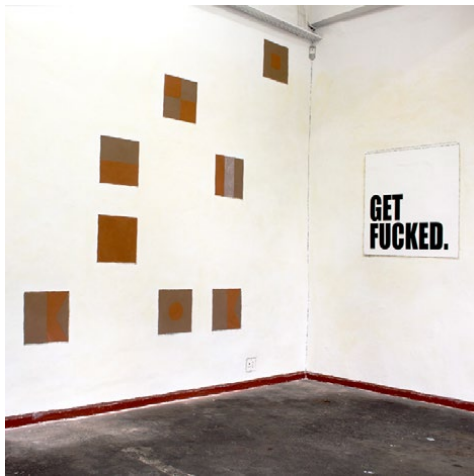
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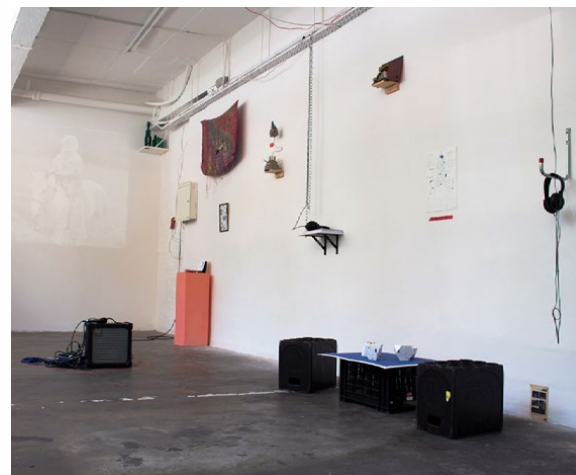
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11



12



14





Image Captions:

- 1. *Help!* The first patrons of Under Projects – 8/9/2022
- 2. *Pilot* installation view, with Wendy Fredriksson, Unathi Mkonto, Guy Simpson. Hosted by Guy Simpson and Luca Evans – 15/9/2022
- 3. *Disco Damage* installation view with Akshar Maganbeharie. Hosted by Brett Seiler – 29/9/2022
- 4. *Sculptures of Cars* installation view, hosted by Mitchell Gilbert Messina – 13/10/2022
- 5. *Dead Symbols* installation, the site of their sonic exploration and vandalism over two days – 22/10/2022
- 6. *Filthy Plinths* gesture on Under’s wall box – 27/10/2022
- 7. *Filthy Plinths* installation view with Mignonne Busser, Phillip Newman, and Melissa Wrench – 27/10/2022
- 8. *Just Visiting* installation view with in-situ works by Ed Young, Inga Somdyala – 10/11/2022
- 9. *Just Visiting* installation view with in-situ works by Zander Blom, Kamyar Bineshtarigh, Dominique Cheminais, and Nazeer Jappie – 10/11/2022
- 10. *ArtThrob 25 Years* installation view, an archive exhibition celebrating ArtThrob’s 25th anniversary – 17/11/2022
- 11. *An Aberration* installation view. Hosted by Max Law – 2/12/2022
- 12. *An Aberration* installation view. Hosted by Max Law – 2/12/2022
- 13. *Christian Nerf’s 3s Object Library* installation view – 6/12/2022
- 14. *Christian Nerf’s 3s Object Library* object, produced during Nerf’s residency at Under – 6/12/2022
- 15. *Bulumko Mbete: Does a kite leave a trace?* installation view of Bulumko Mbete’s work and a dye workshop hosted by Lemeeze Davids – 15/12/2022
- 16. *Kenny*, the resident Under Dog
- 17. *Under Projects* a few days after renovations were completed – 1/11/2022

About Under:

Under Projects is an artist-run space founded by four friends – Luca Evans, Mitchell Gilbert Messina, Brett Seiler, and Guy Simpson – in September 2022. Housed in Roeland Street, Under Projects is organised around the aims of 1) running a space for emerging and experimental projects and 2) developing an acumen around putting shows together quickly. For the time being, Under steers clear of a sales-based model, relying instead on the support of a community of patrons and practitioners who believe that experimental models are necessary to the development of a healthy arts ecology and who wish to encourage an independent project space. In the first four months of its existence, Under Projects presented 11 exhibitions, showing more than 100 artists and artworks and engaging in multiple collaborations.

79 Roeland Street, Gardens, Cape Town, 8001
underprojects.com
info@underprojects.com
@under.projects

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About A4:

A4 Arts Foundation is a not-for-profit laboratory for the arts that invites practitioners to innovate and iterate, working within the resources of what we broadly define as our curatorial studio. Founded on the four As of: Academy, Archive, Apparatus, and Access, A4 intends to support the building of a confident and resilient arts public through educational programmes and initiatives.

A4 is founded by Wendy Fisher and our work is made possible through the continued support of the Kirsh Foundation – a philanthropic entity of Fisher’s family.

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info@a4arts.org
@a4artsfoundation

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Booth I4 – Wayfinder (2023)

Design: Ben Johnson (with this Under wayfinder having been intervened upon and played with by Mitchell Gilbert Messina)
Editing support: Sara de Beer

Under reserves the right to be recognised as the authors and curators of their work and projects that are described within this wayfinder.
A4 reserves the right to republish the works, for digital or physical distribution, free of charge, in line with our mandate to provide access for publics.

A4

**17 — 19
Feb '23**