



# Anja Marais

## Artist Statement

The conquered and exiles take their earth with them, carry with them their rituals as codes of continuity in the new world....but find themselves in paradoxical waters that both show up their presence and render them invisible” – Ben Okri

I create in a wide range of disciplines and materials. The leitmotiv of history fuels my work. Not the linear reductive model of documented history but the unwritten lineage of the ancestral and the ecological.

The only constant in the unfurling of humanity as nomads is the one witness, the earth. When immigrants, nomads, pioneers, pilgrims, and refugees trekked through the milieu of wilderness they left behind their rituals, ceremonies, and stories in the soil. An antique philosophy from Africa that ancestors exchanged with the earth in communion. A sacred ritual between man and the wild.

In my work, I excavate these unspoken testimonies out of landscapes. This process in return offers a means to rebuild collective memory. To develop new modes of organizing experience. Giving reinterpretations to our transactions with nature and our translations of cultural inheritance. Challenging what we know about our own construct.

My two and three-dimensional works are a combination of found objects and photographs. The found objects in my work could have traveled in a suitcase or on a wagon like molder fabrics and heirlooms. I erode my photographs with décollage techniques creating textured surfaces that resemble weathered protest street posters. Together these archaic materials reference my interest in the ritual and the forgotten.

## Artist Bio

Multi-disciplinary artist Anja Marais was born (1974) and raised in the countryside of South Africa. As a young adult, she apprenticed with a landscape painter for many years. She graduated from the University of South Africa with a BFA (honours) in 1998. She has been selected and participated in various programs such as the Enrique Martinez Celaya Summer Workshop (in affiliation with the Anderson Ranch Art Center). She currently works and lives in Miami, FL, USA and exhibits her work in the national and international arena. She recently exhibited at The International Museum of Art and Science, Texas, The University of the Arts Gallery, Philadelphia; Ground Moscow Gallery, St Petersburg, Russia to name a few. Her work is in private and museum collections and she has traveled and attended art residencies over Europe, Asia, and the USA.

[Visit Marais' website for more information.](#)

Image Detail: Anja Marais, *The Crossing*, 2015, Mixed Media, Found Fabric, Soil and Found Objects, 73"x 115" x 20".

