

Goretti Pombo  
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## Position Paper

### What is your craft? (define your discipline, method or approach)

Coming from the Fine Arts major, my experience is that we are pretty much free to do whatever we want. Because of that, I think my craft varies constantly. Another reason why my craft changes is because I think that if I spend too much time on one material, I will get bored. I have, however, noticed that there are some returning favourites. Namely: embroidery, book-making, painting and balloons. Aside from that, materials that I use for my works can be whatever I see fit for my work.

Usually, when given a theme to work with, I walk around with that theme in my mind for a few days. During those days my feelings and opinions start developing. While these are developing, an urgency will build up. The urgency to bring my visual ideas into reality. When this demand has reached a pinnacle, I proceed to make two-dimensional sketches on paper. I found that by doing this, my work feels pure and true to myself. Afterwards, depending on what I feel is necessary, I go on to make more two-dimensional sketches and/or three-dimensional experimentations.

### What are the tools and media of your craft?

The primary tools in my work are my instincts and emotions. Therefore, my work embodies the manifestation of my subconscious. However, the nature of my subconscious is disruptive. It is drawn to contradictions and therefore begs to put images from opposing natures together. I exploit these instincts and try not to always probe too deep into the why's because there is a certain kind of allure to the unknown. Thus, the mystery becomes the object of fascination.

Social media is also very important for my work. Like Facebook, Instagram and Youtube. I draw my inspiration from these sources. On Facebook, I look at memes and this helps me feed my sarcastic and ironic humour which is sometimes apparent in my work. On Instagram, I follow contemporary artists connected to my interests. Some hashtags I follow are #darksurrealism, embroideryartist #newcontemporary #unicorns.

On Youtube, I watch a lot of DIY videos related to crafts. Aside from getting inspiration from social media, I use it to share my work too.

Another important tool is Photoshop. I use it to create and edit new imagery. I also consider walking in the city and entering various shops as a tool. In these shops, I sometimes find objects that often lead me to new ideas for my work. Some of these shops are Sostrene Grene, Lush, Flying Tiger.

But the MOST IMPORTANT tool in my working method is music. Ever since I gained consciousness, I remember constantly watching a compilation of music videos on tape cassettes. These were recorded off of MTV by my mother through the '90s. While most of the music videos on those tapes were normal, some of them were very eccentric. For example "Coffee & TV" by the British rock band Blur. The music video featured a sentient milk carton known as "Milky" searching for one of the band members of Blur, who appeared as a missing person's face on its side. The whole thing is very absurd and impossible and that was what made it so fascinating. These kinds of outlandish music videos are now engraved in my skull and functioned as my first set of referential imagery. Nowadays they have a substantial influence on the work I make. However, it's not only the imagery that triggers that peculiar feeling. It's the song itself. When listening to my music I feel very intoxicated. Imagery starts appearing and disappearing in my mind. Things start moving. Worlds crash against each other. Thus, music helps me enable a kind of automatism.

What are the borders of this practice? (what new media technologies have arisen / what is the future of this field)

I sincerely doubt there are borders to the Fine Arts practice. The Fine Arts practice is very very vague and it can be about anything. Because of this, there is an infinity of options and directions we can take. Besides, we are in an academy that strives to bring up creative pioneers. However, if I am completely honest, the only big border in my practice is my own judgement. I've experienced one too many times already that I make things too complicated or that I set unrequired rules for myself. Bit by bit I am learning to let go and think more freely.

Connect to a historical discourse and give concrete examples of contemporary practitioners.

In “The Aesthetic Hypothesis”, Clive Bell (1881 – 1964), an English art critic writes about his thesis of “aesthetic emotion”. Bell states that “significant form” causes “aesthetic emotion”. The “aesthetic emotion” is a unique and particular emotion that one gets as a cause of visual works of art. According to Bell, objects that cause the aesthetic emotion are called “works of art”. Works of art commonly possess a “significant form”. The significant form consists of all possible relations and combinations of lines, forms and colours that aesthetically moves us. In my opinion, it is the expressionist works that foremost bring the aesthetic emotion about. Artists, by trying to express their emotions and opinions, often create works that are sensible to form. I think my work has a strong connection with Formalism. My work offers no solutions for the many problems the world is facing nowadays. On the contrary, it functions as an escape from the mortal world. My work offers a chance to the ones that behold my work to laugh or be astonished by the absurdity. To experience fun or to question insanity. I want my work to touch a nerve. But most importantly I hope that the audience experiences the wonder that I felt.

Elsbeth Diederix is one of those artists that lets me experience wonder through her work. Elspeth (1971) is a visual artist and photographer born in Nairobi. In her work, Elspeth strips everyday objects of their logical form or function and introduces them into a new and surreal world, mostly in the form of a self-made assemblage. She brings a variety of materials from nature and daily life into view in such a way that a new order of beauty comes to exist. The illusory, imaginary and surreal constructions seem to be captured straight from a dream world. In a short documentary, she says that she wants her images to show her enthusiasm and the things she sees that she finds so incredibly beautiful. It is refreshing to be aware of such an artist. An artist that is giving new life to everyday objects in such a valuable way. Valuable for me, because it is primarily fun, aesthetically pleasing and it also escapes the normal functions and views of the mortal boring world.

## Define your position of your practice in relation to newer technologies.

Since I am normally led by an automatist reflex to sketch, I am often left with absurd imagery. I've always had a predominant feeling that I am supposed to bring this imagery to life somehow. I feel like Digital Crafts will be the way of bringing this crazy imagery into movement. However, as part of the Digital Craft practice, I feel very restricted regarding my poor applied knowledge of technology. Therefore my position is very deficient when it comes to creating or sometimes even understanding newer technologies. Though, maybe I am making things too complicated for myself again. Newer technology doesn't necessarily need to be complicated right? Finally, I think my position will probably always involve making unuseful things. Unuseful only to a rational world but incredibly valuable to me. And hopefully, things that will also go on to provoke wonder to the audience.