

Sculpture update, April 2023.

Woodwork.

New sculptural pieces started in 2018 when I asked my father to make wooden squares for me to build a mobile.

See Reverberation catalogue 2019 AVA exhibition. www.jilltrappler.co.za

The studio conversation between three dimensional objects and two-dimensional canvas worked well for the painting and the sculptures that developed. The colour and surfaces kept my attention, plus the inevitable movement.

When my siblings and I closed my father's workshop studio a few months ago I found the Kiaat planks and small pieces of Kiaat off cuts. It was the colour that drew me to bring them to my studio in Cape Town and work with them. Jack Nyirenda and I spent many hours uncovering the colour and line and shape that these planks revealed.

The steel supports bring an elegance to the wood which adds to honoring this specific selection of planks and off cuts.

The work in these photographs, (thanks to Jurie Senekal) are the final results of transforming and reworking various pieces.

Some of the smaller pieces made from wood and with small clay additions have been cast in bronze at the Bronze Age foundry. (thanks to Eugene Abrahams).

Previous sculptures;

The "fleet" on exhibition at Spin Street, 2021 was made from clay. The fleet of mokoros were Raku fired by Zbysk Kaczmarek (I made one mokoro a day as Covid lock down progressed. Pretending I could sail away perhaps?)

The first family workshop I remember was in Benoni. As small children we spent many hours with my father (Peter Bailie) and grandfather (John Pringle) working with blocks, then joining blocks and watching as they made boats and aero planes for us. As teenagers we made drums by hollowing out stumps and stretching cow hides over them. My brother and I tried making a canoe, a mokoro. Sadly, it didn't float. Trees have always been part of my go to places. We had a tree house. I made a swing bed in a tree and obviously forest walks are essential to us. Our homes have pieces of handcrafted wooden tables, mirrors, etc. The richness of transforming a plank, whittling a branch, transforming and recycling energy makes innate sense to me.

Clay from the dam was cleaned and wedged. We made sculptures, we made pots and cups. We fired the clay using wood ash glazes. (Assisted by my mother, Jean Bailie and our friend Michael Majola.)

At school I made a large sculpture in cement. It took the whole of my matric year. The scaffolding was made of wood, wire and newspaper. The surface was covered with cement. It was a sculpture, 3 meters high of a person looking out, over the fence. A few days before leaving school it blew down in a storm wind.

Sculptural forms enter my weaving, braiding, embroidery too. The first one that I made was a project at Bill Ainslie studio. It was a self-portrait project. I started with a dress I had made for myself. I sewed many pockets to this dress and added bits and pieces of leaves, stones, colours, puzzles, words that I liked to the pockets. I made a puppet of myself, to scale with cardboard boxes and tape, calico and off cuts. She wore the dress. There was a box inside the head with a button to hold it closed. The button was covered with wool which looked my hair. I posted secrets into the box. While reading on evening a mouse made its way up the pockets and into the head, and out again.

One day as she sat in the back of the car waiting for me to return, she was taken away. I hope she found a good home. (Forty-eight years ago)

This brings me back to this new series of sculptures. I will exhibit them (not sure where, not sure when) with the mixed media drawings and paintings I am working on. These new images have referenced the interior of the wood, the circles and cells, the infinite nature of all growth.

Jill