

Exhibition Review

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You don't say

The group exhibition *You don't say*, is based around a third-year Fine Arts project completed at the University of Pretoria under the guidance and teachings of Johan Thom in collaboration with the South African conceptual artist Willem Boshoff. The works of other year groups, ranging from second-year to Master's level, also form part of the exhibition as a way to broaden the conversation across different levels of students and their relative perspectives. The exhibition included more than twenty selected individual young artists' works shown alongside three related works of art by Boshoff: *Ash* (2018), *Elm* (2021), and *Oak* (2021).

The project brief remained largely open-ended, with students encouraged to create artworks using any medium and explore any content insofar as the work engaged with language as their primary vehicle of meaning-making. This means that students were required to think about language and its expressive potential in a manner that exceeded the different symbols and sounds we utilise to communicate meaningfully with one another. Instead, the malleability, history, socio-political context, and meaning-generating properties of language are explored through various artistic methods. In other words, students were encouraged to treat language as a raw material, re-investigating its boundaries and forms whilst expanding its expressive, creative potential.

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The artworks presented in this exhibition vary dramatically in their approach, and, thus, the exhibition provides a multifaceted look at our various relationships with language. For me, this meant that my process of curation was similar to constructing new sentences and meanings. Throughout the exhibition, I sought to draw further attention to the secondary layer of slippage in meaning that can occur when linkages are made between the artworks' themes, use of material, and particular formal approaches to language.

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Art, Access and Agency - art sites of enabling



FIGURE **N° 1**



Willem Boshoff. *Ash* (2018). Ash wood and mixed mediums. Sizes: 925 x 1850mm.



FIGURE **N° 2**



Caitlyn le Roux. *always one step beyond logic* (2021). Monoprint on plaster and cement, laser-cut plexiglass and mixed mediums. Dimensions variable.



FIGURE **Nº 3**



Mia de Wet. *514441* (2021). Mixed media on paper. Sizes: 3200 x 1500mm.

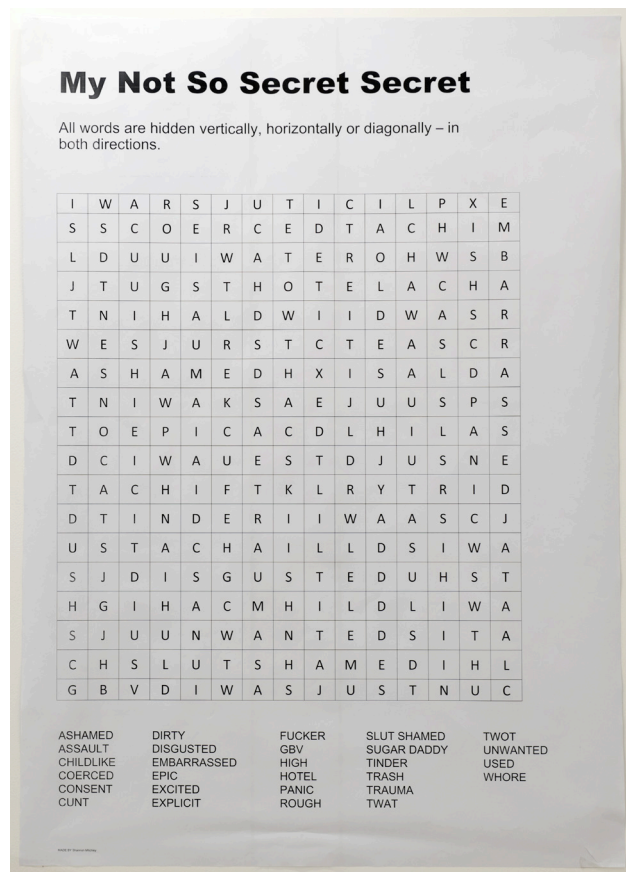


FIGURE **Nº 4**



Shannon Mitchley. *My Not So Secret Secret* (2021). Wheat paste poster. Sizes: 1220 x 1589mm.



FIGURE **Nº 5**



Thabang Moatshe. *Untitled* (2021). Papercut silhouette tableau. Dimensions variable.



FIGURE **Nº 6**



Tristin Roland. Detail from *All of this is stolen (and I'm an asshole for doing so)* (2021). Mixed media installation. Sizes variable.



FIGURE **Nº 7**



Exhibition walkabout at the Javett-UP Student Gallery with Willem Boshoff, Johan Thom and Teboho Lebakeng, 15 October 2021. Photo Credit: UP Fine Arts.