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The themes of *vanitas* and *memento mori* or *memento vivere* deal with imagery as a visual reminder of the ephemerality of human existence. The Latin phrase *memento mori* literally means, "Remember that you must die."

The phrase has its origins in ancient Rome, where it is believed that slaves accompanying generals on victory parades whispered the words as a reminder of their commander's mortality, to prevent them from being consumed by hubris (excessive pride and self-confidence).

In Christian contexts, *memento mori* acquired a moralising purpose, urging the faithful to turn away from fleeting earthly pleasures and focus instead on the afterlife. The term originally comes from the opening lines of the Book of Ecclesiastes in the Bible: 'Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.'

In the Renaissance and Baroque periods, artists frequently incorporated symbols of mortality into their paintings, from obvious imagery such as skulls to more subtle references such as wilting flowers or timepieces. Related to this concept is the *vanitas* still life, popular during the 17th-century Dutch Golden Age, that combined symbols of mortality with sumptuous depictions of material riches to create moral allegories about the follies of human vanity and the permanence of death. In addition to the symbols of mortality these may include other symbols such as musical instruments, wine and books to remind us explicitly of the vanity (in the sense of worthlessness) of worldly pleasures and goods.

Another variant of the theme, the *danse macabre* (or dance of death), is a late-medieval allegory of the universality of death: no matter one's station in life, the dance of death unites all. The *danse macabre* consists of a skeletal Grim Reaper leading dancing figures of all ages and from all walks of life to the grave. The earliest graphic depictions of the *danse macabre* appeared in the 15th century, but the genre has persisted to the present day.

The concept has become a familiar trope in the visual arts from the medieval period to the present. Contemporary artists continue to explore this genre.

Online 24/7

<https://www.edg2020.com/vanitas>

Physical viewing times:

Saturday 16 Oct 11 am - 2 pm

Saturday 13 Nov 11 am - 2 pm

Or by special appointment, to arrange contact 083 2712342

## Filter by

Collection —

All

Lothar Böttcher

Susan Grundlingh

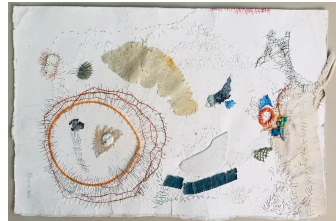
Shui-Lyn White

Christiaan Diedericks

Maryna Joubert

Price +

Sort by



Maryna Joubert, Watching over the full circle, 2021. R6300  
\$442.00



Maryna Joubert, In flesh and blood, 2021. R6300  
\$442.00



Maryna Joubert, Reisdeken, 2020. R8400  
\$589.00



Maryna Joubert, Wings for life, 2021. R7000.  
\$492.00



Christiaan Diedericks & Shui-Lyn White, Daršana (for Vortex), 2021. R28000  
\$1,965.00



Christiaan Diedericks & Shui-Lyn White, Pellis nostra sine eiusdem, R16800  
\$1,179.00



Christiaan Diedericks, Daršana, 2021. R9800  
\$688.00



Susan Grundlingh, New arrivals, 2021. R9100  
\$638.00



Susan Grundlingh, Snapdragons, 2021. R9100  
\$638.00



Susan Grundlingh, Just Picked, 2021.



Susan Grundlingh, Freshly Picked, 2021.

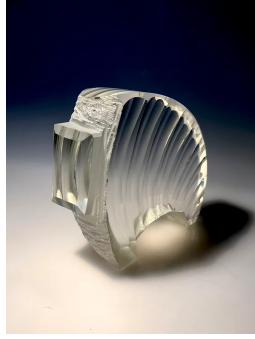


Lothar Böttcher, Bull ram (2020). R29400

R8400  
\$589.00

R9100  
\$638.00

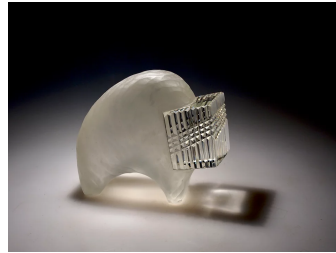
\$4,124.00



Lothar Böttcher, Porcupine Curl (2020).  
R29400  
\$4,124.00

Lothar Böttcher, Crouching leopard (2020).  
R29400  
\$4,124.00

Lothar Böttcher, Pixel cat (2020). R29400  
\$4,124.00



Lothar Böttcher, Bison cubed (2020).  
R29400  
\$4,124.00



**BUSINESS HOURS:** Online gallery 24/7; special open hours as advertised; and by appointment

**CONTACT THE CURATOR:** Elfriede Dreyer | edg2020gallery@gmail.com | +27 83 2712342 |

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