

## **FRANLI MEINTJES**

**Born 1982 in Bloemfontein, Free State  
Lives and works in Pretoria Gauteng**

Franli Meintjes completed her BA fine Arts degree in 2004 at the University of the Free State and is working as a full-time visual artist since 2012. Meintjes's work has been selected for three consecutive years and placed in the Top 10 of the 2013 and 2014 Absa L' Atelier Art Competition and she has exhibited in numerous Absa group shows: *Post-Colonial Africa* - KKNK 2014, *Re-working the Still* - Vryfees Bloemfontein 2014, *The Confessional* – KKNK & Absa Gallery Johannesburg 2017. Meintjes's artworks were included in three group exhibitions curated by Found Collective namely *Fix* - 012 Central Pretoria CBD 2016, *Urban Impressions* - Aardklop 2016 & Fried Contemporary Gallery 2017 as well as *Snake Eyes 2.0* - Aardklop 2017. She also participated in a collaboration with Liberty Battson with their exhibition *Inside Out* at the KKNK 2017. Furthermore her artworks made it into the Top 100 of the 2015 and 2017 Sasol New Signatures Art Competition and the 2014 and 2017 Thami Mnye Fine Arts Award Exhibition. In December 2017 she was invited to take part in the launch exhibition of the National Art Bank at the Oliewenhuis Art Museum and also exhibited at the Association of Arts Pretoria's Annual Ceramic Plate Exhibition 2017.

### **FRANLI MEINTJES – ARTIST'S STATEMENT**

My inspiration for creating art has always originated from my interest in people from different cultures and backgrounds and how they interact with one another, particularly the people of South Africa. I am very passionate and deeply committed to see political and social transformation in our country. My work aims to challenge people from different walks of life, not to get comfortable and complacent but to keep on pursuing personal CHANGE to help cross the bridge of racial, social, cultural and religious divides. It is my desire that my art will cause the viewer to pause, to take a second glance and reflect on the essence, the core and the truth about the state of their own hearts concerning poverty, greed and racism.

I've always loved working with mixed-media, fascinated by the different textures of the different materials that I use and the contrast that is created when placed next to each other to form a whole. Exploring new mediums is a characteristic of my art practice, often using embroidery and ceramics as my medium of choice. I aim to break down the boundaries that exist between traditional and popular

cultures by investigating and highlighting their connections, but also their differences. The time-consuming and traditional craft of stitch or creating something out of clay is often juxtaposed with a world addicted to instant gratification and mass production.

The Popcorn presented in my work symbolizes both negative connotations of indulgence and greed as well as positive connotations of the possibility for transformation and change. Popcorn closely associated with pop culture, movies, celebrities and the high life of the rich and famous, reminds one of the popcorn you would buy when visiting your local cinema, or which you would enjoy at home when comfortably huddled up on your couch to watch a movie. Many enter what looks like a subconscious mode where you grab hands full of popcorn stuffing your mouth, almost with a disregard of your surroundings having your attention fixated on one thing while an indulgence takes place. This forms a visual metaphor for the greed of many where enough is never enough... The chicken feet, a staple food for many low-income households is linked to poverty.

Most popcorn lovers take for granted that it is a simple kernel of corn that can metamorphose into the fluffy treat that they enjoy. The Kernel is the essence, the heart, the core of where it all starts, a seed, hard on the outside, uneatable, protected, dormant, and packed with potential but waiting to become something. As an artist I am telling a story using Chicken feet, the kernel and popcorn. Popcorn are one of the most dramatic transformations in science, demonstrating how the laws of physics apply to everything. Food engineers concluded that the ideal shape for an unpopped kernel is a sphere – (the same shape of a human heart). For popcorn to move from the Kernel stage to the popcorn stage HEAT needs to be applied. When the kernel is heated above 100 degrees celsius, the water inside turns to steam. That water vapor forces its way into the hard endosperm, creating a molten mass. The pressure continues to build up until the hull can no longer hold it in. Then the kernel explodes. When all is said and done, the inverted kernel is twice as large, eight times less dense, hot, edible and has reached its last and final state - its full potential!

