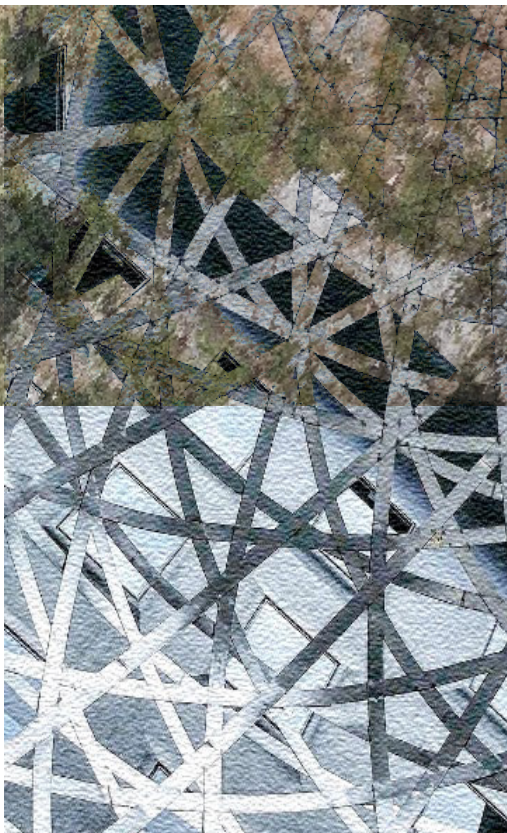


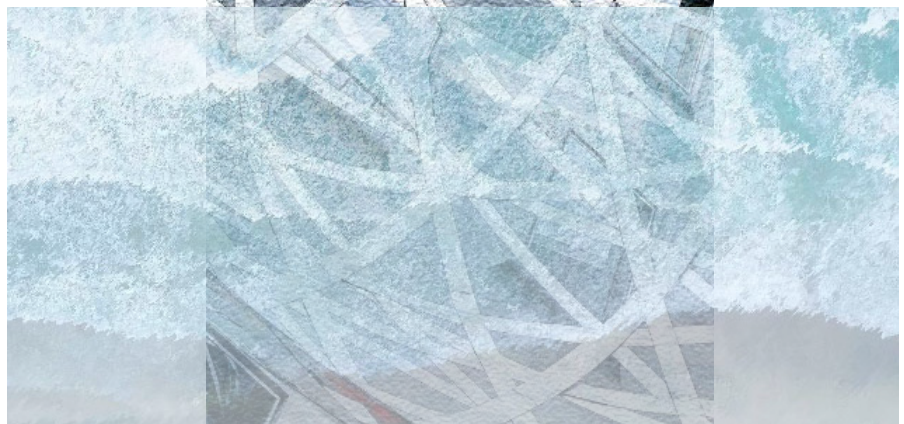
South African Journal of Art History

A JOURNAL FOR THE VISUAL ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE

Volume 37 Number 2 2022



landscape
cityscape
seascape





The South African Journal of Art History is a peer reviewed journal publishing articles and review articles on the following subjects:

Art and architectural history
Art and architectural theory
Aesthetics and philosophy of art
Visual culture
Art and the environment
Film and photography
History of craft
History of design

SAJAH does not publish the following: educational issues; student research; architectural designs; popular culture.

ISSN 0258-3542

Available on Sabinet

Website: sajournalofarthistory.org.za

Archive: UP Space

Indexed by Scopus
and
Clarivate Analytics

Included in the databasis of EBSCOhost, Sub-Sahara Africa

SAJAH
South African Journal of Art History
Volume 37, Number 2, 2022

Editor
Yolanda van der Vyver

Editorial Board

Arthur Barker, University of Pretoria (regionalism and South African architecture)
Catharina de Klerk, Independent researcher (ecocriticism, materiality, South African art)
Kobus du Preez, University of the Free State (indigenous architecture, conservation)
Adrian Konik, Nelson Mandela University (philosophy, film theory and cultural studies)
Estelle Liebenberg-Barkhuizen, Independent researcher (women artists, works on paper)
Estelle Alma Maré, Independent researcher (art and architectural history and theory)
Phil Mashabane, Architect (architectural history, theory and conservation)
Mauritz Naudé, University of Pretoria (South African architecture)
Mbongiseni Nkambule, Tshwane University of Technology (architectural history and theory)
Jonathan Noble, University of the Free State (architectural history, theory and criticism)
Bert Olivier, University of the Free State (aesthetics and philosophy of art)
Wanda Odendaal, Central University of Technology (museum architecture)
Johann Opperman, University of South Africa (South African art)
John Steele, Walter Sisulu University (ceramics, installation art, ephemeral art)
Aletta Steenkamp, University of Cape Town (architecture)
Gerald Steyn, Tshwane University of Technology (African and South African architecture)
Ariana van Heerden, University of Pretoria (neuroscience of art making)

International Advisory Board

Tsion Avital, Emeritus professor, Department of Design and Art, Holon Academic Institute of Technology, Israel
Concha Diez-Pastor e Iribas, ESNE (University of Design), Madrid, Spain
Maria Fernanda Derntl, Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo da Universidade de Sao Paulo, Brazil
Pascal Dubourg-Glatigny, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, France
Aleš Erjavec, Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Susan Grundy, Independent researcher, specialist in the authentication issues in European Old Masters
Antoni S. Folkers, Researcher, African Architecture Matters, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
John Hendrix, Department of Architecture, Lincoln University, UK
Constantinos V. Proimos, Hellenic Open University and the Technical University of Crete, Greece
Raymond Quek, Professor of Architecture, Norwich University of Arts, UK
Leoni Schmidt, Director of Research, Otago Polytechnic, New Zealand
Nikolaos-Ion Terzoglou, Department of Architecture, Technical University, Athens, Greece
Gert van Tonder, Reki-An Pavilion, Kamigamo Minami Ojicho 5 Banchi, Kitaku, Kyoto City, Japan
Alexander Tzonis, Emeritus professor, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands

The SAJAH is sponsored by the Art Historical Work Group of South Africa

Chairperson: **Gerald Steyn**
Treasurers: **E.A. Maré and Johann Opperman**
Publication Secretary: **E.A. Maré**
Cover design: **Johann Opperman**
Typesetting: **Not Another Joe Design Studio**

South African Journal of Art History
Volume 37, number 2, 2022

Contents

Research articles on the theme of “Landscape, Cityscape, Seascape”

Rosella Tomassoni, Francesco Spilabotte and Valentina Coccarelli Brief psychological considerations on landscape in Gian Carlo Riccardi’s paintings	1
Yolanda van der Vyver Landscape, seascape and cityscape at the transitory edges of <i>Zanzibar’s cordon sanitaire</i>	22
Estelle Alma Maré Parisian cityscapes during the nineteenth century	43
Catharina de Klerk Transience and more-than-human seascapes in Ronél de Jager’s <i>Myopia</i> paintings	91

Brief psychological considerations on landscape in Gian Carlo Riccardi's paintings

Rosella Tomassoni

University of Cassino and Southern Lazio

E-mail: r.tomassoni@unicas.it

Francesco Spilabotte

University of Cassino and Southern Lazio

E-mail: francesco.spilabotte@gmail.com

Valentina Coccarelli

University of Cassino and Southern Lazio

E-mail: valentinacoccarelli90@gmail.com

This research article aims to analyse the landscape representations in the multimedia and avant-garde artist, Gian Carlo Riccardi's figurative artworks. Our psychological analysis considers the surreal and fairy-tale landscape of the canvases of the 2000s that present a deformed and altered reality through form and colour, reproductions of a landscape dictated by memory, dreams and especially, the artist's childhood through the depiction of giant men, burning houses, animals with elongated legs, aeroplanes, small boats, seas and mountains. We aim to show how Riccardi approaches landscape in the various figurative works he has produced. In order to render the work complete, it proposes a psychological comparison with the urban landscape represented in the caricature drawings and the landscape depicted in the abstract paintings, which are not mimetic representations of reality but transfigurations of an interior landscape, of the artist's own suffering through lacerations on the canvas, figuratively outlining his emotions within the created landscapes. Riccardi presents the overcoming of realistic imitation and intends to construct a new language of figuration composed of a basic and direct structural lexicon with lines, forms and elements that reconstruct the landscape in the various forms described above.

Keywords: Gian Carlo Riccardi; landscape; figurative art; psychology; surreal

Brevi considerazioni psicologiche sul paesaggio nei dipinti di Gian Carlo Riccardi

L'obiettivo di questo studio è analizzare le rappresentazioni paesaggistiche nelle opere figurative di Gian Carlo Riccardi, artista multimediale e d'avanguardia. La nostra analisi psicologica prende in considerazione il paesaggio surreale e fiabesco delle tele degli anni Duemila, rappresentazioni che presentano una realtà deformata e alterata, attraverso la forma e il colore, riproduzioni di un paesaggio dettato dalla memoria, dal sogno e in particolare dall'infanzia dell'autore, attraverso la raffigurazione di uomini giganti, case in fiamme, animali dalle zampe allungate, aerei e piccole barche, mari e montagne. Questo lavoro vuole mostrare come l'artista contemporaneo Gian Carlo Riccardi si avvicini al paesaggio nelle diverse opere figurative da lui realizzate. Per rendere il lavoro completo ed esaustivo, propone un confronto psicologico con il paesaggio urbano rappresentato nei disegni caricaturali e il paesaggio raffigurato nei dipinti astratti, che non sono rappresentazioni mimetiche della realtà, ma trasfigurazioni di un paesaggio interiore, della propria sofferenza attraverso lacerazioni sulla tela, che delineano figurativamente le emozioni dell'artista all'interno dei paesaggi da lui creati. Gian Carlo Riccardi presenta il superamento dell'imitazione realistica e intende costruire un nuovo linguaggio della figurazione composto da un lessico strutturale essenziale e diretto con linee, forme ed elementi che ricostruiscono il paesaggio nelle varie forme sopra descritte.

Parole chiave: Gian Carlo Riccardi, paesaggio, arte figurativa, psicologia, surreale

The aim of this research article is to offer an introspective analysis of the multimedia and avant-garde artist, Gian Carlo Riccardi, while also showing a psychological reading of the products of his creativity such as his pictorial, figurative and landscape representations.

The execution and realisation of Riccardi's artistic works constitute the most clarifying external aspect of the artist's personality, a substantial element for understanding and giving an iconographic reading of his works, which we believe is a product of the interpreter's irrepressible subjectivity. He practiced interdisciplinarity through multimedia and synaesthetic experiences, not only working in the discipline of painting but also in the field of theatre as a set designer and director, sculpturing and writing, moving on to themes linked to memory and dreams (Riviello 1978: 112, 113).

In the course of this analysis, which embraces different disciplines such as the primarily artistic, literary and psychological subjects, some of Gian Carlo Riccardi's most significant and emblematic works will be examined. Depictions that range from a fantastic and surreal world as a reinterpretation of reality, to the caricatured and abstract, taking up urban, naturalistic and elements of his artistic landscapes. This research explains the most important and recurring elements and characteristics found in Riccardi's artistic works and landscapes, with reference to the past, memory and childhood, and his ability to succeed in figuratively outlining and translating his emotions and impressions. It finally arrives at the realisation of an original language of figuration, and with a strong impact. The perspective of the chosen analysis starts from the assumption that only by studying the entire production of an artist, as in the artistic production of Gian Carlo Riccardi, and getting to know his biography and the determinants of his creative behaviour, also taking into account the period in which he lived, can we fully understand the psychological and cultural significance of his work (Tomassoni 2020: 229).



Figure 1
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Untitled*, 2005, Pastel on paper, 21 x 30 cm, Frosinone, Private collection (reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).

Objectives

The aim of this research is to examine the personal relationship of the avant-garde artist, Gian Carlo Riccardi, with his artistic works and with the landscape as a transposition, as well as a representation of his past experience in order to arrive to an accurate analysis and comparison with the various pictorial, surreal, figurative and abstract representations that he produced or carried out during his lifetime. The specific objectives of the research include the following:

- recognising and examining the creative aspect in the execution of Gian Carlo Riccardi's paintings
- knowing and analysing the various peculiar aspects and symbols present in Riccardi's works
- analysing and recalling the artist's psychological subject matter related to memory, the past and childhood within his works
- analysing and comparing the various forms of expression and execution within Riccardi's paintings and landscapes

Methodology

The research was conducted through the analysis of contemporary art history texts, and the study of books on the life and the works of Gian Carlo Riccardi. Its main focus was on style and the most varied and diversified techniques used by the painter, analysing the various spheres in which he worked, such as the theatre, sculpture and writing, with the focus on painting, examining the most peculiar and characteristic features of Riccardi's artistic world present in his abstracts and surreal paintings, in his caricature drawings in which the landscape – recalling urban and naturalistic elements – merges with the inner landscape of the artist himself. All this makes Riccardi a multimedia artist, operating in different fields and a *tout court* artist, not assimilable to any current or movement (Zani 2007: 32). Furthermore, the various landscape representations evoked by the artist in the caricature, figurative and abstract spheres have been analysed with particular attention to the dreamscapes created in the early 2000s. These works will be the subject of our study since the symbols, natural and landscape elements and figures used and realised in a surreal key by Riccardi deserve special attention. His distortion of reality requires a subjective and interpretive approach and rereading. Throughout this dimension there is a reversal of the natural landscape depicted by the artist in a dreamlike and surreal key where everyday elements are inserted into a fairy-tale context, acquiring new and original meanings related to the recovery of the past, the denunciation of the present society to a utopian hope in the future. Moreover, texts that are related to psychology and behavioural analysis were examined. As far as the psychological approach is concerned, the psychology of art and literature was considered.¹ It is based on the search for psychological motivations that led the artist to the creation and interpretation of a work and the environmental situations that characterise it with reference to the characters, symbolic and significant elements present within the work (Fusco and Tomassoni 1982: 67–89). The methodology and orientation, therefore, consist of examining each situation and character created by the artist, in a final vision that interprets the specific situation or character, as well as the motivational elements that underline Riccardi's creative methods. As a result, the work of art can be considered as the expression of the overall contents of the psyche for which the conscious Ego is not the protagonist in every moment of artistic creation, but often merely the translator of emotional and unconscious motivations of which the Ego itself is unaware.

A basic assumption is the consideration of artistic language as the heterogeneous set of expressive resources, deriving from the heritage of culturally settled knowledge, on which the artist can rely to procure and guide the understanding of his work and to which the critic can also refer to decipher the polysemy of the messages it contains. The resulting interpretive proposal excludes all forms of dogmatism and, while drawing extensively from the pool of knowledge of psychology, provides continuity with artistic, philosophical, and literal criticism (Tomassoni 2018: 22).

The substantial purpose of this line of study is to clarify the contents of the artistic message that can only be read in a psychological key to bring out in the observer elements that, although contained in the mind, would not be known by the observer himself without contact with a given work of art. This process would finally enrich an artistic work with meanings, integrating it with the translation and transposition into concepts of apparently incomprehensible elements (Tomassoni 2020: 233).

Analysis of the works

We started this research from the idea that the human being's world is primarily visual. Throughout history, mankind has been able to create an artificial system of communication, sometimes universal, based essentially on vision, in which figurative representation is included.² We believe that humanity, therefore, has created a language that not only allows communication in real time, i.e. at the instant the signal is generated, but also transcends temporal limits to become, as Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) states, an "extension of memory and imagination". In addition, to overcome the limits of time, figurative language is also superior to verbal language in terms of its capacity for synthesis in that it confers the possibility of expressing, with a limited number of symbols, messages of great complexity such as those of feelings and emotions (Maffei and Fiorentini 1995: 132).

Psychoanalysis considers art as a means of satisfying unconscious desires (frustrated in reality) and as a mode of reparation (a means by which the artist processes the pain, the affection connected to some traumatic event). On the basis of the reflections put forward by Ferrari (2007: 171), Barbieri (2007: 87) and Fusco (Fusco and Tomassoni 2005: 58–61), artistic creation can be considered as a means to contain and process affection, whether it be the pain of a loss or a generic existential discomfort, or anguish, fear, guilt or unidentified forms of psychic suffering. The artistic work should not be perceived as a product of illness or mental distress, but mainly as a potential means to control and overcome a deep and intimate suffering.

The avant-garde multimedia artist, Gian Carlo Riccardi,³ left behind writings that constitute an indispensable starting point for dealing with issues concerning the structural analysis of images. Alongside his artistic activity, Riccardi also elaborated theoretical reflections with didactic purposes. Starting from this, our intention is to present a perceptive analysis of the image, thus offering the basic building blocks of a visual grammar to be used in the relationship with the art object (Mastandrea 2021: 20, 70).

Biography

Gian Carlo Riccardi worked in the fields of pictorial art, producing caricature drawings, abstract and figurative paintings in which the following themes emerged: the surreal, the grotesque, childhood, dreams, and sexuality.⁴ He has collaborated with the Roman theatrical avant-garde, including personalities and authors such as Carmelo Bene, Memè Perlini, Pino Pascali, Pippo di Marca, Nino de Tollis, producing numerous theatrical performances, giving life to the “Teatro Club” in Frosinone, based on gestures and the abolition of words (Tomassoni, Spilabotte and Coccarelli 2022: 1748-1764). He has also created several sculptures called “rooms”, which evoke something familiar to the artist that can be traced back to the past. Moreover, the artist has been the author of poetic and prose compositions. He has been defined by the art critic, Enrico Crispolti, as a multimedia artist because of his ability to move around with complete freedom in different artistic fields, and he has succeeded through his pictorial representations, particularly in those of his last period, in producing a clearly delineated and defined synthesis of his long artistic career (Riccardi 2013: 78).

The pictorial works of the 2000s are surreal representations of a deformed and altered reality.⁵ The artist recovers a zeroed-out dimension of painting by restoring an unfiltered contact with his unconscious, memory and childhood. Hence, the need to recover an elementary, naive artistic vocabulary, which emerges in his drawings and paintings, demonstrating an intentional return to childhood (Terzini 2007: 33).

The symbolic and surreal imagery depicted by the artist consequently represents a re-evocation of the memories, characters and affections of his childhood lived in the land of *Ciociaria*. It occurs to us that Riccardi’s pictorial narrative in the final period of his life is caused by a journey back into the world of childhood: infancy as a time of another logic, no longer tuning to the time zones of the adult world; childhood as a drive, desire, wonder; childhood as a decisive space for the constitution of the ego and of crucial phases for the consolidation of the psyche. Childhood as pleasure and childhood as tragedy, childhood as lost wholeness.

Figures: symbols of the artist’s personal imagination

Gian Carlo Riccardi’s paintings delve into the artist’s individual memory, which emerges in the form of landscapes and figures, altered by a child’s gaze. There are circus performers, giant women, dogs with outstretched legs, war planes and birds flying, and they all stand out against two-dimensional, motionless, and improbable landscapes, densely speckled with coloured dots that fill the resulting spaces so as to link the background to the protagonists floating on it. His paintings are representations of a grotesque and surreal fabula, a fantastic tale reduced to the essential, made up of houses burning or billowing black and white smoke, beasts, men, boats and ships, all signs of a shattered world (Consalvi 2007: 44).

The artist presents elements of an everyday life that is now lost and is subject to compromises against which he rebels by bringing a new meaning and a different message through gesturing the handwriting of a child. The objects are delivered as simulacra of a lost memory to be recovered, as an invitation to the observer to participate in the event. Riccardi is a painter of a landscape that relives and reshapes under his hands – such as a stage set – with the help of the audience (Crispolti 1977: 24).



Figure 2
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Untitled*, 2006, Acrylic on canvas, 41 x 54 cm, Frosinone, Private collection
(reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).



Figure 3
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Untitled*, 2006, Acrylic on canvas, 41 x 54 cm, Frosinone, Private collection.
(reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).

We are in front of a carnival-like celebration where thousands of confetti dot the waves of the sea, ploughed by painted paper boats and vessels braving bad weather and golden waterfalls. Birds fly from a man's head towards a hill that reaches the sky; asexual little men dance on the sea with airplanes. The latter may evoke a memory of war, or even a childhood game. Then, there are the elongated-legged dogs, almost monsters, held firmly on a leash by their masters and circus figures about to perform their acrobatic acts.

The characters act dynamically, rhythmically on the canvases; what animates them is a playful drive to play, which is a vital impulse that goes beyond the painting to escape into reality: the circus men's leaps, the flight of the birds, the acrobatics of the airplanes and so forth. This way, we are allowed to see how the protagonists seem to bring to mind some of the distinctive traits of Euripides' theatre such as the crisis of human reason and profound inner conflicts. The characters staged by the artist are driven, as those of Euripides, by deep impulses overdetermined by irrational forces that push them to act beyond all rules and even beyond their own will (Tomassoni 2020: 159-63). In our view, these irrational forces such as dreams and desire are libidinal drives, which can be traced back to Freudian eros that are also transmitted to the surrounding space (Freud 2007: 70-5).

The theme of the "double" is at work in Riccardi's art: a hopeful glance towards the future and at the same time a profound disappointment with man and the contemporary world can be discerned. The drama of the technological process, the quiet elegy of a peaceful moment, the yearning impulse of sex, the mutual oppression of men, frenzied memories, the rejection of social homologation, illusion and hope constitute the concepts, impressions, and feelings that Riccardi translates into his paintings with a new language.

The landscape as a distortion of reality

The landscape representations depicted in the artist's works are important objects of attachment. This attachment plays a predominant role in the development of the artist's identity and security and can be divided into different types (Giani Gallino 2007: 291). The strongest form of attachment, recognisable in Riccardi's landscapes, is the emotional-familial one that concerns the bond with sceneries – the countryside that has marked the development of his identity. His childhood places, for example, remind one of one's parents or particularly important places in life where one has experienced intense emotions. This relationship of attachment reaches high levels in the elderly artist whose identity has crystallised in the environmental context in which he has spent his life and "his" landscape constitutes "his" memory as well (Costa and Ricci Bitti 2015: 15). For this reason, Riccardi depicts an intimate, personal and surreal landscape, moving in a whirlwind of images, memories and sounds of the past in a fairy-tale context that distorts reality.

We speak of inner landscape as a reflection of everyone's view of the world. It is a subjective view related to memories and emotions connected to a landscape. The inner landscape of the one who observes with its emotional and cognitive projections and investments, is directly related to the external landscape experienced in its physical and material reality made up of lights and colours, recognisable lines and shapes. Hence, it can be observed how, in contrast to the mimetic research typical of landscape views and photographic representations, Riccardi sometimes uses a language that observers find difficult to understand because it is linked to his personal memories. The influences that the territory exerts on the artist are innumerable. Each

of Riccardi's artworks represents a landscape that first and foremost is frequented by the artist, who leads us along an emotional and spiritual geography. The artist has a deep connection with the geographical (city, landscape), material (objects), and immaterial (family, social context, memories) places that surround him. The inner landscapes represented by Riccardi narrate the nostalgia of a world that no longer exists, a world of which only memories and colours remain (Gallo Barbisio 1999: 63, 64).

The Russian physician and man of letters, Anton Chekhov, was defined by the critic, Andreev, as a "pan-psychologist" for his ability to enter deeply into the psychology of the artist (Fusco and Tomassoni 2012: 51, 52). Chekhov speaks of "pan-psychology" and states that the landscape, conceived and realised by an artist "acts", that is anticipates the state of mind of the subject and thus of the artist. The landscape, for that reason, has a strongly predictive function of what the artist's emotional traits represent. Every detail depicted by the artist of the landscape work would thus constitute a piece belonging to the mosaic of his personality to which cards are gradually revealed. Every symbol and element depicted by Gian Carlo Riccardi contain a presentation of his emotional states that are manifested through non-verbal, figurative communication.

First and foremost, we wish to draw a clear distinction between the "actors" and the landscape in Gian Carlo Riccardi's works. The actors are placed in the foreground, and they often occupy the entire space of the work. The landscapes, on the other hand, envelop the figures but are by no means secondary as they are full of essential meanings for the artist and for the observers' understanding of the work. The landscapes in Riccardi's works are equally protagonists because they are full of meanings and metaphors inserted by the artist. Riccardi's landscape representations can be considered as theatrical sets in which the actor-marionettes (dogs, men, women, birds) float in the air as if held up by invisible wires, sometimes remaining anchored to the ground by means of some fantastic invention or because they are crushed by the physical limit of the painting.⁶ Riccardi's intention is to provide the viewer with all the ingredients of a fable whose threads have nevertheless been lost. As in his theatre, the spectator was invited to take part in the event, so in his paintings he imagines the viewer capable of remixing the painting's ingredients at will and thus actively contributing to recreating a new composition, a different order in the scene set by the artist, providing the listener with the possibility to sense or to make out, other subterranean and personal meanings (Terzini 2007: 33). Hence, the figures represented are always in a sort of precarious balance, thus summarising the individual story of Riccardi, an artist always poised between dream and reality (Riccardi 2001: 69–71, 77). From the analyses, it emerges that these figures – sometimes of gigantic dimensions – and the landscape itself have no weight. What is represented is an upside-down world without gravity, without logic, without prejudice: the world of children.

There are different landscape representations in his works; for example, rugged, pyramidal mountains looming on the horizon can be observed. Other paintings present seascapes, where a white boat or a steamboat plough through the waves of the sea drawn one by one. Others are characterised by urban landscapes where streets wind labyrinthically, while the roof of a house burns on a hill and the smoke rises and mixes with the clouds in the sky. We have deduced from our research that this last symbol, "the burning house", is the protagonist of the figurations and artistic poetics of Gian Carlo Riccardi's final period. This would represent the physical consumption of the elderly artist, while simultaneously representing hope, expectation and the artist's ardour for art and life.

The house constantly burns in Riccardi's works, it changes shape and colour. It is sometimes placed in the foreground on a man's hand; from time to time in the background on top of a hill; it occasionally touches the sky and is also present in the seascapes. It is a symbol repeated by the artist, like a warning sign for the observer. The viewer is provoked, impressed, and fascinated to the point of being disturbed.

The world imagined by Gian Carlo Riccardi becomes a kind of Garden of Eden where the little men he creates can live in harmony. The "tree of sin" is always lurking, a sort of spy of the present in the house burning in the background, a window on current events, on the psychological and social condition of the artist in the contemporary scene. As previously stated, the house burning on the slope becomes a manifestation of a vital drive – it burns and rises from its own ashes like a phoenix, thus becoming a symptom of rebirth for a new and free society. The landscape has a communicative function by activating the viewer's unconscious response mechanisms, it triggers his/her emotional response through the use of elementary figuration (Bourriaud 2001: 22). At the same time, we are convinced that these representations bear witness to a penetrating denunciation, codified through the dramatic reversal of reality.

The "primitive" painting technique

The emergence of these repressed contents is manifested in the artist's works through a "primitive" pictorial language. In point of fact, they are characterised by a cursive and deliberately childish drafting, set apart by large fields of flat, incandescent and anti-naturalistic colour, a dense and mellow chromatic matter fixed on the canvas with rapidity, far from any idea of planning. It is abolished by exalting the aesthetic potential of spontaneous, childish language, as if it were a drawing or a child's doodle (Poli 2007: 56, 64, 65, 173).

Through his painting, Riccardi consciously returns to the world of childhood by means of simplified lines and drawings, which bring the bodies back to a frontality that tends to repeat itself and replicate the physiognomies of the characters through similarity. The technique (pastels, pencil, pen) renounces formal perfection from the start and admits deviation from the norm of composition as a fracture for the emergence of the repressed (Zani 2006: 44).

In his works, therefore, there is a return to childhood, even a gestural one, yet notwithstanding the fact that the artist tries to eradicate the rawness and the suffering of reality and wants to go back in time, reality still remains. On the one hand, the reality that is observed is not a positive real life, but a cold and indifferent one. The glowing pigment, on the other hand, represents a stifled cry of hope, in the desire that the house will continue to burn and the little men will continue to play (Lunetta 2007: 1–3).

We are faced with a playful and happy narrative, the mellow colour and violent chromatic accents saturate the landscapes to reinforce the idea of fullness, of fulfilment with respect to an unsatisfactory reality in which the artist feels like an exile, a romantic hero who rejects social conventions and impositions.

Conceivably it is possible to say that he resorts to fight like Don Quixote against windmills, to take refuge, as King Ludwig II of Bavaria, in his "dream theatre" built inside an artificial cave, the *Venusgrotte* (located in the park of the Linderhof castle),⁷ therefore in an imaginary

world in a continuous confrontation-clash between reality and fantasy and the disappointment towards an ordinary and monotonous everyday life (Tomassoni and Spilabotte 2022: 254–62).

The skies, seas and nature depicted by the artist are not mimetic representations of reality. Colour and form are altered in favour of an inner vision not dictated by the eye, but by an external projection of one's unconscious, one's emotions, past memories, filtered through the eye of a child, of an artist trying to escape the sufferings of old age by trying to recall and retrace through images the world of childhood, an utopian world, now being lost (Lunetta 2007: 1–3).

From abstract figuration to dreamlike representations in the works of the 2000s

The artworks created in the 2000s present an abstract component matured by the artist during his experiments in the 1970s and 1980s in the field of abstract figuration through which he manipulates, decomposes and distorts poor and everyday materials, obtaining *Reperti* (figures 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8), relics of a crisis of the ego laid bare in his works composed using disused or abandoned materials (Carlino 2004: 1–4).

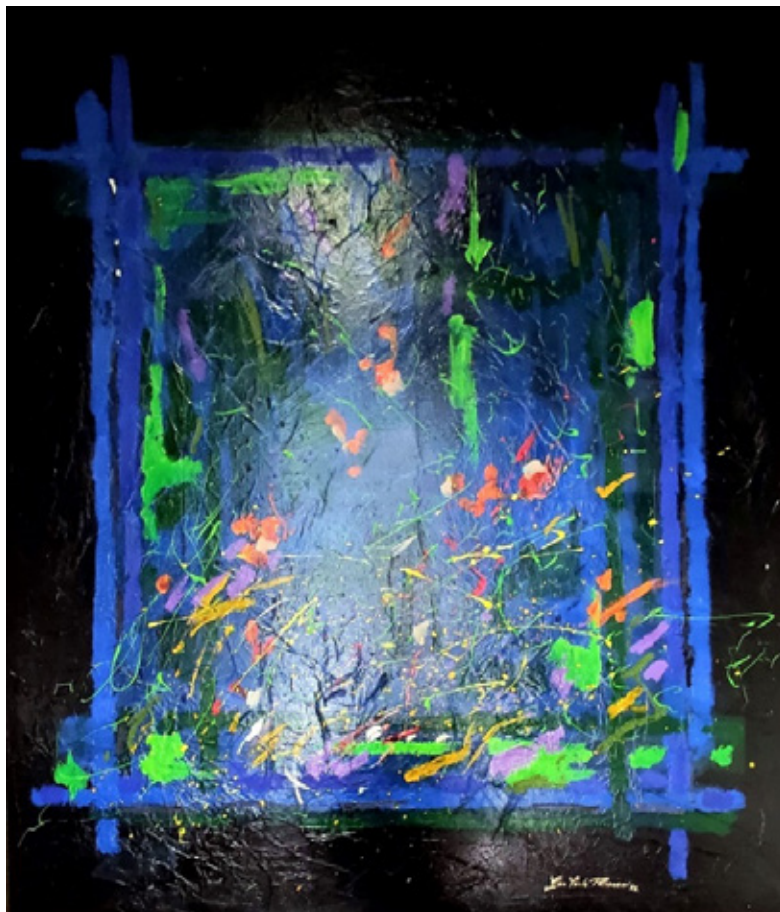


Figure 4

**Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Finestra sul giardino*, 1998, Acrylic on canvas,
124 x 144 cm, Frosinone, Iacobucci Palace.
(reproduced with permission of Frosinone Provincial Administration).**



Figure 5
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Reperto n.3 Metropolis*, 1997, Mixed technique on panel, 70 x 90 cm, Frosinone, Private collection.
(reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).



Figure 6
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Come le parole*, 1986, Mixed technique on canvas, 30 x 45 cm, Frosinone, Private collection.
(reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).



Figure 7
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Composizione n.1*, 1998, Mixed technique on canvas, 125 x 125 cm,
Arpino, Umberto Mastroianni Foundation.
(reproduced with permission of Director of the Umberto Mastroianni Foundation of Arpino).



Figure 8
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Combustione n.3*, 1990, Mixed technique on canvas, 80 x 60 cm,
Arpino, Umberto Mastroianni Foundation.
(reproduced with permission of Director of the Umberto Mastroianni Foundation of Arpino).

In his abstract compositions, the artist rejects reality and reflects on the problematic nature in the lacerations and colour contrasts of the pictorial material, his own difficult nature and the artist's condition of extraneousness in which society places him (Argan and Bonito Oliva 2002: 268, 269, 285, 297). In the torments inflicted on the artistic work (gashes, cuts, burns, fragments of overlapping objects, drips on the canvas), it is possible to identify an iconography of suffering, a crisis that is, however, the consequence of expectation, improvement and resurrection. The violent and improvised gesture functions as a dissociation between reality and the work, a fracture that manifests itself in the abolition of realistic form and colour by using poor materials and a violent critique of contemporary society (Facci 1993: 20). This is partly recovered in these later representations where form and colour are manipulated in favour of a surreal and dreamlike representation as a refuge from everyday society (Moravia 1988: 21).

Through his artistic productions that recapture the techniques of the neo-avant-gardes, Riccardi uses a continuous critique of the unsociability of others that tends to provoke a widespread malaise, an illness of living (Riccardi 1989: 1–5).

Figure 9 is an example of a seascape within Gian Carlo Riccardi's painting. In this surrealistic representation, the artist flattens the perspective depth by resetting it to zero through a graphic linearism that marks the waves of the sea, the smoke and the outline of the boat. Coloured dots emerge from the ducts of the boat and fill the black lines and outline of the painting, invading every empty space, while in the centre of the ship stands an albino rampant dog with a long snout and sharp teeth, probably a creature born out of a dream or the imagination. From its snout, it emanates a verse that expands into the blue space of the painting like a yellow filament. As stated above, the material and iridescent colour is played on contrasting tones particularly in the use of primary colours, which creates a visual shock to the observer who is "drawn" into the pictorial representation.



Figure 9

Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Untitled*, 2007, Acrylic on canvas, 41 x 54 cm, Frosinone, Private collection.
(reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).

In figure 10, the incursion into the surreal and dreamlike imaginary, illusory world is remarkable. The painting, cut by an enormous mountain that touches its peak, presents in the background a seascape with waves on which sits a majestic but insubstantial aircraft carrier, barely touching the waves. The mountain acts like a curtain, dividing the land with the child in the foreground from the cold and cruel reality of the background.

As mentioned before, Gian Carlo Riccardi does not devise a painting of pure escapism from the contemporary world. He fills a landscape, urban or everyday elements with subtle irony that gives a glimpse of the present, denouncing the violence and confusion against which he hopes for a return to the creative, affective origin, childlike amazement and territorial roots. Out of the child's head there appear red birds, symbols of innocence, of fantasy, no longer imprisoned inside the mind (to which the cage at the protagonist's feet alludes). As the house burns on the mountaintop, it burns with a fire that blazes but does not consume.



Figure 10
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Untitled*, 2007, Acrylic on canvas, 41 x 54 cm, Frosinone, Private collection (reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).

In figure 11, the artist's imagination reaches its peak in the paroxysmal depiction of war and play. Between the contours of steep mountains, a dangerously hovering house goes up in smoke. Black smoke rises from it and coloured warplanes fly through it, while the landscape empties of all its colours and sounds like a silent black-and-white film. Not even the howling of dogs reaches the planes, choked by the inability and impossibility of communication. In the foreground, reality is reversed according to the logic of paradox. Consequently, everything turns into a game. If war can change everyday life, then reality can be altered and reshaped according to each person's imagination. If the battle rages behind this family's back, then the parents can

jump on the back of a dog, held on a leash, and the son can tiptoe on the ball like a tightrope walker, while warplanes can become colourful toys. Giving a sense of strong, fantastic energy to these representations devoid of any plausible perspective is the charge of a deliberately innocent expressionism, but the candour of these “puppets” does not conceal their malice, in which one can read in filigree the unease of our living.



Figure 11

Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Untitled*, 2006, Acrylic on canvas, 41 x 54 cm, Frosinone, Private collection (reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).

The influence of the French expressionism of Henri Matisse and André Derain in the intense chromatism, the sense of anguish and melancholy of *Die Brücke* and Edward Munch, the generals, masks and felts of the nuclear artist Enrico Baj, and the fairy-tale and surreal atmosphere of Marc Chagall can be considered fundamental. Influenced by Surrealist painting, the depiction of an illusory world that is devoid of logic, pervaded by a motionless, rarefied and silent atmosphere and a mysterious sense of expectation, a world in which hierarchical laws are subverted and where anarchy dominates. There are unmistakable references to the lively, chromatic nonchalance of Kandinsky and Klee, as well as to Chagall's dreamlike imaginary, but also to the antithetical figures of Keith Haring and Enrico Baj (Poli 2007: 56, 64, 65, 173).

In this “oneiric theatre” the artist stages his fantastic representation; he can rework it and reinvent it without suffering the harsh limits imposed by external reality, thus finding himself in the ideal conditions to be able to make the most of his freedom of invention (Treglia and Tomassoni 2020: 78–80).

Painting as an ironic view of the world

The landscape takes on a psycho-pedagogical and didactic function by accentuating the meaning assigned to the figures in the foreground through a surreal landscape representation, an

expressive and violent chromatism and the use of everyday elements, placed in an unusual and alienating context to communicate a message and activate the observer's attention.⁸

Emphasis given to his representations constitutes an ironic look at the world and humanity around him. Irony is fundamental in the artist's work, which "would lead to a production of humorous painting, never conceived as coarse laughter, but as a means of expressing absurdity, anachronism and paradox" (Riccardi 1981: 10). This is particularly evident in the caricature works created by the artist since the late 1950s (figures 12 and 13), where angels and demons play with each other or annoy friars within prison walls or vast hilly landscapes (Accamè 1972: 27). The urban landscape of Frosinone, the artist's hometown, particularly its bell tower, is the protagonist of the caricatures of the 1980s, depicted in all possible forms and a pretext for political satire (figure 14).⁹



Figure 12

Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Fratini*, 1956, Ink on paper, 52 x 37 cm, Frosinone, Private collection.
(reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).



Figure 13

Gian Carlo Riccardi, *L'attesa*, 1956, Ink on paper, 26 x 37 cm, Frosinone, Private collection.
(reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).



Figure 14
Gian Carlo Riccardi, *Passione vivente*, 1988, Ink on paper, 21 x 30 cm, Frosinone, Private collection
(reproduced with permission of the Riccardi family).

Riccardi's ironic gaze places him in a privileged position in the representation of a society that no longer is caricatured but reversed in form and colour. The artist renounces the satire, the realistic figuration and total abstraction that had characterised his previous pictorial creation. Hence, he arrives at a painting that is abstract in form and colour and ironic in its vision of a utopian society in which Riccardi takes refuge to escape from the corruption and homologation of contemporary society. He communicates with his ego by expressing himself in a plastic and allusive key, modelling the background of things and objects with a unified clarity, almost in an attempt to project the whole beyond the curtain of reality and appearances (Castellani 2002: 152).

Riccardi has repeatedly been accused of producing works that are subversive, a vehicle for a political ideology. Actually, the author looks at the contemporary world through his own gaze and his own feelings, trying to convey to the audience the idea of an inner change against all conformity. On balance, we believe that Riccardi has made memory and introspection the nodal centre of his research, undertaking a radical and unprejudiced exploration into the territories of the unconscious, figuring fears, desires, associations, transgressions, dreams, and visions (Riccardi 1981: 10). These repressed contents (childhood, the memory of his parents, of the war, the love for his homeland), through the artist's laughter and humour, emerge in his paintings, muffled and mediated by explosions of a thousand colours repressing those contents (Orlando 1965: 26).

What emerges in Riccardi's paintings is a strong need to escape from the real world and to take shelter in the world of dreams. The return to childhood is also an inevitable procedure that is translated and manifested from the brush onto the canvas by means of stylised representations that are dear to him, which can be traced back to his infancy. The central themes are that of the artist's irrepressible urge to express his creative talent from childhood (the *enfant prodige*) and, connected to this, that of the precocious revelation of this talent and its power to magnetically attract the attention of others (Kris and Kurz 1934: 48). In the artist, as the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud claims, the figure of the child is central. As a result, he refers to the primary process inherent in the artist that can evoke the Pascolian *fanciullino* and made manifest figuratively through "making art".

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the Italian avant-garde artist, Gian Carlo Riccardi, has created artistic works that present a strong pedagogical-didactic function conferred on the characters placed in the foreground through the depiction of a surreal landscape. Thus, the landscape has a relational function by establishing a communicative process with the viewers (Perelli 2006: 13, 48).

The psychology of the art of literature originates from the assertion that only by analysing the entire production of an artist, getting to know his life and the motivations behind his creative behaviour, taking into consideration the period in which he lived, is it possible to fully understand the psychological and intrinsic significance of his work (Tomassoni 2020: 229).

Analysing Riccardi's artistic works has allowed us to understand how the world evoked by the artist represents a re-evocation of past memories, of the characters and affections of his memory, lived in his homeland, *Ciociaria*.¹⁰

In Gian Carlo Riccardi's paintings, there is a conscious return to childhood which tries to eradicate the suffering of reality that nevertheless continues to surface in the landscape and the symbols depicted.

As we see it, a fairy tale and surreal narrative is configured in the artist's works. This fairy tale is reduced to the essential, in a naturalistic, marine or urban landscape made up of burning houses, animals, ships, planes, all motifs and representations of a utopian world are happy and colourful, but remote and lost at this point.

Feelings of loneliness and anguish run through the entire pictorial production of Gian Carlo Riccardi. The images depicted evoke the unconscious and become the place of memory for escaping from a cruel and merciless world in order to seek refuge in the world of childhood (Riccardi 1981: 10). In spite of everything, his works take the form of a glimmer of hope from which a will to live emerges. This return to the dimension of childhood in an imaginary and illusory world is dictated by a cathartic vision of the world, seen as bitter nostalgia through the eyes of the artist.

To conclude, one can appreciate in Riccardi the desire to recreate a parallel universe, previously depicted by the child's pencil in which everything becomes possible.

Notes

- 1 The psychiatrist, Arieti, stated that creativity is a human prerogative. According to this ability, man does not create from nothing but starts from something that already exists and tries to shape and adapt it to suit his own needs. Consequently, creativity is not divorced from ordinary thinking and everyday reality. Rather, it is an original way of approaching the world. This approach produces works such as poems, paintings, music, philosophical or mathematical theories (Arieti 1990: 230–2).
- 2 The capacity for the creative act becomes the human way to expand one's knowledge and to objectify new and different desires and experiences (Arieti 1990: 275).
- 3 Gian Carlo Riccardi was born in Frosinone in 1933. He was the son of a noblewoman and a lawyer, and the eldest of five children. He died in the same city in 2015.
- 4 Gian Carlo Riccardi attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome, graduating in Scenography in 1961. In 1963 he obtained a diploma in Theatre and Film Direction.
- 5 The works described in this study were shown in two exhibitions: *Imagerie* and *Gian Carlo Riccardi e lo sguardo dell'angelo*.
- 6 The use of symbols in creativity is fundamental because it allows a general concept to be abstracted from reality and then identified, indicated and used through a symbol.
- 7 The *Venusgrotte* in the park of Linderhof Castle is made special by the presence of a lake in which there is still a shell-shaped boat depicting a cupid in the act of shooting his love arrow, and the whole thing is enriched by a large painting of Wagner's famous opera *Tannhauser* (Schmid and Hojer 2007: 25).
- 8 The themes of dialogue with the spectator and urban space, analysed internationally through exhibitions and events, are taken up by Riccardi in his pictorial, sculptural and theatrical works (Perelli 2006: 13, 48).
- 9 A conspicuous part of Gian Carlo Riccardi's artistic production consists of caricature and drawing. He collaborated with several satirical magazines such as *Il Travaso delle idee*, *Il Bertoldo*, *Estro* and *Simplicissimus* (Riccardi 2013: 78).
- 10 In the 1960s, numerous movements and collectives emerged in *Ciociaria* experimenting with new avant-garde languages (Gismondi 1998: 17, 39, 57, 85)

Works cited

- Accamè, Antonio Maria. 1967. *I Frati di Riccardi*. Frosinone: La Tipografica.
- Argan, Giulio Carlo and Bonito Oliva, Achille. 2002. *L'arte moderna 1770–1970. L'arte oltre il Duemila*. Milano: Sansoni.
- Arieti, Silvano. 1990. *Creatività, la sintesi magica*, Roma: Il pensiero scientifico.
- Barbieri, Gian Luca. 2007. *Tra testo ed inconscio. Strategie della parola nella costruzione dell'identità*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Bourriaud, Nicolas. 2001. *Esthétique relationnelle*. Digione: Les presses du réel.
- Castellani, Fulvio. 2002. *Atlante Italiano dell'Arte*. Catanzaro: Carello Editore.
- Consalvi, Mariano. 2007. *Gian Carlo Riccardi e le sue magie*. Frosinone: Flash Magazine.
- Costa, Marco and Ricci Bitti, Enrico. 2015. *Aspetti psicologici nella valutazione estetica del paesaggio*, Turismo e Psicologia, Rivista interdisciplinare di studi, ricerche e formazione 8 (2): 15. Retrieved from doi: 10.14658/TP-2015-2.

- Crispoliti, Enrico. 1977. *Arti visive e partecipazione sociale*. Bari: De Donato.
- Facci, Dario. 1993. *Oggi l'inaugurazione della scultura di Giancarlo Riccardi*. Frosinone: Ciociaria Oggi.
- Ferrari, Stefano. 2007. *La scrittura infinita. Saggi su letteratura, psicanalisi e riparazione*. Firenze: Nicomp.
- Freud, Sigmund. 2007. *Al di là del principio del piacere*. Milano: Mondadori.
- Fusco, Antonio and Tomassoni, Rosella. 1982. *Una proposta di metodologia psicologica per la lettura di testi letterari*, Ricerche di Psicologia 21: 67–89.
- Fusco, Antonio and Tomassoni, Rosella. 2005. *Psicologia e comunicazione letteraria*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Fusco, Antonio and Tomassoni, Rosella. 2012. *Saggi di Psicologia della letteratura oggi*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Gallo Barbisio, Carla. 1999. *La rappresentazione del paesaggio*. Torino: Tirrenia Stampatori.
- Giani Gallino, Tilde. 2007. *Luoghi di attaccamento*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore.
- Gismondi, Federico. 1998. *Rassegna d'Arte. Gruppi Nati nella Provincia di Frosinone*. Veroli: Manifesto Azzurro.
- Kris, Ernst and Kurz, Otto. 1998. *La leggenda dell'artista*. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri.
- Lunetta, Mario. 2007. *Gian Carlo Riccardi e lo sguardo dell'Angelo*. Frosinone: La Tipografica.
- Maffei, Lamberto and Fiorentini, Adriana. 1995. *Arte e cervello*. Bologna: Zanichelli Editore.
- Mastandrea, Stefano. 2021. *Psicologia dell'arte*. Roma: Carocci editore.
- Moravia, Alberto. 1988. *L'Arte di Gian Carlo Riccardi*. Roma: L'Espresso.
- Orlando, Francesco. 1965. *Per una teoria freudiana della letteratura*. Torino: Einaudi.
- Perelli, Lorenza. 2006. *Public Art, Arte, Interazione e progetto urbano*. Milano: FrancoAngeli.
- Poli, Francesco. 2007. *Arte moderna. Dal postimpressionismo all'informale*. Milano: Mondadori Electa.
- Riccardi, Gian Carlo. 1981. *In fondo al pozzo dell'immaginazione*. Frosinone: Dismisuratesti.
- Riccardi, Gian Carlo. 1989. *Perlagrigno*, a cura di Cinzia Baldazzi, Frosinone: Romart90.
- Riccardi, Gian Carlo. 2001. *Gian Carlo Riccardi. 1960-2001*. Roma: Romart Service.
- Riccardi, Gian Carlo. 2004. *Delocazione: la rivelazione di ciò che la rivelazione distrugge (M. Blanchot)*, a cura di Marcello Carlino, Anagni: Real e Virtual.
- Riccardi, Gian Carlo. 2013. *Gian Carlo Riccardi*. Roma: Romart Service.
- Riviello, Vito. 1978. *Catalogo degli artisti*. Roma: Unedi.
- Schmid, Elmar D. and Hojer, Gerhard. 2007. *Schloss Linderhof*, Monaco: Bayerische Schlösserverwaltung.
- Terzini, Massimo. 2007. *Gian Carlo Riccardi artista bambino*. Frosinone: Flash Magazine.

- Tomassoni, Rosella and Spilabotte, Francesco. 2022. *Ludwig of Bavaria: Brief Psychological Considerations on the Historical Character and Visconti's Adaptation*. Psychology 13. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2022.132014>: 254–263.
- Tomassoni, Rosella. 2018. *Parole, immagini, nuovi linguaggi. Saggi di psicologia del cinema e della comunicazione*, San Donato Val Di Comino: Psiche e Aurora editore.
- Tomassoni, Rosella. 2020. *Il contributo della Psicologia della Letteratura all'analisi della Tragedia greca: Ippolito di Euripide*, La Clinica Terapeutica 171 (3): 159-163. Retrieved from doi: 10.7417/CT.2020.2227.
- Tomassoni, Rosella. 2020. *Psicologia della letteratura*. Giornale italiano di psicologia XLVII: 299–233.
- Tomassoni, Rosella, Spilabotte, Francesco and Coccarelli, Valentina. 2022 *Gian Carlo Riccardi's Theatre: Some Psychological Considerations*. Psychology 13. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2022.1312109>: 1748-1764.
- Treglia, Eugenia and Tomassoni, Rosella. 2020. *Sogno e creatività tra ispirazione ed affinità*, La Clinica Terapeutica 171 (3): 78–80. Retrieved from doi: 10.7417/CT.2020.2227.
- Zani, Rocco. 2006. *Il Viaggio di Gian Carlo Riccardi. Sulle tracce dell'infanzia strappate all'oblio*. Frosinone: Flash Magazine.
- Zani, Rocco. 2007. *La comunicativa arte di G. C. Riccardi*. Frosinone: Flash Magazine.

Rosella Tomassoni is Professor of General Psychology at the University of Cassino and Lazio Meridionale and President of C.U.D.A.R.I. (University Centre for Differently Abled People Research Innovation). Former Director of the Department of Human and Social Sciences and Humanities, Academic Senator and Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors. Member of the Board of Italian Academic Psychology, member of the Russian Academy of Human Sciences, member of the I.A.E.A., A.I.P and I.A.A.P., she is the author of numerous essays and articles on General Psychology and Psychology of Art and Literature, translated into various languages.

Francesco Spilabotte holds a degree in Modern and European Languages and Literature from the University of Cassino and Southern Lazio and a degree in Pedagogical Sciences with a mark of 110/110 cum laude and “Dignity of the Press”. He has produced a scientific publication in the field of Psychology of Art and Literature. He has acted in several plays and performances by multimedia artist, Gian Carlo Riccardi. He has attended Cinecittà studios, participating in advertising events, RAI scripts and films. Guitarist and pianist, in 2014 he started a band Thrash's Castle of thrash/neoclassical metal genre. In 2018, he collaborated in the writing of the Book *Semplicemente... Terence Hill*, writing the preface. He has written articles in art, culture and religion for the newspapers *UNOeTRE.it* and *La Voce di San Gerardo*.

Valentina Coccarelli graduated in Literature with a History of Art address and in Modern Literature with a grade of 110/110 cum laude with a thesis on the avant-garde artist, Gian Carlo Riccardi. She attended the Conservatorio Licinio Refice in Frosinone, studying and playing the piano for several years. She has produced numerous paintings and sculptures, exhibited in various art exhibitions and urban spaces. She makes handcrafted creations using poor and recycled materials. She has published articles on culture and art, interviewing local and international artists and public figures on *Cassinogreen.it*, *UNOeTRE.it* and *La Voce di San Gerardo*. She has taken part in conferences and cultural reviews of an artistic and literary nature.

Landscape, seascape and cityscape at the transitory edges of Zanzibar's *cordon sanitaire*

Yolanda van der Vyver

Independent researcher

E-mail: yolanda.vandervyver@icloud.com

The COVID 19 pandemic has conjured up the ghosts of past colonial social distancing projects and the *cordons sanitaires* that were created at the edges of land, sea and city. The banjo-shaped tidal canal between Stone Town and Ng'ambo on the island of Zanzibar in East Africa is one of the best examples where fringes were designed and manipulated to separate and divide people in the interest of sanitary policies. Today the palimpsests that cut cross sections through the layers of time, bear witness to the changes that landscape, seascape and cityscape underwent, to bring about not only these literal conditions or states, but also the figurative "mind"-scapes that are found in die immaterial or intangible.

Keywords: Zanzibar's Stone Town, Ng'ambo, *cordon sanitaire*, cartography as art

Landskap, seenskap en stadskap aan die veranderende randte van Zanzibar se *cordon sanitaire*

Die COVID 19 pandemie het geeste van die vorige koloniale sosiale distansiëringsprojekte opgeroep en ons herinner aan die *cordons sanitaires* wat aan die randte van land, see en stad geskep is. Die banjo-vormige getykanaal tussen Stone Town en Ng'ambo op die eiland Zanzibar in Oos-Afrika is een van die beste voorbeelde waar die kante ontwerp en gemanipuleer is om mense te skei en te verdeel in die belang van sanitêre beleide. Vandag is die palimpseste wat dwarsnitte deur die lae van tyd sny, getuies van die verandering wat landskap, seenskap en stadskap ondergaan het, om nie net die letterlike toestande of state te weeg te bring nie, maar ook die figuurlike geestes-skappe wat in die immateriële en ontasbare gevind word.

Sleutelwoorde: Stone Town in Zanzibar, Ng'ambo, *cordon sanitaire*, kartografie as kuns

The etymology of the words landscape, seascape and cityscape reveals that the origin of the words lies in art. The suffix -scape was not native to English but arose from the early seventeenth century Dutch term *landschap* which means a painting representing an extensive view of natural scenery of a rural or remote area.¹ During this period the Netherlands was the major centre of artistic innovation in Europe and landscape painting flourished as an independent genre (Liedtke 2014). There is a narrower, secondary sense from Middle Dutch, which generally means "region" and although the Dutch suffix can be likened to the English "-ship", as having the general sense of a "state or condition", it was taken into English in the seventeenth century as -scape. This painters' term "landscape" also attracted a non-artistic meaning from 1886 onward, meaning "a tract of land with its distinguishing characteristics" and by 1916, the verb meaning "to lay out lawns and gardens and to plant trees for the sake of beautification" was derived from the non-artistic sense. The words cityscape (1856) and seascape originated as formations from landscape and mean "a view of the city or sea". All senses of -scape in English are extended from the art sense, sometimes literally (landscape, seascape, cityscape) and sometimes figuratively (mindscape, soundscape, see footnote 1). The intangible -scapes are important to the approach advocated in contemporary conservation strategies and will be discussed later.

¹ Retrieved from <https://www.etymonline.com/word/landscape>.

This article is concerned with the landscape, seascape and cityscape of Zanzibar Town on the island of Unguja off the coast of East Africa (figure 1). It aims to describe the changes that the edges of these “-scapes” underwent, by comparing historic maps that were created at different times during the past two centuries (figures 2, and 10-15). Although these maps cannot be described as “landscape paintings”, they do provide an extensive or wide view of the scenery over land, sea and city and are two-dimensional representations of such a view. If the definition of art is the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power,² then historic cartography can be likened to art. Art and maps have historically interacted with each other and provide similar practical and aesthetic functions (see maps by Leonardo da Vinci, Albrecht Dürer and Jacopo de’ Barbari). Cartography is both an art and a science. It is a scientific art or an artistic science³ and according to Ronald Rees (1980: 60), mapmaking and landscape painting were often performed by the same hand.



Figure 1

Victorian map of Zanzibar

(retrieved from the public domain <https://www.handmademaps.com/historical%20map%20illustration/files/page17-1020-full.html>).

² As defined by the Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English, retrieved from <https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/art-and-architecture/art-general/art-history>

³ Retrieved from <https://proceedings.esri.com/library/userconf/proc99/proceed/papers/pap413/p413.htm>.

The focus of this article is a tract of land with distinguishing characteristics, where the edges between land and sea were naturally transitory, and where the built environment intruded on its fringes, blurring the lines between landscape, seascape and cityscape (figure 2). The six maps that are used in this article were chosen from the available literature because they illustrate how the shoreline changed over time. The early maps from 1846, 1892 and 1895 attested to the still natural “state or condition” of the “region” (from the secondary sense of the Dutch word *landschap*), when the triangular peninsula was separated from the rest of the island by a coastal lagoon. Although the shoreline on the Indian Ocean coast changed with the construction of the harbour on the northern edge of the peninsula, it is the gradual disappearance of the lagoon on the later maps (1923, 1958 and 1968) that immediately catches the eye. The local inhabitants called the lagoon *Pani dogo* or *Pwani-ndogo*, which are the Swahili words for “small beach or coast”. This body of water separated the old Stone Town from the rest of the island and naturally divided the landscape (and future town) in two. Over time, this transitional zone between land and sea, the shallow inland body that was separated from the ocean by a narrow land barrier on the south,⁴ was manipulated by design, and transformed through human intervention into what later maps called the Creek, or the Tidal Channel and Basin.

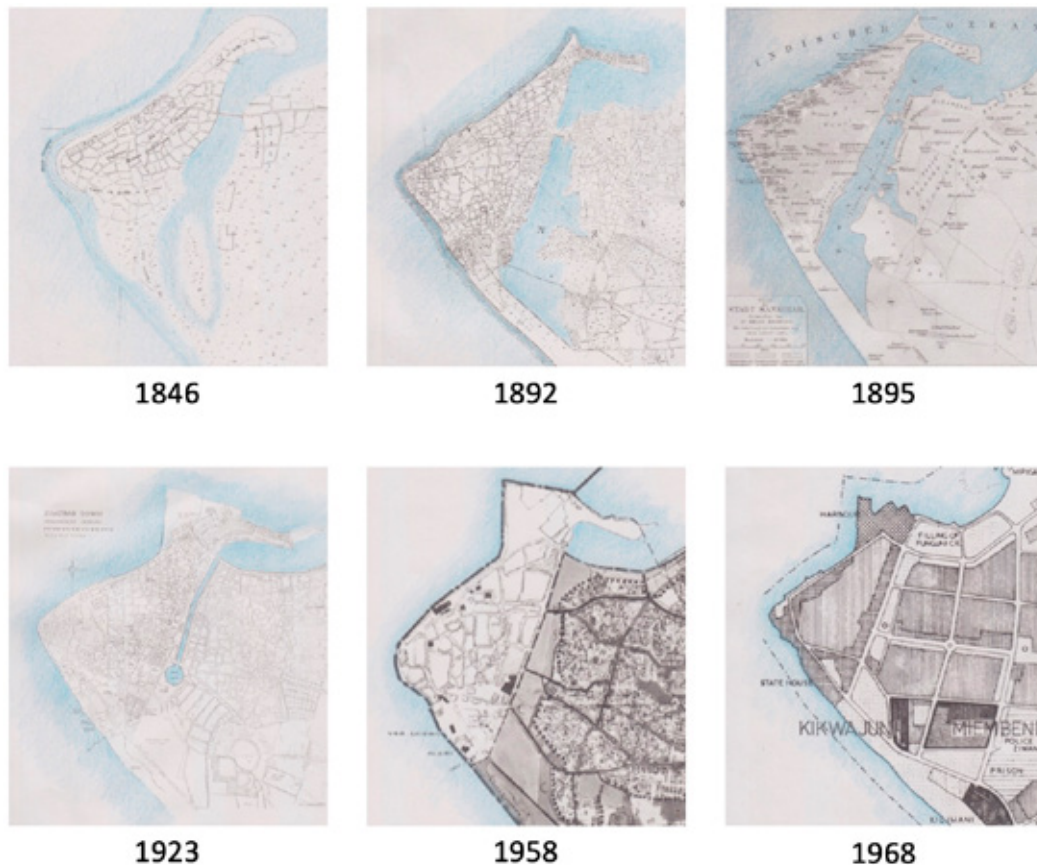


Figure 2
Maps of Zanzibar Town (1846 to 1958), showing how the shoreline changed over time (blue overlay by the author, base maps available on the public domain).

⁴ See http://www.coastalwiki.org/wiki/Coastal_lagoon.

Despite the disappearance of *Pwani-ndogo*, the two sides of Zanzibar Town remain characteristically distinct to this day. This distinction refers to more than just the tangible -scapes. It also refers to the figurative “mind”-scapes that are found in the immaterial or intangible heritage. The tidal lagoon naturally separated the old Stone Town with its Omani architecture located on the western peninsula, from Ng’ambo, which means “the other side”, the old Swahili town on the east. When the Stone Town was declared a World Heritage Site in 2000, scholarly interest in the conservation area, the western side of the town (demarcated in yellow in figure 3) piqued, creating the perception that Ng’ambo in the west is less important than its neighbouring suburb, Stone Town (Barstow 2019).⁵ However, the introduction of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach in 2011 and the publication of the *Ng’ambo Atlas* in 2019, contributed to the inclusion of both sides in recent scholarly debates and narratives. The map in figure 3 is from the *Ng’ambo Atlas*. The morphological difference between the two sides is clearly visible.

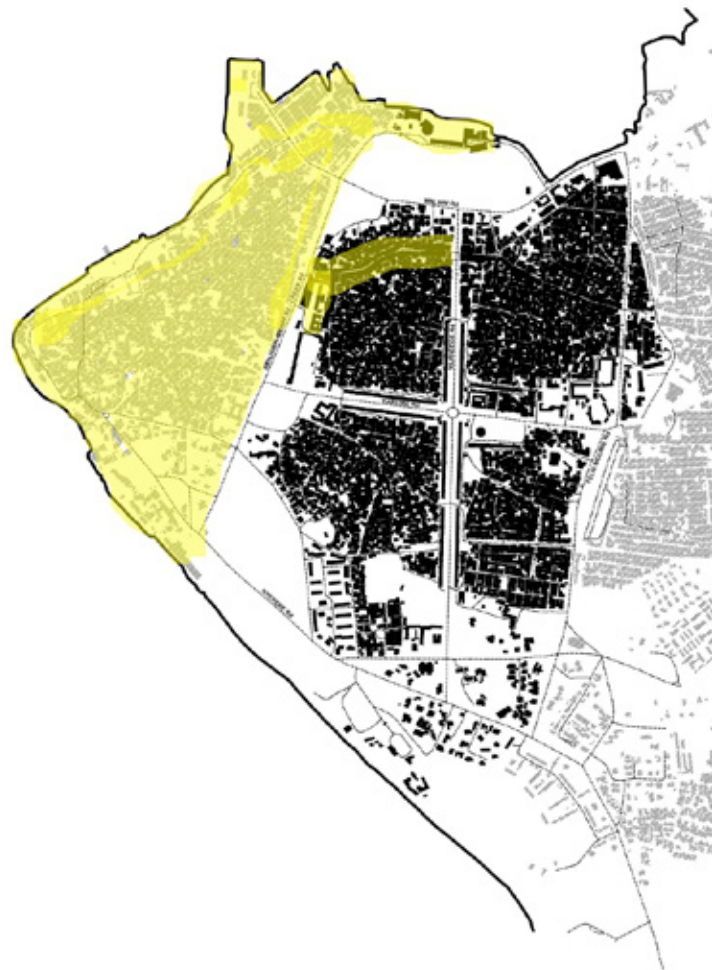


Figure 3
Base map of Zanzibar Town depicting UNESCO conservation area in yellow on the left
and Ng’ambo’s built fabric in black line on the right
(source: map by Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 21, overlay by the author from whc.unesco.org).

⁵ Antoni Folkers (2010: 39) states that this theoretical split has survived up to today, dividing the city into a Stone Town and the Other Side, both with their own set of rules and plans. One has become a World Heritage Site and the other a slum to be upgraded.

A “romance” with Zanzibar

Abdul Sheriff⁶ (1995: 1) writes that Zanzibar on the island Unguja occupies a large “romantic” space in our imagination and has, as a result, attracted the attention of scholars from around the world.⁷ It conjures up visions of a tropical paradise, fertile soils, exotic spices, dhows (figure 4), ancient trade routes, bazaars, palaces, sultanates, slaves, and love stories.⁸ A review of the related literature from the past thirty years reveals that much has already been written about Zanzibar. Scholars seem to be preoccupied not just with its history (Knappert 1992; Sheriff 1995; Sheriff, Jafferji and Chomoko 1995), but also with documenting the existing built fabric using mapping methodologies, and devising ways to preserve an already decaying architectural legacy (see Siravo 1996 and 1997, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture’s book *Zanzibar: A Plan for the Historic Stone Town*).



Figure 4
Dhow in Zanzibar harbour
(photograph by die author).

Zanzibar is one of the most important urban settlements of the region and an integral part of Swahili history, going back to the earliest centuries of the Islamic era. For centuries it formed a crucial part of long-distance maritime trade, visited by merchants from across the Indian Ocean. The natural harbour offered protection to incoming vessels during both monsoon seasons. *Kaskazi*, the northeast monsoon, brought traders from Arabia, Persia and India, carrying porcelain from China, glass beads from India and cloth from India, Egypt and Somalia. The southwest monsoon *kusi*, brought vessels from the south, carrying ivory, timber, tortoise shell, iron and gold, and traders from the north and east could return to their home ports on the Indian Ocean (figure 5; Siravo 1996: 11). Zanzibar was characterised by cultural richness, diverse social and ethnic groups, and complex assemblages made up of multiple elements and histories.

⁶ Abdul Sheriff is a Professor of History at the University of Dar es Salaam and Principal Curator of Zanzibar Museums.

⁷ *Ng’ambo Atlas* is the latest publication (2019) through the collaboration of the Department of Urban and Rural Planning in Zanzibar, the City of Amsterdam, and African Architecture Matters.

⁸ Princess Seyyida Salme (1844-1924) lived in Mtoni Palace before eloping with Heinrich Ruete, a German trader in 1866. She became Emily Ruete in Germany and her *Memoirs*, originally published in 1888, provides accounts of life on Zanzibar during the middle of the nineteenth century (Ruete, Emily. 1996. *Memoirs of An Arabian Princess from Zanzibar*. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publisher.)



Figure 5
Section of map of East Africa showing monsoon winds
 (source: Siravo 1996: 11).

Pre-colonial trade and settlement

Swahili traders and the Kilwa Sultanate

During the eighth century, Swahili people began to engage in the Indian Ocean trade and were influenced by Arabic, Persian, Indian, and Chinese cultures. During the tenth century, city-states flourished along the Swahili Coast and adjacent islands. Kilwa, Malindi, Gedi, Pate, Comoros, and Zanzibar were Muslim, cosmopolitan, and politically independent of one another. The Kilwa Sultanate originated as a Persian colony, but it turned into a very diverse state through extensive inter-marriage and conversion of local Bantu inhabitants and later Arab immigration. Arab and Persian colonisers brought stone architecture and urban civilisation to the Swahili coast. The mixture of Perso-Arab and Bantu cultures in Kilwa is credited for creating Swahili as a distinctive East African culture and language⁹ (Siravo 1996: 1-2).

Swahili diko

The town of Zanzibar originated as a fishing village on the Shangani peninsula in the twelfth century, and comprised of a few *diko*, (temporary fishing settlements) that over time transformed into a typical East African Swahili merchant town, with local crafts participating in the long-

⁹ Retrieved from <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldcivilization/chapter/the-swahili-culture/>.

distance maritime trade (Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 24). It is the product of an ancient pattern of maritime trade and settlement (Siravo 1996: 11). Many such stone towns existed when the Portuguese came to East Africa in the fifteenth century (Yahya 1995: 118).¹⁰

Portuguese

Portuguese navigator Bartolomeu Dias was the first European to round the southern tip of Africa in 1488, demonstrating that the best sea route from Europe to the Orient was in the open Atlantic Ocean to the west of the continent. Vasco da Gama followed the same route and reached India in 1498, therefore becoming the first to link Europe with Asia, the West with the East, and the Atlantic with the Indian Ocean. By 1503 the Portuguese controlled the whole East African littoral and the lucrative Indian Ocean trade. The Kilwa sultanate was destroyed by the envious Portuguese at the beginning of the sixteenth century (Folkers 2010: 32). The Portuguese had fast ships and firearms and resistance was met with force. Mombasa (1505 and 1528), Kilwa (1505) and Lamu and Pate (1506) were attacked, invaded, and sacked. Zanzibar was not so important to them, but they built a chapel on the Shangani peninsula in 1569, on the site of the Old Fort and a small factory (a trading agency) and some houses further to the south (Siravo 1996: 12; Knappert 1992: 18).

Mwinyi Mkuu's pre-Omani dynasty

According to local legends, Zanzibar was first settled by Persians from Shiraz (current Iran) (Knappert 1992: 18) who mixed with the African population to form a local dynasty that ruled the island in traditional Swahili fashion. The oldest datable relic is from 1107 (CE). It is the *kufic* inscription on a (trefoil mihrab) pillar of the kiblah (north niche) in the mosque at Kizimkazi at the south end of the island. There are ruins of a fortress overlooking the harbour near the mosque (Knappert 1992: 17; Siravo 1996: 12). By the end of the sixteenth century these local rulers submitted to the Portuguese, who left them in their positions of power (Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 27). Swahili families from Malindi on the coast of Kenya established quarters there and built mosques, which showed similarities to the mosques on the homeland (Folkers 2010; Siravo 1996: 12).

Omanis

The Omani were rivals to the Portuguese and penetrated the area in the second half of the seventeenth century. Portuguese power began to wane in the mid seventeenth century and the Omanis were able to exert their dominance, culminating in the expulsion of the Portuguese from the East African coast in 1698 when the sultan conquered Fort Jesus in Mombasa (Sheriff 1995: 8; Siravo 1996: 13). Structures that were left behind by the Portuguese were incorporated into fortifications built by the Omani rulers before 1710 and were later transformed into the Great Fort (Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 26; Siravo 1996: 13). The sultans left the indigenous rulers in

¹⁰ Lamu and the old cities of the Lamu archipelago, Mombasa, Vanga, Moroni and Mtsamoudu (Yahya 1995: 117). Harbour towns lined the western Indian Ocean: Kilwa, Mombasa, Malindi, Lamu and Mogadishu and linked with the trading ports of the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf (Siravo 1996: 11).

position on the mainland at Kilwa and Pate or kings at Malindi and Mombasa, recognising local chiefs as tribal rulers and confirming their ceremonial functions. Sometime before 1728 Queen Fatuma was succeeded by her son Hassan, who cleared the bush on the peninsula and is believed to have been the real founder of the town, which gradually replaced the early inhabitants' small fishing village of mud and palm leaf huts at Shangani point (Folkers 2010; Siravo 1996: 12).

By the later part of the eighteenth century, Omani merchants who conducted trade between East Africa and Arabia began to settle in Zanzibar (Issa 1995: 70). The Swahili city was replaced by a stone city after the end of the eighteenth century and became the home of Swahili and Omani Arabs (Folkers 2010: 67). Seyyid Said, the Sultan of Oman, decided to transfer his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar in 1828, and most Omanis immigrated to Zanzibar after 1830 (Issa 1995: 70). They were an immigrant community but continued to maintain links with their homeland. According to Folkers and Perzyna (2019: 23-6) and Sheriff (1995: ix), Zanzibar Town was the uncontested political, diplomatic, and cultural capital of the Swahili world during the nineteenth century. From Kilwa to Lamu to Mombasa, no other city in East Africa could compete in number of inhabitants or in strategic military and economic importance. Omani rule dominated for centuries and even with the onset of colonial rule, the Omani empire maintained its commercial foothold (Sheriff 1995: 61). As a result, Omani architecture dominated the physical appearance of the town (Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 36).

The result of pre-colonial trade and settlement in Zanzibar was a twin city pattern. Although many other pre-modern African cities had bipolar city plans (Folkers 2010: 35), this settlement has Islamic characteristics.¹¹ Mark Horton and John Middleton (2000: 123-27; 229) coined the terms “patricians’ town” and “commoners’ town” to denote the two types of towns recognised by the Swahili. These terms focused on the owners of the settlements, rather than their characteristics. The Stone Town on the western peninsula is an example of a patricians’ town, a compact Muslim settlement that was home to the patrician merchants and from where international trade was controlled (figures 6 and 7). Ng’ambo on “the other side” was an example of a commoners’ town, one that resembled a rural village, built with impermanent materials, facing the land rather than the sea (figures 8 and 9).



Figure 6
Stone Town harbour view 1880
(photograph by J. Sturtz).

¹¹ Where urbanism in an Islamic city is defined by possession of a mosque, baths and central market, traditional Swahili towns would have a mosque but rarely food markets and never baths (Horton and Middleton 2000: 228).



Figure 7
Stone Town rooftop panorama 1888
(photograph by J. Sturtz)



Figure 8 (left)
Houses in Ng'ambo c 1900
(source: Library of African Studies Winterton Collection, Northwest University).

Figure 9 (right)
Ng'ambo in 1894
(photograph by J. Sturtz).

The six maps chosen to illustrate the changes that the landscape and seascape underwent over the course of more than a century, also bear witness to the development of the cityscape into a well-defined twin city. We witness how the land encroached on the sea and how the tangible edges between the two cities were blurred and became transitory, even though the intangible differences remained.

From *Pwani-ndogo* to Creek Road: A brief history

Map One: 1846

The 1846 map of Captain Guillain seems to be one of the oldest representations of the area and the edge between land and sea is still in its natural state. The map indicates the tidal differences that played such an important role in the history of the early town. *Pointe Shungany* (Shangani point), *quartier du commerce* (commercial district), *maisons généralement en pierre* (houses generally made of stone), *cases en paille et en terre* (houses of straw and mud) and *cimitière Arabe* (Arabian cemetery) are indicated in Stone Town on the west. More wattle-and-daub huts are indicated in the eastern side of Ng'ambo. The *chemin de M'tony* (road to Mtoni) leads away from Ng'ambo to the interior. Although stone houses dominate in the town, there are also a few wattle-and-daub huts. The settlement has already jumped to the other side of the Creek with some huts in Ng'ambo near the road to Mtoni, to the interior.

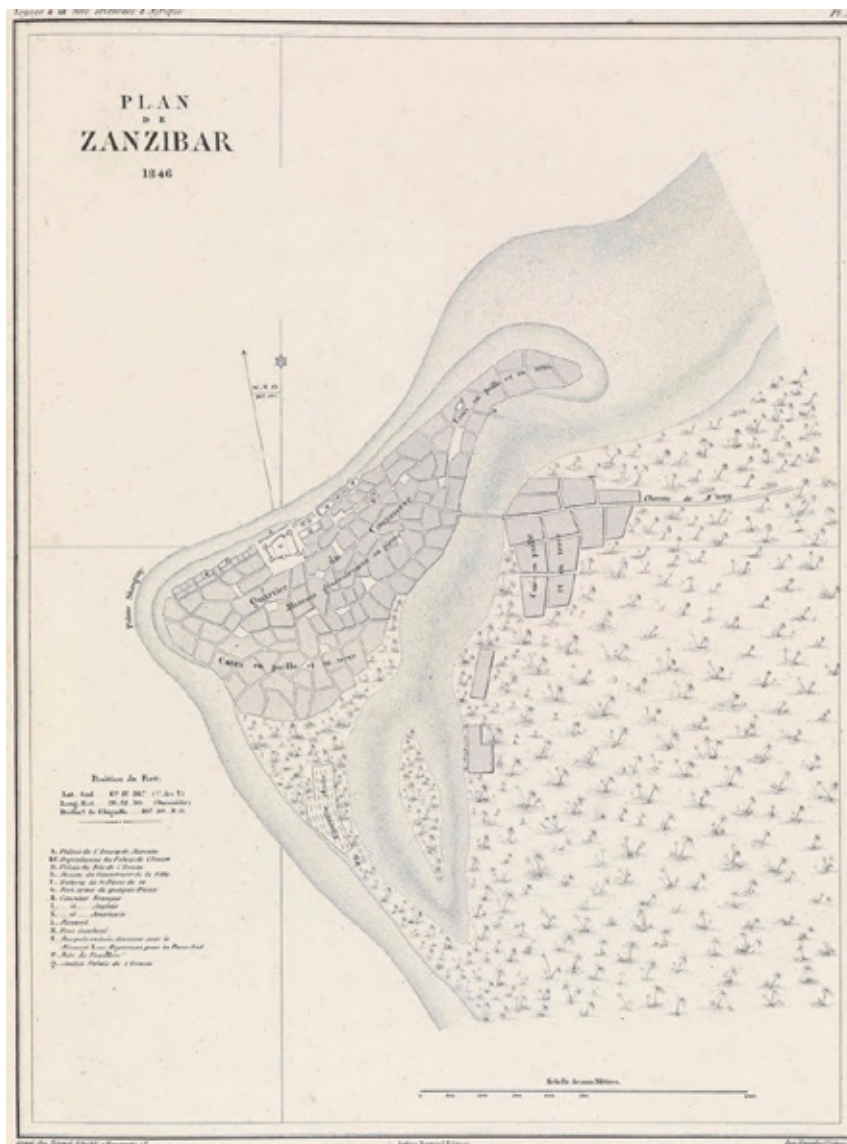


Figure 10

Charles Guillain, *Map of Zanzibar 1846* (retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/VoyageaYlacoYtAtlaBayo/page/9/mode/1up?view=theater>).

Map Two: 1892

The first map after Guillain's 1846 map, is by Imam Sharif (1892), an Indian land surveyor. The Creek is indicated as *Panidogo*. Both the Stown Town and Ng'ambo have increased in size.



Figure 11
Imam Sharif, *Map of Zanzibar 1892*
(source: Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 33).

Map Three: 1895

Dr. Oscar Baumann, an Austrian consul on the island, incorporated Imam Sharif's map to produce a Map of *Sansibar* Town in 1895. The key on the map is colour-coded according to *Vorherrschend Steinbauten* (mainly stone buildings), *Vorherrschend Lehmhütten* (predominantly mud huts) and *Gärten und Pflanzunge* (gardens and plantations). Stone buildings dominate in Stone Town, but wattle-and-daub huts are on both sides of the creek, which is called *Pwani-ndogo*, a lagoon that dries during ebb (*Lagune, bei Ebbe trocken*).



Figure 12
Oscar Baumann, *Map of Zanzibar 1895*
 (retrieved from the public domain

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plan_der_Stadt_Sansibar_-_Map_of_Zanzibar_-_Oscar_Baumann.jpg).

The first three maps provide evidence of the growth of Ng'ambo. In the nineteenth century wattle-and-daub huts were still interspersed between the stone houses in Stone Town, but by 1845 the settlement had jumped across the Creek to Ng'ambo, "the other side". The two parts together formed a truly cosmopolitan city with Arab, Swahili, Indian, Persian, Comorian, Goan and Madagascan people, to name a few, living next to each other, on both sides of the creek in wattle-and-daub Swahili houses, Omani *beyts* and Indian *dukas* (Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 31). Free men and slaves made up mercantile Swahili city states. Omanis who lived in town were dependent on African labourers, most of whom were domestic workers who lived with their masters. But some returned home after working hours and lived on land in Ng'ambo bought by the Omanis. By 1890 Ng'ambo exceeded the old city in size and population.

Although Ng'ambo was perceived by westerners and outsiders as disorderly chaos, many argue that it was not so. As Garth Andrew Myers and Sheriff (1995: 4) put it, the town was composed of organised, structured, and serviced communities based on traditional local development procedures, using local skills and mutual agreements between neighbours. It was divided into clearly defined districts (Mtaa).

The next two maps were produced by British colonial officials after Zanzibar became a British Protectorate in 1890.¹² Before that time no formal policy of segregation existed, but during the British colonial administration, the cosmopolis was reorganised into a segregated city. Stone Town on the peninsula was subdivided into European, Arab and Indian quarters and Ng'ambo on the mainland became the native sector, to which workers' quarters were exiled. Workers and the poor of the town made up the third part of Zanzibar's social formation. The division between the "haves", people of pedigree or *waungwana*, and the "have-nots" were not only social, but also spatial (Sheriff 1995: 4). The creek became the *cordon sanitaire* with the Stone Town on the one side: a formal city for wealthy Europeans, Arabs and Indians and Ng'ambo on the other side: an informal city for African urban proletariat, day labourers, freed slaves, and impoverished Arabs (Folkers 2010: 71). Degeneration and neglect eventually caused Ng'ambo to turn into a slum.

Map Four: 1923

Henry Vaughan Lanchester's improvement scheme of 1923 shows an extension of the port on land to be reclaimed from the sea, as well as a monumental redesign for Stone Town's seafront (Folkers 2014: 40). The Old Creek is channelled in the shape of a banjo, consisting of a long tidal channel that leads to a round tidal basin. By 1927 this work was complete (Sheriff 1995: 3), as can be seen on the survey map of that year, which was compiled from aerial photographs (Folkers 2014: 42).



Figure 13
H.V. Lanchester, *Zanzibar Town Improvement Scheme 1923*
(source: Folkers 2010: 75).

¹² Sultan Khalifa concluded a treaty to turn Zanzibar into a British Protectorate in 1890, and the offshore islands and a thin strip along the coast opposite Zanzibar were all that was left of the former Omani Empire. Britain's influence was extensive but not dictatorial (Battle 1995: 93).

Map Five: 1958

Henry Kendall's Town Planning Scheme of 1958 reconfirmed the division of Stone Town and Ng'ambo, reclaiming the last remnants of the Banjo (Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 52) and turning it into a green *cordon sanitaire*. It proposed reclamation of the nearby Bwawani basin for future development. The Banjo was converted into a small round park.

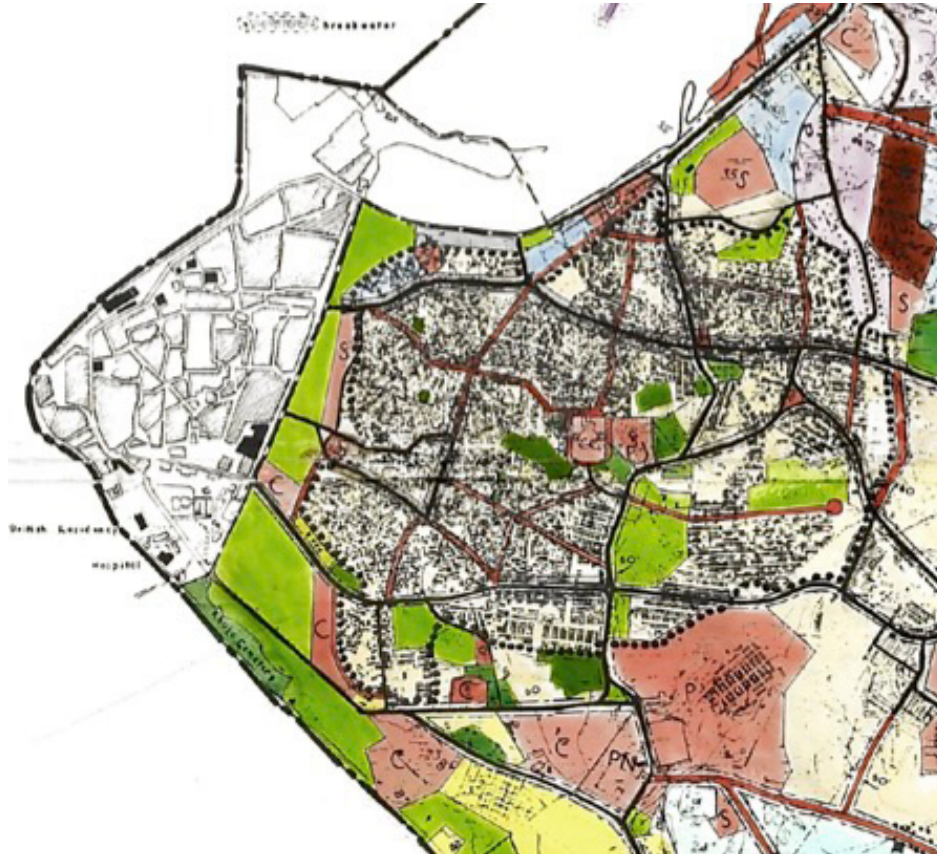


Figure 14
Kendall-Mill, Portion of Zanzibar Town Planning Scheme 1958
(source: Folkers 2010: 75).

Map Six: 1964

The first president of independent Zanzibar, Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume, had different ideas than those of the colonial planners. In 1964, the year of the Revolution when the Sultan was overthrown, he made it clear that he wished to erase the divided city, by clearing up Stone Town and have Ng'ambo rebuilt as a socialist Zanzibar New Town. With the help of the GDR town planner Hubert Scholz, Zanzibar New Town was designed (1968). The Michenzani apartment blocks, consisting of 1,100 apartments, were constructed between the late 1960s and 70s. They consist of twelve 300m long apartment blocks of up to 8 floors and are characteristic of East German *plattenbau*, examples of which can still be seen today in old East Berlin.

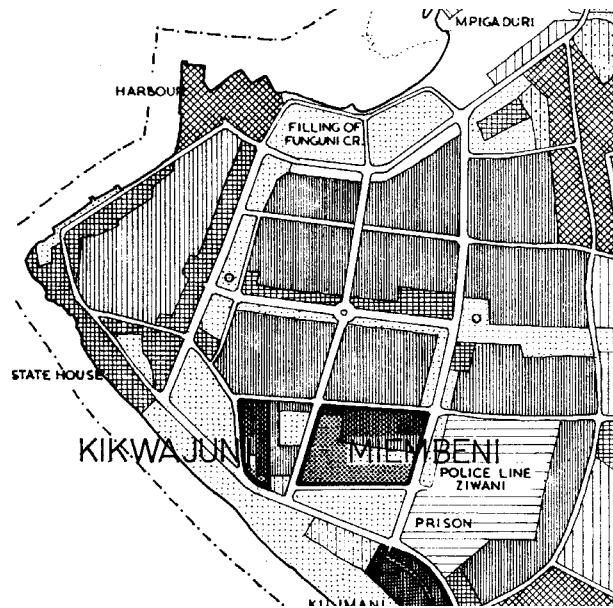


Figure 15
 Herbert Scholz, *Zanzibar Town Planning Scheme 1968*
 (source: Folkers and Perzyna 2019: 61).

There were a further master plans, such as the Master Plan by Chang-Kequan in 1982 which focused on Ng’ambo, but since the tidal basin had all but disappeared, my study of maps ends here. The maps presented in this article are palimpsests that cut cross sections through the layers of time. They bear witness to the changes that landscape, seascape and cityscape underwent, to bring about not only these literal conditions or states, but also the figurative “mind”-scapes that are found in die immaterial or intangible.

The maps tell us that the town of Zanzibar developed on Unguja, the main island of the Zanzibar archipelago on the western tip of a triangular peninsula which projects into the Zanzibar channel about halfway down the island’s coastline. The peninsula was separated from the main island by a creek to the east and connected to it by only a neck of land at the southern end before it was filled in during the twentieth century (Sheriff 1995: 8). *Pwani-ndogo* or more popularly referred to as the Old Creek, had for centuries separated the triangular peninsula of Stone Town (west) from Ng’ambo (east). The tidal creek had to be crossed at high tide by canoe and by foot at low tide. Today, evidence of the tidal basin is still echoed in the name Creek Road (figure 17), which runs from north to south (Sheriff 1995: 2). The old Stone Town still houses much of the capital’s commercial and government activity (Siravo 1997: 208). What thus separated the two halves of the town for centuries, was first channelled and then reclaimed for public open space.

Mosquito Brigade

The current COVID 19 pandemic has conjured up the ghosts of past colonial social distancing projects and the *cordons sanitaires* that were created to separate and divide people in the interest of sanitary policies. The Creek that divided Stone Town and Ng’ambo has a very rich history of division, as becomes evident in the study of the maps above. The reclamation of land and how *Pwani-ndogo* was transformed into Creek Road, has been documented by many scholars of Zanzibar history, but the role that disease and public health during the colonial period played

in this process, has mainly remained untouched.¹³ Amina Ameir Issa's thesis (2009) is one of the only sources that investigates the introduction of pathogens with population expansion and a capitalist economy, Western medical practices as tool of the Empire (and African resistance thereto) and anti-malaria, smallpox and bubonic plague campaigns launched by the colonial government between 1870 and 1963.

Cholera epidemics in Zanzibar were periodic and killed more than 10,000 people in 1870 (Siravo 1996: 18) and another 900 in 1912, but malaria became the focus of the colonial government's Health and Medical Department. Issa (2009: 27) explains that the clearing of the bush for clove plantations led to the disturbance of the anopheles and *Culex* mosquitoes that cause malaria and after slavery was abolished in 1897, the Zanzibar economy became dependant on a migrant labour force that brought epidemics with them. Urbanisation inevitably meant overpopulation, congestion, pollution and unsanitary living conditions. The provision of health facilities for wage labourers became important to the survival of the economy (Issa 2009: 20).

The presence of malaria mosquito larvae was found in the disused stone water tank at Forodhani in 1900 by the Director of Health Services, Dr. Alfred Spurrier. The tank was immediately demolished. The Mosquito Brigade Unit was established in 1907 by the Colonial Office in an effort to control malaria. The Unit employed many workers who inspected every house in Stone Town for mosquito breeding areas. If such areas were found, notice was given and owners were fined. The town population found this a huge intrusion into their lives. The Mosquito Brigade inspected arriving dhows to ensure that they were mosquito free and further required the cleaning of burial vaults and cemeteries (Issa 1995: 80). Upon inspection, it was found that houses built by local Indian architects had central rooms, used as storerooms, that were badly lit and ventilated and that the street-fronting rooms, which were used as shops, were closed at night. These dark rooms were infested with rats and fleas and were found to be dirty and stuffy.

Demolition of "native huts" to make way for European quarters

Similarly, *makuti* huts, or any hut that, according to the Health Department, "was built in the native fashion," were deemed to be without proper lighting or ventilation and were therefore hiding places, reservoirs and breeding places for *Culex* mosquitoes. In 1913 health authorities issued a Public Health Order to demolish thatched houses in certain areas of Stone Town. The court gave notice to the occupier of a native hut to move from there. No compensation was offered. These areas were mostly occupied by poor Comorians, Indians, Arabs and Africans. From 1935 people living in Stone Town were required to rebuild their houses or move to Ng'ambo. Town people were not happy about these planning rules and regulations and felt harassed and intimidated by colonial authorities. The majority lacked the means to fight the bureaucracy and were not ready to move out of Stone Town. Force was used to make sure that they vacated the area and the government compensated them by giving them money to build new houses in the Ng'ambo area. Thatch houses in Ng'ambo had to be replaced with brick houses, but funds for rebuilding only became available in 1946.

¹³ Folkers and Perzyna (2019: 112) briefly mention the British administration's quarantining of dhow crews suspected of carrying smallpox, which was a mortal disease that affected Zanzibar around the turn of the century.

The Director of the Health Department noted in 1916 that removal of huts helped to acquire open space and improve an area of the town where a European quarter has been evolving. The open space created in this way became a new European quarter, which differed in terms of style from other buildings in the Stone Town. Residential segregation between Europeans and Africans to control malaria had already been proposed in the late nineteenth century by Nobel Prize winner Sir Ronald Ross. Issa (2009) argues that Ng'ambo was considered an unhealthy area, to be put under the administration of the Health Officer, while Stone Town, where Europeans, rich Indians and Arabs mostly lived, could be left under the Public Works Department.¹⁴ Urban planning policies were intended to consolidate the categorisation of people according to class. Folkers and Perzyna (2019: 57) relate that:

By the 1960s most of the single-storey Swahili houses that once constituted a large part of Stone Town's tissue had been replaced by Omani houses and Indian shopfront houses or had given way to the development of the European quarters under Lanchester's scheme. The only part that remained densely built up with single-storey Swahili houses was Funguni, located on the peninsula to the north. The neighbourhood was originally considered a part of Stone Town but was listed in the 1947 Ng'ambo Folder as 'native quarters'. The neighbourhood, with all of its buildings, was cleared in the 1970s for the development of the Bwawani Complex.

Still, they don't mention the role that disease played in this decision.

Reclamation of wet areas and the filling of Pwani-ndogo

Further anti-malaria projects required the removal of mosquito breeding grounds. The Mosquito Brigade filled ditches and holes and water tanks, pits, swamps and rivers were oiled. By the middle of the nineteenth century *Pwani-ndogo* had become the source of a horrible stench as David Livingston remarked in 1866. He called it Stinkibar and other Europeans called it a "fetid lagoon" because all the dirt and drainage pollution ran into it from the town (Issa 2009: 35, 46). In 1879 colonial authorities planned to build embankments around the Creek which they thought would be an improvement (Issa 2009: 217), but medical and health authorities in Zanzibar recommended that swampy grounds be reclaimed and streams, including *Pwani-ndogo*, be canalised. A lack of funds delayed the work, but it eventually started in 1907. Swamps, believed to be the chief source of anopheline mosquitoes in the northern portion of the town, were dried out by cutting earth ditches and running tunnels to the sea. In 1913 colonial advisers believed that filling the Creek would stop epidemics and create a neutral zone between Stone Town and Ng'ambo, and between the town and plantations, where anopheline mosquitoes were breeding. Other swamps were filled in the late 1950s.

The filling in of the Creek was a matter of controversy, since the next Principal Health Officer¹⁵ wrote in 1914 that the Creek was washed by salt water and was too porous for rainwater to lodge, which means it could not be the breeding place for mosquitoes in the wet season (Issa 2009: 218). Medical scientist remarked that its "tidal waters served to daily remove much offensive drainage that was discharged into the creek." Medical scientists played an influential role in the sanitation and urban planning process in colonial Africa. In 1935 the decision was

¹⁴ The Director of Public Works Department (PWD) was in charge of Stone Town's building control measures, but the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) was the authority for Ng'ambo.

¹⁵ Dr. Curwen became the Principal Health Officer after the departure of Professor Simpson.

made to fill the creek for health and safety reasons, since it was believed that it was the source of many diseases, especially when crossed by foot. It was filled by placing concrete blocks on the side to keep the water out and then tipping refuse into the water, which initially attracted flies and had a rotten smell (figure 16). Residents sent a petition complaining about the smell to the Sanitary Board, but work continued in this fashion until 1963, when the filling of the creek was complete (Issa 2009: 220).



Figure 16
The Creek being filled at Darajani, photograph taken in 1943.
(source: Issa 2009: 219).

Some residents of Stone Town still remember the existence of the Creek, and the ferry that was used during high tide. It was crossed by foot when the tide was out. They remember having to close their windows before sunset to keep the mosquitoes out, as these were breeding near the bank. As many were happy that the breeding of mosquitoes was stopped, others lost their livelihoods ferrying passengers across. Generally, the reclamation work did a lot to restrain epidemics in the town, but ultimately it was a combination of anti-malarial measures including DDT, quinine and other medications that halted malaria, typhoid and cholera.

Other measures that were taken by die colonial government during the twentieth century included piping the water supply, installing a tap water system to prevent the use of shallow wells, installing water flushed toilets and providing clothes washing platforms in town. Quarrying in town was also outlawed since excavations retained water that permitted mosquitoes to breed. Cattle that were driven backwards and forwards cut the grassy planes with their hoofs, leaving a honeycombed mess, which during the rainy seasons did not dry normally and became the breeding ground of mosquitoes.¹⁶

¹⁶ Issa, Amina A. 2009. Anti-malaria campaigns in Urban Zanzibar, 1913-1945 retrieved from <https://phambo.wiser.org.za/files/seminars/Issa2009.pdf>.



Pwani Ndogo c1880-1900



Creek Road 2011



Pwani-Ndogo in 1890



Jamhuru Garden 2011



Pwani-Ndogo 1900-1908



Creek 2011

Figure 17

Left column: photographs of *Pwani-Ndogo* before the creek was reclaimed, taken between 1880 and 1908 (source: Library of African Studies Winterton Collection, Northwest University);
Right column: recent photographs of the reclaimed creek (photographs by the author).

Conclusion

A pre-colonial historical overview of the island of Zanzibar reveals the interaction between different sociocultural groups. Because Omani rule dominated for centuries, the physical appearance of the landscape, seascape and cityscape of Zanzibar Town was influenced by Omani culture.

During the British colonial administration, the cosmopolis was reorganised into a segregated city. Stone Town on the peninsula was subdivided into European, Arab and Indian quarters and Ng'ambo on the mainland became the native sector, to which workers' quarters were exiled. This theoretical split has survived up to today, dividing the city into a Stone Town and the "Other Side", both with their own set of rules and plans. One has become a World Heritage Site and the other a slum to be upgraded.

Pwani-Ndogo or the Creek, started off as a natural barrier, but its edges were manipulated into a greenbelt, a *cordon sanitaire* that separated the two halves of the cityscape. It was first channelled and then reclaimed for public open space. Although many scholars of the history of Zanzibar have described how *Pwani-ndogo* was reclaimed, none of them (until Issa's thesis) explain that this was done in attempts to control malaria and other diseases in Stone Town. Native *makuti* huts were demolished, because it was believed that they were a breeding ground for the anopheles mosquito that causes malaria. In the process, demolition made way for European quarters. During the twentieth century, a concerted effort was made by colonial authorities to reclaim wet areas and fill the Creek in the fight against disease.

Works cited

- Barstow, Oliver. 2019. *Review | Ng'ambo Atlas. The Other Side of Zanzibar's Stone Town. Amsterdam: ZAM-net Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.zammagazine.com/arts/1175-review-ng-ambo-atlas-the-other-side-of-zanzibar-s-stone-town>.*
- Battle, Steve. 1995. The Old Dispensary: An apogee of Zanzibari architecture, in *The History and Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town*, edited by Abdul Sheriff. London: James Currey: 91-9.
- Folkers, Antoni. 2010. *Modern Architecture in Africa*. Amsterdam: Sun Architecture.
- Folkers, Antoni. 2014. Planning and replanning Ng'ambo, Zanzibar, *South African Journal of Art History* 29(1): 35-49.
- Folkers, Antoni and Perzyna, Iga (eds). 2019. *Ng'ambo Atlas: Historic Urban Landscape of Zanzibar Town's 'Other Side'*. Seattle: LM Publishers.
- Horton, Mark and Middleton, John. 2000. *The Swahili – The Social Landscape of a Mercantile Society*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Issa, Amina Ameir. 1995. The burial of the elite in nineteenth century Zanzibar Stone Town, in *The History and Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town*, edited by Abdul Sheriff. London: James Currey: 67-80.
- Issa, Amina Ameir. 2009. *From Stinkbar to Zanzibar: disease, medicine and public health in colonial urban Zanzibar, 1870-1963*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Durban: University of KwaZulu Natal.
- Knappert, Jan. 1992. A short history of Zanzibar, *Annales Aequatoria* 13: 15-37.
- Liedtke, Walter. 2014. Landscape painting in the Netherlands, *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art*. Retrieved from https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/lpnd/hd_lpnd.htm on 28 May 2022.
- Myers, Garth Andrew. 1995: The early history of the 'other side' of Zanzibar Town, in *The History and Conservation of*

- Zanzibar Stone Town*, edited by Abdul Sheriff. London: James Currey: 30-45.
- Rees, Ronald. 1980. Historical links between cartography and art, *The Geographical Review* 70(1): 61-78.
- Ruete, Emily. 1996. *Memoirs of An Arabian Princess from Zanzibar*. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publisher.
- Sheriff, Abdul. 1995. Introduction, in *The History and Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town*, edited by Abdul Sheriff. London: James Currey: 1-7.
- Sheriff, Abdul. 1995. An outline history of Zanzibar Stone Town, in *The History and Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town*, edited by Abdul Sheriff. London: James Currey: 8-29.
- Sheriff, Abdul. 1995. Mosques, merchants and landowners in Zanzibar Stone Town, in *The History and Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town*, edited by Abdul Sheriff. London: James Currey: 46-66.
- Sheriff, Abdul, Jafferji, Javed and Chomoko, Ashter. 1995. *Historical Zanzibar: Romance of the Ages*. London: HSP Publications.
- Siravo, Francesco. 1996. *Zanzibar: A Plan for the Historic Stone Town*. Geneva: The Aga Khan Trust for Culture.
- Siravo, Francesco. 1997. Zanzibar: A plan for the historic Stone Town, *Environmental Design* 1-2: 208-19. (See also: <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/36191725/zanzibar-stone-town-projects-aga-khan-development-network>.)
- Sturtz, J. 1894. *Land und Leute in Deutsch-Ost-Afrika : Erinnerungen aus der ersten Zeit des Aufstandes und der Blokade : in 83 photographischen Original-Aufnahmen*. Berlin: Königliche hofbuchhandlung von Ernst Siegfried Mittler.
- Van Oers, Ron. 2013. Swahili Historic Urban Landscapes: Applying HUL in East Africa, in *Swahili Historic Urban Landscapes: Report on the Historic Urban Landscape Workshops and Field Activities on the Swahili Coast in East Africa 2011-2012*. Paris: UNESCO: 6-18.
- Yahya, Saad Saleh. 1995. Zanzibar Stone Town: Fossil or foetus?, in *The History and Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town*, edited by Abdul Sheriff. London: James Currey: 116-20.

Yolanda van der Vyver holds a PhD in Architecture from the University of the Free State, a master's degree in architecture and an honours degree in French from the University of Pretoria. She has been a practicing architect since 1996, is a founding member of Y and K Architects and completed the Fellowship Exam of the Association of Arbitrators. She spent a semester at the Centre for the Study of Law and Religion as the Emory University–Halle Institute Fulbright South Africa Distinguished Chair. Her interests include interdisciplinary study and the convergence of law, religion, and architecture.

Parisian cityscapes during the nineteenth century

Estelle Alma Maré

Independent researcher

E-mail: mare_estelle@fastmail.fm

After the French Revolution of the eighteenth century Paris became the site of the Enlightenment. During the nineteenth century the city prospered, enhanced by radical urban planning, and monumental works of engineering and architecture, while literature, the visual arts and photography also flourished. On the negative side France was involved with a war with Prussia whose soldiers marched through Paris in 1870, a national trauma which gave rise to the Communard revolt. However, during the *belle Époque*, from 1871 to 1914, Paris achieved prominence as the cultural capital of Europe. Its boulevards, buildings and engineering structures became the themes of cityscapes by photographers, Impressionists, Neo- and Post-Impressionist painters, draughtsmen and lithographers. By viewing a selection of such representations the aim of this research is to evoke a virtual experience of Paris and its urban life – *la vie moderne* – which contemporary fashionable *flâneurs* explored in reality.

Keywords: nineteenth-century Paris, cityscapes, Impressionism and Neo- and Post-Impressionism, photography

Paysages urbains, le Paris du XIXe siècle

Après la Révolution française du XVIIIe siècle, Paris est devenu le théâtre des Lumières. Au cours du XIXe siècle, la ville a prospéré grâce à une planification urbaine radicale et à des œuvres monumentales d'ingénierie et d'architecture, tandis que la littérature, les arts visuels et la photographie se sont également épanouis. Les événements néfastes ne manquèrent pas : la France fut impliquée dans une guerre avec la Prusse, dont les soldats défilèrent dans Paris en 1870, un traumatisme national qui donna lieu à la révolte des Communards. Cependant, à la Belle Époque, de 1871 à 1914, Paris s'imposa comme la capitale culturelle de l'Europe. Ses boulevards, ses bâtiments et ses ouvrages d'art devinrent les thèmes des paysages urbains des photographes, des impressionnistes, des peintres néo- et post-impressionnistes, des dessinateurs et des lithographes. En examinant une sélection de ces représentations, l'objectif de cette étude est d'évoquer une expérience virtuelle de Paris et de sa vie urbaine - la vie moderne - que les flâneurs contemporains à la mode ont explorée dans la réalité.

Mots-clés : Paris XIXe siècle, paysages urbains, impressionnisme, néo- et post-impressionnisme, photographie

**“Just as a city cannot be seen until it is painted, a city cannot be read until it is written”
(Christopher Prendergast).¹**

Paris is an ancient site that has been inhabited since prehistoric times. Its name derives from the Parigii tribe that settled on the banks of the Seine between 250 and 225 BCE; they were routed by the Romans but eventually returned after the collapse of the Roman Empire. Many invaders followed and for most of its existence Paris was a walled-in strategic settlement. Geographically it was a round city shaped by the flow of the Seine which formed the *Île de la Cité*, an island in the river's center, where the twelfth century cathedral, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, *Sainte-Chapelle*, King Louis IX's royal chapel (consecrated in 1248), as well as the city's first hospital, the *Hôtel-Dieu*, were built. In a miniature painting by the Limburg Brothers (late fourteenth to early fifteenth century) part of the built-up *Île de la Cité* is depicted (figure 1). In the foreground of this scenic vista harvesters are at work under a blue sky in a green field during the month of June; in the background the Seine, the city wall, *Le Palais de la Cité* and the *Sainte-Chapelle* are depicted in meticulous detail.



Figure 1
Limburg Brothers, illustration of the month of June from *Très riches heures du Duc de Berry*, 1412-16, illumination on vellum, Musée Condé, Chantilly (retrieved from the public domain https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Les_Très_Riches_Heures_du_de_duc_de_berry_juin.jpg).

Paris and its rulers

As a vibrant city Paris changed continually. With the increase of the urban population the enclosing city wall was gradually demolished and old structures replaced: for example the *Porte de Saint Denis* was replaced by a triumphal arch, built after 1672 in honour of King Louis XIV (1638-1715). This structure in its suburban setting was depicted by David Cox (1783-1859), who visited France in 1829. In the foreground of Cox's *Porte de St. Denis* a dense group of street vendors had set up stalls in an area occupied by impoverished citizens, as can be inferred from the donkey drawing a cart and the rather dilapidated buildings in the background (figure 2).



Figure 2
David Cox, *Porte de Saint Denis*, Paris, 1829, watercolour over pencil on wave paper, 36.5 x 25.8 cm, venue unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.wikiart.org/en/david-cox/porte-st-denis-paris-1829>).

The French Revolution (1789-93) had a great impact on the city's political and cultural development. The First Empire lasted until 1815 when the French army under Emperor Napoléon Bonaparte I (1769-1821) was defeated at Waterloo. Napoléon who was devoted to Paris, left his imprint on the city,² most notably by commissioning the construction of *L'Arc de Triomphe* in 1806 after the French victory at Austerlitz. Completed in 1835 the arch became the symbol of French military glory and an important landmark in the city (figure 3).



Figure 3
Unknown photographer, *L'Arc de Triomphe et la barrière de l'étoile*, 1850
(retrieved from the public domain <https://1.pb.blogspot.com/-iru411GJ7Y>).

L'Arc de Triomphe with twelve radiating avenues is the eastern focal point of a magnificent urban axis. The east:west avenue links the *Place de l'Étoile* with *L'Avenue des Champs Elysées*, the *Place de la Concorde*, *Le Palais des Tuileries* and *Le Palais de Louvre* (later *Musée du Louvre*). This vista attracted sightseers and painters, such as Félix Benoist (1818-96) who portrayed it from the top of *L'Arc de Triomphe* in 1850 (figure 4). The picturesque depiction shows *L'Avenue des Champs Elysées* in perspective, linking distant landmarks in the low-rise city with green avenues and woodland areas.



Figure 4

Félix Benoist, *L'Avenue des Champs Élysées vue du haut de L'Arc de Triomphe*, 1850, lithograph, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Av_des_Ch_Elysées_au_XIXe_Felix_Benoist.jpg&oldid=248003440).

Six decades after the French Revolution Paris experienced a bloody uprising during which Parisian workers fought street battles against soldiers, one of which took place on 25 June 1848 at a barricade across *Rue Soufflot*. This violent event raised smoke and dust in a street leading to the *Panthéon*, as depicted by Émile Jean-Horace Vernet (1789-1863) in 1848-9 (figure 5). The revolt was suppressed by the Ministry of War and the *Panthéon* survived intact.



Figure 5

Horace Vernet, *Barricade dans la rue de Soufflot, à 25 juin 1848*, 1848-49, 657 x 513 cm, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin (retrieved from the public domain https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Horace_Vernet-Barricade_rue_Soufflot.jpg).

After the worker's uprising the French state was variously governed until Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte (1808-73), a cousin of Emperor Napoléon I, was inaugurated as the first as democratically elected president of the Second French Republic. Its constitution was festively proclaimed on 12 November 1848, an event depicted by Jean-Jacques Champin (1796-1860). The panoramic vista with a perspective effect shows a view of Paris from *La Place de la Concorde* in which *Le Palais des Tuileries*, the adjacent Seine with bridges, the dome of the *Panthéon*, and the towers of *Notre-Dame de Paris* on the horizon can be identified (figure 6).



Figure 6

Jean-Jacques Champin, *Fête de la Constitution sur la Place de la Concorde*, 1848-49, data unknown, Musée Carnavalet, Paris (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.art-prints-on-demand.com/a/champin-jean-jacques/proclamation-of-the-secon.html>).

In 1853 Louis-Napoléon proclaimed the Second Empire, designating himself Emperor Napoléon III. His reign lasted until 1870.³ In response to political ideals and technological developments Napoléon III embarked on a policy of transforming the stagnant capital city and embellishing it with great new buildings.⁴ His appointed urban planner, Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann (1809-91) who was known as the Prefect of the Seine, applied radical measures to modernise the constricted city. He demolished crowded slum-like neighbourhoods, such as seen in a photograph of *Rue St. Nicolas Chardonnet*, a medieval street near the Panthéon (figure 7).



Figure 7

Photograph by Charles Marville, *Rue St. Nicolas du Chardonnet*, c. 1853, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://smarthistory.org/haussmann-the-demolisher-and-the-creation-of-modern-paris>).

The ruthlessly demolished areas make way for straight, up to seventy metres wide avenues, suitable for cannon fire in case of another uprising by the populace (a map of 1870 and a diagram show the new street layout; figures 8 and 9). Public works comprised the installation of sewers, the construction of aqueducts and the provision of civic amenities such as street lighting. The living standards of citizens and the aesthetic development of the city were enhanced by the erection of uniform, up to six stories high apartment blocks along the boulevards. These buildings, referred to as Haussmannian,⁵ featured stone facades, balconies and Mansard roofs (clearly shown on the photograph of the Panthéon from *Rue Soufflot*; see figure 38).⁶ Moreover, the city was beautified by the layout of parks and city squares with fountains.



Figure 8

Map of Paris after 1870 (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2ccid=1HHnn2gt&id=CEBA6cB63DEC81512246>).



Figure 9

Map showing the boulevards that Haussmann created (retrieved from the public domain <https://fr.maps-paris.com/cartes-de-paris-attractions/haussmann-paris-carte>).

The *Musée du Louvre (Nouveau Louvre)* was Napoléon III's most ambitious building programme. A photograph by Édouard-Denis Baldus (1813-89) of its east courtyard and façades was taken from an upper floor of the *Le Palais des Tuileries* in c. 1857 (figure 10). This magnificent edifice attracted “the admiration of the entire world” (Gardner 2021: 137-8); “half a mile long from end to end, it was at the time the largest on the planet. It marked the exact urban centre of Paris and in the nineteenth-century the city was conceived as “figuratively the centre of the world” (Gardner 2020: xv).



Figure 10
Édouard-Denis Baldus, photograph of the *Nouveau Louvre*, c. 1857, albumen print, 7” x 11”, location unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.flickr.com/photos/photohistorytimeline/14312893922>).

The 1867 International Exhibition was held in Paris. As the equivalent of a world's fair it was a great opportunity to celebrate France's industrial prowess and for the occasion an extensive circular exhibition hall, situated at a bend of the Seine, was constructed (figure 11). This showpiece was an engineering feat constructed of cast-iron, for all visitors to admire.



Figure 11
Unknown photographer, *View of the Paris International Exhibition, 1867*, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://za.pinterest.com/pin/515802963556909531>).

The Exhibition created so much local excitement that Édouard Manet (1832-83) was inspired to paint a view of the terrain (figure 12). Manet's painting of the subject, his first Parisian cityscape, is signed but was probably left unfinished. Notwithstanding the title – *View of the Paris International Exhibition* – the view is somewhat imaginary: the Seine has disappeared and various foreground details – the gardener who rakes a circular garden, the woman on horseback, the *flâneur* with his dog and other personages – capture the viewer's attention. The exhibition arrangement in the middle ground displays only the steel column with a lamp at the top as a clearly recognizable element of the exhibition. However, a most intriguing detail is the famous balloon in the upper right hand corner in which his friend Nadar launched a camera four years earlier (see the discussion under "Cityscapes photographed and painted").⁷ From the sky a vista of the exhibition area could be photographed, as in figure 11, which the earthbound artist could not do.



Figure 12

Édouard Manet, *View of the Paris International Exhibition*, 1867, oil on canvas, 60 x 32.7 cm, National Gallery of Norway, Oslo (retrieved from the public domain spenceralley.blogspot.com/2017/05/oil-paintings-by-edouard-manet-html).

The Second Empire collapsed in 1870, the year Paris was besieged during the Franco-Prussian War. Kaiser Wilhelm I and his victorious Prussian soldiers entered Paris on 1 March 1871 and paraded past *L'Arc de Triomphe* down *L'Avenue des Champs Élysées*. As portrayed by an unknown artist, anxious citizens to the right of the picture express their distress about the indignity inflicted on their capital city which has always been the symbol of national pride and aspiration (figure 13).



Figure 13

Unknown artist, *Kaiser Wilhelm I and his Troops Parade down L'Avenue des Champs Élysées in Paris on 1 March 1871*, chalk lithograph, further data unknown (retrieved from the public domain https://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/print_document.cfm?document_id=1375).

After the collapse of the Second Empire the radical Commune National Guard, which had defended Paris during the war, seized power on 18 March 1871 and refused to acknowledge the Third Republic. One incident during the reign of the Paris Commune, recorded by a photographer on 18 March 1871, shows a barricaded street manned by Communards (figure 14). However, the greatest damage done by the Commune was the looting and burning of the *Le Palais des Tuileries* on 23 to 24 May 1871 (figure 15; see also the depiction by Champin, figure 6). The reason why this palace, which had been linked with the *Musée du Louvre*, was a target for the revolutionaries is understandable: by the eighteenth century it had become the main Parisian residence of the French monarchy; thereafter it was occupied by Napoléon Bonaparte, then by the last three kings of France, and lately by Napoléon III.⁸ However, on 28 May 1871, after two months of turmoil the French army violently suppressed the revolt.



Figure 14

Unknown photographer, a street barricaded by Communards, 18 March 1871, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain https://www.reddit.com/r/AbolishTheMonarchy/comments/m8iv38/a_barricade_thrown_up_by_national_guardians_at_the_paris_commune_on_18_March_1871).



Figure 15

Unknown photographer, *burning of Le Palais des Tuileries by the Paris Commune, 23-24 May 1871* (retrieved from the public domain https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuileries_Palace#/media/Files:Commune_de_Paris_24_mzi_incendie_des_Tuileries.jpg).

La belle Époque, 1871 to 1914

The terror of the French Revolution gave birth to the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, spearheaded by prominent French thinkers.⁹ Consequently, the early nineteenth-century Paris earned its sobriquet “the City of Light” (*la Ville Lumière*) in recognition of its importance as a centre for education and intellectual pursuits. The modernisation of its urban amenities during the Second Empire enhanced its cultural development, but unfortunately Haussmann’s grand scheme terminated in 1870 when the Prefect of the Seine was dismissed, partly because of residents’ resistance to further demolitions of the historical Paris, but mainly because the Prussian War brought Louis-Napoléon’s reign to a close.

The Third Republic, from 1871 to 1914, was a period of peace known as *La belle Époque*, during which Paris achieved renown as the most modern European metropolis and a centre of culture.¹⁰ Indeed, Paris attained the status of cultural capital of Europe, as designated by Walter Benjamin (1892-1940).¹¹

On a material level scientific inventions – of which photography requires special mention – flourished. The growth of industrialisation activated technological developments in architectural and engineering constructions. Commerce expanded and capitalism inevitably gave rise to divisions in society in which the most privileged class belonged to the *haute bourgeoisie*.

After 1871 all Parisians could move freely. The spacious avenues and pedestrian areas enhanced the mobility of amblers and horse-drawn carriages. Moreover, citizens could enjoy leisure time in public spaces: squares with fountains, gardens, arcades, as well as in the characteristic Parisian pavement cafes. Landmarks such as the river, historic buildings, monuments, spacious squares, bridges and railway stations enhanced the scenic and functional quality of the city. These civic amenities were not only for the enjoyment of the well-to-do *bourgeoisie* who were privileged with leisure time, but also benefited traders along the quays of the Seine and workers on construction sites; unfortunately labourers secluded in outlying factories and women in menial jobs were disadvantaged.

Charles Baudelaire (1821-67) recorded his often pessimistic insights as a *flâneur* who delved into the effect of a transforming city on the citizen’s psyche.¹² From 1859 to 1863, when he wrote his last poems, he experienced Paris in the midst of the demolition of the city’s old familiar streets, such as *Rue St. Nicolas Chardonnet* (see figure 7). Born in the “city of misery”,¹³ which Haussmann had demolished, Baudelaire in later life experienced nostalgia for the ruined former city with which he was familiar, and wrote in *Le Cygne* (The Swan):

Le vieux Paris n’est plus (la forme d’une ville
Change plus vite, hélas! que le Coeur d’un mortel).¹⁴

Baudelaire’s lament was not shared by a new generation of painters. Attracted by the city’s urban allure they portrayed its life and cityscapes in various painterly styles. Also photographers recorded the transformed urban environment and its citizens.

Cityscapes photographed and painted

The invention of photography cannot be pinned to a single date as it developed over several centuries since the invention of the *camera obscura* in antiquity.¹⁵ Etymologically “photography” derives from the Greek words *photos* (light) and *graphos* (writing, delineation or painting),¹⁶ which actually means “painting with light”, albeit by means of a mechanical device. Obviously the scientific-minded inventors of photography were aware of the physical fact that we see not objects but the light reflected from them. Experiments with lenses, chemistry and exposure to light eventually enabled Nicéphore Niépce (1765-1833) to fix a copy of an engraving superimposed on glass. In 1826/27 he used a camera to make a view from his workroom on a pewter plate, thus creating the first permanently fixed image from nature. As from 1829 he collaborated with Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787-1851), a painter, to improve the photographic process. The latter exploited heliography and through his discovery of a chemical process for “development (making visible) the latent (invisible) image formed upon brief exposure.”¹⁷ Daguerre revealed his process of producing accurate pictures to the French Académie in 1839.¹⁸ A daguerreotype consisted of a metal plate which was coated with a silver mercury amalgam and treated with fumes and fixatives such as sodium thiosulphate. The image was “developed” on this plate, after about one hour exposure time. Consequently, it could not capture movement and another drawback was that only one image was available on the plate to print from. Only during the 1850s when albumen was experimented with could several prints be made and the principle of the negative established.¹⁹ By means of more sophisticated cameras and wide-angle lenses the photographic process was gradually improved to record scenes, i.e. situations or events in three-dimensional space.²⁰ However, taking a photograph remained a time-consuming process; instant snapshots were only possible after 1888 when the Kodak box camera was marketed.²¹

By the mid-nineteenth century commercial photography had become popular. One photographer, Garpard-Félix Tournachon (1820-1910), known by his pseudonym “Nadar”, extensively photographed Paris. From an enormous balloon, nicknamed *Le Géant*, which was launched on 4 October 1863 from the *Champ de Mars* and watched by the populace, he was able to take the first aerial photographs of Paris (see figure 12).²² Following Nadar other photographers also demonstrated “how quickly and powerfully this new medium was adapted to showcase and interpret the hidden treasures or the urban environment”.²³

Photographers and painters explored the urban environment in diverse ways. The latter probably realised that it was senseless to compete with the camera which was capable of instantly recording extensive details of a scene. However, during the second half of the nineteenth century an interchange between photography and avant-garde painting is discernable, tentatively explored in the following survey of late nineteenth-century Parisian cityscapes.

Flâneurs and flâneuses

The urban *haute bourgeoisie*, the most leisurely citizens who dressed well, the men in frock coats and top hats and the women in ankle length frilled dresses, often promenaded along the hundred-and-thirty-seven kilometres of avenues that Haussmann designed to improve the accessibility of all areas of the city. They were seen crossing bridges, strolling beside quays, in the extensive squares, parks, and covered shopping arcades where they were safe from the noisy traffic of coaches. Various artists depicted the *flâneurs* and *flâneuses* who were, unlike the pessimistic Baudelaire, connoisseurs of the modernised cityscape and *la vie moderne*.

In *Elegants Wandering in Paris* (late 1870s), Louis Abel-Truchet (1857-1918) depicted an elegant Parisian gentleman in the foreground as if wandering out of the frame, watching an unaccompanied society lady with a lapdog strolling behind him. The exact centre of the painting is demarcated by a conversing couple and further back pedestrians loiter or go about their business in the receding boulevard (figure 16). This asymmetrical arrangement is without clear focal and vanishing points which characterise traditional classicising compositions. Its innovative features such as the cut-off foreground man, the strong dark:light contrasts between the figures and their surroundings in the midday sun are reminiscent of the effects produced by photography in its early days. It has the “slice of life” effect that exemplifies photographic cityscapes in the transformed Paris with its broad avenues where a photographer had no control of who walks into the vision of the lens or who recedes. Abel-Truchet obviously emulated this effect by depicting a moment in time while life is happening. However, unlike the photographer he purposely presented the foreground figure cutting through the frame to advance in the direction of the viewer, a device that involves the latter as a participant.



Figure 16

Louis Abel-Truchet, *Elegants Wandering in Paris*, c. late 1870s, oil on canvas, 46 x 38 cm, auctioned at Sotheby's in 2018 (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.wikiart.org/en/louis-abel-truchet/elegants-wandering-in-paris>).

In 1879 Hilaire-Germain-Edgar Degas (1834-1917) depicted the elegant Viscount Lepic and his daughters crossing *La Place de la Concorde* (figure 17). The gentleman, his daughters and a dog in the foreground, as well as the man to the left observing them, are all cut off by the frame and face in different directions. Except for a man on horseback approaching from the far left the middle ground is left vacant, but depicted with strong gestural marks that reflect light against which the portraits of the foreground figures are modelled three-dimensionally. In contrast, scant attention is paid to the physical place that is bordered in the background by a distant wall, beyond which trees of *Le Jardin des Tuileries* are cut off above the Viscount's top hat by the edge of the composition. Like in Abel-Truchet's composition this asymmetrical arrangement, without clear focal or vanishing points, has the "slice of life" effect of a short distance photographic shot.²⁴ Even the portraits are presented as events in time.



Figure 17

Hilaire-Germain-Edgar Degas, *Viscount Lepic and his Daughters Crossing La Place de la Concorde*, 1879, oil on canvas, 78.4 cm x 117.5 cm, Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia (retrieved from the public domain [https://en/Wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Place_de_la_Concorde_\(Degas\)&oldid=1038849704](https://en/Wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Place_de_la_Concorde_(Degas)&oldid=1038849704)).

In the footsteps of *flâneurs*

According to Michel de Certeau (1984) it is specifically walking people who bring a city to life. As the author of this article I am acting as a virtual *flâneur* who explores the cityscapes of Paris during the Third Republic (1871-1914). By viewing paintings and photographs of this period I hope to establish what the city that Baudelaire did not live to see actually looked like. Not only had Paris changed, but also the way in which its cityscapes were recorded by painters and photographers. I follow in their footsteps.

La Place de la Concorde, where Viscount Lepic and his daughters were encountered, is a convenient starting place for my virtual itinerary. This vast open space, situated on the axis of the city, was enhanced by the centrally placed Luxor obelisk which was erected in 1833 and later by symmetrically placed fountains (figure 18).²⁵ Figure 19 shows the vastness of the space and since it shows the Eiffel Tower it probably dates from after 1889.

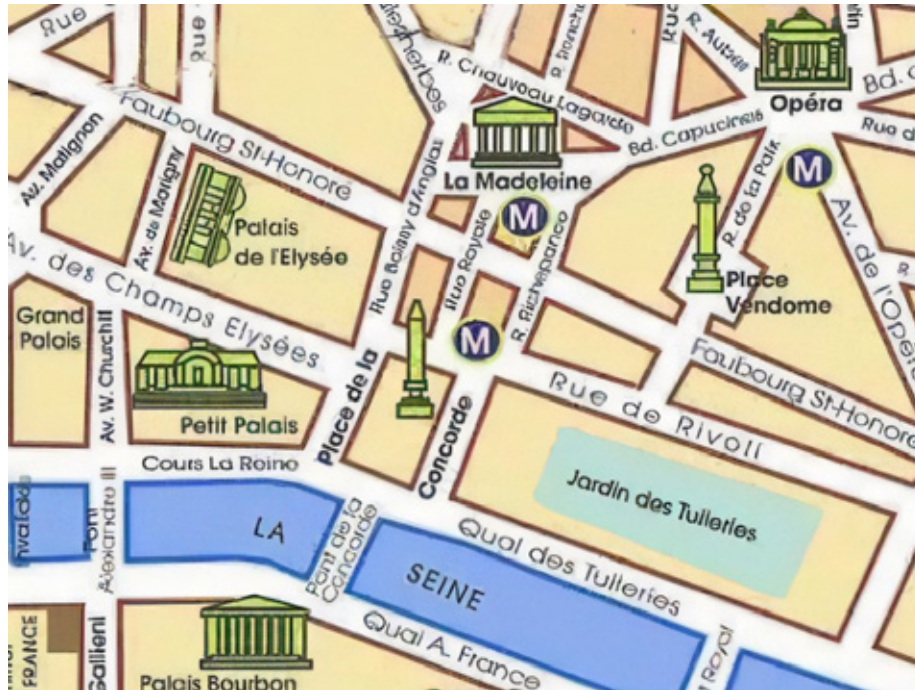


Figure 18

Plan of *La Place de la Concorde*, 1900 (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detail/V2&ccid=a3T3ctHH&id=D5FCEAA8B>).



Figure 19

Unknown photographer, *La Place de la Concorde*, c. 1890, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://monovisions.com/paris-france-late-19th-century-vintage-bw-photos>).

The bustle on the square, showing a full view of the symmetrical blocks of official buildings to the north on either side of *Rue Royale* was recorded by an unknown photographer in the late nineteenth century (figure 20). The print was probably hand-coloured to make it look more like a painting. As a document it also affords an enticing glimpse of *L'église de la Madeleine* at the end of *Rue Royale*, built as a temple in honour of Napoléon Bonaparte's various victories, but later renamed.²⁶



Figure 20

Unknown photographer, *La Place de la Concorde*, late nineteenth-century, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain paris1900.lartnouveau.com/paris08/concorde/cpa/poeconcc2.htm).

Joaquín Pallarés Allustante (1853-1935), a Spanish painter who studied in Paris, captured the atmosphere of a wet morning at *La Place de la Concorde* (figure 21). The painting shows two *flâneuses* in the foreground, further back women with children and a flower seller at the magnificent fountain who are reflected on the colourful surface. An open carriage drawn by two horses races down *Rue Royale*. The background is filled by a full view of one official building and a glimpse of its counterpart to the left, so placed to afford a full view of façade of *L'église de la Madeleine*. More interesting is the effect of the open space in the immediate foreground of the composition; its attempt at virtuoso brushwork draws attention to the significance Impressionists assigned to reflected light and colour contrasts.



Figure 21

Joaquín Pallarés Allustante, *La Place de la Concorde*, c. 1872, oil on canvas, 27.6 x 40 cm (retrieved from the public domain https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Joaquín_Pallarés_Allustante_Place_de_la_concorde.jpg).

From *La Place de la Concorde*, *L'Arc de Triomphe* can be reached via *L'Avenue des Champs Élysées* – the most prominent avenue in Paris. A photograph of 1890 shows this route in which symmetrical double lanes of trees converge in the distance at *L'Arc de Triomphe* (figure 22).



Figure 22

Unknown photographer, *L'Avenue des Champs Élysées* and *L'Arc de Triomphe* viewed from *La Place de la Concorde*, 1890, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Champs-Élysées&oldid=1084801363>).

L'Arc de Triomphe remained the symbol of French military glory, even though profaned by the Prussians. It gained in urban significance when twelve of Haussmann's grand avenues converged there in a star-like formation, referred to as *l'étoile* (the star), of which *L'Avenue des Champs Élysées* is the most important link in the urban axis. A photographic view of 1960 (figure 23) from the top of the arch focuses on the full length of this almost two kilometres long and seventy metres wide avenue which was transformed by Haussmann after Benoist had painted his picture in 1850 (see figure 4). In the photograph a perspective effect is evident, with *Le Palais des Tuileries* at the far end in a focal position. Details of the built up city on either side of the avenue can be discerned as well as monumental buildings in the distance, especially the *Panthéon* and the cathedral of *Notre-Dame de Paris*. The quality of the photograph is also evident in the rendering of pedestrians and vehicles in the avenue.



Figure 23

Unknown photographer, *L'Avenue des Champs Élysées*, after 1860, data unknown, (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detail/V2&ccid=Kc8VNSvr&id>).

I return from a climb to the top of *L'Arc de Triomphe* to *La Place de la Concorde*. From there it is a short distance to *La Gare Saint-Lazare* which opened in 1837. This hub of nineteenth-century transport was a modern engineering construction with high cast-iron roof trusses covered with glass. To provide pedestrian access to the newly expanded railway station an impressive cast-iron bridge, *Le Pont de l'Europe*, was built between 1865 and 1868 – as planned by Haussmann. As feats of modern technology and engineering the station and the bridge became attractions for *flâneurs*, as well as for painters interested in the as yet unexplored effect of light on non-natural objects.

Unlike Baudelaire, the painter Gustave Caillebotte (1848-94) did not mourn the loss of the old city, but explored its new public venues, such as *Le Pont de l'Europe*. In a painting dated 1876, a stylishly dressed couple in conversation crosses the bridge in the direction of *La Gare Saint-Lazare* (figure 24). Unlike the *flâneurs* that Abel-Truchet and Degas depicted (see figures 16 and 17), they are not in the foreground, but seem dwarfed beside the formidable trusses of the bridge to the right which fills a large portion of the painting surface. The emphasis on the receding trusses evokes a perspective composition with the vanishing point in the man's top hat even though the street beyond the bridge continues and vanishes in the background partly obliterated by the rising steam from the engine below.²⁷ The perspective effect is somewhat traditional, but other effects are innovative: the massive copper-coloured truss to the right which casts a bluish shadow is cut-off by the frame and the foreground pavement surface is empty except for the stray dog shown from behind and the backturned man in the right foreground who looks at the trains passing below – which has the effect of a loosely integrated composition that suggests a passing scene.



Figure 24

Gustave Caillebotte, *Le Pont de l'Europe*, 1876, oil on canvas, 125 x 181 cm, Association des Amis du Petit Palais, Geneva (retrieved from the public domain https://www.nga.gov/features/slideshows/gustave-caillebotte.html#slide_2).

In contrast to Caillebotte's somewhat traditional realism, Claude Monet (1840-1926) developed an innovative nineteenth-century pictorial style: Impressionism, practised since the 1860s by a loosely organised group of artists who broke with the types and genres of tradition. They did not follow rules and therefore Impressionism is hard to epitomise, but can be characterised as follows: "Hard outlines, precise detail, high finish were all to be avoided as having no place in an image so fleetingly perceived yet so realistically seen. The Impressionist eye was both descriptive and non-literal..."²⁸ Generally speaking, Impressionism was a response to what could be seen directly in evanescent scenes of the everyday life-world of people and familiar surroundings that are subject to the transient effect of light during various times of the day and the seasons. To capture such scenes in nature and in the city artists painted in *plein air*, if possible.

Monet painted a series of twelve pictures of *La Gare Saint-Lazare* in varied atmospheric conditions and from a variety of positions. These depictions celebrate the technological advantage of the railways in the modern city, but above all, also his skill as an impressionist. The first depiction, dated 1877, shows the station's steel structure decked with glass panels filled with the evaporating blue steam of an approaching locomotive (figure 25). This effect flattens the picture and diffuses foreground and background details which are fleetingly perceived, yet recognisably real.



Figure 25

Claude Monet, *Arrival of the Normandy Train at La Gare Saint-Lazare*, 1877, oil on canvas, 75 x 105 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris (retrieved from the public domain [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Gare_Saint_Lazare_\(Monet_series\)&oldid=1048331381](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Gare_Saint_Lazare_(Monet_series)&oldid=1048331381)).

A year later, in 1877, Monet painted *Le Pont de l'Europe, La Gare Saint-Lazare*. It shows a ground-level view of the bridge over which the *flâneurs* in Caillebotte's depiction strolled. Trains arriving at or departing from the station passed under this bridge and filled the atmosphere with steam and smoke (figure 26). However, in Monet's depiction the effect of the smoke and steam rising in amorphous white and bluish clouds caused by the steaming locomotive to the left, does not obliterate the structure of the bridge or the Haussmannian apartment buildings in the background. Monet not only experimented with a new way of painting, but in a sense he celebrated contemporary technology, as was displayed at the first International Exhibition of the previous year (see figure 11) when the First International Exhibition was held in Paris (see figure 11). Moreover, Monet had ample reason to celebrate the recovery of Paris after the Prussian War.

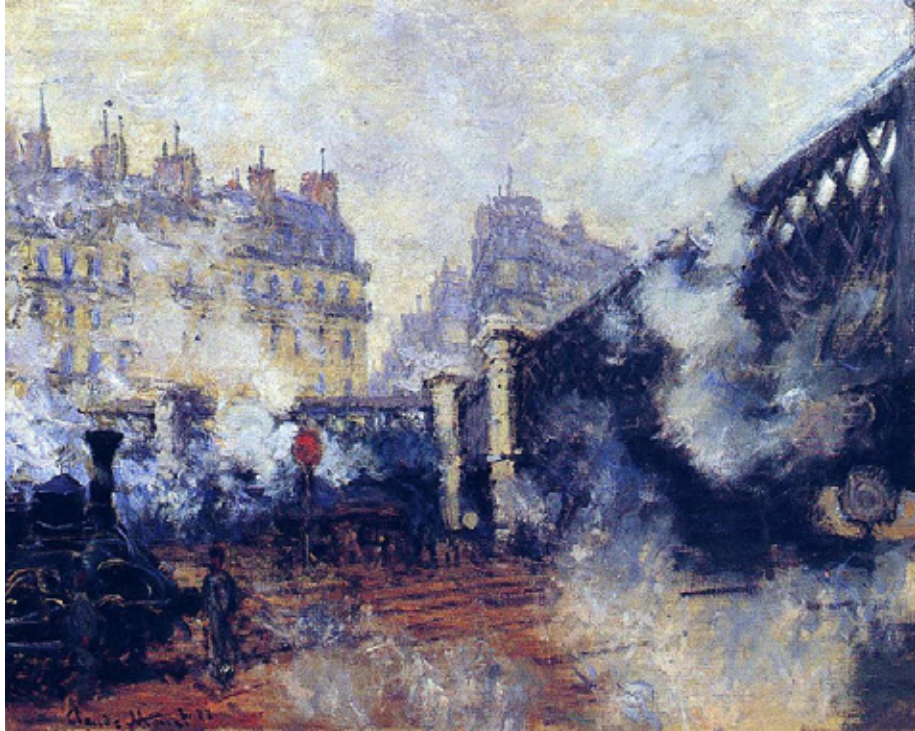


Figure 26

Claude Monet, *Le Pont de l'Europe, la Gare Saint-Lazare*, 1877, oil on canvas, 64 x 81 cm, Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris (retrieved from the public domain <https://nl.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?=&oldid=55769898>).

For the next International Exhibition of 1889 a cast-iron tower as a gateway to the venue was commissioned from Gustave Eiffel (1832-1923). Built from 1887 to 1889 it became an iconic Parisian landmark, referred to as *La Tour Eiffel* (figure 27).



Figure 27

Unknown photographer, *La Tour Eiffel*, 1890s, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://za.pinterest.com/pin/357825132873132873182740>).

Eiffel's tower was variously photographed in the nineteenth century, but like the circular structure of the Paris International Exhibition it was not an attractive theme for Impressionist painters. Its geometrical precision turns it into a static object and the blandness of the cast-iron construction does not vary during the day or the seasons. However, two years before his death Georges Seurat (1859-91) rendered the tower's harsh structure in bright colourful dots and blended it into a harmonising setting (figure 28). This reinvention of the tower was a pictorial feat done in the Neo-Impressionist pointillist style which was inspired by the law of simultaneous contrast of colours, referred to as chromoluminarism, as developed by Michel-Eugène Chevreul (1786-1889).²⁹



14. THE EIFFEL TOWER. 1889. New York, Mr. and Mrs. Germain Seligman

Figure 28

Georges Seurat, *La Tour Eiffel*, 1889, oil on wood, 24 x 15 cm, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.wikiart.org/en/georges-seurat/the-eiffel-tower-1889>).

On *L'Isle de la Cité* the most illustrious Parisian landmark is the twelfth century cathedral of *Notre-Dame de Paris*, visited by all tourists. In the foreground of a late nineteenth century photograph sightseers on the decks of three-horsed coaches with upper decks drive past the stately building (figure 29).



Figure 29

Photographer unknown, tinted view of *Notre-Dame de Paris*, late nineteenth century, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.vintag.es/2017/05/30-breathtaking-colour-pictures-of-paris>).

Notre-Dame de Paris was also photographed by Eduard Baldus-Rean (1813-89), whose print and a painting by Armand Guillaumin (1841-1927), a minor Impressionist, were brought together in an exhibition at the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid from October 2019 to January 2020, with the theme “How did photography influence the Impressionists?”.³⁰ However, it is doubtful if the exhibition proved such influence. Comparing the photograph and painting (figures 30 and 31) only the cathedral features prominently; the photograph is focussed on the structure, while the painter limits its significance in the background in favour of the foreground scene of the river and its quayside.



Figures 30 and 31

Left: Armand Guillaumin, *Bridge of the Archbishop and the Apse of Notre-Dame de Paris*, c. 1880, oil on canvas, 54 x 65 cm, Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.widewallls.ch/magazine/impressionists-photography-museo-thyssen-bornemisza>).

Right: Eduard Baldus-Rean, photograph of *Notre-Dame de Paris*, c. 1660-70, albumin print, 22.9 x 28 cm, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.widewallls.ch/magazine/impressionists-photography-museo-thyssen-bornemisza>).

Exploring Parisian sights on both sides of the banks of the Seine one has to cross some of the 137 bridges that spans the river. Parisian bridges were a favourite topic for photographers, for example the view of *Le Pont de Notre-Dame* which focuses on the structure of the foreground bridge, showing another bridge beyond, and unidentifiable buildings in the foreground and in the distance to the right (figure 32). Clearly, the photographer could select a theme and focus on the foreground, but could not rearrange the composition as painters of Parisian cityscapes were wont to do.

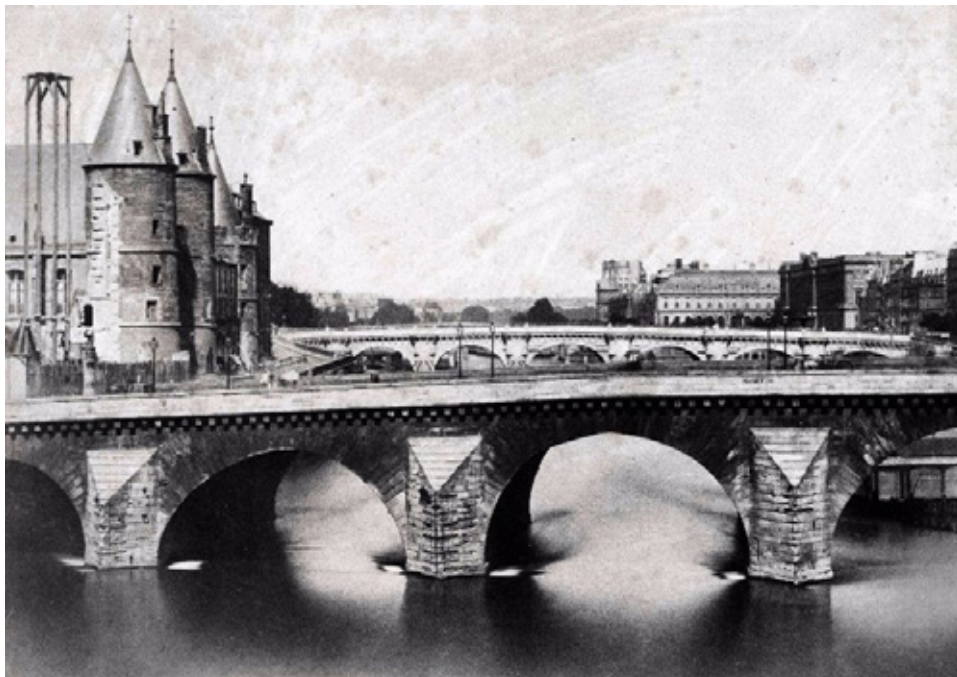


Figure 32

Unknown photographer, *Le Pont de Notre-Dame*, date unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://4.bp.blogspot.com/-UGlegrLV10/WdsyEFhcNKI>).

The photograph (figure 32) of *Le Pont de Notre-Dame* is a document with a clear focus. When the painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), a pioneer of Impressionism, depicted *Le Pont Neuf* in 1872 his aim was quite different (figure 33). He portrayed the venerable structure – the oldest surviving crossing that connects the left and right banks of the Seine – as a bustling thoroughfare and not as an engineering construction. From a position adjacent to the French flag to the right, the angle of vision is oblique, thus eliminating a perspective view of the roadway which is cluttered with the random movement of pedestrians and coaches. All objects in this sunny afternoon scene under a blue sky that reflects its light below are clearly depicted: the bridge structure to the right, the Haussmannian buildings in the background, the pedestrians and coaches. Obviously, this is a fleeting scene, not meant to be recorded, but to invite the viewer's eye to roam, not to focus.



Figure 33

Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Le Pont Neuf*, 1872, oil on canvas, 75.30 x 93 mm, National Gallery of Art, Washington (retrieved from the public domain https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Auguste_Renoir_-_Pont_Neuf,_Paris_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg&oldid=617512669).

One of the most elegant bridges, *Le Pont de Carrousel à Paris*, is 168 metres long and 33 metres wide. It gives access from the south to the *Musée du Louvre* which figures prominently in the background of a photograph of c. 1900 (figure 34). This photograph affords the researcher an opportunity to compare it with the painting in figure 35 with a similar theme.

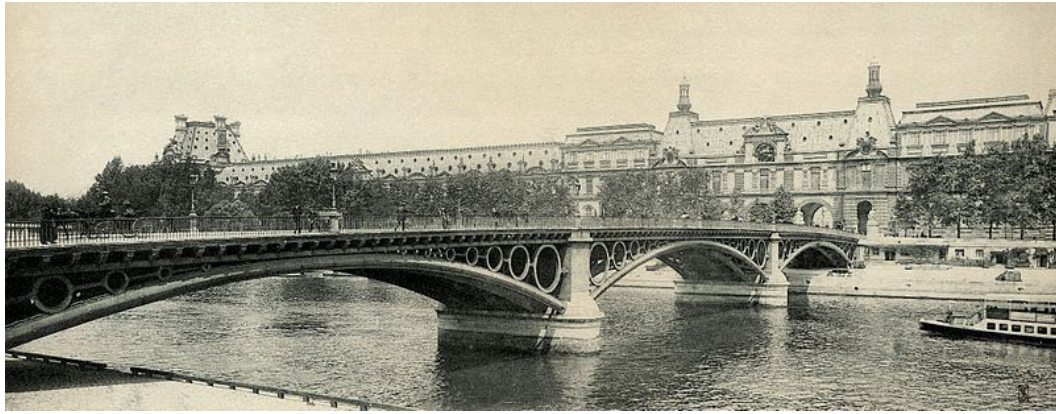


Figure 34

Unknown photographer, view of *Le Pont du Carrousel*, c. 1900, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain www.noblesseetroyantes.com/le-pont-du-carrousel-a-paris).

Vincent van Gogh (1853-90) recognised the scenic quality of *Le Pont du Carrousel* and in 1886 painted it with the *Musée du Louvre* in the background (figure 35). This *pleine air* painting is from a position further back on the quay than the position occupied by the photographer in figure 34. Details of the bustle of the quay form the foreground to only two full arches of the bridge, as if seen directly from the front. The imposing *Musée du Louvre* features in the background, depicted with the distances between the towers and the roof foreshortened. Moreover, the building is painted as if parallel with the painterly surface, but in reality – judging from the photograph above – it is situated at an angle from the painter's position.



Figure 35

Vincent van Gogh, *Le Pont du Carrousel and the Musée du Louvre*, 1886, oil on canvas, 31 x 44 cm, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen (https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Pont_du_Carrousel_and_the_Louvre,_by_Vincent_Van_Gogh,_1886_-_Ny_Carlsberg_Glyptotek_-_Copenhagen_-_DSC09424.JPG&oldid=618846420).

The main Parisian vistas are along various boulevards documented by photographers and depicted by various painters. First among these was Daguerre who in 1839 documented the *Boulevard du Temple* (figure 36). Taken from a rooftop the exposure time to record the cityscape was long; consequently, the street is empty of moving pedestrians, but a static figure in the left foreground registered on the photograph. Rebecca Jeffrey Easby remarks that in the technique Daguerre applied he recorded “far more detail than in earlier photographs. [In *View of Boulevard du Temple*] we can clearly see the panes in the windows and the sharp corners of the building in the front of the image. The objects are no longer blurry masses of light and dark, but define separate structures. In fact, the only thing missing are the people, except for the small figure of a man having his shoes shined at a sidewalk stand.”³¹ Only since the 1860s could the movement of pedestrians and coaches captured in street scenes (figure 37). By the end of the nineteenth century, however, street life could be vividly documented, as in the print of *Rue Soufflot* (named after the designer of the *Panthéon*³²). It shows the centrally placed *Panthéon*, as well as Haussmann buildings, wheeled traffic, pedestrian movement and pavement cafes (figure 38).



Figure 36

Louis Daguerre, *View of Boulevard du Temple*, 1839, data unknown
(retrieved from the public domain https://smarthistory.org/daguerre-paris-boulevard/#:~:text=%Louis%20Daguerre%2C%20Paris%20Boulevard%20or%20View%20%of,Boulevard%20shows.)).



Figure 37

Unknown photographer, summer street scene in Paris, c. 1875 (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=qWsv9x9&id=D4678C17DF52>).



Figure 38

Unknown photographer, view of the *Panthéon* from *Rue Soufflot*, late nineteenth-century, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=%2EQnQEoG&id>).

Claude Monet exhibited *Le Boulevard des Capucines*, 1873-4, at the First Impressionist Exhibition that took place during April-May 1874 in a gallery on the same boulevard in Paris (figure 39). He depicted the vast public space of the grand boulevard in which Parisian citizens participate in an anonymous parade to the right side of the composition that is diagonally demarcated by a row of trees. On the left side coaches move in the street and are also lined up along the trees. The colour scheme consists of patches of blue and yellow light, which in most areas are blended into hues by broad brushstrokes that obscure physical details. On ground level the diminutive pedestrian figures consist of dark blotches that cast no shadows; the coaches are likewise vaguely delineated but their hoods reflect the blue light. Besides the complicated effect of vivid light this composition is identifiable as a cityscape of *Le Boulevard des Capucines*, as seen obliquely from a high balcony. This observation raises the issue of the influence of photography, especially views of boulevards that Daguerre had pioneered (see figure 36).



Figure 39
Claude Monet, *Le Boulevard des Capucines*, 1873-4, oil on canvas, 80.3 x 60.3 cm, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City (retrieved from the public domain <https://impressionistarts.com/first-impressionist-exhibition>).

Caillebotte also painted in the Impressionist style. In 1878 he recorded *Rue Halévy*, a thirty metres wide avenue created by Haussmann's initiative in the centre of the city, adjacent *Le Place de l'Opera* (figure 40). The view is from a balcony on the sixth floor of a building, of which the partition to the left emphasises the artist's steep downward vision of *Rue Halévy*, some twenty metres below. Multi-level apartment buildings that flank the thoroughfare recede perspective-like in size and clarity. Likewise, pedestrians and coaches recede towards the far end of the avenue which turns to the left to link up with *Le Place de l'Opera*. The perspective effect also influences the receding effect of blue and yellow of the foreground buildings into fading hues, even as streaks of yellow in the sky imply the blazing light of the sun at noon when no shadows are cast.

There are vast differences between Monet's *Le Boulevard des Capucines* (see figure 39) and Caillebotte's *Rue Halévy*. However the influence of photography is evident in both – even if they were not actually composed from photographs.



Figure 40

Gustave Caillebotte, *Rue Halévy, vue d'un sixième étage*, 1878, oil on canvas, dimensions unknown, Museum Barbarini, Potsdam, Germany (retrieved from the public domain https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gustave_Caillebotte#/media/File:Gustave_Caillebotte_-_Rue_Halévy,_vue_d'un_sixieme_etage.jpg).

Camille Pissarro (1830-1903) painted *L'Avenue de l'Opera* in various atmospheric conditions, such as a view subtitled *Effect of Snow*, dated 1898 (figure 41). Notwithstanding the patches of white snow that settled on the city during a winter's day, the condition of light turns the boulevard and its activity into an almost homogenous abstraction of harmonic golden tones. The view is seemingly recorded from street level, but some distance away from the red

street lamps that are placed in the foreground on either side of the broad avenue. The more or less symmetrically placed apartment blocks recede towards the blurred structure of the blue-tinted opera building which closes off the street like a vanishing point, but for the sake of the composition its real shape is obviously distorted, if compared to figure 42.



Figure 41

Camille Pissarro, *L'Avenue de l'Opera, Effect of Snow*, 1898, oil on canvas, 65 x 83 cm, Private Collection (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.toperfect.com/avenue-de-l-opera-effect-of-snow-1898-Camille-Pissarro.html>).

The Paris Opera which Emperor Louis-Napoléon III commissioned was prominently positioned by Haussmann at the top of a boulevard, named *L'Avenue de l'Opera*. The architect Charles Garnier (1825-98) was employed to execute the design which was built from 1861-75. The so-called *Palais Garnier* became one of the distinguished landmarks in Paris and by general consensus is rated as the most beautiful opera house in the world.³³

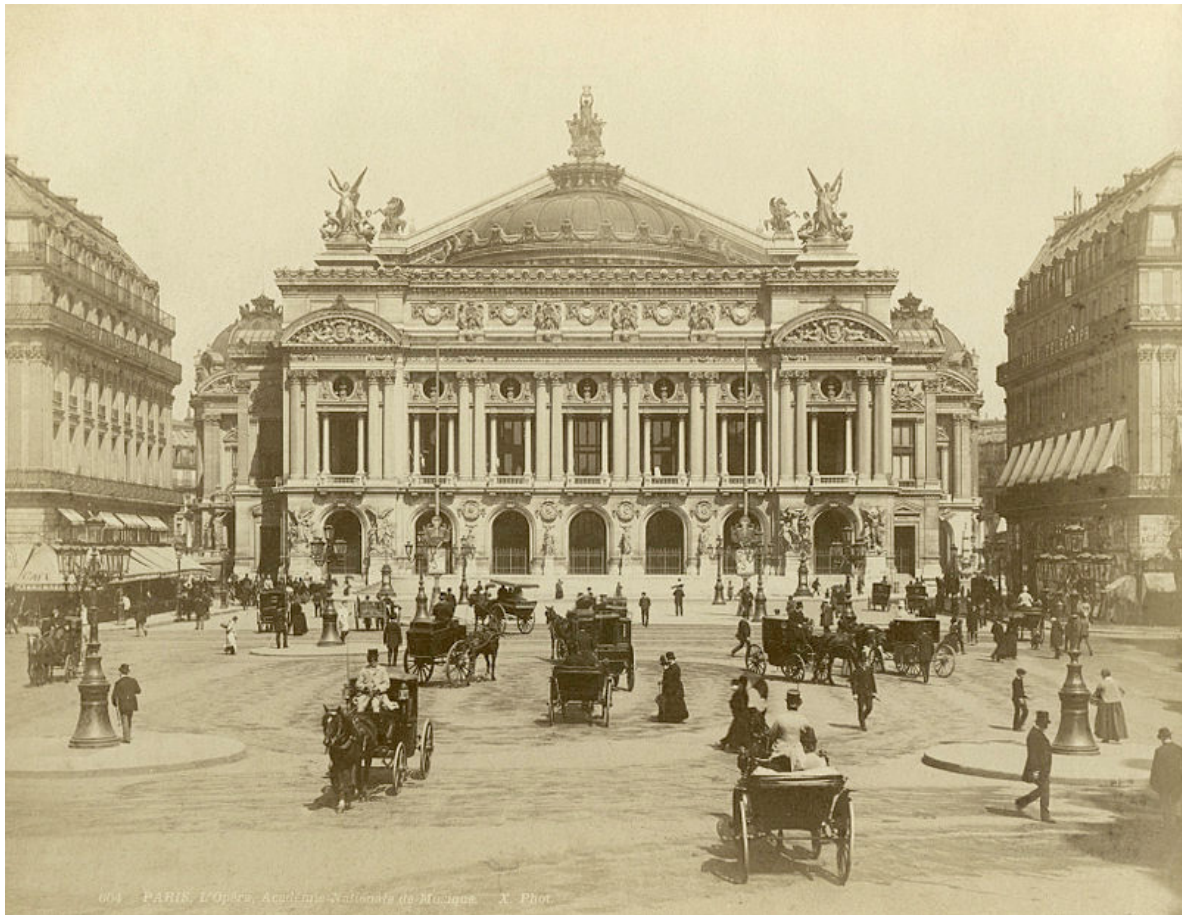


Figure 42

Unknown photographer, *Palais Garnier l'Opera*, c. 1890, data unknown (retrieved from the domain http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palais-Garnier#/media/File:Paris-l'Opera,Accad mie_nationale_de_musiquesjpg).

If it rains or snows one can find shelter in a *passage* situated off a boulevard, such as the *Passage des Panoramas*, one of Europe's first shopping malls which opened in 1799. The covered *passages* which connect alleys between main roads became popular after the establishment of boulevards (figure 43). In an unfinished project Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), a German-Jew who fled to Paris in 1940 to escape the Nazi's, documented these shopping arcades, which promoted interest in these structures for their share in the transformation of nineteenth-century Paris into a modern city.³⁴ New technologies produced building materials such as concrete and cast-iron trusses that enabled the construction of the well-lit *passages* with glass roofs. Before the era of electric lighting their structures made the shops on ground level and other functions above accessible in all weather conditions.



Figure 43

Unknown photographer, a Parisian *passage*, date and data unknown (retrieved from the public domain https://publicdomaininreview.org/essay/on-benjamins_public-oeuvre).

Leaving the central city by following *Le Boulevard Montmartre* to a northern suburb, free of Haussmann's influence, a new vista opens. This boulevard was depicted by Pissarro on a spring morning in 1897 (figure 44). Seen from above, the details of flanking apartment buildings and the avenue with pedestrian movement segregated from wheeled traffic by rows of sprouting trees, are of less importance than the warm colours with which the light of the spring morning is rendered.



Figure 44

Camille Pissarro, *Le Boulevard de Montmartre, matinee de printemps*, 1897, oil on canvas 65 x 81 cm, Courtauld Institute of Art, London (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.wikiart.org/en/camille-pissarro/boulevard-montmartre-spring-1897>).

In the nineteenth-century Montmartre was a sparsely built-up residential area which retained much of its natural beauty. The *Vue de Montmartre depuis la Cité des Fleurs à les Batignolles* by Alfred Sisley (1839-99) was painted in 1869 from his home in *La Cité des Fleurs*, a flowery pedestrian street (figure 45). In the foreground it depicts planted trees on a green meadow and a roadside above which rises the village of Batignolles, an urban settlement on a sloping hillside outside Paris which Napoléon III had annexed in 1860. Most notable is the depiction of the blue summer sky with wind-blown cloud formations, rendered in lively brushstrokes.



Figure 45

Alfred Sisley, *Vue Montmartre depuis la Cité des Fleurs à les Batignolles*, 1869, oil on canvas, 70 x 117 cm, Musée de Grenoble, Grenoble (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.wikiart.org/en/alfred-sisley/View-of-montmartre-from-the-city-des-fleurs-1869>).

Like Sisley and many other artists, Vincent van Gogh (1853-90) had a studio in Montmartre where he painted localities, such as *Le Moulin de la Galette* (figure 46). Established in 1622, this mill and bakery was situated near the summit of Montmartre, as shown in a photograph of 1885 (figure 47). However, Vincent viewed the mill from a different position: only one mill tower (probably the one on the far side of the photograph) is seen from behind a pedestrian area and the *Bufette Moulin de la Galette* (the name of the shop) in the foreground. He simplified the physical appearance of the small buildings that line the street by sketching their forms with laden brushstrokes in red and warm hues. Likewise, the form the mill tower behind the shop is sketchy, but in lighter hues against the light blue sky. Thus Vincent did not paint a naturalistic cityscape; by means of primary and vivid colours he exaggerated the effects of light on the scene to project an expressive mood in a style which is labelled Post-Impressionism.



Figure 46
Vincent van Gogh, *Le Moulin de la Galette*, 1886, oil on canvas, 38 x 45 cm, Nationalgalerie, Berlin (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.wikiart.org/en/vincent-van-gogh/the-moulin-de-la-galette-1886>).



Figure 47
Unknown photographer, *Le Moulin de la Galette*, 1885, data unknown (retrieved from the public domain <https://www.arteeblog.com/2014/12/pablo-picasso-le-moulin-de-la-galette.html>).

Montmartre was primarily known as a resort for artists and as a nightclub district. The seventeenth-century mill and bakery area *Le Moulin de la Galette* eventually became an open-air cafe, music- and dance-hall and restaurant during the nineteenth century. Festive Parisians who gathered there were immortalized by Renoir in 1876 (figure 48).



Figure 48

Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Bal du Moulin de la Galette*, 1876, oil on canvas, 131 x 175 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris (retrieved from the public domain https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Bal_du_moulin_de_la_Galette&oldid=1072478961).

On the summit of the butte of Montmartre, the highest position in Paris, the construction of a huge basilica, *Le Basilique du Sacré-Coeur*, in a pseudo-Byzantine style, was started in 1875 (figure 49). The authorities claimed that this holy edifice would symbolise national penance for the defeat of France in the 1870 Franco-Prussian War and the violence of the 1871 Commune. However, many citizens and especially local artists such as Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Pablo Picasso, Camille Pissarro, and Vincent van Gogh who had studios in Montmartre, protested against the intrusion in their habitat– to no avail.



Figure 49

Unknown photographer, view of the construction of *Le Basilique du Sacré-Coeur*, c. 1876 (retrieved from the public domain <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Sacré-Coeur, Paris&oldid=1082695726>).

Montmartre was not only known as the resort of artists, but also as a nightclub district. Its inhabitants maintained entertainment venues such as the *Moulin Rouge*, where the first cabaret was presented in 1889 (figure 50). The founders of this establishment stated that their aim was to “allow the very rich to come and slum it in a fashionable district, where people live differently from other parts of Paris. The place attracts men and women, the middle classes and rich foreigners passing through Paris as well as artists and ordinary folk.”³⁵ Presumably the artists who lived in Montmartre took pleasure in the *Moulin Rouge* as much as they abhorred the basilica.



Figure 50

Unknown photographer, *Moulin Rouge*, after 1889 (retrieved from the public domain <https://anhistorianabouttown.com/history-of-the-moulin-rouge/>).

Resumé and conclusion

After the survey of Parisian cityscapes of the nineteenth-century, it is apt to reflect on the validity of the epigraph heading this article: “Just as a city cannot be seen until it is painted, a city cannot be read until it is written.” Its author, Christopher Prendergast, presumably implied that painters of cityscapes enable viewers to see the relevant city in its physical and cultural essence, and writers enable readers to read it thus. However, the foregoing survey motivates the researcher to engage with Prendergast’s statement regarding the essential physical qualities of a city that can be seen in the medium of painting, but also in the dissimilar medium of photography.

First and foremost, the question of the authenticity of cityscapes as recorded in paintings and photographs should be considered.

Photographic developments after the invention of the daguerreotype enabled “painting with light” mechanically and instantaneously. Thus, Sharon Larson (2005: 1) observes: “By the dawn of the Second Empire in 1852, the development of photography was historically parallel to the urban development that was sweeping over Paris.” Not only Nadar and other photographers recorded Haussmannian cityscapes; so did the painters who gathered in the cultural capital of Europe. These painters surely became familiar with the medium that could document a slice of life in the ever-changing urban location. In this regard Aaron Scharf (1974: 165) comments: “The young Impressionist painters appeared in Paris in the early 1860s in the thick of the battle between photography and art. It is hardly possible that they were not affected by it.” “Affected” in what sense? Scharf (1974: 165) postulates that the “struggle between art and photography” affected Impressionism’s “concern with both imitation and expression”. He concedes that this “dichotomy” is “apparent”, understood as “seeming”. Moreover, with “the growth of photography as an art and the commensurate antipathy artists felt for it” Scharf (1974: 165) states: “Artists found it expedient to hide the fact of their use of photographic material or its influence upon them.” These two statements are the art historian’s subjective insights, not facts, which he qualifies further on: “[I]t is difficult to know the exact extent to which Impressionists made straightforward use of the camera image, though certainly its oblique influence is detectable” (Scharf 1974: 166). He contends that artists such as Manet placed emphasis on the objective eye and desired to record the transitory character of natural light, that “amounted to a kind of perceptual extremism which was germane to photography itself, and would not necessitate – indeed would obviate – copying from photographic prints. By the same token, it is most likely that in their own interests they would scrutinize the work of contemporary photographers” (1974: 166). Thus Scharf vacillates between postulating a hidden or an oblique influence of photography on Impressionism.

In 1986 Kirk Varnedoe, a historian of modern art, reconsidered the issue of the influence of photography on Impressionism with “candor”, i.e. a forthrightness that he believed eliminates “inaccurate and misleading” assumptions, such as Scharf’s. Varnedoe’s thesis is that Impressionist paintings, which have been said to look like photographs, do not look like photographs: “Certainly they do not look like the photographs of their day. No amount of searching has yet produced a photograph from the 1870s or before that looks anything like Degas’ *Place de la Concorde (Comte Lepic and his Daughters)* of 1875 [see figure 17] or Caillebotte’s *Boulevard Seen from Above* [see figure 40].” Moreover, the postulated influence of photography on painting, such as “[b]old croppings, exceptional perspectival spaces, unusual viewpoints, and so on, have since the fifteenth century depended only on the desire to construct them...” (Varnedoe 1986: 101). Yes, the examples of “photographic vision” can be traced in the history of painting, but is it

certain that late nineteenth-century artists who studied the works of their illustrious predecessors sought out such details to emulate in a modern setting? Actually, Varnedoe does not refer to a most crucial aspect mentioned by Scharf, that artists such as Monet placed emphasis on the objective eye and desired to record the transitory character of natural light, that “amounted to a kind of perceptual extremism which was germane to photography itself, and would not necessitate – indeed would obviate – copying from photographic prints” (quoted above).

Françoise Heilbrun (2009) reiterates the fact that Impressionist painters “never whispered a word about photography”. She nevertheless discerns the influence of the wide-angled camera in their paintings after 1859, as seen in “stereoscopic views of human figures on the boulevards and elsewhere” (2009: 18). She motivates her thesis by referring to the rise of photography: “In the 1840s, and increasingly from 1859, [...] stereoscopic views showing the boulevards in Paris shot from rooftops became widespread...” (2009: 19). Monet (see figure 39), Caillebotte (see figure 40) and Pissarro (see figures 41 and 44) did indeed paint stereoscopic views of Parisian boulevards from high balconies.

Manet’s oeuvre attests to his endeavour to paint the familiar life-world in which he immersed himself like his friend Nadal. Both were concerned with contemporary life. For that reason one may surmise that the painter and the photographer had discussed the characteristics, differences and probable similarities between their respective crafts. Clearly, it is not possible for a photograph to be taken of a past event or an idea. Manet aspired to paint what he saw the life world without filling scenes with sentiments, deeper meaning or signification like the narrative depictions of the past that chronicled the glory of France at the official Salons of the Second Empire.³⁶ Like *flâneurs* Impressionists discovered the allure of contemporary Parisian cityscapes and its street-life – a world more attractive than the presumed settings and personages of myth and history.

The city as a life-world is not a world in repose; the observed world has no fixed structure, but is forever changing – a lesson that photography of the time could not teach the painters who claimed the privilege of artistic freedom. In art they learnt this lesson from Japanese woodblock *ukiyo-e* prints, i.e. “pictures of the floating world”. This world was described by a seventeenth-century Japanese writer as “living only for the moment, turning our full attention to the pleasures of cherry blossoms; drinking wine, diverting ourselves in just floating, floating; [...] like a gourd floating along with the river current”.³⁷ This influence was made possible during the second half of the nineteenth-century when trade routes from Japan were open for the first time on two hundred years and Japanese art was imported in the West (Bozó [date unknown]: 180). In Paris Manet, Degas and Van Gogh collected *ukiyo-e* prints from which they inferred a different aesthetic than was practiced by painters at the time: flattened space, the use of outline, bold and bright colours, and unusual, asymmetrical, cropped compositions. However, Impressionists avoided fixed outlines and applied colour according to the law of simultaneous contrast of colours.³⁸ The unusual *ukiyo-e* characteristics are especially evident in various compositions by Degas, of which *Place de la Concorde* (see figure 17) is a prime example.

Impressionists introduced a new mode of painting: *modernité*. Art was no longer understood to be a direct copy of nature. No Impressionist painting or any painting in later nineteenth-century styles is a direct, unmediated copy of a subject like a mechanically produced photographic print. Indeed, Impressionists, Neo- and Post-Impressionists were not motivated to copy from historical works or photographs. Painting remained representational, but ceased to have the function of a document, a text or a testimony like history painting. Impressionists assumed

the freedom to view the life-world subjectively, clearly, indicating a break with the rationalism of the Enlightenment and Salon art. Thus the cityscapes by Monet, Pissarro, Caillebotte and Renoir, illustrated above, were painted variously, but recognisably impressionistic in technique. Moreover, artists assumed the freedom to transpose actuality to imagination, to reorder the facts of the life-world into fiction – i.e. into art.

The city's greatest transformation occurred during the Second Empire. Thereafter, *La belle Époque*, which lasted from 1871 to 1914, engendered the socio-cultural context in which *avant garde* artists – the Impressionists, Neo- and Post-Impressionists – flourished. Rather than recording static objects and figures their change of painterly mode favoured the presentation of events in the familiar contemporary life-world. Politics transformed the city as a life-world which became a catalyst for the way in which art changed.

Unlike photographs of nineteenth-century Parisian cityscapes, paintings do not afford the researcher with authentic documents of the urban historical reality of one-hundred-and-fifty years ago. Pictorial depictions of nineteenth-century Parisian cityscapes are subjective representations by imaginative artists, most often enlivened by fictive details. Nevertheless, these painters' representations are remarkable “documents” of a *Zeitgeist* or *Weltanschauung* which lasted for a limited time until the First World War. As Erwin Panofsky (1955: 55) explained, intrinsic meaning or content “is apprehended by ascertaining those underlying principles which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religion or a philosophical persuasion”. Indeed, modern art originated in the unique late nineteenth-century French context and diversified rapidly in very different twentieth-century contexts.

Notes

- | | | | |
|---|---|----|--|
| 1 | Prendergast 1992. | 5 | For detailed information about Haussmann's influence on the modernising of nineteenth-century Paris, see Kirkland 2013. |
| 2 | Paris in the late eighteenth century, when Napoléon Bonaparte was elected Consul, was a poverty-stricken city. As an admirer of Classical art and architecture he wanted to transform Paris into a modern Rome. Under his rule Rue de Rivoli was broadened, <i>Le Palais de Tuileries</i> was restored, <i>L'Avenue des Champs Élysées</i> was embellished with the construction of <i>L'Arc de Triomphe</i> at its top, and several other civic improvements. Quoted from the review by Augustin Marck, retrieved from https://www.napoleon-series.org/research/Napoleon&Paris.html . | 6 | For a more detailed description of Haussmannian-type architecture, see Hohenadel (2022). |
| 3 | For a history of Post-Napoléonic France, see the article in <i>Boundless World History</i> , retrieved from https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-worldhistory/chapter/france-after-1815 . | 7 | According to Rewalt (1961: 172) Nadar was Manet's friend and also an intimate of Baudelaire. |
| 4 | See Kirkman 2007. | 8 | For a complete history of <i>Le Palais des Tuileries</i> , see Devêche 1981. |
| | | 9 | For a review of the Enlightenment, see Bristow (2017). |
| | | 10 | For the history of Paris, see Combeau (1999) and Sarmant (2012). |
| | | 11 | See Benjamin <i>Paris, Hauptstadt des XIX Jahrhunderts</i> (1955) and the English translation, <i>Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century</i> (1969). |

- 12 See Baudelaire's description of the *flâneur* in *Peintre de la vie modern* (1863), translated as *The Painter and Modern Life* (1964).
- 13 This phrase is quoted from Rushton 2017
- 14 "The Paris of old is no more – a city's pattern changes, alas, more swiftly than a human heart." Quoted from Scarfe 1961: 209.
- 15 The *camera obscura* is the "ancestor of the photographic camera. The Latin name means 'dark chamber', and the versions, dating to antiquity, considered of small darkened rooms with light admitted through a single hole. The result was that an inverted image of the outside scene was cast on the opposite wall, which usually whitened." Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/print/article/90865>.
- 16 The source referred to: <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.10.1093/acref/9780>.
- 17 Quoted from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nicephore-Niepce> as updated by Alicja Zelazko, 2022.
- 18 For a review of Daguerre's invention, see Daniel 2004.
- 19 For a non-technical history of photography, see Benjamin 1931,
- 20 In 1844 Friedrich von Martens, an engraver-photographer built a camera that was able to take scenes embracing an arc of 150 degrees, resulting in panoramic views of Paris. See the unauthored article, "The little black box: cameras that made history. A swivelling lens for panoramic views", in *Life Library of Photography: The Camera*, by the Editors of *Time-Life Books*, 1981: no page numbers.
- 21 In 1888 George Eastman invented the Kodak box camera that functioned with a roll film. See Lisa Robinson, "History of photography: introduction of Kodak". Retrieved from <https://photofocus.com/inspiration/history/history-of-photography-introduction-of-kodak>.
- 22 For a description of Nadar's balloon and his first ascent, see Walton 2019.
- 23 Glenn 2017: 1.
- 24 See the unauthored article : "The influence of photography in the works of Edgar Degas", retrieved from <https://gradesfixer.com/free-essay-examples/the-influence-of-photography-in-the-works-of-edgar-degas>.
- 25 For a description of the erection of the obelisk on the Place de la Concorde, see Follert (2014).
- 26 A history and description of *L'église de la Madeleine* can be downloaded from <http://en.parisinfo.com/paris-museum-monument/71158%C3%89Église-de-laMadeleine>.
- 27 For a survey of Caillebotte's art, see Varnedoe 1987.
- 28 Thomas 1992: 13. For a history of Impressionism, see Rewalt 1961, and for a more detailed analysis, see Brodskaia 2018.
- 29 See Herbert 1968 and Roque 2011.
- 30 For a review of the exhibition see <https://widewalls.ch/magazine/impressionists-photography-museo-thyssen-bornemisza>.
- 31 Rebecca Jeffrey Easby, quoted from <https://smarthistory.org/daguerre-paris-boulevard/#:~:text=%Louis%20Daguerre%2C%20Paris%20Boulevard%20or%20View%20%of,Boulevard%20shows>.
- 32 For a history of the Panthéon, see Lebeurre 2000.
- 33 For more detailed information about the Paris Opera, see Kirkland 2013 and Mead 1991.
- 34 See Benjamin 2002.
- 35 Quoted from *Travelling in the Footsteps of the Impressionists*, "Japanese Ukiyo-e art and its influence on Impressionism", retrieved from <https://www.itravelwithart.com/ukiyo-e-art-impressionism/#:~:text=Japanese%20art%20prints%20ukiyo>.
- 36 The *Salon de Paris* was the official showcase of French art in the orthodox style known as academic art, as taught at the *Académie des Beaux-Arts*, which sponsored an annual juried show. However, it happened in 1863 that the jury accepted only 2218 of the 5000 submitted works. To solve the dilemma Emperor

Napoléon III ordered another exhibition, and decreed that the public should judge the merit of the rejected works. The alternative exhibition, referred to as the *Salon des Refusés*, included many works by Impressionists.

For a description of the *Salon des Refusés*, see Rewalt 1961: 69-92.

37 Quoted from *Travelling in the Footsteps of the Impressionists*, “Japanese Ukiyo-e art and its influence on Impressionism”, retrieved from <https://www.itravelwithart.com/ukiyo-e-art-impersonism/#:~:text=Japanese%20art%20prints%20ukiyo>.

38 According to Ryle (2011) various Impressionists, notably Pissarro and Monet, applied Chevreul’s colour theories.

Works cited

Baudelaire, Charles. 1964. *The Painter and Modern Life, and Other Essays*, translated by Johnathan Mayne. London: Phaidon.

Benjamin, Walter. 1931. A short history of photography, *Literarische Welt* (18.9, 25.9 and 2.10). Retrieved from <https://screen.oxfordjournals.org> at New York University on June 23, 2015.

Benjamin, Walter. 1955. *Paris, Hauptstadt des XIX Jahrhunderts*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag.

Benjamin, Walter. 1969. Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century, *Perspecta* 12: 163-72.

Benjamin, Walter. 2002. *The Arcades Project*, edited by Rolf Tiedeman. New York: Belknap Press.

Bozů, Thomáš. No date. Characteristics of Japanese art and its influence on Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. Retrieved from <https://www.public.sk/web/kniznica/elpub/document/Migasova2/subor/Bozo.pdf>: 175-83.

Bristow, William. 2017. Enlightenment, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Retrieved from the public domain <https://bing.com/dearch?q=stanford+enyclopedia+of+philosophy&cvid>.

Brodskáia, Nathalia. 2018. *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism*. New York: Parkstone International.

Combeau, Yvan. 1999. *Histoire de Paris*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Daniel, Malcolm. 2004. Daguerre (1787-1851) and the invention of photography, in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art. Retrieved from http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dagu/hd_dagu.htm(October 2004).

De Certeau, Michel, 1980/1984. Walking the city, in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, translated by Steven Randall. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Devêche, André. 1981. *The Tuileries Place and Gardens*, translated by Jonathan Eden. Paris: Éditions de Tourelle-Maloine.

Follert, Michael. 2014. *Enjoyment’s Petrification: the Luxor Obelisk in a Melancholic Century*. Retrieved from https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=mZ_kDrt8doC&oi=find&pg=PA123&dq=french+luxor+obelisk&ots.

Gardner, James. 2021. *The Louvre: The Many Lives of the World’s Most Famous Museum*. London: Grove Press.

- Glenn, Ezra Haber. 2017. *Photographing Haussmann's Paris*. Retrieved from the public domain <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-08-02-19th-century-photographer-that-captured-haussmann-s-paris>: 1-5.
- Herbert, Robert L. 1968. *Neo-Impressionism*. New York: Solomon Guggenheim Foundation.
- Heilbrun, Françoise. 2009. Impressionism and photography, *History of Photography* 33(1): 18-25.
- Hohenadel, Kristen. 2022. *What is Haussmann Architecture?* Retrieved from the public domain <https://www.thespruce.com/what-is-haussmann-architecture-5180196>.
- Kirkland, Stephane. 2013. *Paris Reborn: Napoléon III, Baron Haussmann, and the Quest to Build a Modern City*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Kirkman, Emily, 2007. *Architecture in the Era of Napoleon III*, retrieved from www.arthistoryarchive.com/arthistory/architecture/Haussmanns-architectural-Paris.html.
- Larson, Sharon. 2005. Rethinking historical authenticity: photography, Nadar and Haussmann's Paris, *Equinoxes* (A Graduate Journal of French and Francophone Studies) 5(Eté): 1-5. Retrieved from https://www.brown.edu/Research/Equinoxes/journal/issue%2005/eqx5_larson.htm.
- Lebeurre, Alexia. 2000. *The Panthéon: Temple of the Nation*. Paris: Éditions du Patrimoine. Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/pantheon temple of 0000 lebe>.
- Mead, Christopher Curtis. 1991. *Charles Garnier's Paris Opera: Architectural Empathy and the Renaissance of French Classicism*. New York: The Architectural History Foundation.
- Panofsky, Erwin. 1955/1970. Iconography and iconology. An introduction to the study of Renaissance art, in *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Harmondsworth: Penguin: 51-81.
- Prendergast, Cristopher. 1992. *Paris and the Nineteenth Century (Writing the City)*. London: Blackwell.
- Rewalt, John. 1961. *The History of Impressionism*. New York: Museum of Modern Art.
- Roque, Georges. 2011. *Chevreul's Colour Theory and its Consequences for Artists*. Retrieved from Colour Groups (Great Britain) <https://www.colour.org.uk>: 1-28.
- Rushton, Jessica. 2017. The Paris of Charles Baudelaire: a guide – 150 years on including podcast. Retrieved from <https://www.myfrenchlife.org.2017/10/10/paris-charles-baudelaire-150-years>: no page numbers.
- Sarmant, Thierry. 2012. *Histoire de Paris: politique, urbanisme, civilisation*. Paris: J.-P. Gisserot.
- Scarfe, Francis (ed.). 1961. *Baudelaire. Selected Verse*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Thomas, Denis. 1992. *The Age of the Impressionists*. London: Chancellor Press.
- Varnedoe, Kirk. 1986. The artifice of candor: Impressionism and photography reconsidered, in *Perspectives on Photography: Essays in Honour*

of *Beaumont Newhall*, edited by Peter Walch and Thomas Barrow. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico: 99-123.

Varnedoe, Kirk. 1987. *Gustave Caillebotte*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Walton, Geri. 2019. *Le Géant* or Felix Nadar's giant balloon. Retrieved from <https://www.geriwalton.com/felix-nadars-giant-balloon-le-geant>: 1-7.

Estelle Alma Maré obtained doctoral degrees in Literature, Architecture, Art History and a master's degree in Town and Regional Planning. She practiced as an architect from 1975-1980 when she joined the Department of Art History at the University of South Africa. As an academic she published widely in the field of art and architectural history, aesthetics, literary subjects and cartography. She has edited various books, proceedings and accredited journals: *de Arte*, *SA Journal of Cultural and Art History*, and also the *SA Journal of Art History*. She received various awards from the University of South Africa and the National Research Foundation. The most prestigious award was a bursary from the Onassis Foundation for Hellenic Studies in 2001. In 2002 she was awarded an exchange scholarship by the French National Research Institute and in 2003 the Stals Prize for Art History by the South African Academy for Arts and Science.

Transience and more-than-human seascapes in Ronél de Jager's *Myopia* paintings

Catharina de Klerk

Independent researcher

E-mail: csdeklerksa@gmail.com

The contemporary South African artist and curator Ronél de Jager is known for exploring the transient, elusive qualities of time and space in paintings, sculptures and installations focussing attention on the human impact on the environment. The artist often depicts landscapes devoid of human figures in oil paintings translating photographic images and film stills in limited colour palettes, such as the series of paintings created for the exhibition *Myopia*, with Mandy Coppes-Martin at the Lizamore and Associates Gallery in 2017. These representations of fragile seascapes and seemingly undisturbed undersea worlds suggest new ways of looking at environmental issues, challenging myopic or short-sighted perspectives. A discussion is offered of De Jager's *Myopia* paintings from a critical posthumanist perspective. The article argues that De Jager's seascapes and underwater landscapes evoke experiences of transience, with the inherent vulnerability of being on Earth connecting various more-than-human forms of existence, highlighting the interrelationship between humans as well as non-human agents. The research takes on added significance in light of a growing consensus that the Earth has entered a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene. This article contributes to the critical discussion of more-than-human landscapes in contemporary South African visual art with specific reference to De Jager's *Myopia* paintings.

Keywords: landscape, more-than-human, posthumanism, Ronél de Jager, transience

Verganklikheid en meer-as-menslike seeskappe in Ronél de Jager se *Myopia* skilderye

Die kontemporêre Suid-Afrikaanse kunstenaar en kurator Ronél de Jager is bekend vir haar ondersoek na die verganklike, vlietende kwaliteit van tyd en ruimte in skilderye, beeldhouwerke en installasies, met die aandag gefokus op die menslike impak op die omgewing. Die kunstenaar beeld dikwels landskappe uit sonder enige menslike figure in olieskilderye wat fotografiese beelde en filmgrepe in 'n beperkte kleurpalet vertaal, soos in die reeks skilderye geskep vir die uitstalling *Myopia*, saam met Mandy Coppes-Martin by die Lizamore and Associates Gallery in 2017. Die voorstellings van brose seeskappe en oënskynlik onversteurde onderwaterwêreldes stel nuwe maniere om na omgewingskwessies te kyk voor en daag bysiede of kortsigtige perspektiewe uit. De Jager se *Myopia* skilderye word vanuit 'n kritiese posthumanistiese perspektief beskou. In hierdie artikel word geargumenteer dat De Jager se seeskappe en onderwaterlandskappe ervarings van verganklikheid oproep, met die onafwendbare kwesbaarheid om op Aarde te wees wat meer-as-menslike vorms van bestaan aan mekaar verbind, en die verwantskap tussen mense en nie-menslike agente beklemtoon. Hierdie navorsing is verder van belang met die toenemende konsensus dat die Aarde in 'n nuwe geologiese epog is, die Antroposeen. Die artikel dra by tot die kritiese bespreking van meer-as-menslike landskappe in kontemporêre Suid-Afrikaanse beeldende kunste met spesifieke verwysing na De Jager se *Myopia* skilderye.

Slutelwoorde: landskap, meer-as-menslik, posthumanisme, Ronél de Jager, verganklikheid

In the series of paintings created for the collaborative exhibition, *Myopia*, in 2017, the contemporary South African artist and independent curator Ronél de Jager (born 1985), considers new ways of looking by representing fragile seascapes, on the border between land and sea, and seemingly undisturbed undersea landscapes. *Myopia*, a two-woman exhibition at the Lizamore and Associates Gallery in Johannesburg from 2 to 25 November 2017, with paintings by De Jager and sculptures by Mandy Coppes-Martin, questions the often short-sighted or “myopic” perspectives on environmental issues.¹

Ronél de Jager is known for exploring the transient, elusive qualities of time and space in paintings, sculptures and installations focussing attention on the human impact on the environment, as emphasised by Carina Jansen (2022). The artist often depicts landscapes devoid of human figures in oil paintings translating photographic images and film stills in limited colour palettes. According to a recent artist statement, De Jager (2020b) emphasises that she is drawn to seemingly empty landscapes, standing in for idyllic spaces in the absence of human inhabitants, in paintings that evoke both stillness and a sense of danger. In *Alone in this World with Water and Sky* (2017), as in figure 1, for example, an underwater kelp forest is depicted, seemingly far removed from the influence of human actions, with sunlight filtering through the dark kelp branches partially hidden in shadow. The limited palette of blue and green reflects De Jager's interest in exploring real versus fictional landscapes and the act of looking from different perspectives.



Figure 1
Ronél de Jager, *Alone in this World with Water and Sky*, 2017, oil on canvas, 90 x 130 cm, *Myopia* exhibition (photograph provided by the artist).

In this article, I focus on the interpretation of selected paintings of seascapes and underwater landscapes by Ronél de Jager from the 2017 collaborative *Myopia* exhibition. The exhibition as a whole will, however, be taken into consideration, as in the installation view of the exhibition in figure 2. Johan Myburg (2016) already considers the careful installation of an exhibition as important when exploring De Jager's work, such as in her 2015 exhibition *A.M. (After Midnight)* at Lizamore and Associates,² arguing that De Jager's paintings should not be considered in isolation, but rather placed within the context of the exhibition and the artist's oeuvre as a whole. This study contributes to the critical discussion of more-than-human seascapes and underwater landscapes in contemporary South African visual art with specific reference to De Jager's paintings for the *Myopia* exhibition. This approach is significant, because the research expands on the ways more-than-human environmental concerns can broaden art-historical inquiry reconsidering landscape and seascape.

Ronél de Jager can be considered an established South African artist, but with the exception of a few articles, such as Ashraf Jamal's (2022) analysis of De Jager's recent solo exhibition *Still Here* at the Kalashnikovv Gallery in Johannesburg (from 11 June to 5 July 2022), little academic research has been published on her work. De Jager has exhibited both locally and internationally and regularly participates in group exhibitions and collaborative projects. She has been a finalist in national art competitions such as the Sasol New Signatures in 2008, 2010 and 2013, Absa L'Atelier Art Award in 2008, 2013 and 2015 and the Thami Mnyele Fine Arts Awards in 2011, 2013 2015 and 2016 (Roets 2016). This study contributes to academic scholarship on De Jager as a contemporary South African artist.

De Jager's *Myopia* paintings will be explored from a critical posthumanist perspective challenging the divide between nature and culture as well as between human and non-human agents. Critical posthumanism, as proposed by the scientific philosopher Donna Haraway (2008; 2016), challenges both the constitution of the human category itself and the possibility of drawing neat boundaries between human and non-human. Such a posthumanist perspective suggests that agency is distributed through dynamic forces that human participates do not completely control, with humans seen as entangled with their environment.

I argue that De Jager's seascapes and landscapes evoke experiences of transience, with the inherent vulnerability of being on Earth connecting various more-than-human forms of existence, highlighting the interrelationship between humans as well as non-human agents. The concept of a more-than-human world, as popularised by the eco-phenomenologist David Abram (1996: 131; see also 2010), can be defined as encompassing a complex interdependence between all beings, to both include and exceed human societies. The research takes on added significance in light of a growing consensus that the Earth has entered a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, distinguished by the fact that humans have increasingly become the primary drivers of environmental change (compare Krajewska 2017: 30).



Figure 2
Ronél de Jager and Mandy Coppes-Martin, *Myopia* exhibition, Lizamore and Associates, Johannesburg, from 2 to 25 November 2017 (photograph by the author, with permission of the artist).

The discussion of De Jager's paintings for the *Myopia* exhibition as challenging short sighted perspectives on the more-than-human landscape and seascape is divided into six sections. In the first section the *Myopia* exhibition will be contextualised and briefly discussed with specific relevance to myopia or near-sightedness and the importance of different ways of looking. The second section focusses on underwater landscapes and the transformative role of water as a theme in visual art. The importance of suggestions of transience and change and the connection to relationality in more-than-human relationships follow in the third section. Section four considers the seascape in De Jager's painting titled *Paludarium* in-depth, referring to the attempt to capture or enclose nature through the image of the greenhouse, a theme relevant to De Jager's more recent work. In section five, ecological considerations are highlighted and the more-than-human landscape discussed from a critical posthumanist approach, before, finally coming to a conclusion in section six.

***Myopia* exhibition and new ways of looking**

Myopia is an eye disorder where objects in the distance seem blurry, more commonly known as near-sightedness,³ but can also be defined as a lack of intellectual foresight. As part of the *Myopia* exhibition De Jager displayed a series of paintings, including seascapes and underwater landscapes, which consider different ways of looking by reproducing close-up stills of quiet, at first glance seemingly undisturbed undersea scenes and more abstract paintings of topological views. Some of these works depict deep sea creatures, often hidden and difficult to see, such as a close-up of a dark red vampire squid (*Vampyroteuthis infernalis*) in *Galaxies flap their million shells at the Sun*, sea anemone resembling flowers in *Phosphorescent Fire* and *To the Pull of the Sun and the Moon*, starfish in *Convulsively Embraced* and the delicate bells of swarms of jellyfish in *Pulsating Bells* (figure 3). These images allude to an undersea world seldom seen by human eyes and only rarely thought about, except perhaps on a holiday at the seaside, a visit to the Aquarium or when watching a nature documentary.⁴



Figure 3
Ronél de Jager, *Pulsating Bells*, 2017, oil on canvas, 90 x 130 cm, *Myopia* exhibition, Lizamore and Associates, Johannesburg (photograph provided by the artist).

As argued by Myburg (2016) the act of viewing is central to De Jager's work, suggesting new ways of perceiving her work and even the world, with the shared, but unique viewing experience allowing a viewer to attach their own, individual meanings to the work. For the artist superficial seeing can become intentional looking when the viewer is fully engaged with the artwork in order to complete the artwork.⁵ As already evident in the artist's 2014 debut solo exhibition, *After Midnight: A Prelude*, De Jager's work can be considered as an ongoing project exploring the transformative power inherent in the constant, shifting presence of cast shadows and filtered light.⁶

Olivia Vázquez-Medina (2018: 329) links physical myopia with myopia in a metaphorical, figurative sense, with short-sightedness a central motif for the inability to see. Following Vázquez-Medina (2018: 329), vision can be used as a conceptual framework, as with reference to Martin Jay's study of the history of vision in a Western historical context, highlighting that understanding vision in different ways can significantly enrich such a cultural discussion. According to Jay (1994: 236) in *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* there is still a visually privileged order of knowledge or "ocularcentrism" in epistemological models of speculation, observation, and revelation. Fiona Symington (1997: 307) already emphasised the importance of theories of vision within the discipline of art history and visual culture, with questions concerning the subject of vision and discourses of viewing indebted to theories of visuality still privileged within the study of visual culture. An oversight or a "re-occurring myopia" is an often unchallenged idea of human vision as universal or the "predicament concerning the humanness of vision", with continued ramifications for the critique of vision (Symington 1997: 307-8). Accordingly, Symington (1997: 308) highlights the materiality and corporeality of vision, with the need to both engage with and think beyond the materiality of the presumed physiology of a body when discussing vision. Ian Grosvenor (2007: 610) emphasises the importance of taking into consideration the untrustworthiness of images as reliable evidence as a kind of historical myopia.

According to Danielle R. Raad (2021: 102) the interpretation of a landscape is based on the conceptual framework used to make sense of the elements, constructed by both individual orientations and shared social values. Raad (2021: 116) criticises a myopic perspective of the landscape resulting from collective vision in colonisation, nationalisation and exclusion, with a dominant narrative that makes it hard to see, deterring viewers from seeing other people's understanding of the landscape, as well as the impact of humans on every part of the world. Raad (2021: 118) argues that the dominant, collective vision of landscape can be changed by writing that presents the varied experiences, with consciously embodied experiences of a place by individuals potentially disrupting the hegemony of vision over the other senses. Chris Wilbert (2019: 211) describes a contradictory hybrid landscape as a landscape of potentiality that is not only social or natural, but still acted on by non-human animals. This emphasises the struggles over landscape with different groups seeking to speak for different interests, often in conflict, through the negation of others, with landscape an ontological and political position.

A landscape can be viewed as a representation of a part of the surface of the Earth, often consisting of characteristic geographic features. From the Dutch term *landschap*, referring to paintings of the countryside, the landscape genre rose in prominence since the Renaissance in Northern Europe.⁷ A modified landscape can be referred to as a cultural landscape, including people and the plants they grow, the animals they care for and the structures they build (see Taylor and Lennon 2011). Modelled after the term landscape, a seascape, as a form of marine art, refers to a photograph, painting, or other artwork representing the sea, but can also refer to actual views of the sea, often viewed from the shoreline, between land and sea.⁸

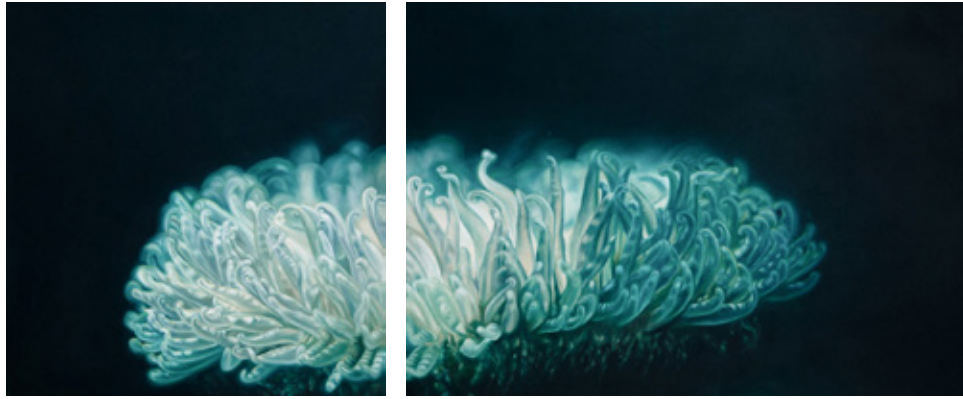


Figure 4

Ronél de Jager, *Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble, Till the terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink*, 2017, oil on canvas (diptych), 90 x 90 cm and 90 x 120 cm, *Myopia* paintings, Lizamore and Associates, Johannesburg (photograph provided by Lizamore and Associates, with permission of the artist).

The title of one of the paintings, a diptych depicting a sea anemone as can be seen in figure 4, *Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble, Till the terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink* (2017), is taken from the poem *A Forsaken Garden* (1878) by the English poet, Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909) that portrays love as a fleeting, transient emotion with reference to the landscape, such as the image of the sea taking over the land. Margot K. Louis (2004: 408) points to the continued influence of Swinburne on contemporary poetry and fiction. *A Forsaken Garden* from Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads* second series (1878) has been interpreted as a poem about change and decay, reflecting on the mortality of love, but works on different, subtle levels according to Francis O'Gorman (2003: 348) through layers of allusion and parody. Drawing on Judaeo-Christian tradition, Swinburne's hidden garden is at once the home of love and life and a place of death and corruption, similar to the Garden of Eden in Genesis, but the garden, despite its proximity to Eden, is without the promise of redemption (O'Gorman 2003: 349). In the opening stanza, the speaker refers to a time when plants grew from the grave, or when life sprouted from death, but it is unclear whether or not they will cycle back and sprout again (Eron 2006: 305).

Sarah Eron (2006: 309) identifies change and union as central themes in Swinburne's poetry, with a ghostly quality that pervades much of Swinburne's landscape poetry. The poem opens with a concentric landscape, with the speaker dealing with the conflict between love and time, with the circular pattern of time linked to the circularity of space as accentuated by the stasis and movement of the circle. Such notions of concentricity and unchanging change give meaning to Swinburne's humanized landscapes (Eron 2006: 305). Swinburne introduces the landscape through in-between states, with the reader placed at the edge of the land, between "lowland and highland". This conceptualisation of time and space, on the scale of microcosm and macrocosm, are linked to the phenomenon of metamorphosis, and, therefore, as objects vanish in nature, they are ultimately reconfigured and reunited to other metamorphosing forms (Eron 2006: 208). By emphasising poetry's self-reflexivity, Swinburne reaffirms the individual's imaginative life (Louis 2004: 403).

De Jager's depictions of ocean creatures explore associations of birth and death, such as regenerating jellyfish in *Pulsating Bells* (figure 3) and sea anemones in *Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble* (figure 4), deep sea volcanic mountains in *Birth of an Island (After Sea of*

Flames) (figure 5), and topological imagery, such as in the *Eustatic Surveillance* series (figures 6 and 7). These explorations of transformative processes apply not only to the life and death of individual organisms, but also to larger, geological processes, such as the eruption of deep sea volcanoes, creating underwater mountains with the movement of tectonic plates, while the deep sea steam vents also support life. A paradox in De Jager's work is that despite working from imagery selected from the fleeting pursuits of photography and videography, she is interested in the notion of deep time of geological processes taking place over millennia as well as in comparison, the brief time of human life and that of other creatures that share the landscape (see De Jager 2020b).

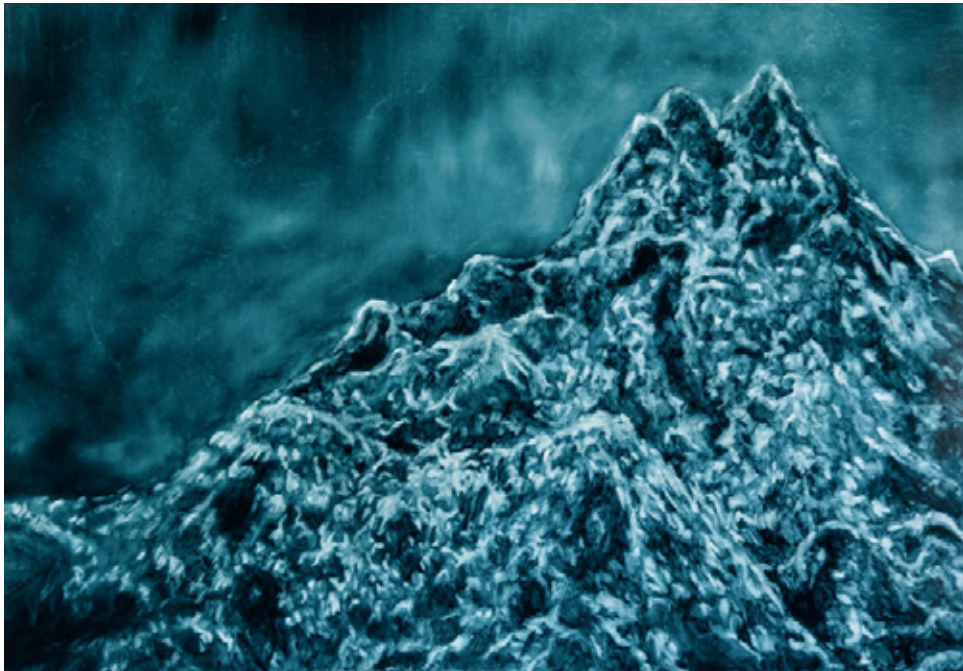


Figure 5

Ronél de Jager, *Birth of an Island (After Sea of Flames)*, 2017, oil on recycled acid-free synthetic paper, 62 x 83 cm, *Myopia* exhibition (photographs provided by Lizamore and Associates, with permission of the artist).

De Jager translates photographic and video imagery into paint marks, with some of the details of the landscape left outside the viewer's grasp. Sourced from aerial and infrared photography,⁹ photographs of oil spills and underwater imagery taken during surveys of the seafloor with Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs), the works both evoke and unsettle the viewer's expectations. Most of the ocean resources, which cover over seventy percent of the Earth's surface, are not fully explored. For decades, underwater robotic vehicles (URVs), remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) have been used for deep-sea exploration instead of human beings in manned underwater vehicles (MUVs) (Xiang, Niu, Lapierre and Zuo 2015). According to Raúl Nava (2022) the *Fresh from the Deep* series by the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI), for example, provides an opportunity for the public to see some of the latest deep-sea discoveries made by their scientists.¹⁰

The quiet depictions of seascapes and underwater life in the exhibition are interrupted by more abstract works, as in the installation view of *Alone in this World with Water and Sky* surrounded by works from the *Lost lands* series, in figure 6. In using drip painting with bees

wax and oil paint over found images of landscapes or typographic maps, De Jager experiments with the tactility and movement of paint. The *Lost lands* series and *Eustatic Surveillance* series (figure 7) refer to aerial photography of where ocean meets land and where landscapes remain submerged on the ocean floor. Aerial photography and mapping by plane or drone has been successfully applied to near shore marine environments, such as to study groundwater discharge or for monitoring coral reef development (Khimasiaa, Rovere and Pichler 2020).



Figure 6

Ronél de Jager, 2017, *Alone in this world with water and sky*, oil on canvas, 90 x 130 cm, surrounded by the *Lost lands* series, installation view, *Myopia* exhibition, Lizamore and Associates, Johannesburg (photograph by the author, with permission of the artist).

Eustatic (global) sea level refers to the volume of the Earth's oceans, representing the sea level if all of the water in the oceans were contained in a single basin (compare Munaretto, Vellinga and Tobi 2012: 358). Changes in the eustatic sea level lead to changes in accommodation and therefore affect the deposition of sediments in marine environments (Smith, Ballinger and Stojanovic 2012: 31). Sea level changes can be driven by either variations in the masses or volume of the oceans, or by changes of the land with respect to the sea surface (Woodhouse, Barnes, Shorrock, Strachan, Crundwell, Bostock, Hopkins, Kutterolf, Pank, Behrens, Greve, Bell, Cook, Petronotis, LeVay, Jamieson, Aze, Wallace, Saffer and Pecher 2022: 2).

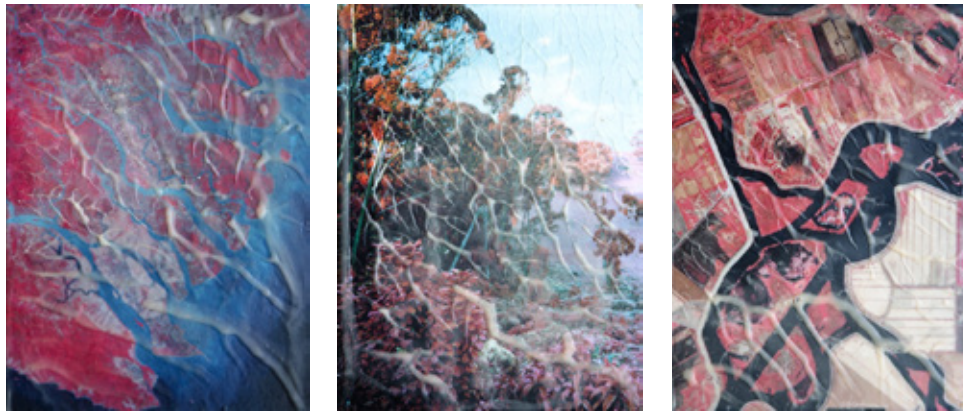


Figure 7
Ronél de Jager, *Eustatic Surveillance I*, *Eustatic Surveillance VIX* and *Eustatic Surveillance X*, 2017, found images with oil and bees wax on board, 20 x 15 cm each (photographs provided by Lizamore and Associates, with permission of the artist).

The argument is made that De Jager’s paintings ask the viewer to slow down when looking and consider the play of colour, shape and form. The attention to colour and the medium of paint show an appreciation for our innate connectedness with the world, attempting to engage the viewer in a sympathetic manner with the undersea world. Through the paintings personal and more universal scenes are recalled, acknowledging the landscape as shared by both human and non-human inhabitants, with even the seemingly distant deep sea increasingly explored, and exploited, by humans.

Carina Jansen (2022) describes De Jager’s interest in translating photographic and video imagery, including through the process of digital manipulation, into ambiguous, suggestive paint marks implying movement, enabling her to explore liminal or in-between states. In the *Myopia* exhibition, these blurry or half-hidden images in vivid colours depict unclear landscapes, between land and sea. Through this distortion and manipulation of the source imagery, De Jager’s blurry images of landscapes suggests movement, with this disturbance unsettling as details of the landscape remain beyond the viewer’s grasp. The viewer is left with a mere sensation, an intense yet transient impression of the landscape scenes that De Jager explores (Jansen 2022). According to Ashraf Jamal (2022) the power of De Jager’s characteristically blurred or hazy paintings of forms seen in passing or designs under the threat of erasure through deliberate distortion, lies in their inscrutability, emphasising this uncertainty, with the artworks more impressionistic than realistic. The focus, Jamal (2022) argues with reference to De Jager’s recent solo exhibition *Still Here*, should be placed on the intimate, even tender moments that hover between worlds, emphasising the sense of interconnected and even adventure that she creates. I argue that this sense of interconnectedness is also central to the exploration of the landscape in De Jager *Myopia* paintings.

According to the artist statement of the *Myopia* exhibition,¹¹ the series continues De Jager’s exploration of notions of temporality through the medium of paint, eluding to both geological time and the contemporary moment, in order to highlight the effects of human actions on the seascape, while not directly depicting their presence (and imagining their absence). De Jager examines our understanding of time, often by slowing down a photographic snapshot or film still in the medium of paint (see De Jager 2020b).

In *When the Earth Stands Still* (2020), both in its title and in its imagery, De Jager continues this exploration of temporality central to the *Myopia* exhibition.¹² This artwork¹³ was created as part of *The Pandemic* interdisciplinary project by the UJ Arts and Culture, a division of the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA) at the University of Johannesburg, as a reaction to the Coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic, based on music from the UJ Choir's ninth album, speaking to both resilience and the ability to create in times of crisis.¹⁴ De Jager's work often deals with concepts of time, environmental concerns and with personal narratives as microcosms of broader social issues, such as the conflict between the natural environment and human intervention in it (Jansen 2022).

Underwater landscapes and the transformative power of water

Underwater can be considered as a space of both mystery and human exploitation. In De Jager's painting *Hidden hills and Valleys of the Ocean Floor* (2017), with oil paint on recycled acid-free synthetic paper as demonstrated in figure 8, this mysterious aspect of the underwater world is emphasised, based on images taken by submarines and recalling the contours of typographic maps. I argue that the paintings depict the transformative role that water plays in seascapes of the shoreline and underwater landscapes, with the effects of moving water and sea life over the passage of time.



Figure 8

Ronél de Jager, *Hidden Hills and Valleys of the Ocean Floor*, 2017, oil on recycled acid-free synthetic paper, 58 x 58 cm, *Myopia* exhibition, Lizamore and Associates, Johannesburg (photographs provided by Lizamore and Associates, with permission of the artist).

In a recent study of the representation of the ocean by contemporary Caribbean artists, Elizabeth DeLoughrey and Tatiana Flores (2020: 132) emphasise that attention is increasingly being paid to the depths of the sea. Contemporary visual artists are creating ecologically aware artworks, linked to social and ecological issues, including water use and pollution (see Stevens 2013). According to Tricia Cusack (2012: 17) the depiction of the water's edge in the visual arts, including the seascape, is as an important theme to be research, including within art history.

In connection to this research imperative, as supported by Reidy and Rozwadowski (2014: 338), I argue that the in-between spaces created by the ocean and the representation of underwater landscapes can be further investigated within the South African context with specific reference to De Jager's *Myopia* paintings. These works encourage the viewer to reconsider our relationship to water and water systems through the depiction of the seascape and underwater landscapes. The interaction between people and the seascape, with a focus on unequal power relationships, is particularly relevant within the South African context (compare Baderoon 2009: 89). For example, consider the use of natural resources such as in the undersea drilling for gas or the mining of alluvial diamonds. John Childs (2020: 189) discusses the emergence of deep-sea mining (DSM), sometimes promoted as the next frontier of resource extraction, highlighting the complex spatial and temporal human relationships to natural resources with reference to both the geology and ecologies of the seabed and seawater. The paintings explore the complex relationship between humans and nature, recalling both a sense of hope and loss. Human interaction with the landscape is not represented as only negative, but can also be positive and even life confirmative.

Water, necessary for human life, but with the potential to destroy through floods, drowning or spreading disease, can be considered as an important theme to be explored within visual art (compare Dixon 2011: 12; Stevens 2013: 217). Given the position of the Earth from the Sun, water can exist in the three stages of vapour, liquid and solid, with the different forms of water continually shaping both Earth and its inhabitants (Schmitz 2018: 3-4). The complex associations around water, and specifically the sea, include the transition from life to death (Corbin 1994: 246). These association around water with the transition between life and death are already explored by the French phenomenological philosopher Gaston Bachelard in *Water and Dreams* (1942[1983]), a continuation of his psychoanalytical discussion of poetical imagination (see also Bachelard 1958[1994]). In De Jager's *Submerge I to IV* series, such as *Submerge II (colour study)* (2017; figure 9), with acrylic on board, this potentially dangerous and all-consuming nature of the sea and water is recalled when viewing the abstracted landscape.

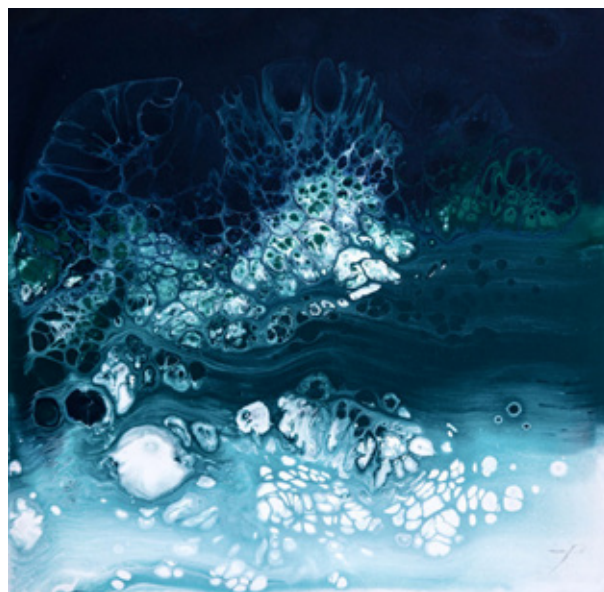


Figure 9
Ronél de Jager, *Submerge II (colour study)*, 2017, acrylic on board, 30 x 30 cm, *Myopia* exhibition
(photographs provided by Lizamore and Associates, with permission of the artist).

Suggestions of transience and more-than-human relationships

In De Jager's oeuvre, transience and change can be considered as important themes. De Jager is known for representations of fleeting moments and continues her search of the ephemeral in the *Myopia* paintings. The works recall life's fragility, with this heightened sense of fragility speaking to ecological concerns, including a sense of urgency about the impact of human actions on the environment. While much of the world above sea level has been changed by human impact and natural disasters, the world in and under the sea, specifically the deep-sea basin, seems, incorrectly, to be unaffected.

I argue that De Jager's *Myopia* paintings, including seascapes and underwater landscapes appear to be devoid of human life, evoking a sense loss and fragility as part of the artist's continued exploration of the theme of transience. As already suggested, De Jager is drawn to seemingly empty landscapes that evoke both stillness and a sense of danger, such as *Alone in this World with Water and Sky* (figures 1 and 6). For De Jager the seascapes and underwater scenes offer a space for contemplating the connection between life and death, emphasising the fragility of human, and non-human, life. The thin wash layers of oil paint on canvas, paper and board, often in a limited palette, emphasise the temporary, transient nature of the seascapes depicted and the lives recalled, with traces of the passage of time and the absence left behind on the landscape. Viewers are confronted with their own mortality through the emphasis on the effects of time and processes of decay. Through *Myopia* a reconsideration of the relationship between life and death is suggested.

Transience is the constant theme or leitmotif in De Jager's oeuvre, both conceptually and formally, as shown in a recent exhibition, *Still Here*, at Kalashnikov Gallery (Myburg 2022). As argued by Jansen (2022) this engagement with temporality and susceptibility to decay over time in De Jager's work, can be symbolic of the connection with others as well as with ourselves. De Jager contemplates the disintegrating boundaries between real and not real, and the consequent effects on our personal relationships and our relationship with ourselves. Jamal (2022) does not, however, consider De Jager's paintings simply as a reminder of death or as *memento mori*, rather placing the emphasis on connections or "kinship" with evocative objects and other life forms. Such kinship is central according to Haraway (2016) when reconsidering human relationships to the environment and non-human life. De Jager (2017) wants the viewer to notice the often cyclical movements of nature as central to developing an understanding of nature, while finding new ways of looking in search of the unknown

De Jager explores these concepts of transience and transformation with reference to the Vanitas still life tradition, such as seventeenth and eighteenth century Dutch and Flemish still life painting, with objects loaded with symbolic meaning (Jansen 2022). As part of this exploration of Vanitas still life conventions, the significance of objects as mundane as the arrangements of flowers in a ceremonial bouquet is investigated by De Jager.¹⁵ Flower bouquets are already suggested in the series of paintings *Ocean's Bouquet I*, *Ocean's Bouquet II* and *Ocean's Bouquet III* (2017; figure 10) shown as part of the *Myopia* exhibition. When the boundaries between real and unreal are already complex with objects as seemingly mundane as flowers, a much deeper level of complication in the rest of our lives is implied.¹⁶ The flower arrangements suggested in *Myopia* and further explored in beaded tapestries of flora in De Jager's more recent *Still Here* exhibition, decay within a short time and can be considered as symbolic of our connection to the lives of others as well as our own (see also Froment 2022).

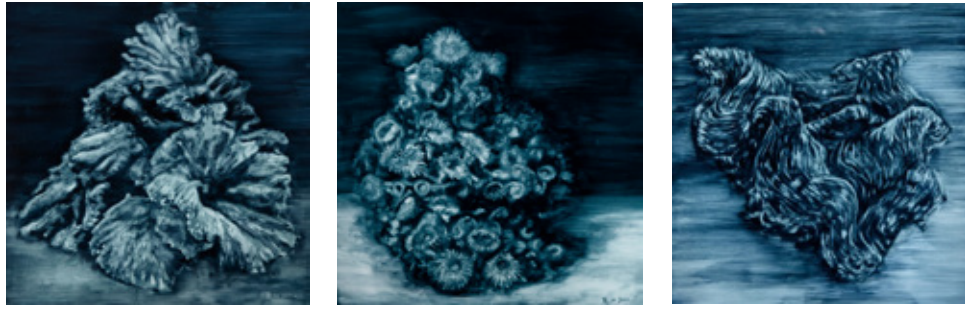


Figure 10

Ronél de Jager, *Ocean's Bouquet I*, *Ocean's Bouquet II* and *Ocean's Bouquet III*, 2017, oil on recycled acid-free synthetic paper, 58 x 58 cm, *Myopia* exhibition (photographs provided by Lizamore and Associates, with permission of the artist).

There is an increasing awareness of the inescapability of death as shared by all living beings, as conceptualised by the American art historian and film critic Kaja Silverman's in her 2009 book *Flesh of My Flesh* (2009). Silverman (2009: 54) discusses relationality as the way in which people are connected by "an invisible thread" of life and the inevitability of death. This awareness offers a starting point for acknowledging the complex relationships connecting all living things through transience. An ontological equality is created between people by this awareness of our own mortality, but also an awareness that this fate is shared by all living beings, as discussed by Adele Nel (2012: 61). As stated by Matthew Mullane (2010), with reference to Nicolas Bourriaud (2008: 46), relational art creates "relations outside the field of art (in contrast to relations inside it, offering it its socioeconomic underlay): relations between individuals and groups, between the artist and the world, and, by way of transitivity, between the beholder and the world". This approach requires a radical re-evaluation of the relationship between life and death. This emphasis on the connections between all living and non-living beings are placed within the discussion of relationality by authors such as Fiona Robinson (2020: 14). Building on the work of the feminist thinker and psychologist Carol Gilligan (1982), Robinson (2020: 11) argues for an ethics of care that resists all hierarchies that divide people from others and even themselves.

Capturing nature in *Paludarium*

In De Jager's oil painting on Yupo paper titled *Paludarium* (2017; figure 11) a lagoon surrounded by palm trees and ferns is depicted in a limited blue palette, with another body of water, perhaps the sea, visible on the horizon, behind the boulders. In *Paludarium*, De Jager explores the theme of a greenhouse as representative of nature being domesticated by humans. A paludarium is a type of terrarium that includes both water and land elements, usually consisting of an enclosed container to display live plants and animals in a natural looking environment.¹⁷ The word paludarium comes from the Latin word *palus* meaning marsh or swamp and *arium* which refers to an enclosed container. Paludaria can be maintained for scientific, horticultural or even simply aesthetic reasons and range in size from small, easily displayed boxes to biospheres large enough to contain entire trees (see for example Lüddecke 2003: 38). De Jager (2015) refers to the greenhouse interior as being a space of comfort and growth, but also as a space of entrapment in artificial conditions.



Figure 11

Ronél de Jager, *Paludarium*, 2017, oil on Yupo paper, 73 x 53 cm, *Myopia* paintings, Lizamore and Associates, Johannesburg (photograph provided by the artist).

Kenneth S Schmitz (2018: 3) compares Earth to a paludarium or a closed system of both terrestrial and aquatic elements, with the ability of the Earth as our home to support human and non-human life limited by the cleanliness of the air, the amount of portable water and availability of soil to grow food. Despite this reliance, human activity is increasingly threatening its own existence and the life of other species by the depletion of natural resources and pollution of the air, water and soil (Schmitz 2018: 4). The artist Vaughn Bell, for example, created wearable terrariums known as the Portable Personal Biosphere, transporting plants around urban areas as public performance works addressing human relationships with the environment, as described by Joh Spayde (2016: 50) in conversation with the artist. Rania Ghosn and El Hadi Jazairy (2020: 33) argue that the image of a terrarium can help conceptualise an increasingly troubled relationship with the Earth in the context of the Anthropocene, in order to make visible and reflect on the connections and changes across the surface and topography of the planet.

The precursor of the terrarium was a small glass structure known as the Wardian case, invented by the amateur botanist Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward, and was used for packing and transporting botanical specimens around the globe (Ghosn and El Hadi Jazairy 2020: 33). The Wardian case can be viewed as an instrument of nineteenth-century colonial enterprise and exploitation, such as by aiding the British Empire in the establishment of tea plantations and exotic plant collections at Kew Gardens (Wells 2018: 158).

According to Ellen Agnew (2018), De Jager is one of the contemporary South African artists who have turned to nature as a form of refuge, against the backdrop of socio-economic, political and environmental transformations, in order to exercise their painterly impulses (see also Corrigan 2018). In the painting *Green* (2020), part of a series of works based on photographs of houseplants taken through a semi-transparent plastic sheet and featured as part of the *Vanishing Act* exhibition, at the online 2020 KKNK National Arts Festival from 22 June to 25 July 2020,¹⁸ De Jager (2020a) also explores the theme of houseplants and greenhouses, and how they have come to represent for her the idea of nature being domesticated by humans. For De Jager (2020a) life in Johannesburg, the artist's home city, often considered as an urbanised artificial forest given the large number of trees, can be compared to a greenhouse

According to De Jager (2020a) the development of the *Green* series coincided with the artist's then-new status as a mother, evoking concepts of growth and nurturing, traditionally associated with motherhood, but also entrapment, with feelings of being unexpectedly trapped by changed circumstances. This feeling of confinement was further heightened during the initial breakout and response to the Covid-19 pandemic,¹⁹ with measures including lockdowns, border closures and prohibition of public events implemented to attempt to slow down the spread of the virus and reduce the pressure on healthcare systems in order to protect human life.²⁰ Through the home environment, perhaps also populated by houseplants, domesticated slivers of nature cultivate a sense of security that artificially mirrors the outside world (Jansen 2022). Widespread concerns about safety keep many housebound, cultivating a sense of security that artificially excludes the outside world. De Jager (2020a) speaks of the greenhouse interior, and by extension the domestic space, as being a space of comfort and growth, but also as a space of entrapment in artificial conditions.

More-than-human ecological considerations in the *Myopia* exhibition

Environmental issues are increasingly a central concern in contemporary art, as discussed by Alan Braddock and Renée Ater (2014: 4-5), posing new questions to the engaged viewer. Such "ecocritical" considerations can broaden art-historical inquiry into even seemingly familiar works, revealing previously unnoticed complexities and connecting us through shared environmental concerns (Braddock 2009: 26). Building on Suzi Gablik (1993), Alan Braddock and Christoph Irmscher (2009) define ecologically oriented criticism or "ecocriticism" as a form of inquiry that emphasizes environmental interconnectedness, sustainability and justice in cultural interpretation. Bert Olivier (2007: 24) emphasises communication and collaboration as central to ecological art, suggesting that other, less harmful relationships with the natural environment can be imagined. De Jager's paintings created for the *Myopia* exhibition can be interpreted from an ecocritical perspective.

The destruction of nature is made even more pertinent through ecological issues such as pollution and the exploitative destruction of natural resources. These ecological considerations take on added significance in light of new scientific reports about climate change and the growing consensus that the Earth has entered a new geological epoch marked by the planetary impact of human activities, the Anthropocene, introduced by Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer (2000). The uneven distribution of the effects of the environmental crisis need to be taken into consideration, in line with Simon Estok and Murali Sivaramakrishnan (2014: 1). Sandra Swart (2021: 3) criticises the erasure of issues of race, class and gender in discussions of the Anthropocene, with Haraway (2015: 159) suggesting "Plantationocene" and "Capitalocene"

as alterative terms. This approach recognises that the world we inhabit is not exclusively the domain of human beings, suggesting a more self-critical approach, marked by an awareness of the environments in which art unfolds (see Lorimer 2012: 384). From a critical posthumanist perspective, agency is distributed through dynamic forces that human participates do not completely control, with humans seen as entangled with their environment.

In De Jager's oil painting *Spill* (2017; figure 12) the disastrous effects of an oil spill at sea on sea life, such as seabirds, and the subsequent clean-up efforts are recalled as potential consequences of extracting resources, including deep sea mining. The streaked wash layers of grey oil paint on recycled Yupo synthetic paper, made from polypropylene, are similar to the remnants of an oil spill washed up on the shoreline. Within the South African context examples of significant oil spills include the MV Apollo Sea oil spill in 1994²¹, the MV Treasure oil spill in 2000²² and recent oil spills at Algoa Bay in 2021 (see McCain 2021). The coastal chemical spill caused by a warehouse fire in Durban during the unrest in June 2021 can also be recalled (compare Sishi and Ward 2021).²³



Figure 12
Ronél de Jager, *Spill*, 2017, oil on Yupo paper, 30 x 30 cm, *Myopia* exhibition, Lizamore and Associates, Johannesburg (photograph by the author, with permission of the artist).

Oil spills are a form of pollution described by Luck Briggs and Chidinma Briggs (2018) as the release of a liquid petroleum hydrocarbon into the environment, especially marine areas, due to human activities. Oil spills may be due to release of crude oil from tankers, pipelines, railcars, offshore platforms, drilling rigs and wells, as well as spills of refined petroleum products and their by-products, heavy fuels used by large ships such as bunker fuel, or the spill of any oily refuse or waste oil (Wolfaardt, Underhill, Altwegg and Visagie 2008).

Such oil spills have a negative effect on coastal birds and marine animals and has been catastrophic for some species, such as African penguins along the southwestern coast of Africa.²⁴ Spilled oil penetrates into the structure of the plumage of birds and the fur of mammals, reducing their insulating ability and making them more vulnerable to temperature change and less buoyant in the water.²⁵ The oil can also contaminate drinking water and fish species that are

consumed by humans and wildlife. Despite repeated condemnation of the consequences such oil spill accidents seem to continue as does the exploitive need for oil heightened by rising oil prices.

Reflecting on the depiction of the landscape and specifically the seascape, such as in De Jager's paintings for the *Myopia* exhibition, a question that should be asked, as pointed out by John Wylie (2012) with reference to notions of dwelling developed by the anthropologist Tim Ingold, is namely "... what does it mean to dwell in a landscape?". According to Carlos Roberto Bernardes de Souza Júnior (2021) the concept of more-than-human refers to the worlds of the different beings co-dwelling on Earth, a challenge to the dualism between culture and nature and between human and non-human. Through a more-than-human approach humans and non-human agents can be viewed as intertwined and as integral parts of the environments in which they exist, as articulated by Emma L. Sharp, Gary J. Brierley, Jennifer Salmond and Nicolas Lewis (2022). A more-than-human approach, as first popularised by Abram (1996: 131), can be used to reconsider landscapes through interactive notions between socio-cultural and non-human elements, as described by Lorimer (2010).

Given this heightened environmental awareness, Haraway (2016) argues that an alternative understanding of the world around us is required. Working from a critical posthumanist approach, Haraway (2008: 106) explains that confronting human exceptionalism requires working through associations of mortality and transience, such as judgements around whether human beings and non-human organisms deserve a future. In line with Sharp *et al.* (2022) the new geological epoch of the Anthropocene should be considered as an important turning point, with the need to focus on the consequences of past and present human activities that have left traces on the land, water and atmosphere and continue to pose a threat to the survival of every living thing, including interdependent relationships between human and non-human agents (Castree 2014: 436 as quoted by Sharp *et al.* 2022). Interrelationships between more-than-human beings can broaden interpretation by revealing multiple spatial dimensions as characteristic of living in the Anthropocene and can create opportunities for expressions of shared worlds (De Souza Júnior 2021). De Jager's paintings exhibited as part of the *Myopia* exhibition, as discussed in this article, point towards a possible, more-than-human reconsideration of the shared seascape, on the border between land and sea, and underwater landscape.

Conclusion

Ronél de Jager's paintings of seascapes and underwater landscapes created for the collaborative exhibition *Myopia*, with Mandy Coppes-Martin at the Lizamore and Associates Art Gallery in 2017, recall both very personal and more universal environmental associations. This series of paintings suggests new ways of looking, challenging myopic or short-sighted perspectives on environmental issues by representing fragile seascapes, on the border between land and sea, and undersea worlds also impacted by human actions.

De Jager is known for exploring the transient, elusive qualities of time and space in paintings, sculptures and installations focussing attention on the human impact on the environment. De Jager's *Myopia* paintings, including seascapes and underwater landscapes, evoke loss and fragility as part of the artist's continued exploration of the theme of transience. The artist depicts landscapes without any human figures in oil paintings translating photographic images and film stills in limited colour palettes. As discussed, De Jager is drawn to seemingly empty landscapes,

appearing to be unaffected by human life, creating a feeling of both stillness and danger, such as *Alone in this World with Water and Sky*. Suggestions of both life and death are in line with associations with the sea and water more generally.

A potential association that flows from this discussion, is the connection between an awareness of transience and of nature as cyclical. Through this heightened awareness of transience recalled by De Jager's *Myopia* paintings, the connection between people's experience of life as fragile and the destructive effect of human actions on the environment is highlighted. Destructive effects that were considered include the effects of oil spills on marine as well as human life as suggested in *Spill*. These depictions of dynamic environments in oil paintings such as the seascape *Paludarium* and underwater landscapes *Hidden Hills and Valleys of the Ocean Floor* and *Birth of an Island (After Sea of Flames)*, emphasise the important role that art can play to encourage an awareness of ecological issues.

This article contributes to the critical discussion of more-than-human seascapes and underwater landscapes in contemporary South African visual art with specific reference to De Jager's paintings for the *Myopia* exhibition. Building on the need to re-evaluate human relationships with nature, De Jager's paintings offer a starting point for exploring our fragile relationship with the natural world. This ecocritical approach recognises that the world we inhabit is not exclusively the domain of human beings. Viewers are urged to consider their own impact on nature and imagine different, less harmful relationships with the environment, challenging human exceptionalism and the divide between nature and culture as well as between human and non-human agents.

Notes

- 1 Lizamore and Associates. 2017. *Myopia*: Ronél de Jager and Mandy Coppes-Martin. Retrieved from <https://lizamore.co.za/myopia-by-mandy-coppes-martin-and-ronel-de-jager> on 11 July 2022.
- 2 Lizamore and Associates. 2015. *A.M. (After-Midnight)*: The final showcase of a three part debut exhibition. Retrieved from https://lizamore.co.za/s/AM-After-Midnight-by-Ronel-De-Jager_.pdf on 11 June 2022.
- 3 As highlighted by Pauline Cho and Qi Tan (2019) the increasing prevalence of myopia in children worldwide is viewed as a major public health concern, driving research into myopia prevention and control, including understanding risk factors. The prevalence of myopia has been steadily rising, with 28 per cent of the global population said to be affected in 2010 and expected to rise to nearly 50 per cent by 2050 (Padmaja Sankaridurg 2017). Dharani Ramamurthy, Sharon Yu Lin chua and Seang-mei Saw (2015) offer a review of environmental risk factors for myopia, emphasising that progressive high myopia can lead to sight-threatening ocular complications, with the increasing prevalence of myopia posing a socio-economic burden.
- 4 Lizamore and Associates. 2017. *Myopia*: Ronél de Jager and Mandy Coppes-Martin. Retrieved from <https://lizamore.co.za/myopia-by-mandy-coppes-martin-and-ronel-de-jager> on 11 July 2022.
- 5 Art.co.za. 2015. Ronél de Jager: Barren I - IX (series). Retrieved from <https://art.co.za/roneldejager/barren.php> on 11 July 2022.
- 6 ROOM Gallery. 2014. 'A.M.(After Midnight): A Prelude': Ronel de Jager at ROOM Gallery/Projects, *Artthrob*. Retrieved from https://artthrob.co.za/Listings/Ronel_de_Jager_at_ROOM_GalleryProjects_in_June_2014.aspx on 11 July 2022.
- 7 *Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary*. S.v. "landscape". Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <https://dictionary>.

- cambridge.org/dictionary/english/landscape on 30 July 2022.
- 8 *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*. S.v. “seascape”. Springfield: Merriam-Webster. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/seascape> on 30 July 2022.
- 9 Lizamore and Associates. 2017. Myopia: Ronél de Jager and Mandy Coppes-Martin. Retrieved from <https://lizamore.co.za/myopia-by-mandy-coppes-martin-and-ronel-de-jager> on 11 July 2022.
- 10 For examples of footage of deep-sea animals taken by Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) being used in marine science to better understand the changing ocean and raise awareness, see video highlights made available by the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI) on their YouTube channel at: MBARI (Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute). *YouTube*. Online at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/MBARIVideo/videos> Accessed: 30 July 2022.
- 11 Lizamore and Associates. 2017. Myopia: Ronél de Jager and Mandy Coppes-Martin. Retrieved from <https://lizamore.co.za/myopia-by-mandy-coppes-martin-and-ronel-de-jager> on 11 July 2022.
- 12 UJ Arts & Culture responds to the COVID-19 crisis with care and creativity. 2020. *Creative Feel*. Retrieved from <https://creativefeel.co.za/2020/05/uj-arts-culture-responds-to-the-covid-19-crisis-with-care-and-creativity/> on 11 July 2022.
- 13 UJ Arts and Culture. 2020. “The Pandemic Project :: Ronél de Jager.” *YouTube*. Online at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_IB3ScGILw Accessed: 11 July 2022.
- 14 The Pandemic: An interdisciplinary project. 2020. *Art Times* (June): 69-71. Retrieved from https://issuu.com/arttimes/docs/art_times_june_edition_2020 on 11 July 2022.
- 15 Latitudes. 2022. Ronél de Jager: Still Here. Retrieved from <https://latitudes.online/shows/new-shows/ronel-de-jager-still-here-1.html> on 11 July 2022.
- 16 Latitudes. 2022. Ronél de Jager: Still Here. Retrieved from <https://latitudes.online/shows/new-shows/ronel-de-jager-still-here-1.html> on 11 July 2022.
- 17 *Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary*. S.v. “vivarium”. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/vivarium> on 30 July 2022.
- 18 KKNK (Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees). 2017. Debuutproduksies ryg talle Kanna-toekenings in, *Litnet*, 19 April. Retrieved from <https://www.litnet.co.za/debuutproduksies-ryg-talle-kanna-benoemings/> on 11 July 2022.
- 19 Latitudes. 2022. Ronél de Jager: Still Here. Retrieved from <https://latitudes.online/shows/new-shows/ronel-de-jager-still-here-1.html> on 11 July 2022.
- 20 Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by a novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, that emerged in late 2019, with its subsequent global spread having a significant impact. As Covid-19 infections increased, governments across the world continued to implement measures to attempt to slow down the spread of the virus and reduce the pressure on healthcare systems in order to protect human life, with measures including lockdowns, border closures and prohibition of events (compare Aidoo, Agyapong, Acquah and Akomea 2021:75).
- 21 A large oil spill that affected the South African coastline was when the MV Apollo Sea, a Chinese-owned, Panamanian-registered bulk carrier, sank near Cape Town in June 1994. The oil leaking from the sunken vessel caused a major environmental disaster and killed thousands of seabirds, including vulnerable African penguins. The first public indication that the ship had sunk was the appearance of penguins covered with oil. Gale-force winds hampered attempts to protect Cape Town from the oil slick and beaches were streaked with oil. The oil affected the breeding grounds of the endangered African penguin on Dassen Island. Over 10 000 penguins were collected and cleaned, of those approximately 5000 survived, but efforts were impeded by rough weather (Wolfaardt, Underhill, Altwegg and Visagie 2008).
- 22 The MV Treasure oil spill occurred on 23 June 2000, when the ship, carrying an estimated 1,300 tons of fuel oil, sank off the coast of South Africa while transporting iron ore from China to Brazil. The oil from MV Treasure spread towards Robben Island and Dassen Island threatening the African penguin populations. Clean-up efforts began promptly after the incident with particular attention being

paid to salvaging the penguin communities. Within ten days of the spill, over 20 000 oiled African penguins were admitted to the rehabilitation centre in Cape Town, of which ninety percent were rehabilitated and released, but because of exposure on the main land, twenty-seven percent of those released have died annually from avian malaria. The African penguin rescue effort was one of the largest bird rescue missions undertaken thanks to its many volunteers and teams of professionals, included washing and rehabilitating already-oiled birds and pre-emptively capturing non-oiled birds (Wolfaardt *et al.* 2008). In 2013 a ship ran aground in Goukamma Nature Reserve outside of Knysna, only 227 birds were directly affected and ninety-five percent of them were successfully rehabilitated.

- 23 Protests broke out after former President Jacob Zuma was jailed for failing to appear at a corruption inquiry and swiftly degenerated into looting and arson, with more than 300 people and hundreds of businesses destroyed (compare Sishi and Ward 2021).
- 24 The African Penguin (*Spheniscus demersus*) is a vulnerable species, occurring along the southwestern coast of Africa, breeding between Hollamsbird Island, Namibia, and Bird Island, Algoa Bay, South Africa.
- 25 BirdLife International. 2004. Oil spills significantly reduce populations of seabirds and are costly to clean up. Retrieved from <http://datazone.birdlife.org/sowb/casestudy/oil-spills-significantly-reduce-populations-of-seabirds-and-are-costly-to-clean-up-> on 11 June 2022.

Works cited

- Abram, David. 1996. *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-than-human World*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Abram, David. 2010. *Becoming Animal: An earthly cosmology*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Agnew, Ellen. 2018. New Romantics, *Art Africa*, 23 February. Retrieved from <https://www.artafricamagazine.org/new-romantics/> on 11 July 2022.
- Aidoo, Suzzie Owiredua, Ahmed Agyapong, Moses Acquaaah and Samuel Yaw Akomea. 2021. The performance implications of strategic responses of SMEs to the Covid-19 pandemic: evidence from an African economy, *Africa Journal of Management* 7(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322373.2021.1878810>: 74-103.
- Bachelard, Gaston. 1942. *Water and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Matter*, translated from the French by E.R. Farrell [1983]. Dallas: Pegasus.
- Bachelard, Gaston. 1958. *The Poetics of Space*, translated from the French by M. Jolas [1994]. Boston: Beacon.
- Baderoon, Gabeba. 2009. The African oceans – tracing the sea as memory of slavery in South African literature and culture, *Research in African Literature* 40(4, Winter). Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40468163>: 89-107.
- Bourriaud, Nicolas. 2008. Relational aesthetics: Art of the 1990s, in *Right About Now: Art & Theory Since the 1990s*, edited by Margriet Schavemaker and Mischa Rakier. Amsterdam: Valiz.
- Braddock, Alan C. 2009. Ecocritical art history, *American Art* 23(2). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1086/605707>: 24-8.
- Braddock, Alan C. and Irmscher, Christoph (eds). 2009. *A Keener Perception: Ecocritical Studies in American Art History*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Braddock, Alan C. and Renée Ater. 2014. Art in the Anthropocene, *American*

- Art 28(3). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1086/679693>: 2-8.
- Briggs, Luck and Chidinma Briggs. 2018. Petroleum industry activities and human health, in *The Political Ecology of Oil and Gas Activities in the Nigerian Aquatic Ecosystem*, edited by Prince E Ndimele. Cambridge: Academic Press. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-809399-3.00010-0>: 143-7.
- Castree, Noel. 2014. The Anthropocene and geography I: The back story, *Geography Compass* 8(7). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12141>: 436-49.
- Childs, John. 2020. Extraction in four dimensions: Time, space and the emerging geopolitics of deep-sea mining, *Geopolitics* 25(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2018.146504>: 189-213.
- Cho, Pauline and Qi Tan. 2019. Myopia and orthokeratology for myopia control, *Clinical and Experimental Optometry* 102(4). Retrieved from <https://doi-org.oasis.unisa.ac.za/10.1111/cxo.12839>: 364-77.
- Clarke, David. 2010. *Water and Art: A Cross-cultural Study of Water as Subject and Medium in Modern and Contemporary Artistic Practice*. London: Reaktion.
- Corbin, A. 1994. *The Lure of the Sea: The Discovery of the Seaside in the Western world 1750-1840*, translated from the French by J. Phelps. London: Penguin.
- Corrigall, Mary. 2018. New Romantics exhibition: Artwork as a new romance rooted in nature's magic, *Business Day*, 22 January. Retrieved from <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/life/arts-and-entertainment/2018-01-22-artwork-as-a-new-romance-rooted-in-natures-magic/> on 11 July 2022.
- Crutzen, Paul J. and Stoermer, Eugene F. 2013. The 'Anthropocene' (2000), in *The Future of Nature: Documents of Global Change*, 2013, edited by Libby Robin, Sverker Sörlin and Paul Warde. New Haven: Yale University Press. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300188479-041>: 479-90.
- Cusack, Tricia. 2012. Introduction: exploring the water's edge, in *Art and Identity at the Water's Edge*, edited by Tricia Cusack. Farnham: Ashgate: 1-17.
- De Jager, Ronél. 2017. Artist Statement, in *Sacred and Profane: 03 August – 26 August 2017*, edited by Dirk Bahmann, Ronél de Jager, Stephan Erasmus, Mandy Johnson, Wayne Matthews, Neil Nieuwoudt. Retrieved from <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55d72b16e4b0f5f10ae1260e/t/598c1ebf9f7456493d0b8315/1502356404756/Sacred+and+Profane+%28MEDIUM%29.pdf> on 11 July 2022.
- De Jager, Ronél. 2020a. *Green (2020): Painting featured at 'Vanishing Act' exhibition, KKNK National Arts Festival*, Online 22 June – 25 July, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.roneldejager.com/green> on 8 June 2022.
- De Jager, Ronél. 2020b. *When the Earth Stands Still (2020)*. Retrieved from <https://www.roneldejager.com/whentheearthstandsstill> on 8 June 2022.
- DeLoughrey, Elizabeth and Flores, Tatiana. 2020. Submerged bodies, *Environmental Humanities* 12(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-8142242>: 132-66.
- De Souza, Carlos Roberto Bernardes Júnior. 2021. More-than-human cultural geographies towards co-dwelling on earth, *Mercator, Fortaleza* 20. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4215/rm2021.e20005>.

- Dixon, Marion. 2011. Water, the [delicate] thread of life, in *Water, the [Delicate] Thread of Life*, edited by Federico Freschi. Johannesburg: Standard Bank of South Africa: 12-25.
- Eron, Sarah. 2006. Circles and the in-between: Shaping time, space, and paradox in Swinburnian verse, *Victorian Poetry* 44(3, Fall). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1353/vp.2006.0030>: 293-309.
- Estok, Simon C. and Sivaramakrishnan, Murali. 2014. Introduction to new work in ecocriticism, *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 16(4). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.2618>.
- Froment, Emilie. 2022. Melding the mirror of scientific observation with her artistic license: Ronél de Jager's work interprets transformational qualities as core in all matter, *Habitat: The Art of Living* 29 June. Retrieved from <https://www.thelivinghabitat.com/melding-mirror-scientific-observation-artistic-license-ronel-interpret-natures-transformation-core-quality/>.
- Gablik, Suzi. 1993. *The Reenchantment of Art*. New York: Thames and Hudson.
- Ghosn, Rania and Jazairy, El Hadi. 2020. Trash peaks: A terrarium of the Anthropocene, *Architectural Design* 90(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1002/ad.2522>: 32-7.
- Gilligan, Carol. 1982. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Grosvenor, Ian. 2007. From the 'Eye of History' to 'a Second Gaze': The visual archive and the marginalized in the history of education, *History of Education* 36(4-5). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/00467600701496948>: 607-22.
- Haraway, Donna J. 2008. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Haraway, Donna J. 2015. Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making kin, *Environmental Humanities* 6(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-3615934>: 159-65.
- Haraway, Donna J. 2016. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Henry, Matthew S. 2018. Nonhuman narrators and multinatural worlds in Karen Tei Yamashita's *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest*, *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and the Environment* 25(3, Summer). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1093/isle/isx061>: 566-83.
- Jamal, Ashraf. 2022. Elegant inscrutability: Ronél De Jager's 'Still Here', *ArtThrob* 7 July. Retrieved from <https://artthrob.co.za/2022/07/07/elegant-inscrutability-ronel-de-jagers-still-here/> on 11 July 2022.
- Jansen, Carina. 2022. STILL HERE, in *Ronél de Jager STILL HERE Exhibition Catalogue 2022*. Published on Jun 11, 2022. Retrieved from https://issuu.com/kalashnikovgallery/docs/ron_1_de_jager_-_still_here_2022_-_2022-06-17 on 11 July 2022.
- Jay, Martin. 1994. *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Khimasia, Anant, Rovere, Alessio and Pichler, Thomas. 2020. Hydrothermal areas, microbial mats and sea grass in Paleochori Bay, Milos, Greece, *Journal of Maps* 16(2). Retrieved from <https://0-doi-org.oasis.unisa.ac>.

- za/10.1080/17445647.2020.1748131: 348-56.
- Krajewska, Ania. 2017. The anthropocene shifts in visual arts: A case against anthropocentrism, *De Arte* 52(2-3). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/00043389.2017.1332504>: 29-53.
- Lorimer, Jamie. 2010. Moving image methodologies for more-than-human geographies, *Cultural Geographies* 17(2). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474010363853>: 237-58.
- Lorimer, Jamie. 2012. Aesthetics for post-human worlds: Difference, expertise and ethics, *Dialogues in Human Geography* 2(284). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820612468646>: 284-87.
- Louis, Margot K. 2004. Swinburne, *Victorian Poetry* 42(3, Fall). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1353/vp.2004.0054>: 401-9.
- Lüddecke, Horst. 2003. Space use, cave choice, and spatial learning in the dendrobatid frog *Colostethus palmatus*, *Amphibia-Reptilia* 24(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1163/156853803763806920>: 37-46.
- McCain, Nicole. 2021. Oil spill sees 80 litres of fuel enter Algoa Bay, possibly endangering seabirds. *News24*, 18 November. Retrieved from <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/oil-spill-sees-80-litres-of-fuel-enter-algoa-bay-possibly-endangering-seabirds-20211118> on 11 June 2022.
- Mullane, Matthew. 2010. The aesthetic ear: sound art, Jacques Rancière and the politics of listening, *Journal of Aesthetics & Culture* 2(1): 4895. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3402/jac.v2i0.4895>.
- Munaretto, Stefania, Vellinga, Pier and Tobi, Hilde. 2012. Flood protection in Venice under conditions of sea-level rise: An analysis of institutional and technical measures, *Coastal Management* 40(4). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/08920753.2012.692311>: 355-8.
- Myburg, Johan. 2016. Kuns: Ronel de Jager, *Vrouekeur*, 17 June. Retrieved from <https://www.vrouekeur.co.za/nuus-vermaak/kuns-musiek/kuns-ronel-de-jager-2> on 11 July 2022.
- Myburg, Johan. 2022. Resensie: ‘Still Here’ – Ronél de Jager, *Netwerk24*, 22 June. Retrieved from <https://www.netwerk24.com/netwerk24/kunste/kuns/resensie-still-here-ronel-de-jager-20220622> on 11 July 2022.
- Nava, Raúl. 2022. *Fresh from the Deep* video series provides inside look at newest ocean explorations. Moss Landing: Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI). Retrieved from <https://www.mbari.org/fresh-from-the-deep-series/> on 31 June 2022.
- Nel, Adele. 2012. By sý oë uit, by jóune in”: relasionaliteit, visie en die dood in *Die SneeuSlaper* (2010) van Marlene van Niekerk, *Stilet: Tydskrif van die Afrikaanse Letterkundevereniging* 24(2): 53-74. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC138242> on 11 July 2022.
- O’Gorman, Francis. 2003. “Death lies dead”: The allusive texture of Swinburne’s “A Forsaken Garden”, *Victorian Poetry* 41(3, Fall). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1353/vp.2003.0041>: 348-52.
- Olivier, Bert. 2007. Ecological ‘art’ and the transformation of the world, *South African Journal of Art History* 22(1): 24–34. Retrieved from <https://repository.up.ac.za/handle/2263/10273> on 11 July 2022.

- Raad, Danielle R. 2021. The power of collective vision: landscape, visual media, and the production of American mountains, *Journal of Cultural Geography* 38(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/08873631.2020.1775005>: 102-22.
- Ramamurthy, Dharani, Yu Lin Chua, Sharon and Saw, Seang-mei. 2015. A review of environmental risk factors for myopia during early life, childhood and adolescence, *Clinical and Experimental Optometry* 98(6). Retrieved from <https://0-doi-org.oasis.unisa.ac.za/10.1111/cxo.12346>: 497-506.
- Reidy, Michael S. and Rozwadowski, Helen M. 2014. The spaces in between: science, ocean, empire, *Isis* 105(2). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1086/676571>: 338-51.
- Robinson, Fiona. 2020. Resisting hierarchies through relationality in the ethics of care, *International Journal of Care and Caring* 4(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1332/239788219X15659215344772>: 11-23.
- Roets, Andriaan. 2016. Blank Spaces: Explore the best KKNK visual art, *The Citizen*, 5 May. Retrieved from <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/the-citizen-gaun/20160505/281895887446608> on 11 July 2022.
- Sankaridurg, Padmaja. 2017. Contact lenses to slow progression of myopia, *Clinical and Experimental Optometry* 100(5). Retrieved from <https://0-doi-org.oasis.unisa.ac.za/10.1111/cxo.12584>: 432-7.
- Schmitz, Kenneth S. 2018. *Physical Chemistry: Multidisciplinary Applications in Society*. Amsterdam: Elsevier. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-800513-2.01001-9>.
- Sharp, Emma L., Brierley, Gary J., Salmond, Jennifer and Lewis, Nicolas. 2022. Geoethical futures: A call for more-than-human physical geography, *EPF: Philosophy, Theory, Models, Methods and Practice* 1(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/26349825221082168>: 66-81.
- Silverman, Kaja. 2009. *Flesh of my Flesh*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Sishi, Siyabonga and Ward, Rogan. 2021. South African authorities probe coastal chemical spill in Durban. *Reuters*, 18 June. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/south-african-authorities-probe-coastal-chemical-spill-durban-2021-07-17/> on 11 June 2022.
- Smith, Hance D., Ballinger, Rhoda C. and Stojanovic, Timothy A. 2012. The spatial development basis of marine spatial planning in the United Kingdom, *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning* 14(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/1523908X.2012.663192>: 29-47.
- Spayde, Jon. 2016. Portable land art, *Public Art Review* 54 (Spring/Summer): 50-7. Retrieved from https://issuu.com/forecastpublicart/docs/par54_final on 11 July 2022.
- Stevens, Ingrid. 2013. The pool of psyche: water in the works of Ariana van Heerden and Kevin Roberts, *South African Journal of Art History* 28(2): 217-23.
- Swart, Sandra. 2021. At the edge of the Anthropocene: Crossing borders in Southern African environmental history, *South African Historical Journal* 73(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/02582473.2021.1939768>: 1-10.

- Swinburne, Algernon Charles. 1878. *Poems and Ballads: Second series*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Symington, Fiona. 1997. Sensory speculations: Visual discourse and the vision of visibility, *Social Semiotics* 7(3). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350339709360390>: 307-21.
- Taylor, Ken and Lennon, Jane L. 2011. Cultural landscapes: a bridge between culture and nature?, *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 17(6). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2011.618246>: 537-54.
- Vázquez-Medina, Olivia. 2018. Myopia and dazzlement: Visions of Venice in Sergio Pitol, *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 95(4). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14753820.2018.1483645>: 325-50.
- Wells, Lindsay. 2018. Close Encounters of the Wardian Kind: Terrariums and pollution in the Victorian Parlo, *Victorian Studies* 60(2). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2979/victorianstudies.60.2.02>: 158-10.
- Wilbert, Chris. 2019. More-than-human heritage spaces: Animal-human stories from Hoo to Tiergarten, in *Tiergarten, Landscapes of Transgression: This Obscure Object of Desire*, edited by Sandra Bartoli and Jörg Stollmann. Zürich: Park Books.
- Wolfaardt, A.C., Underhill, L.G., Altwegg, R. and Visagie, J. 2008. Restoration of oiled African penguins *Spheniscus demersus* a decade after the Apollo Sea spill, *African Journal of Marine Science* 30(2). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.2989/AJMS.2008.30.2.14.564>: 421-36.
- Woodhouse, Adam, Barnes, Philip M., Shorrocks, Anthony, Strachan, Lorna J., Crundwell, Martin, Bostock, Helen C., Hopkins, Jenni, Kutterolf, Steffen, Pank, Katharina, Behrens, Erik, Greve, Annika, Bell, Rebecca, Cook, Ann, Petronotis, Katerina, LeVay, Leah, Jamieson, Robert A., Aze, Tracy, Wallace, Laura, Saffer, Demian and Pecher, Ingo. 2022. Trench floor depositional response to glacio-eustatic changes over the last 45 ka, northern Hikurangi subduction margin, New Zealand, *New Zealand Journal of Geology and Geophysics*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/00288306.2022.2099432>: 1-24.
- Wylie, John. 2012. Dwelling and displacement: Tim Robinson and the questions of landscape, *Cultural Geographies* 19(3, July). Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44251486>: 365-83.
- Xiang, Xianbo, Niu, Zemin, Lapierre, Lionel and Zuo, Mingjiu. 2015. Hybrid underwater robotic vehicles: The state-of-the-art and future trends, *HKIE Transactions* 22(2). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/1023697X.2015.1038322>: 103-16.

Catharina de Klerk obtained a Masters of Arts degree in History of Art at the North-West University in 2021, exploring the beach as transformative threshold in Guy du Toit's *Beach Scene* sculpture series (2015). Her research interests as an independent researcher include visual art and the environment, memory studies and materiality. At present she is particularly interested in the depiction of ecological issues and temporality in contemporary South African art.