

Masquerade



by André Stead

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2020

Stainless Steel Masks

2020 has been a significant year for the world due to the Covid-19 pandemic affecting so many lives. Social distancing and hygiene have become synonymous with our efforts to combat the virus. All over the world, the effects are echoed from one country to another as the pandemic sweeps the globe.

The measures some countries took to protect their citizens also had a significant impact on the mental wellbeing of many people. Social isolation, mass unemployment and economic recession have left many people vulnerable, homeless or starving.

I felt inspired by a story of a young graphic designer who had started making masks due to unemployment from the covid-19 pandemic. It was a meaningful reflection of what was happening in the world now. The collection of stainless steel masks are a tribute to the spirit of human survival in times of adversity.

At the beginning of the lockdown in South Africa, I could not travel to my studio, so I stayed at home and made a series of watercolour portraits of my family. I also collected several masks and borrowed a sewing machine so we could make our masks at home. It was clear that the pandemic would have a profound impact on the world, touching everyone in one way or another.

After working for months on my new solo exhibition, all plans were now on hold, as shows and travelling got postponed, and suppliers were closed for the lockdown it became clear that I would have to use what I had available in the studio to create some new work. I wanted to do work that reflected my own experience, as well as what is happening in the world.

I already had the reference material for making masks and combined with the inspiring story of the young designer who started making masks unexpectedly. I felt it was fitting to document this phenomenon with a unique collection of hand made stainless steel masks showing some of the different face covers used during the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic.

As many face an uncertain future and the world sees an unusual amount of people and companies moving online for commerce and social interaction it makes me wonder what kind of future we are likely to live in beyond Covid-19. One thing is sure, the pandemic has changed our world in ways that may take years to understand, and the social and cultural impact from it will last for years to come.

We are now more dependant than ever on social media and digital connections to keep in touch with our friends and loved ones. The intersection between our physical bodies and our digital connection to the world is the subject of my new solo exhibition 'Singularity 'due to open later in 2020.



Mask V
2020
Stainless steel
130 x 140 x 150 mm

Homemade mask

Homemade masks are ubiquitous, and it's straightforward to find patterns for different designs online to make masks. They are usually made with two or three layers of cloth to maximize the chances of keeping out viral material. The pattern can also easily be scaled down to fit children and are very inexpensive to make. The added benefit of a homemade mask is that it can be custom fitted for comfort and can have almost any design on it depending on the fabric used.



Mask VIII
2020
Stainless steel
150 x 170 x 130 mm



Mask VIII
2020
Stainless steel
150 x 170 x 130 mm

Commercial Mask

The FFP1 mask is widely used in the construction industry and protects against dust and other airborne particulates. There are different versions of the moulded respirator that also have a valve for breathing, and the mask is a product of South Africa.



Mask III
2020
Stainless steel
130 x 150 x 160 mm



Mask IX
2020
Stainless steel
130 x 180 x 200 mm



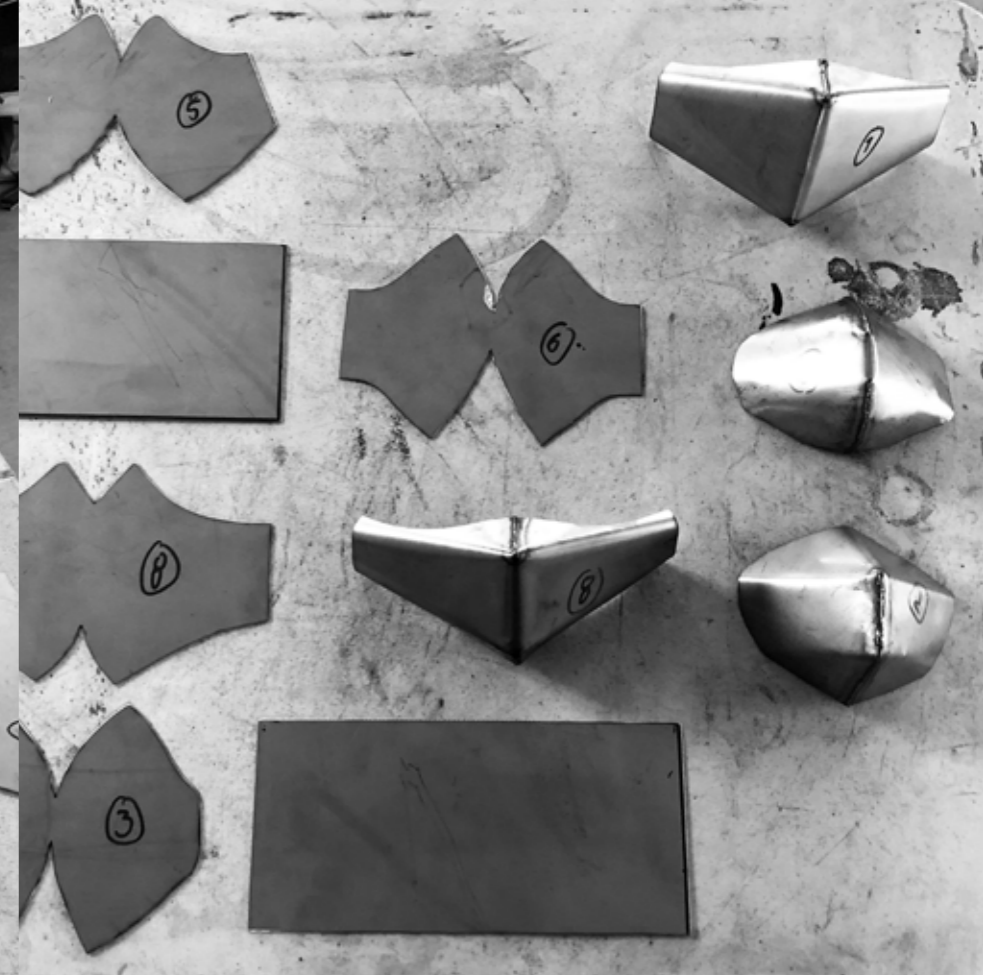
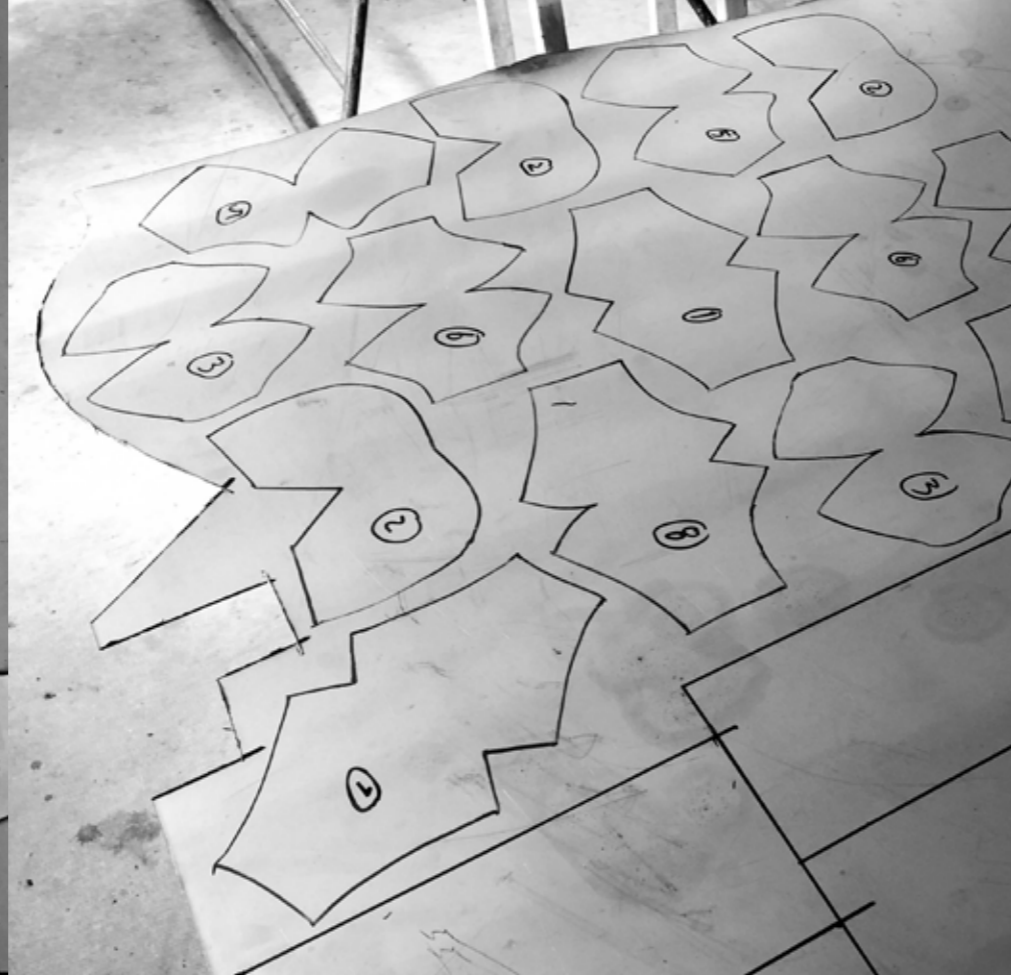
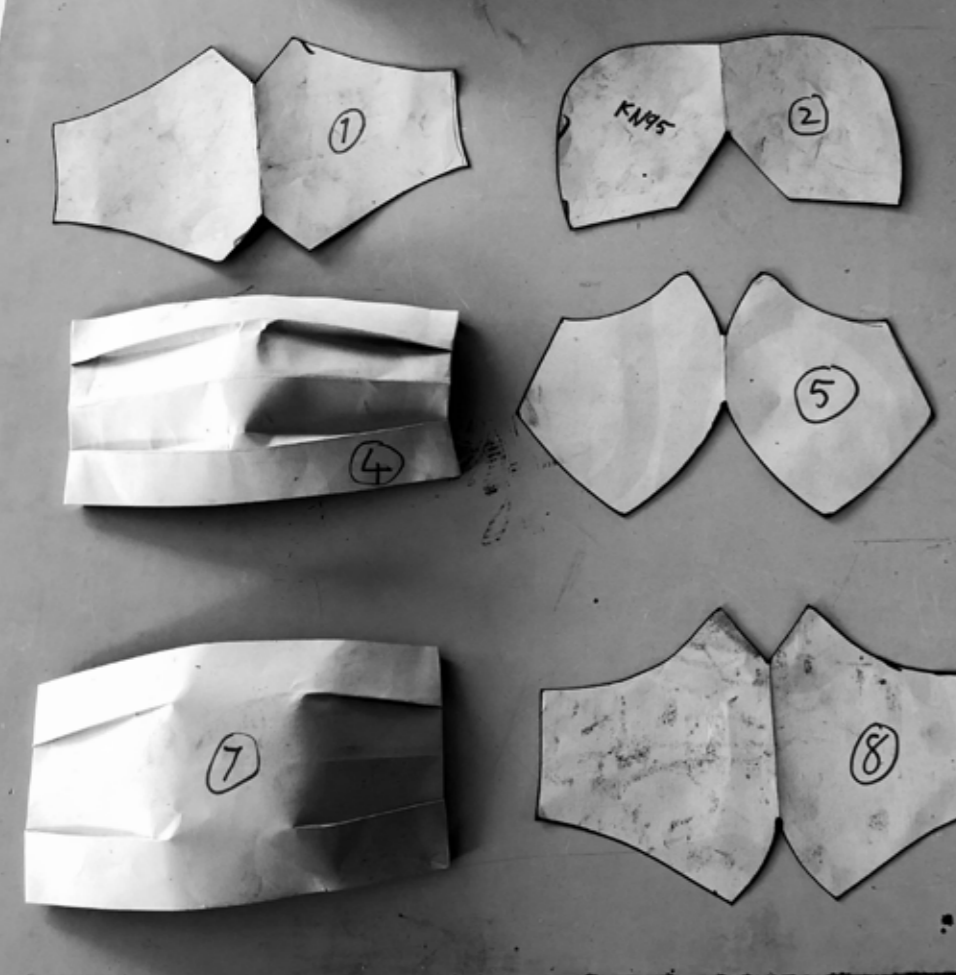
In the Studio

At the beginning of 2019, I started retooling my studio for working with stainless steel. I started learning some new techniques for shaping metal and progressively increased my ability to create complex forms from sheet metal.

The experience that I gained from the original development work I did in stainless steel forming techniques made it easy to come up with a good process for making the masks in metal. I started by making cardboard cutouts that I could trace onto the metal for cutting out the appropriate shapes.

The pieces are all made by hand, including the cutting, welding, shaping and polishing, making each piece a unique artwork in its own right. Once all the parts have been assembled and finished off each piece is signed and dated. The collection currently consists of twenty-two individual artworks and nine different masks types.

These masks can not be worn and are an artistic representation of different kinds of face covers made in Stainless steel that symbolise people from different cultural and economic backgrounds.





Mask I
2020
Stainless steel
140 x 150 x 180 mm



KN95 Mask

This face mask is widely used in the medical industry and has multiple layers of nano fibred non-woven cloth capable of filtering viral particulates. The respirator is FDA approved, very much sought after during the pandemic and a product of China.



Mask II
2020
Stainless steel
130 x 150 x 160 mm



Mask VI
2020
Stainless steel
130 x 130 x 150 mm



Mask VI
2020
Stainless steel
130 x 130 x 150 mm



Mask IV
2020
Stainless steel
135 x 210 x 330 mm

Folded mask

There are many kinds of folded masks used in hospitals and the medical industry. These stainless steel masks derived their inspiration from the folded design and adapted for metal to look like the cloth ones, although the manufacturing process is very different.



Mask IV
2020
Stainless steel
135 x 210 x 330 mm



Mask VII
2020
Stainless steel
140 x 200 x 280 mm

Surgical mask

The surgical mask completely replaced the traditional cloth facemask during the 1960s in most developed countries. Cloth facemasks were widely used from the late 19th century and slowly evolved into ever more sophisticated iterations over time.



André Stead

Born in Evander, 1975. Lives and works in Cape Town.

Qualifications and awards

2007 Eight years at the Bronze Age Art Foundry, Simon's Town

1997 Metal forging tuition, John Allesandri, Cape Town

1995 Graphic design course, Gunther Komnick, Cape Town

1994 Goldsmith apprenticeship, Pretoria

1993 Pro Arte School of Arts, Distinction with colours for Art, Pretoria

1991 Merit award, Iscor Art Competition, Iscor Art Collection, Pretoria

Selected Exhibitions and Commissions

2020

International sculpture day, Group exhibition, Melrose Arch Gallery, Johannesburg

Zug Installation art project, Private commission, Zug, Switzerland

Meeth-Willkomm installation art project, Private commission, Germany

2019

Disrupting Patterns, Group exhibition, Melrose Arch Gallery, One and Only Hotel

Collectors' exhibition, Group exhibition, Knysna Fine art, Knysna

Sculptx, Group exhibition, Melrose Arch Gallery, Johannesburg

Ravens in flight, Private commission, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Santa Fe Doves, Private commission, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Cape Town Art Fair 2018, Art Fair, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

2018

Sculptx, Group exhibition, Melrose Arch Gallery, Johannesburg

Celebration of Winter, Group exhibition, Grande Provence Gallery, Franschoek

Charity Auction, Private Auction in aid of Groote Schuur Hospital, Stellenbosch

Sculpture on the Cliffs, Public art exhibition, Hermanus Fine Arts, Hermanus

Timeless, Group exhibition, Melrose Arch Gallery, Umhlanga, KwaZulu-Natal

Guest Artist, Stellenbosch Arts Association Members' Exhibition, Stellenbosch

Cape Town Art Fair 2018, Art Fair, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

2017

Stable 2017, Group exhibition, Melrose Arch Gallery, Johannesburg

Charity Auction, Private Auction in aid of The Rainbow Academy, Cape Town

20-year celebration, Group exhibition, Knysna Fine art, Knysna

Art at the Clock Tower, Group exhibition, Cast - Cape Town, V&A Waterfront

Sculptx, Group exhibition, Melrose Arch Gallery, Johannesburg

Black and white, Group exhibition, Absolute Art Gallery, Stellenbosch

Summer Exhibition, Group exhibition, Art at Durban Ville Hills, Durban Ville

Public artwork, Rand Merchant Bank - Private Collection, Johannesburg

Cape Town Art Fair 2017, Art Fair, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

Mute Wisdom, Group exhibition, Art at Almenkerk, Algin Grabow

2016

Sublimation, Solo exhibition, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

A Sense of Place, Group exhibition, Imibala Gallery, Somerset West

Self-I, Group exhibition, Everard Read Gallery, Franschoek.

Transmutation, Group exhibition, Knysna Fine Art Gallery, Knysna

Cape Town Art Fair 2016, Art Fair, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

A Certain Kind Of Madness, Group exhibition, Imibala Gallery, Somerset West

2015

Summer Exhibition, Group exhibition, Knysna Fine Art Gallery, Knysna

Signature, Group exhibition, Everard Read Gallery, Franschoek.

US Woordfees, Group exhibition, P J Olivier Art Centre, Stellenbosch

Cape Town Art Fair 2015, Art Fair, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

Bring your own identity, Group exhibition, Knysna Fine Art Gallery, Knysna

Is Sculpture at Tokara, Group exhibition, Tokara Wine Estate, Stellenbosch

2014

Murmuration, Corporate commission, Delaire Graff Wine Estate, Stellenbosch

Woordfees 2014, Group exhibition, P J Olivier Art Centre, Stellenbosch

Cape Town Art Fair 2014, Art Fair, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

The Fountain of youth, Private commission, Oxford, United Kingdom

The Wall of Words, Corporate Commission, Oxford, United Kingdom

2013

Koi Fish Installation, Private commission, Singapore

Cape Town Art Fair 2013, Art Fair, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

National Heritage Project Company Commission

Elemental man, Solo exhibition, Knysna Fine Art Gallery, Knysna

Woordfees 2013, Group exhibition, P J Olivier Art Centre, Stellenbosch

2012

Summer, Group exhibition, Christopher Møller Art, Cape Town

Young Minds Charity Fund Raiser, st. Lorient, Pretoria

Illumination, Solo exhibition, Christopher Møller Art, Cape Town

Oxford Swallows, Private commission, Oxford, United Kingdom

2011

Flight of the Swallows, Corporate commission, Delaire Wine Estate, Stellenbosch

Evolution, Solo exhibition, Is Art Gallery, Franschoek

Group exhibition, Christopher Møller Art, Cape Town

Group exhibition, Dawid's Choice Gallery, Johannesburg

Roodt Inc, group exhibition, Dawid's Choice Gallery, Johannesburg

2010

Group exhibition, Dimitrov Art Gallery, Dullstroom

Rooftop exhibition, group show, St. Lorient, Pretoria

Group exhibition, The Upper Deck Gallery, Plettenberg Bay

Group exhibition, Christopher Møller Art Gallery, Cape Town

2009

Group exhibition, Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg

Identity, group exhibition, Platform on 18th Gallery, Pretoria

Figures, solo exhibition, Northcliff, Johannesburg

Female series launch, Grande Provence Heritage Wine Estate, CTICC

2008

Angels, group exhibition, Grande Provence Gallery, Franschoek

Group exhibition, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town

Medallions, Corporate Commission, Burj Khalifa Development, Dubai

2006

Corporate commission, Graham Beck Wine Estate, Franschoek

Group exhibition, Bronze Age Sculpture House, Cape Town

2000 – 2005

Group exhibition, Seidelberg Wine Estate, Paarl

Miniatures, group exhibition, Bronze Age Sculpture House, Cape Town

Board of Executors, Corporate Commission, Cape Town

Group exhibition, Vineyard Gallery, Cape Town

1999

Group exhibition, The Christie Gallery, Cape Town

Group exhibition, Everard Read Gallery, Cape Town

1998

Wooden figures, Solo exhibition, Novalis Institute, Cape Town

Sanlam Restoration - Award, Corporate commission, Sanlam, Cape Town

Group exhibition, Association for visual arts, Cape Town

1997

Sanlam Literary Award, Corporate commission, Sanlam, Grahamstown

Group exhibition, Primart Gallery, Cape Town

Collections

Laurence Graff

Bernard Fontannaz

Board of Executives

Rand Merchant Bank Collection

National Heritage Project Company

Graham Beck Estates

Johnny Walker

Tom Nickloff

Willy Woestyn

Sanlam Collection

Iscor Collection

Iscor

