

# SACRED AND PROFANE

03 AUGUST - 26 AUGUST 2017



DIRK BAHMANN | RONÉL DE JAGER | STEPHAN ERASMUS  
MANDY JOHNSTON | WAYNE MATTHEWS | NEIL NIEUWOUDT

LIZAMORE  
& Associates

C A T A L O G U E

s e l e c t e d  
w o r k s

"In 1600 at the age of twenty-five the shoemaker Jakob Böhme was 'seized by the divine light (...) and at the sudden sight of a pewter vessel (...) which led to the inner-most ground or centre of secret nature' .

By Bohme's own account, he had broken through the portals of Hell for the duration of a quarter of an hour. 'I recognized the whole of Being in Evil and Good, the way one originates in the other (...). I saw through as into a chaos with everything in it, but I could not undo it.' He recognized 'that all things consist of Yes and No', and these 'are no two things side by side, but only one thing (...). Were it not for these two, which are in constant conflict, all things would be Nothing, and would stand still and motionless.'"

-Alexander Roob



## Sacred and the Profane

Lizamore & Associates is pleased to present a group exhibition titled, "Sacred and the Profane". The exhibition takes place from the 03rd August to 27 August. Participating artists are; Dirk Bahmann, Ronél de Jager, Stephan Erasmus, Mandy Johnston, Wayne Matthews and Neil Nieuwoudt. The works on show explore a range of processes that draw on ideas and interpretations of the Sacred and the Profane. It stems from the need of every era to reinvent "spirituality" for itself. Art has the potential to lead us to a place of vision that unites the material and ethereal worlds (Hart 2005:3). Human experience has the possibility to be ordered by the sacred and to create fundamental meaning in the world.

This duality causes humanity to become aware of the sacred because it manifests itself as something wholly different from the profane (Eliade 1959:11). This awareness becomes a reality that does not belong to our world, in objects that are an integral part of our natural "profane" world (Eliade 1959:11). Humanity of every culture and era has exerted great efforts to presence and to glimpse the numinous through ritual, art and monumental architecture. The exhibition, Sacred and Profane brings together a group of artists seeking the impossible, confronting dualities and investigating the intertextual nature of adding meaning to what is already known. In this sense, authenticity cannot be handed down, new maps of consciousness need to be drawn along with an exploration of new visions that challenge the structural contradictions inherent in the human condition in an attempt at a truthful transcendence.

With this inherent interplay, something of the religious conception of the world persists in the behavior of profane man, although he is not always conscious of this fixed heritage (Eliade 1959:49). The artists therefore seek, "— something to satisfy our "craving for the cloud of unknowing beyond knowledge and for the silence beyond speech."

Binaries of unity and individuality and ways of being are delved into as the artists encounter the highest question because its answer is no answer. Meaning must be continuously re-found and reformed for it to be alive. The human condition is one of duality - without light, we cannot know darkness, without suffering we cannot know freedom and without the profane we cannot know the sacred. A genuine sense of the numinous is not possible without the many other things, the artist who creates the sacred must therefore produce something "dialectical: a full void, an enriching emptiness."

Authorship of the works has been intentionally blurred. Artists have collaborated extensively to produce the body of work. For a singular voice is the voice mute of authority. There is a search for the complex, the layered, ...the impossible dream of the sacred... and the profane.

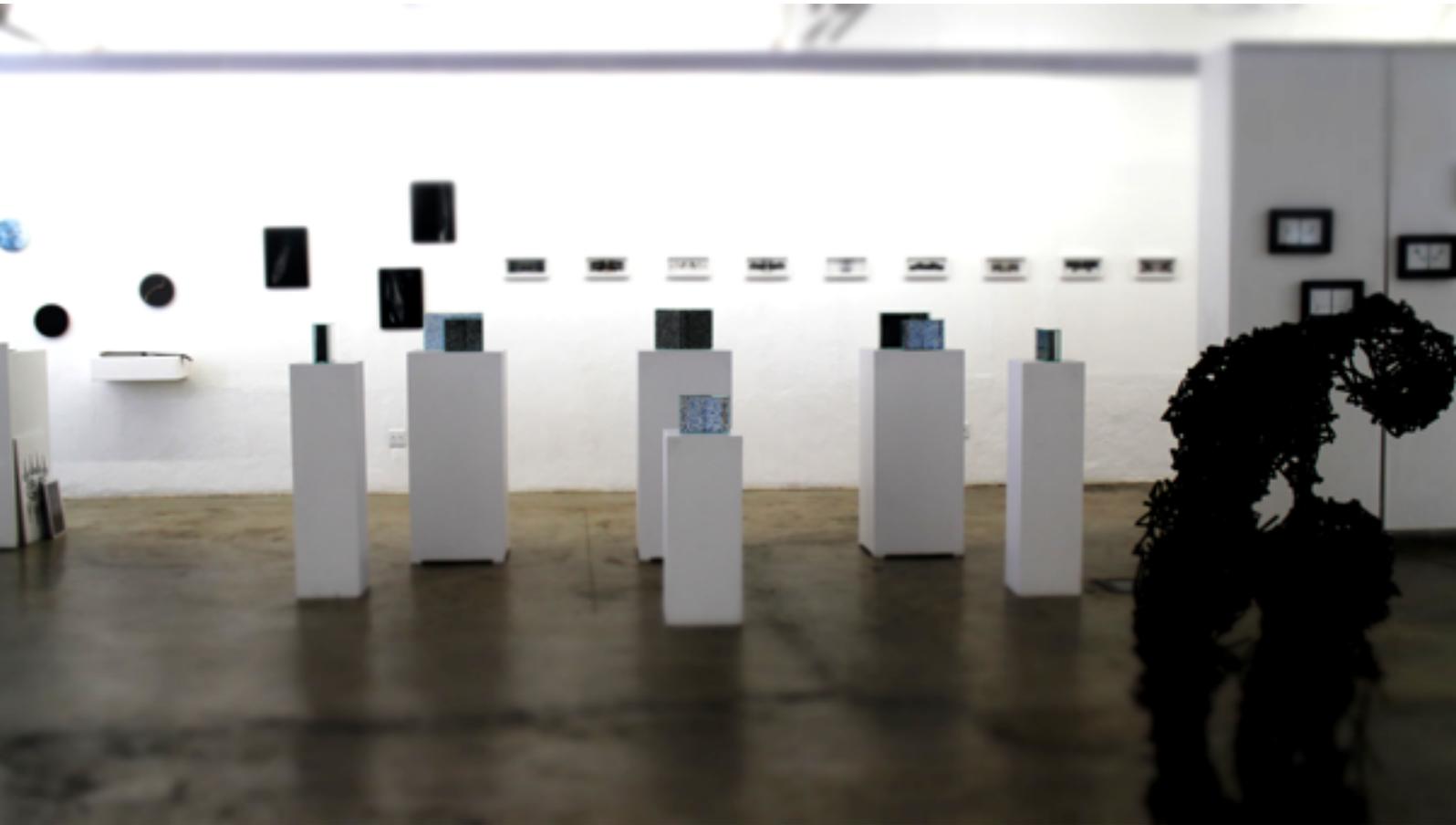
### References:

Hart, A. 2005. THE SACRED IN ART AND ARCHITECTURE: Timeless principles and contemporary challenges. [O]. Available: <http://aidanharticons.com/the-sacred-in-art-and-architecture-timeless-principles-and-contemporary-challenges/>

Eliade, M. 1959. The Sacred and the Profane: the Nature of Religion. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.



Installation view of Sacred and Profane at Lizamore and Associates | 2017



Installation view of Sacred and Profane at Lizamore and Associates | 2017

# DIRK BAHMANN

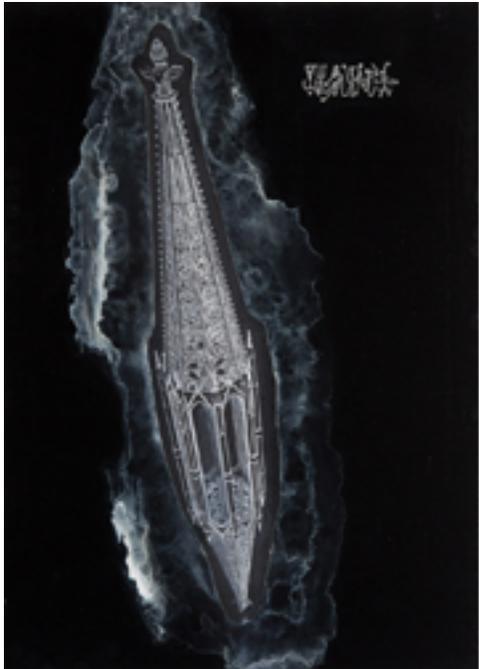
And if you gaze long into an abyss, the abyss also gazes into you.

- Friedrich Nietzsche

My works serve as an instrument that allows me to engage with, and to stare into the abyss of being. They form a flimsy armature that serves as a centre in the orientation-less vastness of the psyche - A point to move from and to which to return. They allow me to wander in this world of shifting shadows, seeking out the ill-defined edges and mumbling about that which I can barely make out.

Consciousness has proven itself to be inherently difficult to grasp and map. It resists any finite definition. The more one tries to pin it down the more evasive and elusive it becomes. To navigate the interior of one's own being is a pathless path. There are numerous maps in existence of others journeys but none that truly reflect the landscape that one encounters. The works, for me emerge out of a blind groping in the dark, which through a constant prodding begins to suggest a form which inexplicably resonates within the works. These delicate forms serve as an anchor from which to navigate, orientate, think and dream about the interior void.

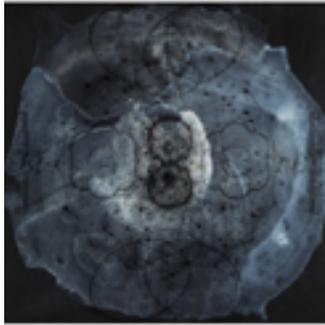
We all dwell somewhere. In the external world this is the place which we call home. It is our shelter and refuge and to which we return to at the end of the day. But we also dwell in an interior world. But what is the form of the interior "home"? How do we to articulate it? How do we recognize it? And how does it bridge the interior and exterior? Through these questions the works engages with the psycho - spatial aspects of the psyche and attempts to find " home" in this day and age.



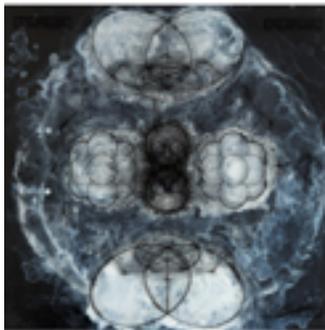
(left to right) Dirk Bahmann & Neil Nieuwoudt | Above and Below I - III  
Acrylic and polyurethane varnish on laser engraved nitrile  
rubber bonded to aluminum | 43 x 30,6 cm  
Variable edition of 5 | R4 200,00 (each)



(left to right) Dirk Bahmann & Wayne Matthews | Round and Round I - III  
Graphite and salt on laser engraved nitrile rubber bonded to  
aluminum | 43 x 30,6 cm | Variable edition of 5 | R4 200,00 (each)



Dirk Bahmann, Neil Nieuwoudt &  
Wayne Matthews | Into the Abyss  
I (triptych) | Acrylic on laser  
engraved nitrile rubber bonded  
to aluminum, lead, copper,  
aluminum leaf Total dimensions:  
194 x 43 cm; Individual panels:  
43 x 73 cm (2x) and 43 x 43cm |  
Variable Edition of 5 |  
R9 600,00



Dirk Bahmann, Neil Nieuwoudt &  
Wayne Matthews | Into the abyss  
II (triptych) | Acrylic on laser  
engraved nitrile rubber bonded  
to aluminum, lead, copper,  
aluminum leaf Total dimensions:  
194 x 43 cm; Individual panels:  
43 x 73 cm (2x) and 43 x 43cm |  
Variable Edition of 5  
R9 600,00

# RONÉL DE JAGER

In the group exhibition, *The Sacred & Profane*, De Jager draws from her interest in the metaphysical in a new series of process based works which engage scientific practices to explore the relationship between process and medium.

Rather than building structures which allude to sacred forms of mysticism and history, De Jager's work fixates on the alchemical to explore what is seen as sacred and profane.

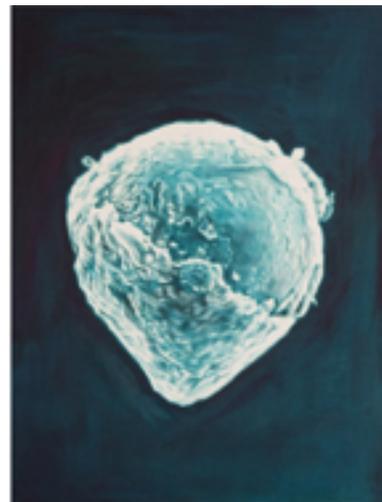
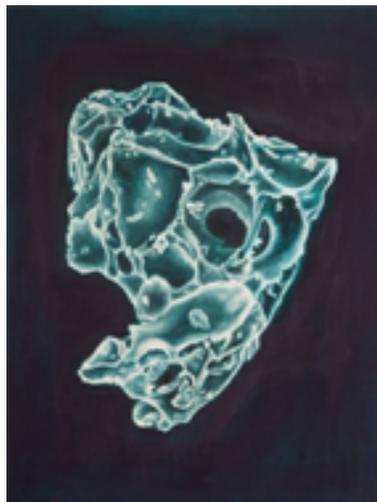
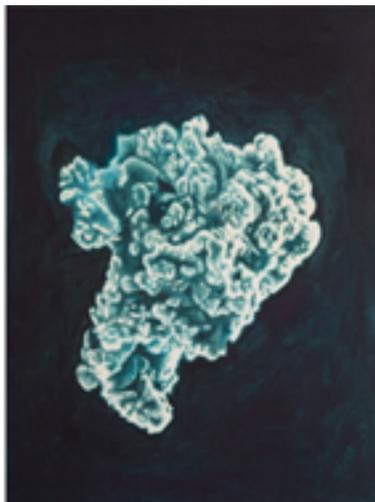
This exploratory process consists of a scientific approach in which De Jager investigates the interaction between paint and canvas, dye and fabric and metals to a chemical electromagnetic process.

These reactive processes occurred in De Jager's studio/cum laboratory where she studies the weight of paints, its viscosity and how this relates to its gravitational pull and therefore its behaviour once placed on the surface of the canvas.

In this way De Jager asks us to question who is controlling the behaviour of the medium and the outcome of the artwork, is it in its own innate structure or is this the work of the artist as she manipulates the medium.

The orb shapes which unify the works point to the physical manifestation of a petri dish, a scientific tool to culture cells and study their habits, De Jager searches within the seemingly known yet profanely unknown outcomes.

Fascinated with words, its influence and its definitions, De Jager wants us to notice this reiteration of the circle and acknowledge its use in relation to ideas of cycles and movement and more developed concepts of the circle in astronomy, calculus and geometry.



(l-r) Ronél de Jager | Dust I - IV | Acid dye on Cotton Canvas | 80 x 60 cm | R11 400,00 (each)



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(left) Ronél de Jager | Adam (Diptych) | Cyanotype on cotton canvas  
50 x 150 cm (each) | R11 400,00



Ronél de Jager | Virus (series) 11 - 13 | Acrylic on board 23,5 cm diameter | R3 100,00 (each)

# STEPHAN ERASMUS

## Back and Forth series

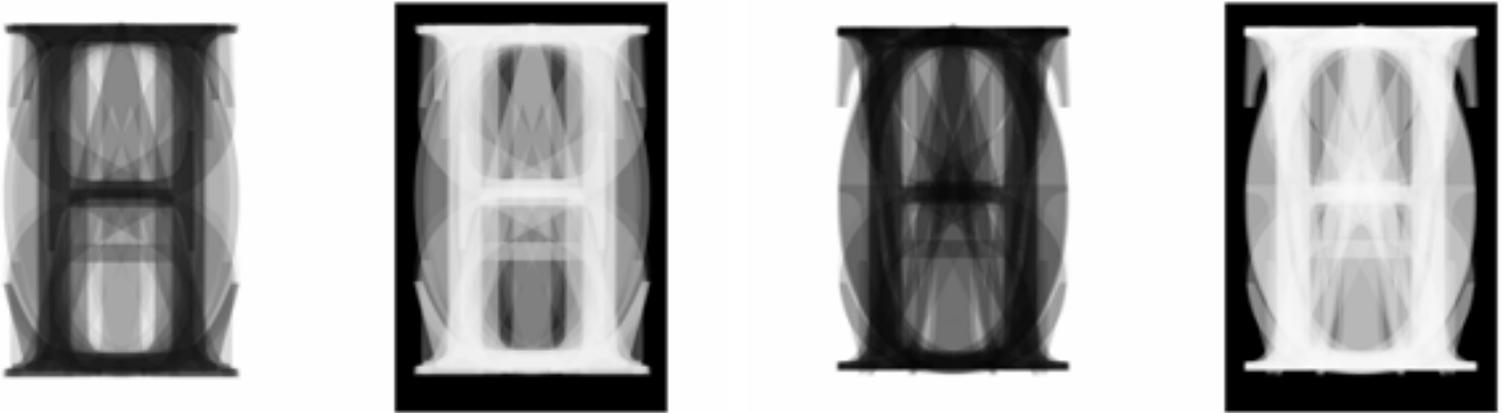
The work has sampled text from Alchemic sources which explores the creation of the philosopher's stone. The practice of alchemy is sometimes equated to a personal transformation as opposed to the physical creation of an object. The idea of the personal transformation combined with one of the key processes in the making of the philosophers stone, the union of the red king and the white queen, explores the different ways in which the two binary opposites of the red king and the white queen views the transformation process. Through the multiple inversion of the already encrypted symbolic text, the viewer is presented with the cryptic text.

## Their Hollow Words series

In each image several layers of text is presented in a positive image and a negative image. The text is sampled from several religious structures. The series of works explores the physical text of the religious structures and the human understanding or interpretation of the text. Throughout history the human interpretations of religious texts has been a highly contentious issue that had and is still having a major impact on societies, politics and economics in the world.



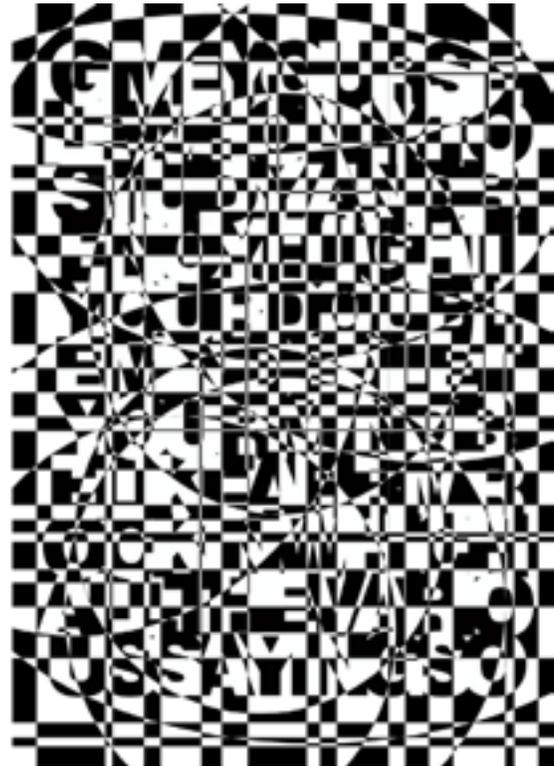
(installation view) Stephan Erasmus | Their Hollow Words I - XV | digital print on archival paper  
32,9 cm x 48,5 cm | Edition of 15 | R3 000,00 (unframed) R3 900,00 (framed), each



(l-r) Stephan Erasmus | Their Hollow Words I & III | digital print on archival paper  
32,9 cm x 48,5 cm | Edition of 15 | R3 000,00 (unframed) R3 900,00 (framed), each



(installation view)  
Stephan Erasmus | Back and  
Forth I - VIII | digital print  
on  
archival paper  
48,3 cm x 32,9 cm | edition of  
15 | R3 000,00 (unframed) R3  
900,00 (framed), each



(l-r) Stephan Erasmus | Back and Forth I & II | digital print on archival paper  
48,3 cm x 32,9 cm | edition of 15 | R3 000,00 (unframed) R3 900,00 (framed), each

# MANDY JOHNSTON

I am formally interested in the use of alternative materials in art making because of the contextual values, definitions and symbolism's attributed to them. I enjoy researching the physical world and finding interesting connections and contradictions in the conceptual values attributed to objects and materials.

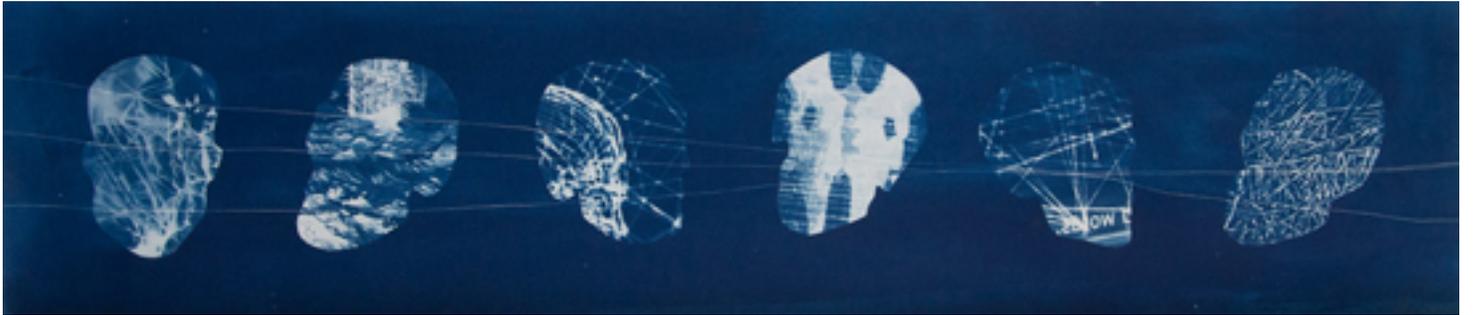
My work, almost always refers to a specific historical and cultural context. I am fascinated by the notion that things are often defined by their antithesis and that the formation of a value is often around the threat of absence or the obvious presence of an absence. A thing can fill space both literally or figuratively, and in absence can leave its memory open and vulnerable to be absorbed, used, ignored or quoted.



Mandy Johnston | The Enablers | plastic straws | 146 x 122 cm | R41 040,00



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(above & below) Mandy Johnston | Sacred and Profane I & II | Cyanotype on Wenzhou paper  
28,5 x 90,5 cm | R 9 120,00 each (framed)



Mandy Johnston and Wayne Matthews | Chantoir (the cave) | Graphite and Mixed Media on Shenxuan  
78 x 88 cm | R19 000,00 (framed)

# WAYNE MATTHEWS

Not the language of the whole...

...for the Sacred and the Profane.

"Wo/Man is thrown into trouble and the sparks fly upwards." or "If you cross your eyes ever so slightly the world splits in two."

In many creation myths there is that first word, first formed, spoken, spat out or written down. Like seed it falls to the cupped hands of what is waiting below. And, where it fell there came... And that in those waters had formed a mild mound or two. It may have been from these mounds, in his own Lustgarden that the cross eyed Copernicus, with his one eye closed, confirmed the shadowy games that the s[o]un plays with the moon. It could be on this very hillock that Dionysus set up his oracular tripod. The sacred and profane dichotomy stuttering repeats the first word that was spoken over the primordial waters. Splitting into pairs, like Adam and Eve, like Noah's animals, it punctuates the chaos of the metaphoric night before the language of the birds. But, now there is only static.

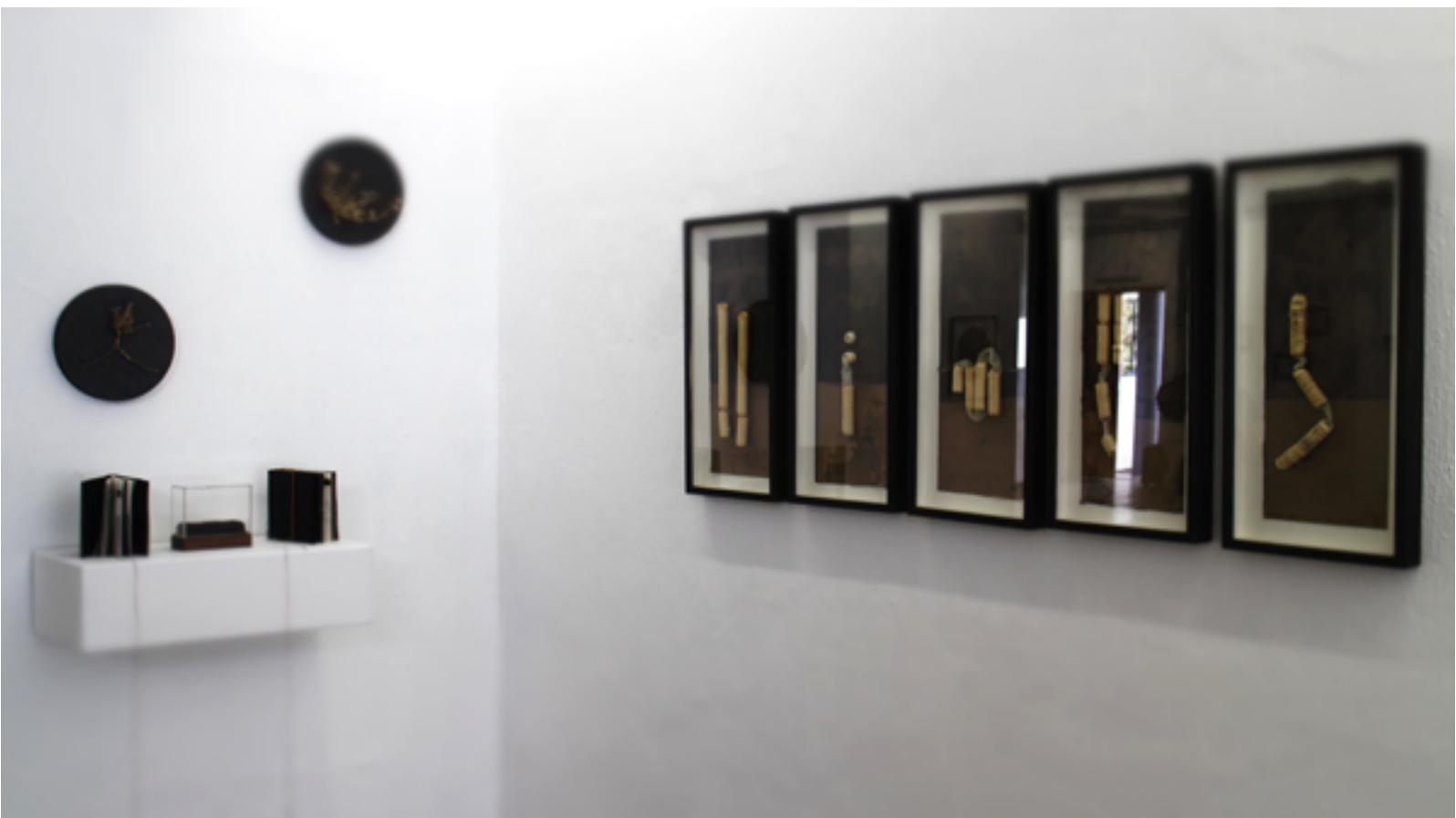
This body of works regard that language and other infamous go-betweens, Eros, Jacob, the Crane, Mercury, Hermaphrodite, the colon and the semi-colon. Those that bridge the one with the other, the distance between the eyes, may leave you with sin crouching at your door. But 'HEI'; there is always redemption and return.



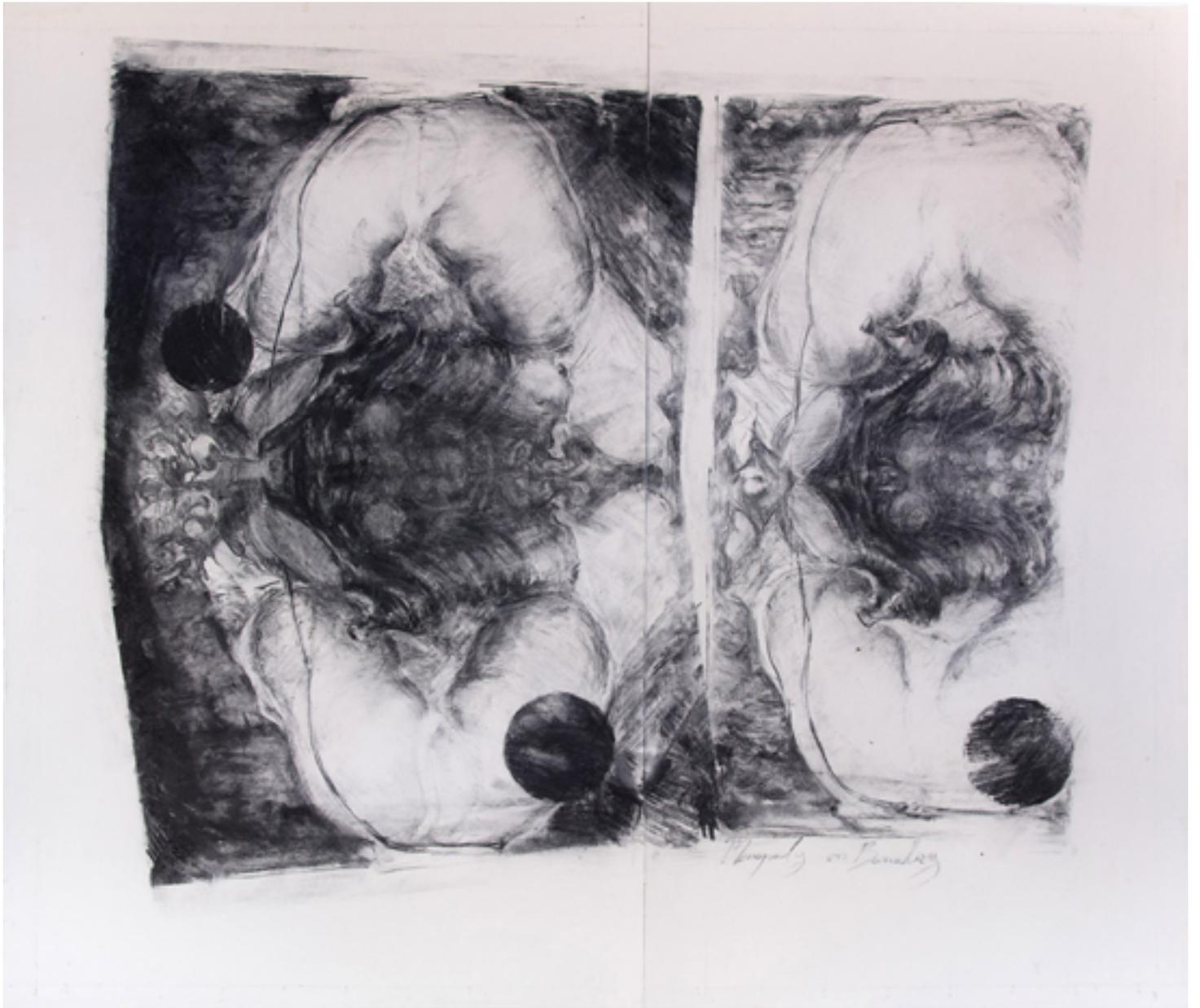
Wayne Matthews | Lacuna Cul de sac | Charcoal on cold press cotton paper inlaid into Fabriano  
59.5 x 49 .5 cm | R11 400,00 (framed)



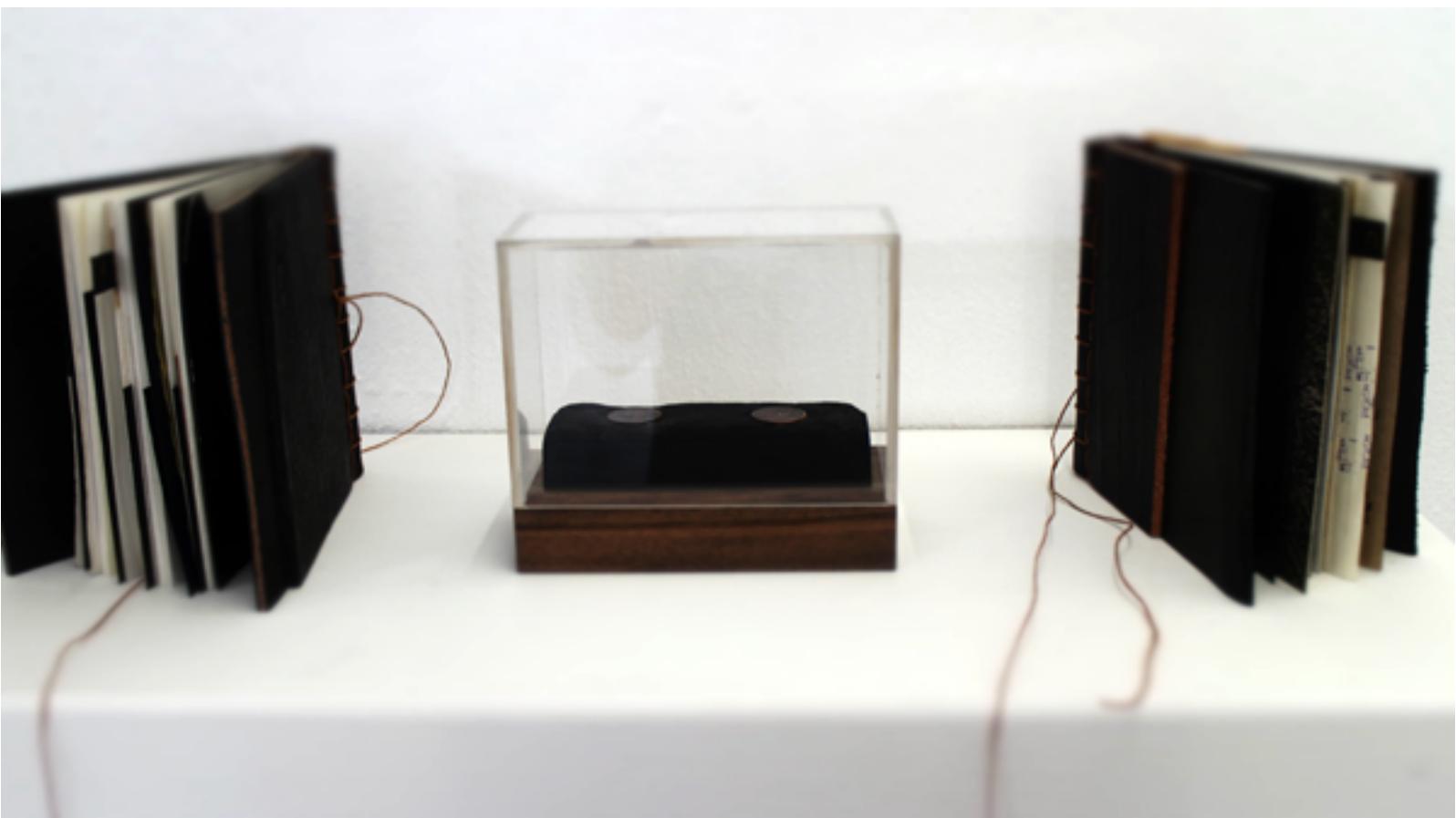
(left) Wayne Matthews | Aphorisms afore the Saints (set of 5) | Charcoal graphite and wax on Fabriano Rosapina  
72 x 28 cm (Each) | R25 650,00 (full set)



(right) Wayne Matthews | Augur and Auricle (set of 5) | 47 x 18.8 cm (each) | R22 800,00



Wayne Matthews | Monopoly on Banality | Charcoal on Fabriano Rosapina | 118 x 100 cm | R30 400,00 (framed)



(left & right) Wayne Matthews & Neil Nieuwoudt | OMICRON: Codex I & II | artist books, Stab-stitch binding, leather cover, 5 ply natural waxed linen thread, mainly 140 gsm paper + various other gauges, collage, digital print, acrylic, ink | 15 x 16 x 3 cm (Each) | R8 000,00 (each)

# NEIL NIEUWOUTD

"Language is a virus from outer space"

- William S. Burroughs

Letters, symbols and language define our way of seeing and/or translating the world around us. It also defines how we respond and interact with each other and our surroundings; it is also influenced by numerous cultural, historical and various other dynamic factors.

The asemic writing that is used in this body of work, specifically created for the Sacred and Profane exhibition, is a non-semantic form of writing which is done intuitively and automatically. The symbols I create have no definitive meaning and are open to translation by the viewer. Therefore, to me, they represent the intangibility of the Universe which comes from a subconscious space within me that is undefinable and, to that effect, is sacred. Personally, the labelling and defining of a form or structure, be it in nature (living) or man-made (object), takes away from the sacred quality that the 'thing' inherently holds.

The following are more symbols or 'keys' that will help guide the viewer to gain a better understanding and appreciation of my works:

Omicron (uppercase **Ο**, lowercase **ο**, literally "small o":  $\text{Ὀμικρον}$ ,  $\text{o mikron}$ , micron meaning 'small' in contrast to  $\text{}$ ) is the 15th letter of the Greek alphabet. In the system of Greek numerals it has a value of 70. This letter is derived from the Phoenician letter ayin **𐤀**.

The hieroglyph, which was the symbol for the Phoenician letter ayin, is the symbol of the eye.

Psi (uppercase **Ψ**, lowercase **ψ**; Greek:  $\text{Ψ}$  Psi) is the 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet and has a numeric value of 700. In both Classical and Modern Greek, the letter indicates the combination /ps/ (as in English word "lapse").

For Greek loanwords in Latin and modern languages with Latin alphabets, psi is usually transliterated as "ps". In English, the letter is pronounced / 'saI/ or sometimes / 'psaI/. (In Greek, it is pronounced [ 'psi].)

The letter's origin is uncertain. It may or may not derive from the Phoenician alphabet. It appears in the 7th century BC, expressing /ps/ in the Eastern alphabets, but /k / in the Western alphabets (the sound expressed by X in the Eastern alphabets). In writing, the early letter appears in an angular shape (**𐤓**). There were early graphical variants that omitted the stem ("chickenfoot-shaped psi" as: **𐤓** or **𐤓**).

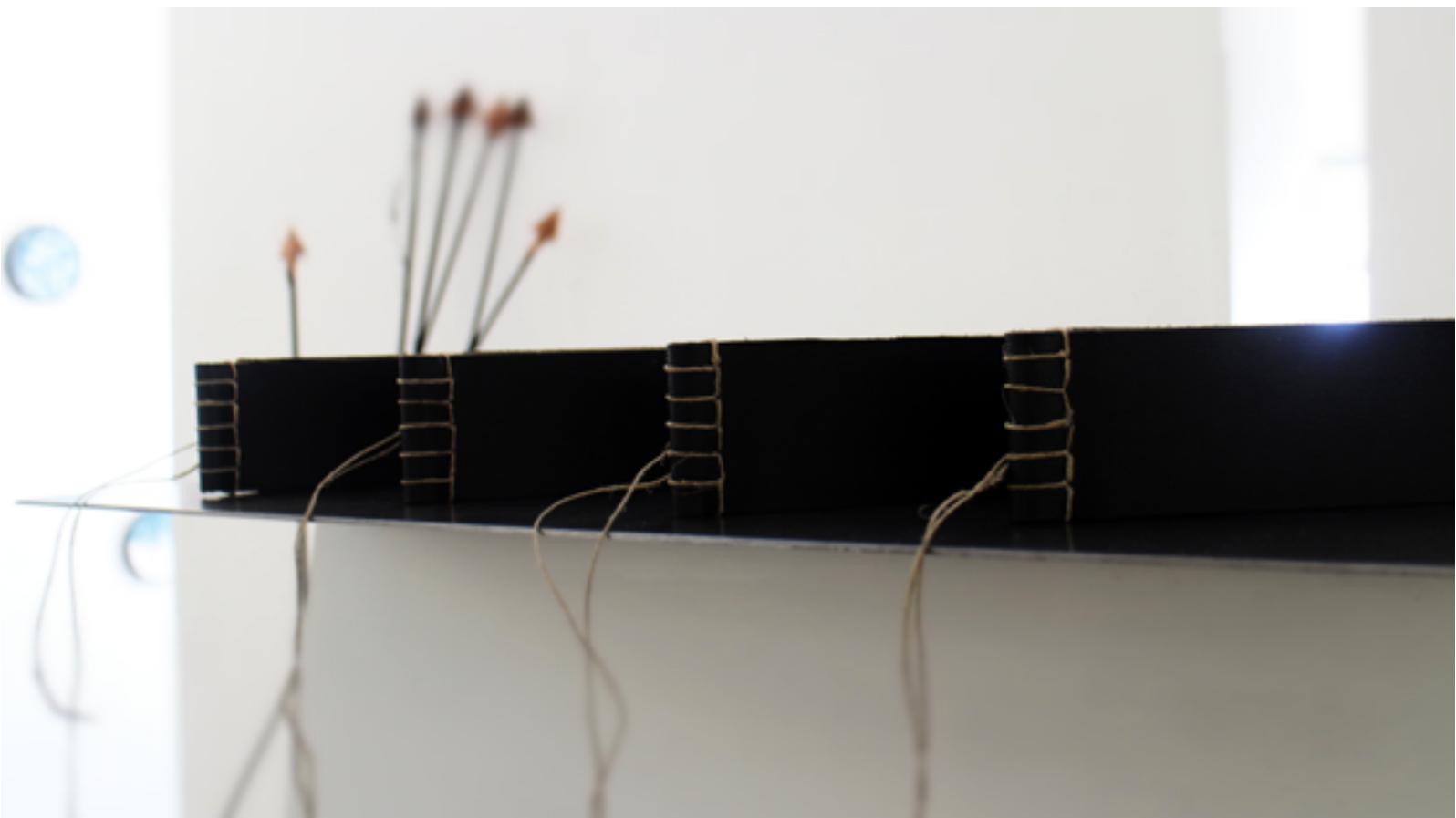
**ALSO NOTE:** The most common symbols for a wave function (in quantum mechanics) are the Greek letters  $\psi$  or  $\Psi$  (lower-case and capital psi, respectively).



Neil Nieuwoudt | I | Found book, acrylic paint, varnish encased in glass vitrine | 22,5 x 320 x 69 cm | R6 000,00



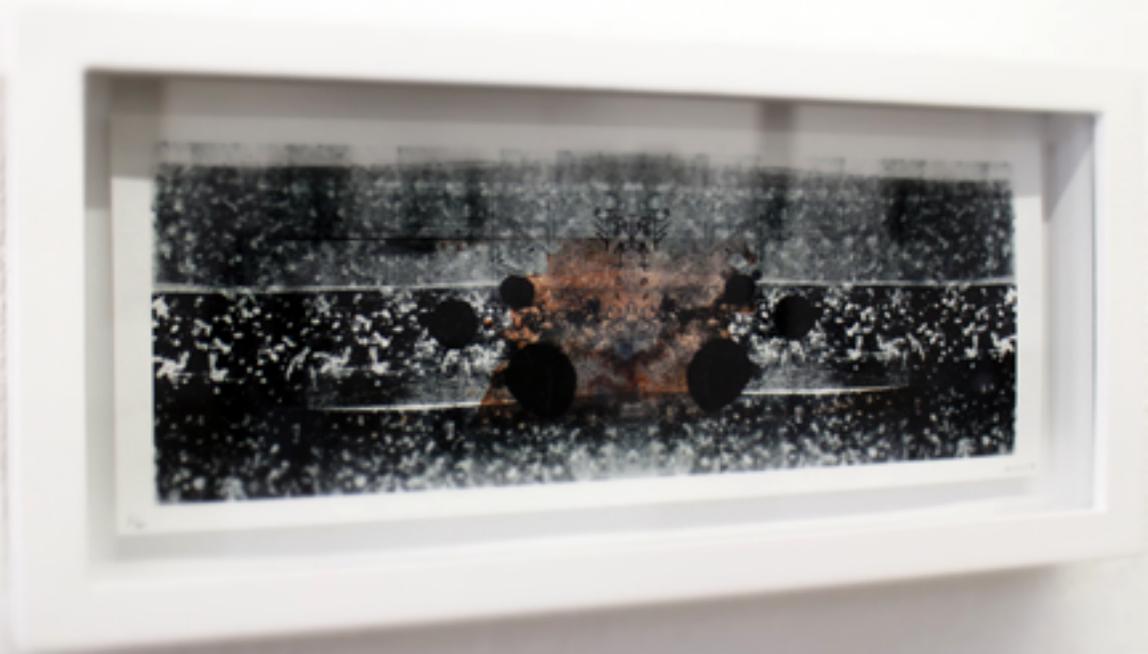
Neil Nieuwoudt | "Ψ" (set of 7) | Acrylic, pastel & enamel on Masonite  
Installation size: 40 x 195.5 cm | Individual sizes clockwise starting left: 40 x 60 cm, 20 x 30 cm, 20 x 30 cm,  
40 x 60 cm, 15 x 19,5 cm, 15 x 19,5 cm, 15 x 19,5 cm | R11 000,00 (sells as set)



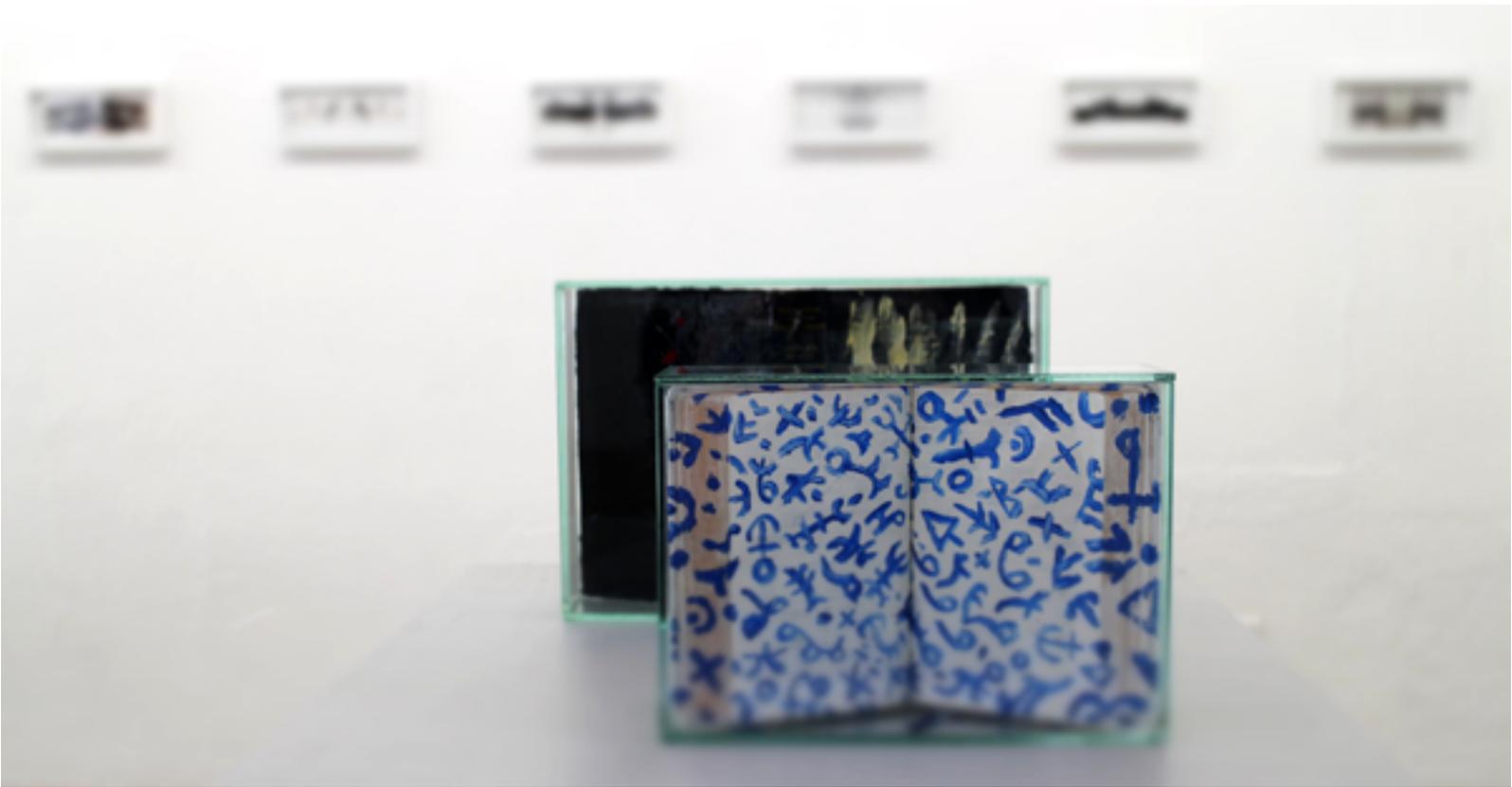
Neil Nieuwoudt | OMICRON: Lexicon I - IV | Stab-stitch binding, leather cover, 5 ply natural waxed linen thread, mainly 140 gsm paper + various other gauges, collage, digital print, acrylic, ink | 6 x 23 x 3 cm (each) | 1/ 1 | R2 900,00 (each)



Neil Nieuwoudt & Ronél de Jager | OMICRON: Genesis | unique artist book | stab-stitch binding, leather cover, 5 ply natural waxed linen thread, mainly 140 gsm paper + various other gauges, collage, digital print, acrylic, ink | 10,5 x 63 x 3 cm | 1/1 | R8 000,00



Neil Nieuwoudt & Ronél de Jager | OMICRON: Exodus 46 -47 | digital archival print on Awagami Kozo thin bright 70GSM | 10,5 x 28,2 cm (paper size) | Ed of 6  
R3 000,00 (framed) R2 700,00 (unframed)



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# VIDEO INTERVIEWS

DIRK BAHMANN: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fvoDWDvrJog&t=4s>

RONÉL DE JAGER: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4K9dqn8ebk4&t=1s>

STEPHAN ERASMUS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ui4ePZEsmjM>

MANDY JOHNSTON: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hM0uAE-TrgU&t=3s>

WAYNE MATTHEWS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJWQU9LWPEg>

NEIL NIEUWOUDT: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jjJhko7y8A&t=12s>

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