

The logo for KNY SNA FINE ART is displayed in a dark red, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in two lines: 'KNYSNA' on the top line and 'FINE ART' on the bottom line. The letters are bold and evenly spaced.

KNYSNA FINE ART

UWE PFAFF

ABOUT

Uwe Pfaff was born in 1947 and grew up in Germany. He emigrated to South Africa in 1970

His first job was with a German company designing rock-cutting equipment. A year later he departed for Cape Town where he worked as a design draughtsman for an air-conditioning company amongst other things. In 1975 he took his first painting and sculpture classes at the Cape Town Art Centre, a year later holding his first one-person exhibition.

Still a little unsatisfied, he took evening classes at the Ruth Prowse School of Art and Design, studying etching and sculpture. A number of exhibitions followed and both an etching and a sculpture were selected for the prestigious Cape Town Biennale in 1982. He was becoming well known for his beautifully carved wooden sculptures. In the early 90s he took classes in ceramics subsequently winning first prize in a national competition for a tea-set he designed.

After a hiatus when he concentrated on earning a steady income to support his growing family, Uwe came back with some new work in the late 90s. His silkscreens and what he calls 'metalpictures' sold well at the first show he held then. Here Uwe demonstrated a renewed propensity for pattern which found different but related form in the two bodies of works. Both comprise simple images composed of and animated by complex patterns, but while the silkscreens have the incessant chatter of an internal monologue, the metal works state themselves more boldly. It is to these that Uwe has increasingly turned his attention, experimenting with materials, scale and format. He makes the pieces by taking a torch to substantial steel plates and cutting shapes from them.

Complex filligrees describe the simple form of a head or a figure, and, just as their precise nature recalls Uwe's training as a draughtsman, so too does their agitation remind one of his restlessness. He invokes mythical archetypes like humans, animals, tools, elements and various hybrids of these.

Described as they are by pierced surfaces, it is tempting to interpret the pieces in terms of negative and positive spaces, but this lends an unequal weighting to the two. It is in the relationship between them, the blurring of the figure/ ground relationship and the assumptions we usually make about space and form, that Uwe's works take root. His lacertine line favours neither the negative nor the positive.

The shimmering polished metals lend another layer of ambiguity, but the sheer weight and bulk of the pieces refuses to budge. It is here that his cast of characters and objects spontaneously assemble themselves into stories, the plots of which haven't yet been told. Early in the new Millennium, Uwe's restlessness returned once again and found him experimenting with the leftovers from his steel-cutting. These have subsequently become works of their own. In another inspired mood, he found that, when struck, his sculptures make polyphonic musical instruments.

He has subsequently arranged a performance, using these works, by the Flying Cow Gratuitous Noise Ensemble. Uwe seems increasingly concerned with the energy contained in the very materials of these sculptures, and that left over, like ghost limbs, by the cutting process. This energy, he seems to claim, manifests itself in the musical tones and textures to which the works give rise.

EXHIBITIONS

2013	Solo Show ISART Franschoek Solo Show GROTAMARE Italy
2012	Solo Show Cutting Edges ART SPACE Johannesburg
2011	Solo Show G2 Cape Town
2010	Solo Show KUNSTHAUS Cape Town Group Show BARNARD GALLERY Cape Town
2009	commissions for TUI Cruise ship Mein Schiff , Oslo Norway
2007	Fine Art Fair Olympia London Group Show Cork Street Gallery London Head Spaces Artspace JHB
2005	VEO
2003	Solo Show Studio 77 Cape Town. Solo Show Studio 77 Cape Town.
2002	Solo Shows and Group Exhibitions in Siegen, London and Cape Town. Solo Shows and Group Exhibitions in Siegen, London and Cape Town.
2001	Group Show of metal-pictures, Cape Gallery, Cape Town Solo Show of metal-pictures, In Fin Art, V&A Waterfront.
2000	Solo Show of sculptures, paintings, screenprints and metal-pictures Third iii Gallery, Cape Town
1992	Group Show of drawings, Artscene, Cape Town
1990	Solo Show of terra cotta sculptures, Gallery international Cape Town
1989	Images of Wood, Johannesburg Art Gallery
1983	Fantasy and Obsession, Group Exhibition, SAAA
1982	Cape Town Triennial
1981	Solo Show of sculptures, Gallery Interntional, Cape Town
1980	18 Cape Artists SAAA
1979	Cape Town Biennial
1976	Solo Show of paintings, SAAA

COLLECTIONS

In addition to many private collection Pfaff's work is to be found in the:

Sanlam collection

Friends of the South African National Gallery

Durban Art Gallery's collection

Presidential collection of Tanzania

Sasol collection and Rand Merchant Bank.