

# EVERARD READ

## **BRETT CHARLES SEILER**

(b.1994 Zimbabwe)

Through his paintings, Brett Charles Seiler creates an interior world which wavers between desire and anxiety. He explores the male body, domestic space, poetry, Queer history, Biblical symbolism, love and alienation, as well as the possibilities of painting as a medium. His experimentation with material, colour, and line has culminated in a unique and carefully honed style. In his search for materials which are both evocative and easily accessible, Seiler's early paintings included found objects such as old black-and-white photographs and fabric. Though these objects have mostly been stripped away from his most recent paintings, they have been absorbed as visual strategy. The photographs are present in the snapshot-like, narrative atmosphere of the depicted scenes, and in the colour palette and tones. The interest in fabric can be seen in his treatment of the canvas as an important part of the finished work. The rawness of the surface and the sketched quality of the lines add to the feeling that we are witnessing a brief, urgent moment in time which has passed but been memorialised.

Even in the more conventional of Seiler's painted scenes, the void-like backgrounds add an enticing ambiguity to the works. They become otherworldly. In some cases, they offer a vision of an untouched heaven, but more often they have the texture of a dream (or nightmare). You can see familiar objects – a houseplant, a thrifted mid-mod chair, a parquet floor – and yet the surroundings remain alien and unstable. Perspective is unsteady, with flatness and depth being represented alongside each other. The most fascinating visual element is the male subjects. The lines of the figures feel fragile, as if they could be washed away into their surroundings at any moment. Their poses, and the way that they hold and touch each other, tell stories which are never fully revealed. In looking at Seiler's bodies, I am reminded of Cezanne's group and solo studies of nude, awkwardly-posed but still sensual men. However, the symbolic, narrative quality of Seiler's paintings differs from Cezanne's limited variations of bathers in front of bodies of water.

Seiler's recent series of paintings are rich with visual references. The domestic space is destabilised by what appears to be an apocalyptic event. In one, a man kneels before another, like a sinner asking for Christ's salvation, but also like a man seeking solace from his lover. There are also art historical references, such as a painting within a painting and reclining nudes. Words and poetry are another important aspect of Seiler's practice. His works have included comic but tragic anecdotes, love letters, and references to Queer culture. He references the legendary Fire Island. The 'Coke/cock bottle' which appears often within the paintings and as a sculptural object allows for a moment of erotic humour.

All of these visual elements offer a sensitive navigation of his own experiences as a gay man who has lived through shame and alienation, as well as love – and the joy and anxiety that comes with it. As seen in works such as the *Gay Alphabet* series, Seiler is not afraid to engage directly with the political, but he makes the politics of gender and sexuality feel intimate and immediate. Beyond this personal/political lens, the works are an expression of his passion for artistic practice itself – through both the physical act of painting, and the history of art and culture.

– Khanya Mashabela

Seiler graduated from the Ruth Prowse School of Art in 2015. In addition to his solo shows, Seiler has been included in various group exhibitions and fairs, including a performance piece with Luvuyo Nyawose titled 'Reading Homophobia' (2017) at the A4 Arts Foundation in Cape Town, curated by Kemang Wa Lehulere and Zipho Dayile, and the Armory Show and Art Basel with Galerie Eigen + Art in 2023.

# EVERARD READ

## EDUCATION

2015 Graduated from the Ruth Prowse School of Art

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *Upcoming* Museum Bensheim, Germany (October)  
2024 *Upcoming* A26 Space, Beijing, China (May)  
*Upcoming* Gallery Eigen+Art, Leipzig, Germany (September)  
2023 Luke, Warm, Everard Read, London, UK  
Riding in cards with boys, Gallery Eigen+Art, Berlin, Germany  
2022 scenes from an apartment, Everard Read, Johannesburg, South Africa  
Oh, Christopher, M+B, Los Angeles, USA  
At some point, I thought I was building a home, Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
2021 Timber, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
2020 Closet, Goodman Gallery viewing room, Johannesburg, South Africa  
Pride or Die, curated by Jana Terblanche, Gallery Lab, FNB Art Joburg, Johannesburg, South Africa  
2019 How I forgot the colours of the rainbow, SMITH Studio, Cape Town, South Africa  
2018 More scared of what was in the closet than what was underneath my bed, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
2016 Macho Man, Tell It To My Heart, Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, South Africa

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 *Upcoming* Out: LGBTQ+ Artist Activists of Africa, Smithsonian, Washington DC, USA (May)  
2024 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read & Gallery Eigen+Art, Cape Town, South Africa  
2023 Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Everard Read & Gallery Eigen+Art, Cape Town, South Africa  
The Armory Show, with Gallery Eigen+Art, New York, USA  
Art Cologne, with Gallery Eigen+Art, Cologne, USA  
Art Basel, with Gallery Eigen+Art, Basel, Switzerland  
The Other's Warmth, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
2022 Things I'd like to remember, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
In Between Dreams, Gallery Eigen+Art, Berlin, Germany  
Das Eigene im Fremden, Museum Bensheim, Germany  
Hot House, Sixty Six, London, UK  
Rohkunstbau 27, Altdöbern Castle, Germany  
The Armory Show, with Gallery Eigen+Art, New York, USA  
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, with Eigen+Art, Cape Town, South Africa  
Seduction, Everard Read, Cape Town  
2021 OASIS, 25th Anniversary Exhibition, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
Summer 2021, Everard Read, London, UK  
In Your Shadow, SMAC, Cape Town, South Africa  
In Conversation, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
Space and Place, curated by Khanya Mashabela, Galerie Eigen + Art, Leipzig, Germany  
This room glows in the dark while we are asleep, curated by Jana Terblanche, The Vault, Cape Town, South Africa  
Art Cologne, Cologne, Gallery Eigen + Art, Germany  
Positions, Berlin, Gallery Eigen + Art, Germany  
2020 ODYSSEY, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
Three Way, KwaZulu Natal Society of Arts, Durban, South Africa

# EVERARD READ

- 2019 The Spectacle, THEFOURTH, Cape Town, South Africa  
Emphatic Whispers, SMITH Studio, Cape Town  
Winter 2019, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
Home Affairs, Waterfront Docks, Cape Town, South Africa  
OUTSIDE, RK Contemporary, Riebeeck-Kasteel, South Africa  
FNB Joburg Art Fair, online, solo booth curated by Jana Terblanche, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2018 One Straight Hour performed for The Main Complaint, Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, South Africa  
Sunday Service, GUS, Stellenbosch, South Africa  
Unfair, The Ruth Prowse School of Art, Cape Town, South Africa  
The Edge of a Thread, Eclectica Contemporary, Cape Town, South Africa  
Close Encounters, SMITH Studio, Cape Town, South Africa  
Not Really, Studio 136 Bree, Cape Town, South Africa  
Multiplicities Vol1: Continuous Unknowing, Assembly Room, NYC, USA
- 2017 Closer than Ever, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa  
Performance Night, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa  
One Week, Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, South Africa  
Young Now, Hazard Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa  
Hold, The Ruth Prowse School of Art, Cape Town, South Africa  
You & I, A4 Arts Foundation, Cape Town, South Africa  
Dislocation, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
Salon Show, Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, South Africa  
ABSA L'Atelier Top 100 finalists, ABSA Gallery, Pretoria, South Africa
- 2016 Falling Into One Another, Ruth Prowse School of Art, Cape Town, South Africa  
New Monuments, Commune.1, Cape Town, South Africa  
Winter Collection, Everard Read, Cape Town, South Africa  
One Zero Seven, 107 Long market Street, Cape Town, South Africa  
The Ties That Bind, Bend, Break, Secret Dungeon, NYC, USA  
Lip Service with Khanya Mashabela, Open Dialogue Box, Cape Town, South Africa  
Sorry! Please Try Again, Palms Centre, Cape Town, South Africa  
Reading Homophobia, with Luvuyo Nyawose, performance, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa  
Africa  
Emerging Painters, Turbine Art Fair, Johannesburg, South Africa