

EVERARD READ

MATTHEW MICHAEL

(b. 2001 Johannesburg, South Africa)

Matthew Michael is an artist and curator known for their interdisciplinary practice spanning assemblage sculpture, installation, video and drawing. Through these, they delicately explore the essence of objecthood – how everyday artefacts may assume a sacred quality by imbuing them with a sense of sentimental, ornamental significance.

Michael honours often-overlooked gestures – the unseen – through manifesting dynamic sculptural inventions. A pivotal aspect of their practice involves aesthetic appropriation through deliberate but minimal transformations. These challenge prevailing aesthetic norms through recontextualization; new meanings emerge from relational dynamics. Things of practicality, such as garden gloves or safety pins, are subtly reconfigured through the quiet subversion of their symbolic language, becoming metaphorically charged bodies. A zipper comes to perform underlying actions which carry a hint of romantic and sexual longing.

Michael's assemblages emphasise how simple boundaries seen as inherent in objects offer opportunities. Here, where their interventions evoke a sense of sentimental and erotic allure, it is intertwined with learning and self-discovery. These artworks interrogate how aesthetic styles embody broader social values such as taste, trustworthiness and lifestyle choices. Through a meticulous selection and sensitive reworking, Michael's work explores how the curation of objects can evoke and challenge personal and societal narratives, offering a commentary on contemporary aesthetics and human relationships.

EDUCATION

2020 The University of Pretoria, Bachelor of Fine Art

2024 Cape Town Creative Academy, Bachelor of Contemporary Art

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2024 The Head & the Heart in the Heat, Cubicle Series, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA

2022 Arena, AVA, Cape Town, SA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2025 Forget Me Not, Kalashnikov, Cape Town, SA

2024 Little Life, Everard Read, Cape Town, SA

Blurring the Lines, Gallery the Fourth, Cape Town, SA

Pipe Dreams, Demo Projects, Cape Town, SA

2023 Full House, curated by Fede Arthouse & Under Projects, Blank Projects, Cape Town, SA

Sublet, curated by Unathi Mkonto & Amy Cornfield, Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, SA

Text, curated by Kamyar Bineshtarigh & Brett Charles Seiler, Yew Street Studios, Cape Town, SA

Flirt, CTCA, Cape Town, SA

2022 1 Kasten, Schoenwalder Project Space, Berlin, Germany

Blue Tape Series 3.0, curated by Björn Thomas, p72 Project Space, Johannesburg, SA

Got Junk? Vol. 2, Gallery the Fourth, Cape Town, SA

Hellmouth, curated by Max Law & Brett Charles Seiler, 51 Buitenkant Street, Cape Town, SA

2021 You Don't Say, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, SA

EVERARD READ

- Got Junk?, Gallery the Fourth, Cape Town, SA
2020 100 Years: Young Emerging Artists, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, SA
2019 Good On Paper 2, curated by Sibu Masters, Johannesburg, SA
2018 Good On Paper curated by Sibu Masters, Johannesburg, SA

CURATORIAL PROJECTS/RESIDENCIES

- 2025 Training Terrain, curator, Demo Projects, Cape Town, SA
J.A.F.A.R Artist Residency, Helsinki, Finland.
2024 Rabbit Hole, curator with Björn Thomas, One Park, Cape Town, SA
2023 Wild flowers do care where they grow, curator with Björn Thomas, Cape Town, SA

PUBLICATIONS

- 2024 Al-Tiba9 Contemporary Art Magazine ISSUE 17 (Limited Edition Print).
Kuba Paris Contemporary Art Blog (Online).