

Stephen Hobbs in the working radius

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ARTIST Stephen Hobbs' latest exhibition, 'Be careful in the working radius', offers an enquiry into the complex relationship between people and the built environment of the city.

The city itself acts as the tool for this enquiry, presented in a series of prints, works created from trial proofs, sculptural objects and a limited edition artist's pop-up book.

The exhibition at David Krut Gallery, Parkwood, is supported by a simultaneous installation of work at David Krut Projects at Maboneng Precinct's Arts on Main.

Hobbs said the body of work began over a year ago, when he made some prints at David Krut's print workshop and sought to transform two-dimensional images into a three-dimensional pop-up book as part of

the project.

"At the beginning of this year, Krut brought printmaker and book artist Ingrid Schindall from America to Johannesburg for a residency at the workshop.

I walked in, and my printer suggested we work together. We discussed it, and designed the pop-up book from beginning to end. It was all fortuitous," he said.

The book took six weeks to produce by hand.

The body of work on show references various public art projects Hobbs has been involved with in the nearly 20 years since completing his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Wits University. But viewers should not expect typical cityscapes.

What appears at first glance to be geometric patterns become street grids with tall buildings rising from the ground, and what appears to be a model city becomes a group of

Mandarin Chinese characters. Gazing at the works reveals optical illusions and lines of text, and reflective surfaces provide for yet more exploration.

The works also move beyond typical editioned prints made using woodblock and linocut techniques. Hobbs also created works from the editions' trial proofs, which he altered by cutting and adding other materials. Even the woodblocks and copper plates used in the printing process were repurposed to make sculptural objects.

"My exhibition's an ironic reflection on building sites, inspired by socio-political circumstances. And I wanted to share with my audience the level of immersion offered by printmaking to those who want to go on a creative journey," said Hobbs.

'Be careful in the working radius' is on until 10 August.

Details: 011-447-0627; www.davidkrut.com



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