



BITTERKOMIX #04
Mickelson, J. & Donald Botes
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Shawn Hill aka Bat Butt
Fifty Prison

It seems that for young artists and designers in South Africa, it is exactly publication to this exhibition, and we acknowledge that a follow-up exhibition might soon be warranted, showing a plethora of publications not included here, a great indication of the health of the private and self-publishing industry in South Africa. „Zines are precursors to social media, especially image-based blogs, which may give insight into why they are resurging.“²¹ The value of this „badge of honour“ but also for their longevity in a notoriously tickle local publication environment: BITTERKOMIX No.1 was published in 1992! On the other hand, many a trashy tract, a poorly conceived and drawn zine has equally been included because it looks „grungy!“ Educational, historical and wider „feel“ at stake. If there is a stereotype of zine ... then it is of a photocopy, roughly hand produced, probably produced by a lone and slightly awkward youth.²²

No author of the many fabulosa monographs on zine and self-publishing cultures claims any degree of completeness in their surveys; how could they? But with ever increasing zine-like forms appearing online, Jack Bratton asks, “how does such a stubbornly tactile print medium find new relevance in a digital age?”²³

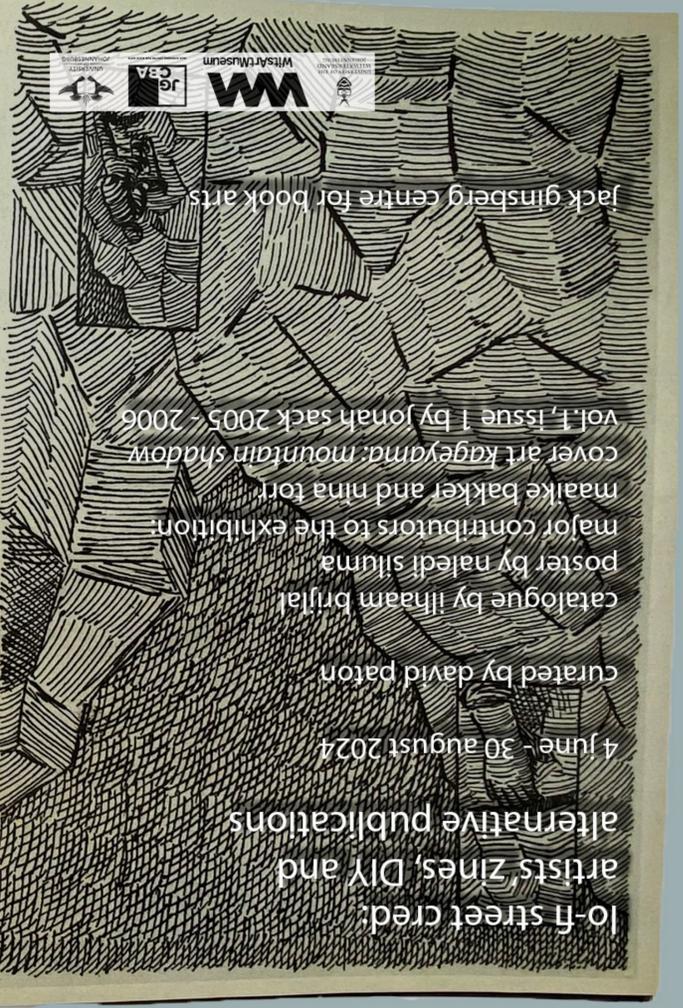


World Spook Variables vlr n Hanham
Scott Berve edition
Mina Torr | Bibi Slippers

Word of mouth has brought many a publication to this exhibition, and we acknowledge that a follow-up exhibition might soon be warranted, showing a plethora of publications not included here, a great indication of the health of the private and self-publishing industry in South Africa. „Zines are precursors to social media, especially image-based blogs, which may give insight into why they are resurging.“²¹ The value of this „badge of honour“ but also for their longevity in a notoriously tickle local publication environment: BITTERKOMIX No.1 was published in 1992! On the other hand, many a trashy tract, a poorly conceived and drawn zine has equally been included because it looks „grungy!“ Educational, historical and wider „feel“ at stake. If there is a stereotype of zine ... then it is of a photocopy, roughly hand produced, probably produced by a lone and slightly awkward youth.²²

1. Olafur Gehlmann, *Zine Masters of the 20th Century*, Marcopoulos, Pettibon, Shown, Printed Matter & LA Art Book Fair, The Getty Contemporary at MOCA, 31 Jan – 3 February 2013, pp.12–2.
2. Berlin Golony, *The Zine Unbound*, in *The Zine Unbound*, Kula, Marwols and Barcatabic Hippers, Terza Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 7 Oct – 30 Dec 2006, p4.
3. A.M. Scott, *On the Art of Self-Publishing*, in *The Zine Unbound*, Kula, Marwols and Barcatabic Hippers, Terza Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 7 Oct – 30 Dec 2006, p15.
4. For a more comprehensive history of zines and their influence upon contemporary zine culture see Teal Triggs, *Fanzines The DIY Revolution*, San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2010 pp6–19.

5. Scott, op. cit. p.12.
6. Michael Gardiner, 'Introduction' to exhibition catalogue in South African artists' zines, DIY and alternative publications, Wits Art Museum, Johannesburg, 16 March – 14 April 2006, pp. 1-7. O Kammeeyer, Die Afrikaanse Letterkundige Streeks Modern and Contemporary Art, Lavery Magazine 1966 – 1978, Warren Johannesburg, 16 March – 14 April 2006, pp. 1-7.
7. O Kammeeyer, Die Afrikaanse Letterkundige Streeks Modern and Contemporary Art, Lavery Magazine 1966 – 1978, Warren Johannesburg, 16 March – 14 April 2006, pp. 1-7.
8. Gardiner, ibid, p.1.
9. Gardiner, ibid, p.1.
10. Gardiner, ibid, p.1.
11. Gardiner, ibid, p.1.
12. Rangoato Hlasane, 'Ephemeral Collectives', in *Journal of the-chronic-chronic*, Tracy Rose and Francis O'Leary, UMSHINI (NEWORK24) course brief, Burger, Johannesburg, 2023.
13. Not on this exhibition but worthy of mention is William Boshoff's 'Kyk!Kyk!' (2002), published by Uitgewery Pennets in 1980.
14. Scott, op. cit, p.15.
15. Soňa Commentz, 'Show me Yours, I'll Show you Mine', in *Behind the Zines*, Self-Publishing Culture, Robert Klanten, Adeline Mellert & Mathias Hubner (eds), Berlin: Gestalten, 2011, p4.
16. Teal Triggs, *Fanzines: The DIY Revolution*, San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2010, p15.
17. Lehmann, op. cit, p.1.
18. Scott, op. cit, p.15.
19. Lehmann, *Zine Masters of the 20th Century*, Marcopoulos, Pettibon, Shown, Printed Matter & LA Art Book Fair, The Getty Contemporary at MOCA, 31 Jan – 3 February 2013, pp.12–2.
20. Berlin Golony, *The Zine Unbound*, in *The Zine Unbound*, Kula, Marwols and Barcatabic Hippers, Terza Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 7 Oct – 30 Dec 2006, p15.
21. A.M. Scott, *On the Art of Self-Publishing*, in *The Zine Unbound*, Kula, Marwols and Barcatabic Hippers, Terza Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 7 Oct – 30 Dec 2006, p4.
22. Berlin Golony, *The Zine Unbound*, in *The Zine Unbound*, Kula, Marwols and Barcatabic Hippers, Terza Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 7 Oct – 30 Dec 2006, p15.
23. Jack Bratton asks, “how does such a stubbornly tactile print medium find new relevance in a digital age?”



Wits Art Museum
JGCA
Wits Art Museum

Jack Ginsberg Centre for Book Arts

Vol.1, issue 1 by Jonah sack 2005 - 2006

cover art kageyama mountain shadow

maaike bakker and mina for

major contributors to the exhibition

poster by natedi silima

catalogue by Ithnam Drijal

curated by david paton

4 June - 30 august 2024

lo-fi street cred:

artists' zines, DIY and

alternative publications

artists' zines, DIY and

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artists' zines, DIY and

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Continuing the notion of tackling ideas, Rangoato Hlasane describes his university student project, titled Ephemeral Collectives (which is part of the Drawing and Contemporary Practice III course in the Department of Fine Art, Wits University) as “premised on the place and role of collective publishing by artists.”¹² Hlasane contextualises this publication-based project thus:

In the editorial to the first issue of Snarl (August 1974), Joyce Ozyński writes: “The primary intention of Snarl is to disturb the prevailing torpor reigning over the relationship between artists and audience by providing honest, informed criticism uninhibited by the desire to please either artist, audience or editor.” After only six issues – and the events of June 1976 that violently demonstrated that “it could be dangerous to hold and express ideas”¹⁰ – it was clear that Snarl’s aims were unachievable. But this was not the case with New Classic (1975 – 1978) whose five issues were edited by Siphos Sepamla, Donga and Inspan (1976 – 1978) edited by Welma Odendaal and Isabel Hofmeyr respectively, and the 46 issues of the legendary Staffrider (1978 –1993 (1996) edited by Mike Kirkwood, Mthobi Mutloate, Chris van Wyk and Andries Qlipphant, which “tackled ideas head on.”¹¹ But what is so revealing in the issues of Wurm and Izwi shown on this exhibition, is their means of production; typed and mimeographed pages, accompanied by monochrome and simply reproduced images which were hand-collated and stapled, indexing both the period in which they were made and their modest means of production.



Invasie
Thanduxolo Mwelase | Tammi Mbambo | Omphemetse Ramatlhase | Kglalalo Shoni | Lindelwa Masuku | Queenzela Mokoena | Bill Kouelany | Oratile Papi Konopi - collaborative members



Move!
Rotondwa Manevhele | Eva-Rose Lundo | Sakhiwo Tshabalala | Mabontle Phetla - collaborative members

What is clear from this partial view of independent and alternative publishing is that South Africa has always nurtured such practices.¹⁵ When hegemonic constrictions are encountered, the “free-thinking mode of human expression and a do-it-yourself alternative to the mainstream” seep out of every available crevice and crack.¹⁶ In this space of seepage, young artists, writers and designers have found a rich conduit for the publication of ideas and visual forms in unique or limited-edition publications. Despite limited access to funding, established printing facilities and markets, these creative producers have fashioned some profoundly challenging zines and self-published works.

artists/activists ... on 14 June 1985. What the SADF failed to eliminate is the spirit, the memories, the practices and the philosophies of Medu.

Through the lens of the Medu Art Ensemble newsletters and posters, Hlasane’s students must deepen their editorial collectives by the mastery of publishing with a RISograph printer “to create beautiful, brave, inspiring and unique publications.”¹⁴



Move!
Rotondwa Manevhele | Eva-Rose Lundo | Sakhiwo Tshabalala | Mabontle Phetla - collaborative members

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lo-fi street cred: artists' zines, DIY and alternative publications

What this exhibition contains is probably unlike anything you have seen before in august museum spaces of academic institutions. Yet it is from the edges of the academic space that we might expect to find such publications proliferating; objects that un hinge the conventional expectation of published literature, art monographs and catalogues. The unauthorized, and often incendiary ideas of students (still so prevalent and strident across the globe today) are printed quickly and cheaply, from clandestine copy machines and silkscreens, often without a care for aesthetic merit: think of the May ‘68 civil unrest, where students and authorities clashed at the University of Paris, or the NUSAS resistance movement in South Africa in the ‘80s whose members produced posters and tracts in defiance of the National Party’s state of emergency. The life of these posters, tracts and zines was short-lived, promoting polemical positions and produced wherever a cause seemed worth fighting for: “an idiosyncratic up yours ... in the face of mainstream authority”¹ Berin Golony describes such publications, and especially zines, as “a site of community building intended to counter the social conditioning of mainstream media ... their status as extraordinary containers of original (not one of a kind, but original) works of art commissioned specifically for the page.”²

to gain freedom from England as an early form of alternative publishing, prefiguring more recent forms such as the Dada Manifesto and the mail art of Fluxus. Today’s zines have their roots in the fanzine publications⁴ of the 1970s punk rock movement and Scott states that “these social shifts ... all shared one thing [a] response to an overwhelming feeling of discontent with the status quo, and a need to take matters into one’s own hands.”⁵ The period between 1966 and 1978 in South Africa is described by Michael Gardiner as “a golden age of lively, independent and ‘alternative’ publishing that was available to a wider range of readers than books were.”⁶ This history saw the rise of independent publications such as Wurm (1966–70) which J C Kammeeyer described as “avant garde”⁷ and in which Gardiner found “novelty, the unorthodox and that which challenged the conventional.”⁸ Another publication from this period was Izwi / Stem / Voice (1971–74), in whose 20 issues editors Stephen Gray, Phil du Plessis and Wilma Stockenström, amongst others, found “a space to explore and express what their repressive society sought to forbid them.”⁹



Wurm 8
Phil du Plessis | Marié Blomerus - editors
Izwi 01
Stem / Voice
Phil du Plessis | Stephen Gray | Sydney Jose | Wilma Stockenström | Lola Watter - editors

Since the invention of the printing press, states A.M. Scott, such “countering” describes a search for an alternative to what the ruling classes printed as truth for a lemming-like society to consume.³ Scott cites Thomas Paine’s pamphlet, titled Common Sense (1779), that urged Americans



Snarl
Joyce Ozyński - editor

Claire Lehmann reminds us of the path such objects travel before appearing in an exhibition space like the JGCB, when she states:

However a zine came into your possession, its passage did not likely include mainstream commercial channels. Sheets were pulled from a Xerox platen; folded, stapled, passed out at a concert in smoky darkness; rescued for a few dollars from the back of a tiny bookshop; dented during a media-mail journey through the postal service; traded underground.¹⁷



Tragic Book No. 9
Christopher K. Wilde

Sonja Commentz describes objects such as those on this exhibition as “always personal and stuffed to the gills with plenty of passion, the resulting leaflets, magazines and books are invariably shaped by their means of production – and resulting limitations.”¹⁸ Such limitations seem implicated in the very aesthetic we seek for inclusion here, as anything smacking of high production values, coupled with a large enough budget to ensure fine printing and secure commercial distribution channels, disqualifies any item from inclusion.



Black Box #1 Map - South Africa 50 South African Artists #023 - Gordon Froud
The Book of Do's Bern Porter Dog Ear Press, USA
Funderlust Johannesburg 2.0 Next Level Monsters Jess-Jardin Wedepohl
Field Guide Tropic of Soda Jean De Wet
Eat / Drink / Fuck / Sleep Thorsten Baensch Bartleby & Co, Germany
Eleganza You Better Work Leandrie de Vos
Dust, thirst, loneliness, waiting, fatigue, life Sean O'Toole & Dale Lawrence
Duplicate the Rush
Des Constructions De Panneaux Publications Dessines Four Une Ville Francois Nigel Penke
Convenience Store Julia Schimautz & Francis Brook Dream Press, Ope Town
University of Students Nonkululeko Ghabalala University of Pretoria
Snake in the Well Part 1 Jean De Wet



You & Me Skullboy
rethink Jade Gaines & Saajidah Madhi Wits University
Endpaper Jonah Sack
Meet the Monster Lorcan White
Times are Tough Morne Venter
the fourth dimension Alan Watts Dewald Meyer
photo(s) Mphoetle Mabusel, Bradley Cloete, Kamogelo Sebopa, Katleho Habi & Kerri Liebovitz Wits University
Johannesburg 21 Feb - 4 Mar, 2005 Various ZA artists with Werner Bouwens, Brice Matthiessent & Wilfried Descamps MAPS project, ZA & Switzerland
A Little White Shadow So much the less complete Mary Ruelke Wave Books, USA
Shitty Spaces for Boring People Let me let you Down FML
The Beginning of Time An African Tale Zhi Zulu
Secret Travels Secret Messages Jean De Wet



Breaking Umbra Kris-Jan Delport
On the page at the back of the book Mary Clare Butler, Jenna Rodrigues, Woody Leslie & Brad Freeman
Separation Undoing Architecture Alexander Oppen
Zombi 1 Lorcan White, Corne Zeelie, Jonah Sack, Nicolene Louw, Rui Tenreiro, Norman Oatherine, Dorabella MariPOSE, John Del & Roarke O'Roarke
Notties Hotel Claire Grimbeek
Keep and Eye Out Side Project BBDO initiative
Magic Roy Comics All the Mystery and Intrigue Vol.1 No.2 (left hand side images) Jean De Wet
Lunar Fog 5 Jean De Wet
Die Kakauser Gemeine Dieter Roth (a.k.a. Diter Rot) Incertin Sens, France
The King & The Queen Spinning Song Sean McMahon
Unexplored Wonders Field Guide Dewald Meyer
Ephemeral materials including bookmarks, stickers & badges from the Center for Fine Print Research University of the West of England, Bristol, UK



(int)angible Riot Jonathan Lafanya & Kyle Kemink Soft Serve, Pretoria
A Pattern of Orange Xitha Maketa & Daniella Rodrigues Soft Serve, Pretoria
Tower, Plug me in Jaco van der Merwe & Zhi Zulu Soft Serve, Pretoria
Witchcraft Archive Silence on Dinner Plate Flex of He & I & Sorrypnic Soft Serve, Pretoria
Soak If we eat our ebony pixies nod and say they taste like chocolate Belita Andre & Bianca Brand Soft Serve, Pretoria
Want dis jou Voorre in Jou PliG 'n zef aKaner boere girl Paula Stephanie Kruger
Woza Sisi Dahlia Maubane
Journey of Unseeing (right) Ditshegoteo Mabo & Jozi Artist Pangasine Graphic Design Project University of Johannesburg
Encyclopedia of the Council that Controls Everything in the Whole Entire World Natalie Pierre-Eugene
Burning House Lize-Marie Dreyer
Expanding the Dimensions of Chaos Stephen Spurrler Queensland, Australia



White Curtains Diary Veleria Geselev & Naz Saldulker
Poetry Africa 12 contributing poets Center for Creative Arts University of Natal, 1998
Junk - Space (City) (CIT) Rachel Wilson
Zem's Iscatho Dictionary Zamaxolo Joseph Midway, The Market Theatre Galleries Johannesburg
Wees Bang Maggie de Vos & Inalle Wepener
How to Fiss off a Graphic Designer A conceptual zine Jack Springer
Outcast Mubheera Ksi, Aida Muegari Khorooshah, Ntokozo Mudau & Retatiswe Moshoshe Wits University
Boudoir Guerrilla Vivienne Westwood's Bohemia Emma Poulet & Christian Naudé
A Verbis ad Verbera Words Add, Words Subtract Richardt Strydom & Jaco Burger
Juvenile Zine Issue 02 Opens the Nostalgia Edition Dillon Harland, Christy Lee, Kevin Lawrie, Luvuyo Sokutu, Kyle Kemink, Chad Hanming, Johnny Allison! Elio Mosvero, Jack Singer & Liam MacSweeney
Juvenile Zine Issue 01 Yell Badenhorst, Tyrone Le Roux, Christie Osborne, Sydney Kenney, Shayne Capasorio, Seth Piental, John Clayton, Kyle Kemk, Jack Singer & Liam Sweeney



1st Copy Conrad Botes Anton Kannemeyer Kunstdepartement, Stellenbosch Universiteit
2nd Copy Anton Kannemeyer Conrad Botes Kunstdepartement, Stellenbosch Universiteit
The USN Crew Michael Petersen 1st year Graphic Novel Project University of Johannesburg
Finding Amy Melissa Bester 1st year Graphic Novel Project University of Johannesburg
Zombie Love Reijo Kärkkäinen France
Autobiographies Scott McCarney Autobiography #4: Homemade Maps (shown)
Catbird Press Kerri Sanoomb North Haven, CT, USA
Unpacking my Library Buzz Spector Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art Ohio, USA
The Collector's Edition Amber Smith
Pulp! Common Ground, London Summer 1989 edition
Fooks Nookspeaker Walter Bettiss
Kageyama Mountain Shadow Vol. I Issue 1 Jonah Jacob Sack



It's Weird Kevwe Matsuli, Tshapo Bopape & Davide Longari Wits University
Bat Butt Various issues from #1 - #9 Shaun Hill & Multiple artists
Terms and Conditions Jessica Powell, Ashley Brown, Nhlamhla Tshabalala, Pearl Mosheng, Genevieve Matter & Rebecca Boulet Wits University
1-Juni #2 National Typografika Garth Walker - editor
1-Juni #15 Porn Issue Garth Walker - editor
1-Juni #28 The Tattoo Issue Conrad Botes Gover
1-Juni #8 For the Sins of the Fathers Garth Walker - editor & other editions on exhibition
Eloff III Comix Johan de Lange, Michelle Dicke Nicholas Nesbitt, Yaren Rotha Michelle de Klerk & Jozi Comix
Oh poes! I'm a lesbian Issue #1 - #4 Genre Pretorius
T.S.C (The Struggle Continues) Madumetsa Manku, Lindokuhle Tende, Faith Mkhosi, Phindilo Tshilangano, Achal Byroo & Koketso Sekhocha
Zine in a Box #7, #14 & #17 Cheryl Penn (ZA) & various interstition artists Mailart collective
The Passage Shaylin Naicker, Athini Rathebe & Teri Davids House of Rant Collective Wits University



Invade Thanduxolo Mwelase, Tammi Mbambo, Ompemetse Ramatlhate, Kgalelo Shoni, Lindelwa Masuku, Queszela Mokoena, Bill Kouelary & Oratile Papi Konopi Wits University
Master of Reality Milno Chow, Cynthia Daignault, Gary Kachadourian & Sto Booklyn Art Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
Roadkillvisiontoilettries Asha Zero
Jodorowsky on Queues Kate McMorrine Gfeller & Helligård at ReSurgol, Berlin
Fine Turner on Crystal Benedikt Ruger Gfeller & Helligård at ReSurgol, Berlin
Kiki Smith in Dunkirk Eliannuelle Pidoux Gfeller & Helligård at ReSurgol, Berlin
Test Campaign Wim Legrand
Jungle Jim Fiction Issue #1 - #6. Various artists AFreak Press, ZA
'Manufactured' Navigate Nostalgia Fact and Friction Imagination Scott Williams Artefakte Aktivierung Kunsthau Dresden, Dresden, Germany
Bat Butt Postcardlines accompanying various issues Shaun Hill & others



Paper Jam NokuKhanya Sibande, Zinhe Khumalo, Courtney Bentley, Boitumelo Phashe, Alexandra Geen & Alexandra Greenberg Wits University
Zineofdeizire David Paton
Tweeling ...Koerante, Voorskrifte, Kruidenterlyste en Graftene... Eileen Marsis
Musa N. Nxumalo At Large: Sihle Khaambule
The Blue Peck Koerante Terrence Nauza
Scream of the Librarian (Sketches of Our Patrons in Downtown Los Angeles) Joe J. Rane, Raymond Pettibon & Cristin Sheehan Sullivan Booklyn Artists Alliance, Brooklyn, NY
Smoke Signal Cobe Fowler - editor Desert Island, Brooklyn, NY March 2013
An Unauthorized Account (3) Rosine Appel Press Rappel, NY
A collection of zines made by members of the public during various 'make-a-book' sessions held by the JOGBA at WAM between 2021-24
Alphabet Zoo Asha Zero A-Z, Johannesburg