

ESCAT GALLERY



Image courtesy of the artist.

JONATHAN FREEMANTLE
Cape Town, South Africa, 1978

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JONATHAN FREEMANTLE

(Cape Town, South Africa, 1978) is a painter based in Edinburgh, Scotland, whose practice explores the relationship between the human body, time, and the natural world. Rooted in a profound understanding of painting traditions and art history, his work investigates humanity's place within the landscape, seeking connections between physical experience, material presence, and spiritual reflection. At the age of seventeen, Freemantle was selected as one of only five students worldwide to undertake a rigorous apprenticeship at St Oswald's Academy in London, where he spent five years studying traditional drawing, painting, sculpture, and geometry. This intensive training continues to inform the technical precision and conceptual depth that characterise his practice today. Working with a wide range of materials, including egg tempera, ochres, earth pigments, and mountain rocks gathered from the landscapes that inspire him, Freemantle creates paintings that dissolve the boundaries between body and environment. The landscape is not only represented but physically embedded within the work itself, becoming an active participant in the painting process. His paintings are marked by expressive gestures, layered surfaces, and a visceral materiality that reflects an ongoing dialogue between humanity and the earth. In the context of the Anthropocene, Freemantle's work offers a nuanced meditation on responsibility, vulnerability, and the possibility of reconciliation between humans and the natural world.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

In Search of the Miraculous, Escat Gallery, Barcelona, Spain (2025)
The Fallen Tree, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa (2024)
Portals, Experience 27, Madrid, Spain (2023)
Spirit Matter I, Nirox Foundation, Cradle of Humankind, South Africa (2022)
Spirit Matter II, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa (2022)
Time Travel, SpaceBY The Fourth, Cape Town, South Africa (2021)
Unknown Pleasures, Experience 27, Madrid, Spain (2021)
Breathing Space, LTD Ink Corporation, Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2020)
The Oldest Mountain, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa (2018)
Der Heilige Berg II, Gallery MOMO, Johannesburg, South Africa (2016)
Der Heilige Berg II, Gallery MOMO, Cape Town, South Africa (2015)
Der Heilige Berg, Summerhall, Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2013)
We Have Invented Nothing, PUNT WG, Amsterdam, Netherlands (2011)
Divina Proportione, Old Ambulance Depot, Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2010)
Immigration | Migration, Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2007)
The Stillness Collection, Stillness Manor, Cape Town, South Africa (2007)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Africa Future Now, Edinburgh International Fashion Festival, Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2015)
Fifteen MMXV, Hazard Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa (2015)
Load Shedding, Commune.1 Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa (2015)
Winter Sculpture Fair, Nirox Sculpture Park, South Africa (2015)
Residency, Nirox Foundation, Cradle of Humankind, South Africa (2014)
Scintilla, Commune.1 Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa (2014)

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GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Exact Imagination: 300 Years of Botanically Inspired Art in South Africa, Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa (2014)
Play, Nirox Sculpture Park, Cradle of Humankind, South Africa (2014)
Absolute Reflection, Museum of African Design, Johannesburg, South Africa (2014)
This Is Happening Now, Gayfield Creative, Edinburgh International Fashion Festival, Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2014)
Collective Dreaming, Freemantle + Bolhuis, Summerhall, Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2012)
#GR5-RMX, Annuale 2011, Studio128, Edinburgh, United Kingdom (2011)
Aspect Prize Finalists Exhibition, The Paisley Institute, Paisley, United Kingdom
RSA Annual Exhibition, Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, United Kingdom
A Truth in Black & White, Alliance Française, Cape Town, South Africa
New Painting, Joao Ferreira Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
A Truth in Black & White, Solan Studios, Cape Town, South Africa
A Truth in Black & White, The Warehouse / Lyon & Turnbull, Edinburgh, United Kingdom
FineArtCircle, Old Truman Brewery, London, United Kingdom
Royal Society of Portrait Painters, Mall Galleries, London, United Kingdom