

## **ARTIST STATEMENT INVISIBLE EMBRACE**

With this collection of works, artist Chris van Niekerk explores the vibrational energy of flower essences and its resonance with the human energy field.

To understand how flower essences work requires a recognition that vibrational energy creates all life forms in matter. This vibrational energy and matter constantly and interdependently interact in rather complex ways.

It is said that flowers represent the feminine principal in nature. The flower, being the highest manifestation of the plant, harbours the vital energy of reproduction. Flowers become wombs for the conception and growth of living forces. The essences contained within flowers are energetic imprints of the life force of plants and resonate with the human etheric body. The flowers displayed in this collection of works exhibit their magnificent power by bringing the healing nature of flower essences to our attention. These flowers and plants have their powerful physical effects explained by their amazing range of biochemical constituents. The artist explores how the more subtle attributes of especially flowers, as they live within their own physical forms, become reflections of how the human soul expresses itself in human bodies.

The art works comprise of radiography, multi-layered digital imagery and detailed, close-up hand drawings of the plant morphology. The unique combination of these techniques transforms each individual plant into an aesthetic and compelling austerity.

With these works, the artist introduces x-ray technology as an artistic medium and as metaphor to create an awareness of the vibrational energy of flower essences as a 'sacred code of the celestial heavens'. The life force as encapsulated by flowers, translating into molecular cells, organic tissue and developing seeds as invisible to the naked eye, becomes visible through x-ray imagery. These ghostlike flower images adds a distinct ethereal quality, aesthetically echoing the mystery and unfathomable Divine Intelligence of what happens deep within every developing flower. In each work, the attention is drawn to the flower itself by means of contrasting grey on black translucent x- ray imagery. With this technique, the artist guides the viewer to

transform a perception that flowers are merely objects of beauty to an awareness that flowers are the 'spirit of the planet, the Divine in form'.

The base layer in each work comprises of high resolution digital prints in full colour on archival paper. The images are captured in such a way that the basic plant form is instantly recognisable. The use of translucent plexiglas creates reflections and three-dimensional textural layers, which change as the works are viewed from different angles. The use of translucent plexiglas also create a light refraction from the first layer all the way through to the base print images. Oversized inverted x-ray images are printed in charcoal on the final plexiglas layer, forming subtle charcoal - on - black 'ghost' images and adding yet another aesthetic layer of texture to the work.

The artist interprets detailed plant morphology by making hand drawn sketches of various aspects of the plants in acrylic ink, as such fusing a human element with that of nature. Detailed parts of the original plant forms are modelled into ink sketches which are not merely the repeated forms captured by the camera lens. Leaves, bulbs, roots, seeds and flowers hold perfect intrinsic visual qualities, selected by the creative spirit of nature. The result of this human effort and the interpretation of the plant morphology through hand drawn sketches creates a space for art in nature. These drawings add to the authenticity and integrity of each work.

Original plant forms are deconstructed and reassembled into repetitive patterns. Initially they draw attention to their overall forms and symmetry and then to their unique component parts. There is a contrast of simplicity and exuberance at the core of each of these works. Mandalas symbolically represent the Self in cosmic intelligence and has the potential to induce some higher consciousness and transpersonal awareness in the viewer.

The works portray South African flora only, thereby honouring the indigenous vegetation of the Dylan Lewis Sculpture Garden.