



PAINTINGS
FOR ANTS
BY LORRAINE LOOTS

BIO of LORRAINE LOOTS

AUGUST 2019

Lorraine Loots is a South African artist best known for her miniature painting series, *365 Paintings for Ants*, launched in 2013. Despite the illustrious career that followed, Lorraine never planned to become an artist: she dropped Art as a subject in high school, stopped painting indefinitely after finishing Art School (Stellenbosch University, 2010) and once again decided not to choose art as a career after completing two post-graduate courses.

Despite her best intentions to the contrary, Lorraine became an artist almost by accident, when her side project - *365 Paintings for Ants* - unexpectedly turned into a full-blown occupation. In this series, she set out to paint a miniature every day for an entire year, allowing people to “book” certain dates and thus own the paintings created on these days. The project was met with an astounding international response, prompting her to follow on her first collection with another year-long challenge in 2014, titled ‘*365 Postcards for Ants*’.

In 2015, the artist launched *100 Paintings for Ants* - a similar project, but with a more flexible schedule - which freed up time for a series of international exhibitions, from New York, Los Angeles and Chicago to Hong Kong, Singapore and Sydney. In June 2019, Lorraine put on her largest exhibition yet - and her first in London - where she displayed the over 900 miniature paintings she has created over the past 6 years. Loots’ work has been featured on *CNN*, *The Huffington Post*, *The Daily Mail*, *Colossal*, *Buzzfeed* and *Gizmodo* among many others, and she currently has an Instagram following of 292 000.

Loots’ work is grounded in her sentimentality and sensitivity to her surroundings. Early on, nostalgia became a strong theme in her life - and the idea of specific dates holding personal significance took on new meaning - with the loss of both her brothers (in separate incidents) at the ages of 15. With this, the idea of dates as significant markers became central to her; as did the idea of physically *marking* each day. Loots’ 365 projects were an answer to this drive (or a catharsis for the grief), and at the same time, Loots attributes the compulsiveness of her initial daily painting projects to her 80-year-old aunt (a poet and artist), who has - since the age of 11 - been committed to writing a diary entry every single day of her life. In addition to this compulsive nature, she inherit-

ed a strong perfectionistic streak from both parents, and her attention to detail can be all-encompassing at times. Loots' work is a manifestation of these qualities: a dedication to life's significant moments; yet at the same time a celebration of the mundane details of the everyday.

Born in Bloemfontein, South Africa, the 34-year-old artist completed her BA degree in Visual Communications at Stellenbosch University in 2008, her MA in Film and Media at the University of Cape Town in 2011, and in 2012 attained a diploma in Business Acumen for Artists at the UCT School of Business. She is inspired by the notion of synergizing nostalgia, sentiment and assigned meaning to create heirloom artworks. She currently lives in Cape Town with her family: husband, Mark, three-year-old son, Felix and rescue pup, Salvador Dagi.

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