

The Garden at Night

Ruschka du Toit





How to purchase

Please email me at hello@ruschkadutoit.com with the title of the work you would like to purchase.

A secure payment link will be sent to you where you can easily make payment with a debit or credit card. You will also have the option to EFT.

Important Info

All **canvas** works are sold framed in kiaat as per example on the left.

All **paper** works are sold unframed. Framing can be arranged upon request.

The exhibition will be up until the 27th of February and works will be packaged and shipped thereafter.

All prices are excluding shipping which will be quoted for seperately. Shipping worldwide. Collection in Cape Town is free.



(left)

Hypoallergenic

2023

Acrylic ink on canvas

340 x 460mm, framed in kiaat

R7500

(right)

Grow a thicker skin

2023

Acrylic ink on canvas

340 x 460mm, framed in kiaat

R7500 (Sold)

Family Tree
2024
Acrylic ink on canvas
610 x 910mm, framed in kiaat

R14500





In my dream I was trying to tell you that I love you

2023

Acrylic ink on canvas

315 x 335mm, framed in kiaat

R5850 (Sold)



Doomscrolling again?

2023

Acrylic ink on canvas

335 x 315mm, framed in kiaat

R5850 (Sold)



Monster unnamed
2023
Acrylic ink on canvas
335 x 315mm, framed in kiaat

R5850



A flower or a phone
2023
Acrylic ink on canvas
335 x 315mm, framed in kiaat

R5850

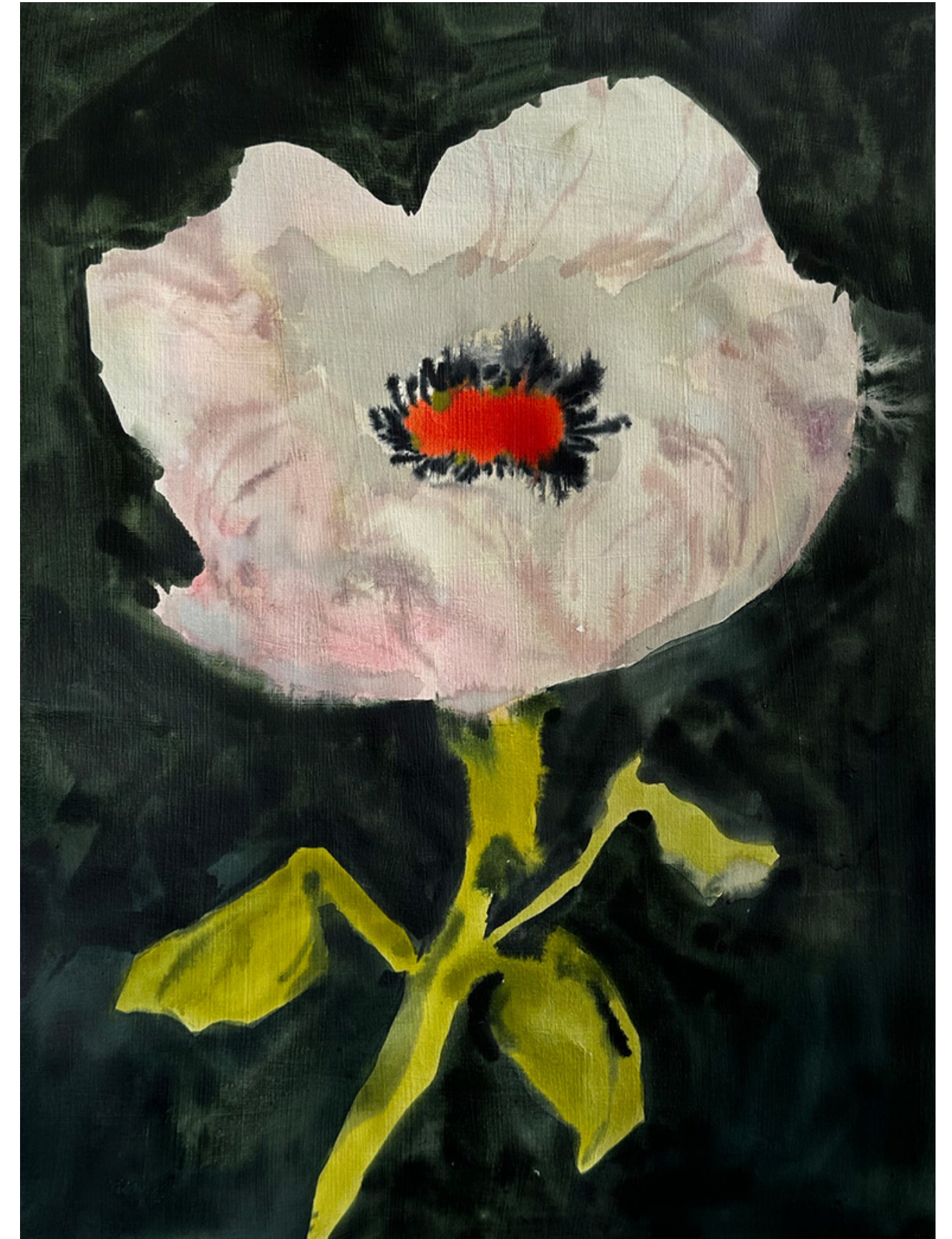
How are we even keeping it together?

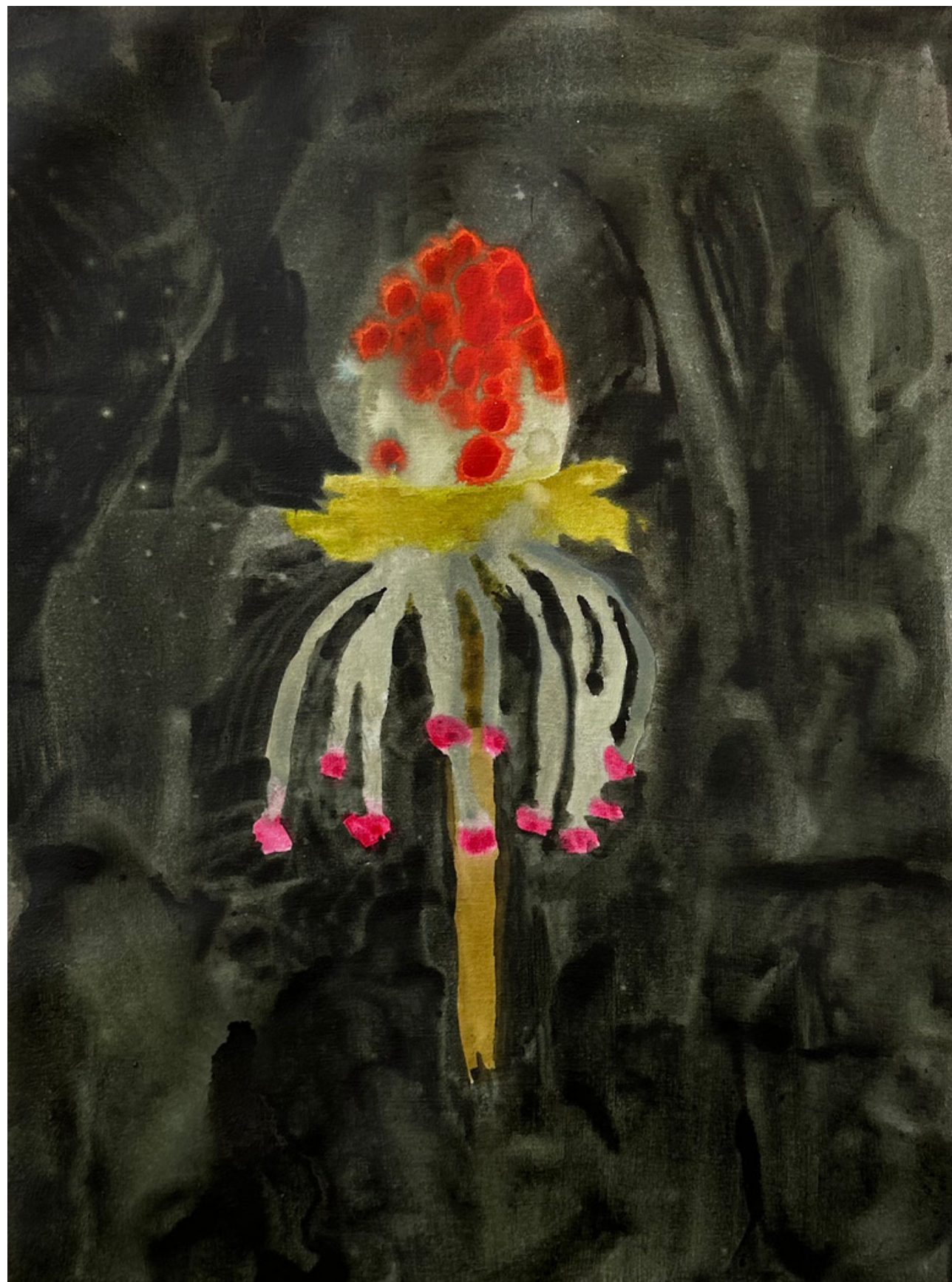
2024

Acrylic ink on canvas

340 x 460mm, framed in kiaat

R7500 (Sold)





Don't let the bastards grind you down

2024

Acrylic ink on canvas

340 x 460mm, framed in kiaat

R7500 (Sold)



Hold steady

2024

Acrylic ink on canvas

335 x 315mm, framed in kiaat

R5850 (sold)

All that emotional baggage
2024
Acrylic ink on canvas
610 x 910mm, framed in kiaat

R14500 (Sold)





But if I don't have this sadness, then how will I know joy?

2024

Acrylic ink on canvas

335 x 315mm, framed in kiaat

R5850 (Sold)



Please remain soft

2024

Acrylic ink on canvas

335 x 315mm, framed in kiaat

R5850 (Sold)



Forsaken

2024

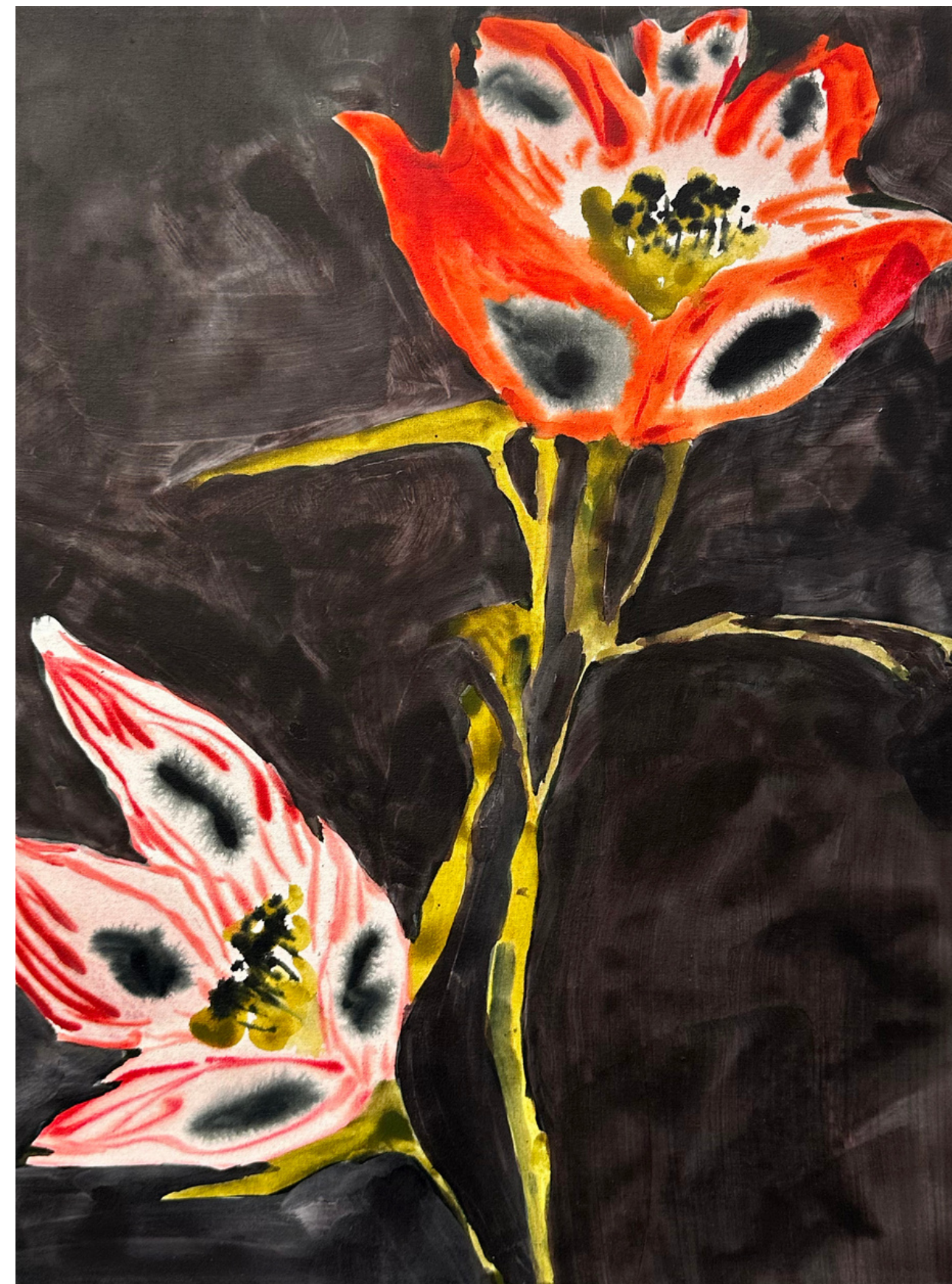
Acrylic ink on canvas

335 x 315mm, framed in kiaat

R5850 (Sold)

Playfight
2024
Acrylic ink on canvas
340 x 460mm, framed in kiaat

R7500



A flower grown for you, because you once told me that I should paint small

2023

Acrylic ink on canvas

610 x 860mm, framed in kiaat

R14500





I didn't ask to be me

2023

Acrylic ink on canvas

340 x 460mm, framed in kiaat

R7500 (Sold)

You are / You became
2023
Acrylic ink on canvas
340 x 460mm, framed in kiat

R7500





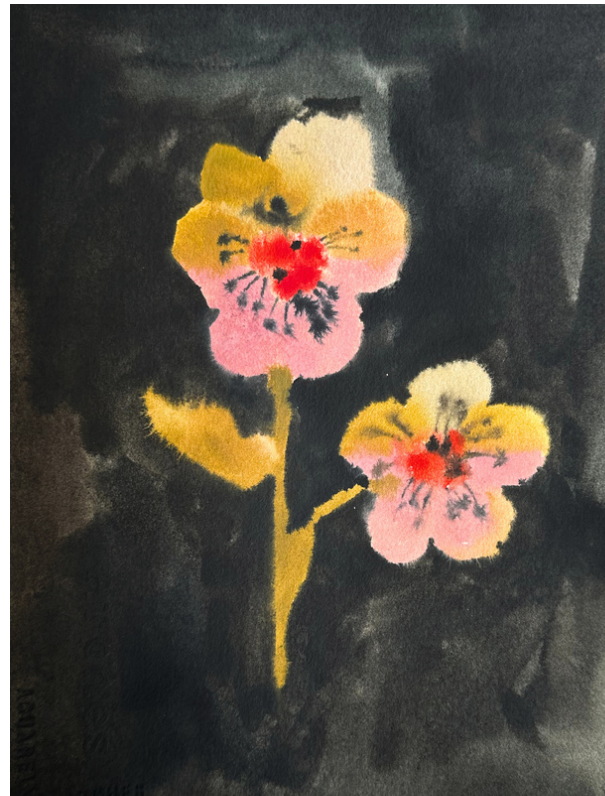
You broke my heart into a million pieces

2024

Acrylic ink on canvas

340 x 460mm, framed in kiaat

R7500 (sold)



For Safie (Sold)

2024. Acrylic ink on Arches paper. 185 x 245mm, unframed.
(top left)

Tell me what its like to walk home at night

2024. Acrylic ink on Arches paper. 185 x 245mm, unframed.
(top middle)

Are you still watching? (Sold)

2024. Acrylic ink on Arches paper. 185 x 245mm, unframed.
(top right)



You deleted this message (Sold)

2024. Acrylic ink on Arches paper. 185 x 245mm, unframed.
(bottom left)

For Georgia (Sold)

2024. Acrylic ink on Arches paper. 185 x 245mm, unframed.
(bottom middle)

Light, dark, light again (Sold)

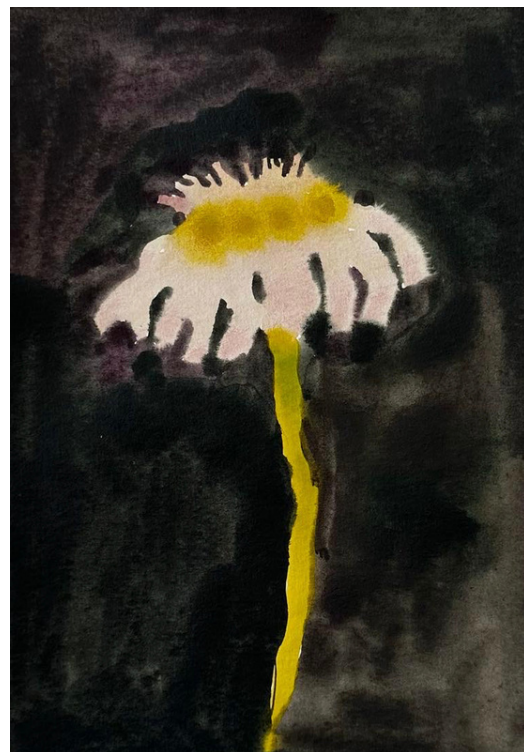
2024. Acrylic ink on Arches paper. 185 x 245mm, unframed.
(bottom right)

R2500 each

Memento Mori
2024
Acrylic ink on canvas
255 x 355mm, unframed

R4500 (Sold)





Second-hand survival (Sold)

2023. Acrylic ink on paper. 210 x 145mm, unframed.

(top left)

What sound does a flower make in the wind? (Sold)

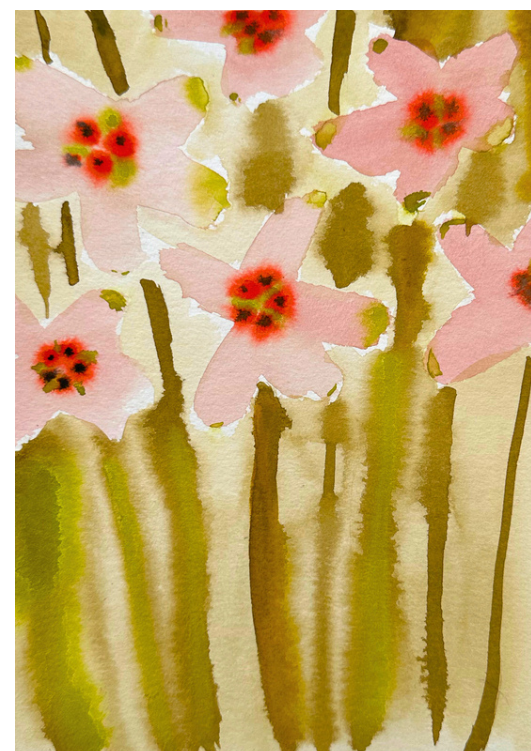
2023. Acrylic ink on paper, 210 x 145mm, unframed.

(top middle)

'The Wood Wide Web'

2023. Acrylic ink on paper, 210 x 145mm, unframed.

(top right)



Missed calls

2023. Acrylic ink on paper, 210 x 145mm, unframed.

(bottom left)

For Mary Wollstonecraft

2023. Acrylic ink on paper, 210 x 145mm, unframed.

(bottom right)

Growing pains (Sold)

2023. Acrylic ink on paper, 210 x 145mm, unframed.

(bottom middle)

R2000 each



Paradise lost / People get tired of hearing about this place.

2023

Acrylic ink on paper
160 x 250mm, unframed

R2000 (Sold)



Paradise found / On some days atleast.

2023

Acrylic ink on paper
160 x 250mm, unframed

R2000 (Sold)



Always a rose, never an orchid under the light of the moon

2023

Acrylic ink on paper
160 x 250mm, unframed

R2000 (Sold)



Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

2024

Acrylic ink on canvas

255 x 355mm, unframed

R4500 (Sold)

Ruschka du Toit: The Garden at Night

What does it mean to be a flower?

The transience of life that deepens

its sweetness

What are flowers saying to us?

We pursue them to their hiding places

Ruschka du Toit's work is a window into the garden at night, where we might glimpse the hidden life of what grows there. She uses ink to capture figments, partly emerging, partly disappearing from the paper or canvas, like the soft silhouettes of this nocturnal garden. The artist blurs boundaries; pulling from ink drawings, botanical observations, illustrations, literary works and paintings to create an altered genre. It remains open-ended, an unfinished sentence, a question. This is du Toit's practice — expansive, unpredictable, at once macabre and delightful.

This body of work showcases the culmination of du Toit's obsession with flowers. She paints shadow portraits, ghost flowers, orchids, fynbos, unidentified monsters and budding crocuses.

They are captured in the soft pallor of the moonlight. They invite the question — 'what is a flower?' — or more importantly, 'what do flowers have to teach us?' Darwin recorded looking into a flower and seeing "*the very heart of nature's double nature — that is, the contending energies of creation and dissolution, the spiring toward complex form and the tidal pull away from it.*"

Georgia O'Keeffe wrote about the power of a single small flower that if "[you] really look at it, it's your world for a moment."

Virginia Woolf felt that left alone, there was a yearning towards flowers with a possibility to feel that "*they expressed one; felt they became one; felt they knew one, in a sense were one.*" Perhaps even with the fleetingness of a flower's bloom, they have important things to teach us about time.

Du Toit pulls remnants of flowers and their various associations, like discarded petals, and brings them together, imbued with observation and eerie imagination. The artist's ethereal flowers showcase the delights of nature, illustrating the beauty of both a flower's becoming and its afterlife. They are testaments to the communion of

life that embraces, in equal parts, birth and decay. They hold somewhat of the whole world for du Toit, sometimes joyful, sometimes melancholic. These disparate elements give life to the painter's spectral botanicals in a gothic Frankenstein assemblage. With parallels to several themes put forward in this pioneering 1818 novel by Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin Shelley, du Toit's work grapples with 'the monster', notions of divinity and the weighting of nature versus nurture.

When describing her own relationship with the floral kingdom, du Toit says: "*The flowers allow me to tell a story. The flowers are a conduit, but also a teacher.*" The artist doesn't merely paint flowers, she paints the shadows of their transcendent beauty. She captures the bittersweet, which author Susan Cain describes as most palpable in "*those out-of-time moments when you witness something so sublime that it seems to come from a more perfect and beautiful world.*" Du Toit's work tenderly holds questions of the divine, allowing the artist to further explore the cavernous nature of these questions. The works speak to concepts of

immanence — that the divine exists unobserved in the everyday. Many of the paintings are portraits of a single, precious moment. Perhaps the work, most of all, stands as an encouragement to pause, to take time to celebrate the flowers or glance up into the night's sky where we might glimpse some remnants of holiness — upon closer observation, we might even notice, in the words of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, that "*all the stars are a-bloom with flowers...*"

Text by Olivia Barrell

"Life, although it may only be an accumulation of anguish, is dear to me, and I will defend it."

Mary Shelley's Monster, Frankenstein

Ruschka du Toit, b.1984, is a painter from Cape Town, South Africa. Working mainly in ink since the early 2000s, she paints mostly plants and people, using gestural brushstrokes and vibrant colours. Ruschka is represented by Cape Town agency, Butter in her capacity as an illustrator.

The Artist's notes on Titles:

During a mentoring session with Katherine Bull from Fourfold while discussing the dark backgrounds of my works, she mentioned 'a garden at night' and I immediately knew my work had found its home, its 'grounding' so to speak.

The title *Light, dark, light again* is from an Angie McMahon song titled *Making It Through*.

The title *Second-hand survival* is from an article by Maria Popova for *The Marginalian* titled 'The Poetic Science of the Ghost Pipe: Emily Dickinson and the Secret of Earth's Most Supernatural Flower': "*Rather than reaching up for sunlight like green plants, the ghost pipe reaches down. Its cystidia — the fine hairs coating its roots — entwine around the branching filaments of underground fungi, known as hyphae. So connected, the ghost pipe begins to sap nutrients the fungus has drawn from the roots of nearby photosynthetic trees.*

Out of this second-hand survival, such breathtaking beauty."

From that same article comes the title *The Wood Wide Web*

"...we know that 90% of plants rely on these mycorrhizal relationships for their survival — an interdependence for which the English botanist David Read coined the term "the Wood Wide Web," to describe the groundbreaking research of Canadian plant ecologist Suzanne Simard, who furnished the definitive evidence for it in the 1990s."



Thank you

Any questions? Do not hesitate to contact me.

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