

NO 20 ART OF THE HOME

Cape Town-based artist and photographer **Sitaara Stodel**'s nostalgic artworks explore her personal connection to the concept of home.



Through collage, printmaking and video, Sitaara Stodel's experimental solo exhibition for

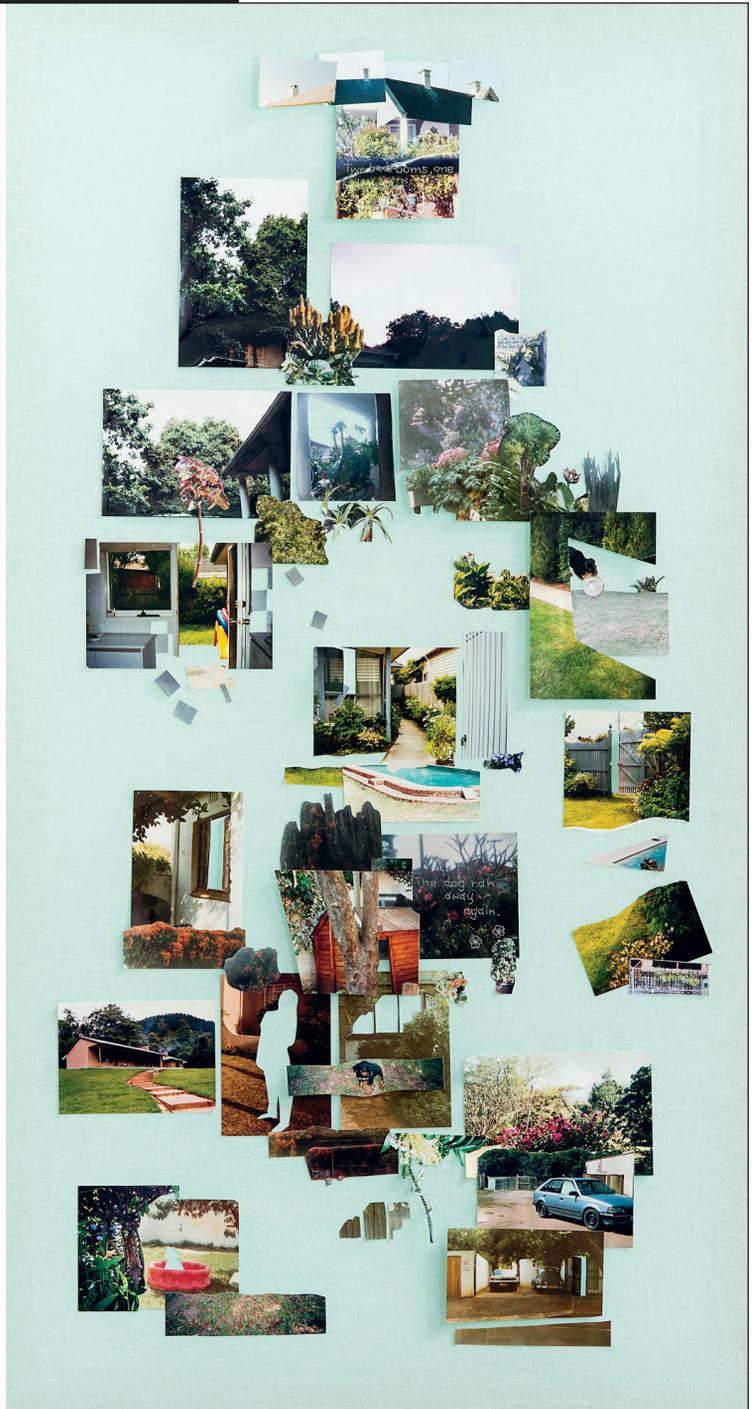
SMITH gallery at Investec Cape Town Art Fair 2019 reflected her experience of domestic spaces and the role of movement and settledness, not only in the exhibition itself but also in the broader context of South Africa's past.

When did you first know you wanted to be an artist? I realised I wanted to do something with art when I got a desk job after matriculating, so I applied to UCT's Michaelis School of Fine Art. I hadn't thought beyond university, just that I would need to get a job to pay the rent. Art-making seemed like an expense I couldn't afford, but I was fortunate to be awarded the Tierney Fellowship.

What has been a highlight of your artistic journey so far? Definitely being a part of the Investec Cape Town Art Fair this year with SMITH. It was the first time I've exhibited by myself, so it gave me a chance to really play with the space. I showed a video, collages and prints, and made the space look like the inside of a living room, almost as if you were stepping inside one of my collages.

Is there a particular medium you prefer? At the moment I enjoy making collages out of other people's family photographs. I buy them at markets and second-hand shops, and sort through piles to see if they evoke anything in me. Then I get to spend time with these otherwise forgotten images and cut out pieces that mean something to me. I get to turn them into scenes that remind me of different aspects of home. I enjoy pairing colours and horizon lines, making a new story from the old ones.

What does home mean to you in the context of your pieces? I moved many times when I was a child due to evictions, and continued to move out



House and Garden, 2019, photomontage and gold thread on linen.

of habit after leaving my family home. I've moved about 34 times, so exploring the idea of what home means to me has been a big part of my work. I explore memories of all the different spaces I have lived in, and the dream of the ideal home that can never be reached.

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