

QUIRKS ON ROUTE 62 - PRESENTED BY ARTYSAN GALLERY

ARTYSAN

ISSUE 01

FREE MONTHLY DIGITAL CREATIVE MAGAZINE

SEPT 2025

GRIT TALK

RAW INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST
CALVIN MURPHY

FREQUENCY

THE ORBAPHONE:
MUSICAL ART BY
RIGNOLD HAYWOOD

FORK'N FOOD

EXOTIC TALK WITH
MUD MODERN

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FROM THE EDITOR

I'm pretty excited about launching the first issue of the ArtySan creatives magazine, but I'm under no illusion that it'll be a great success - I'm also not afraid of it failing.

I've been involved in various businesses my whole life - some crashed and burned, leaving me bankrupted and broken, yet others worked well and form part of my most exciting memories.

The thing is, if you're too afraid to try you'll never know - and I *really* like knowing! Also, if something didn't work (despite your suffering at the time) later on you'll realise how much you learned and how it shaped your life.

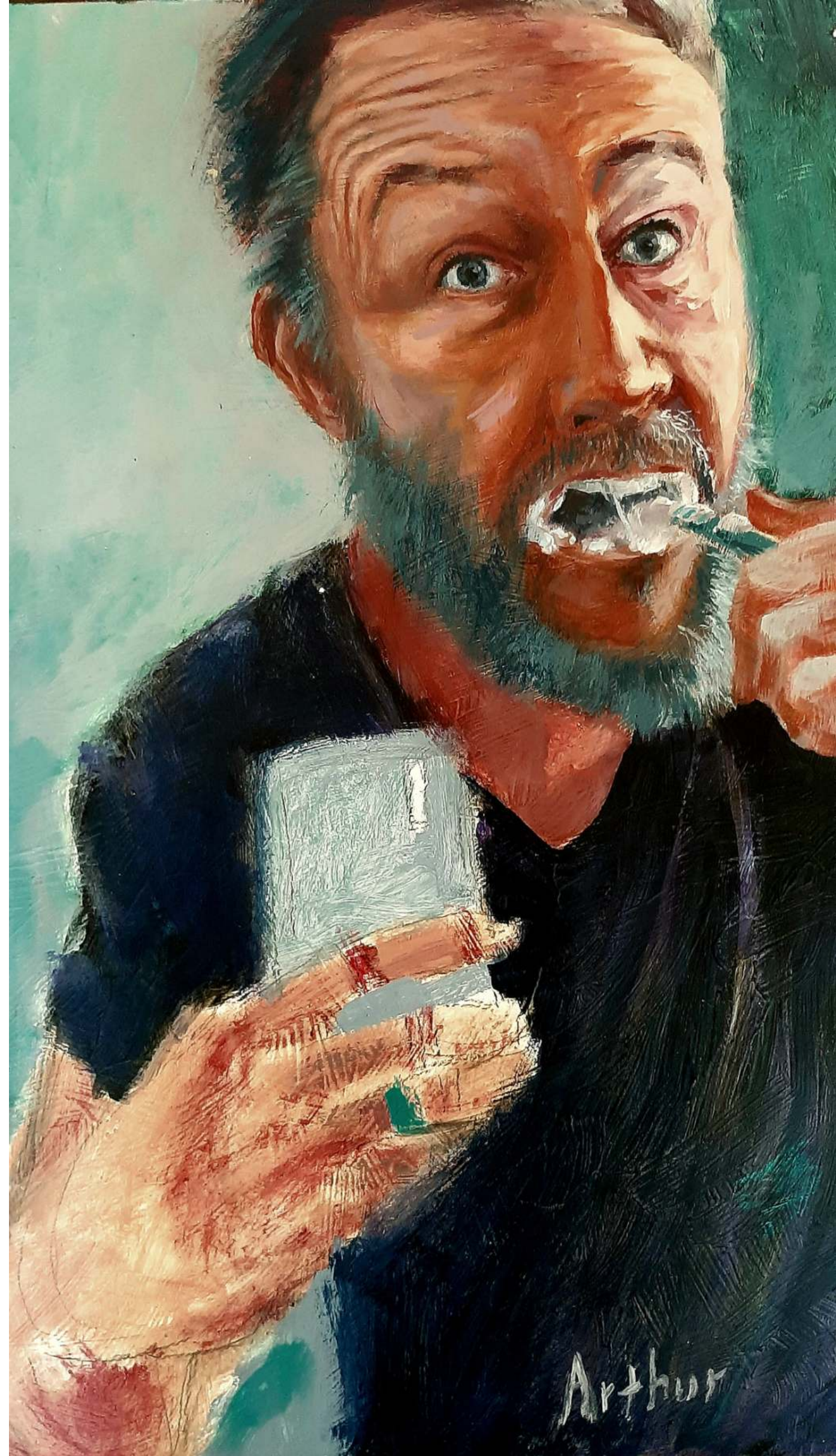
The trick is not to make the same mistake twice - that means you haven't learned anything.

***“Doen maar net!”
 (“Just do it!”)***

A classic reminder happened one stormy night when we had floods and people stranded from Worcester to Ladismith. We'd done a few risky river crossings (in a 4x4) and ended up stuck in the Tradouw pass with a big tree and boulder in the middle of the road. There was an Afrikaans family out there, ripping off branches and moving smaller rocks.

So I approached him and asked what I could do to help. He just looked at me with exasperation and said “Doen maar net!”.

Of course I felt like an idiot - and quietly started ripping off branches and moving rocks. A few other people joined in, and within 45 minutes we'd moved the tree and the boulder, with just enough space for our cars to get through.



As individuals it might sometimes seem fruitless and overwhelming to pick away at a mammoth task or idea, but if you're surrounded by people who share the same goal, the same passion, doing the best they can in a small way, it's amazing what great things can be achieved in a relatively short time - as I learned that cold, wet night on the pass, when we moved a mountain.

I can sit in my gallery on my own, or I can use it as a base to do a lot more - not just for myself - but for other creatives in our little towns - sharing to the world what I believe are crazy, quirky, talented people that I respect and resonate with!

Expect a lot more - video interviews, podcasts, expert workshops, exhibitions and whatever the hell fun this turns into!



CRIT TALK

WITH ARTIST CALVIN MURPHY

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CRIT TALK

WITH ARTIST CALVIN MURPHY



Breaking Boundaries: An Artist's Journey Beyond Convention

I can't quite recall when and how I first met Calvin and his wife, Em, but he's been one of those people you come across that feels like you've known for a lifetime. There's a certain kind of genuine humanity you stumble across in people like him - raw, honest, warm and salt of the earth - yet others might find him somewhat abrasive.

Looking at his work, there's an incredible amount of care and attention to detail. His art has an unmistakable sensitivity to it despite his defiant distaste for society in general.

The juxtaposition is exquisite, and as I type this I have no idea how the interview is going to go. I just hope I can peel back a layer or two and reveal the magic that I see in him as a person, and as an artist - so here it is!

For some, art is a calling that emerges early, fostered by encouragement and opportunity. For others, it's a path fraught with obstacles, detours, and the need for creative resilience. The artist I spoke to falls into the latter category, their journey shaped by both early promise and unexpected adversity.

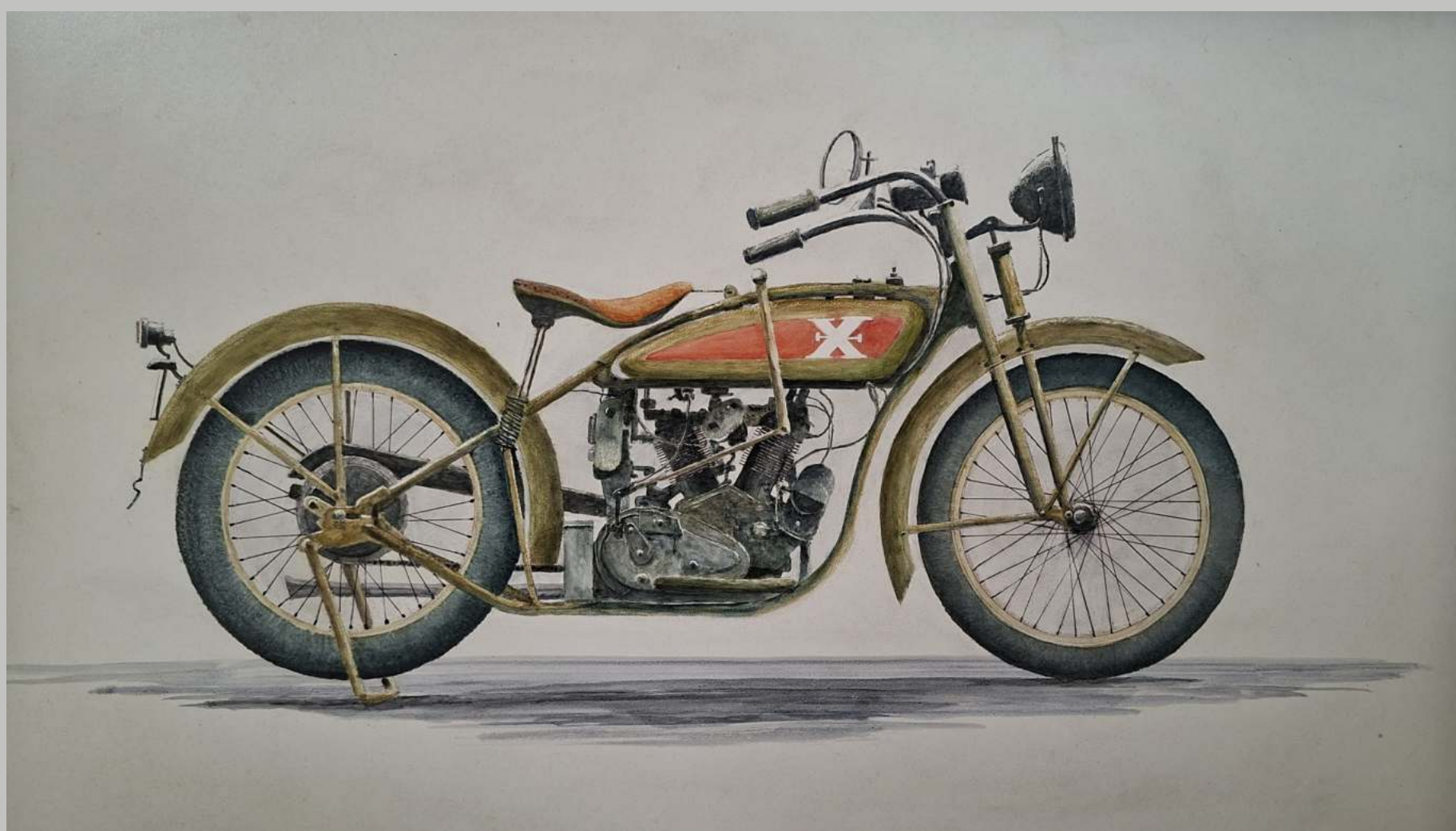
"I used to draw a lot when I was very young," Calvin recalls. With a father who was a draughtsman, creativity was always within reach — paper and pencils were part of daily life. Recognition came early too: "The standard 5 art prize was mine according to my teacher and the headmaster, but it was awarded to a very inferior painting by the high school art master. That was my first encounter with deceit."

This experience, compounded by ongoing discouragement from the same teacher, ultimately led the artist to step away from formal art studies. "I chose metalwork to remove myself from any contact with him. Looking back, this and the lack of encouragement at home obviously steered me away from painting and into the motoring industry — and eventually, into construction."

Yet the urge to paint never fully disappeared. Occasional opportunities — like a set of old oil paints — provided moments of experimentation. A dislike for the traditional feel of canvas led to innovative choices: "I thought vinyl panel was worth a try... I came across Liquin, which gave a flowing colour not unlike the watercolour process." This method, letting the white of the board shine through, became a signature technique: "Nobody that I had mentioned this to knew what I was talking about, and there was no literature that I could find about this method."

The breakthrough came after years of sporadic experimentation.

"It came together with the first painting, which I still have. In the promise of something worth doing, I started painting more than occasionally."





Encouraged by positive gallery responses such as Gail from the Cape Gallery who immediately exhibited several mountain scenes, while Di at G2 Gallery accepted and purchased one, so Calvin's confidence grew. But life and work remained the priority: "I've never considered myself an artist, even though I've completed commissions in many countries."

On Motivation and Method

When asked about challenges, the artist's answer is refreshingly direct: "Having a cretin for an art teacher in high school". Technical feats — like a commission requiring the accurate rendering of an 18 wheeler truck driving through the Karoo — are approached with precision. And creative blocks? "I go into the workshop and find something to make or fix, so it never bothers me."

Recognition and financial reward are welcome, but not essential to Calvin: "I get pleasure from giving away work to someone who really likes it, and maybe can't afford to buy it."

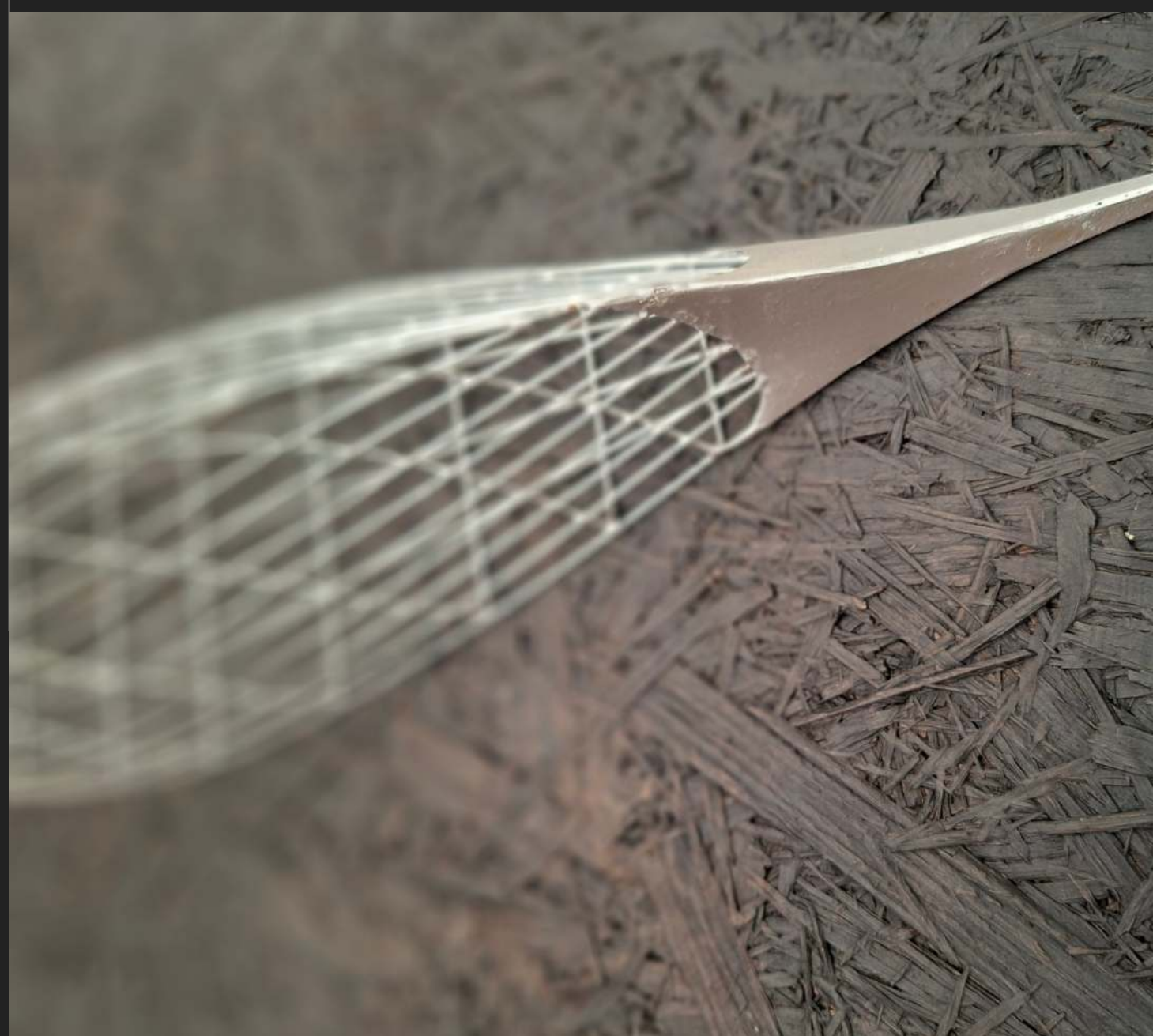
Pushing Artistic Boundaries

The artist's painting method often baffles others. "It amazes me how some people seem to fail to grasp just what this method of painting is about. Someone stated that my work is not art but could not explain their thinking." For this artist, art is about "pushing the envelope and boundaries— not doing what the herd is doing by copying archaic processes."

Inspiration comes from both landscapes and mechanical subjects. "If someone likes my work, I'm happy."

The commercial side of art is acknowledged with wry humour: "If you depend on this for your livelihood, it must be done. But it would be nice to have a patron in this day and age. Prostitution is the name of the game."

Some family and associates questioned the practicality of painting on vinyl board, especially for overseas commissions. The artist adapted: "I keep the sizes so as to fit into normal luggage. I have not had any protest regarding the board I paint on."



GRIT TALK

CONTINUED WITH ARTIST CALVIN MURPHY

Challenges, Resilience, and Independence

Resistance to convention has been both a struggle and a source of fulfillment. “On reflection, I realise how much pleasure it gives me to stand back and see the work that suits my temperament.” Public opinion matters little:

“I really don’t care what anyone thinks of the work I put out, but it pleases me if it gives someone pleasure.”

Asked for advice for aspiring artists in uncertain times, the answer is pragmatic: “Take up plumbing or grow food.”



On The Art World and Technology

Gallery experiences vary: “Some are brilliant, others run by idiots who will take any crap offered if there is enough bullshit to go with it. I have had success with some and not with others. Follow the logic.” As for social media: “I think it is a waste of time trying to promote your art on social media.”

The rise of digital art inspires skepticism. “It will probably kill art as we know it, if enough power can be provided to run it,” the artist says.

“To do art digitally must leave a hole in the heart for those who practise it.”

Ultimately, art is defined by creating something that pleases the senses, using whatever materials are available.

Personal Reflections

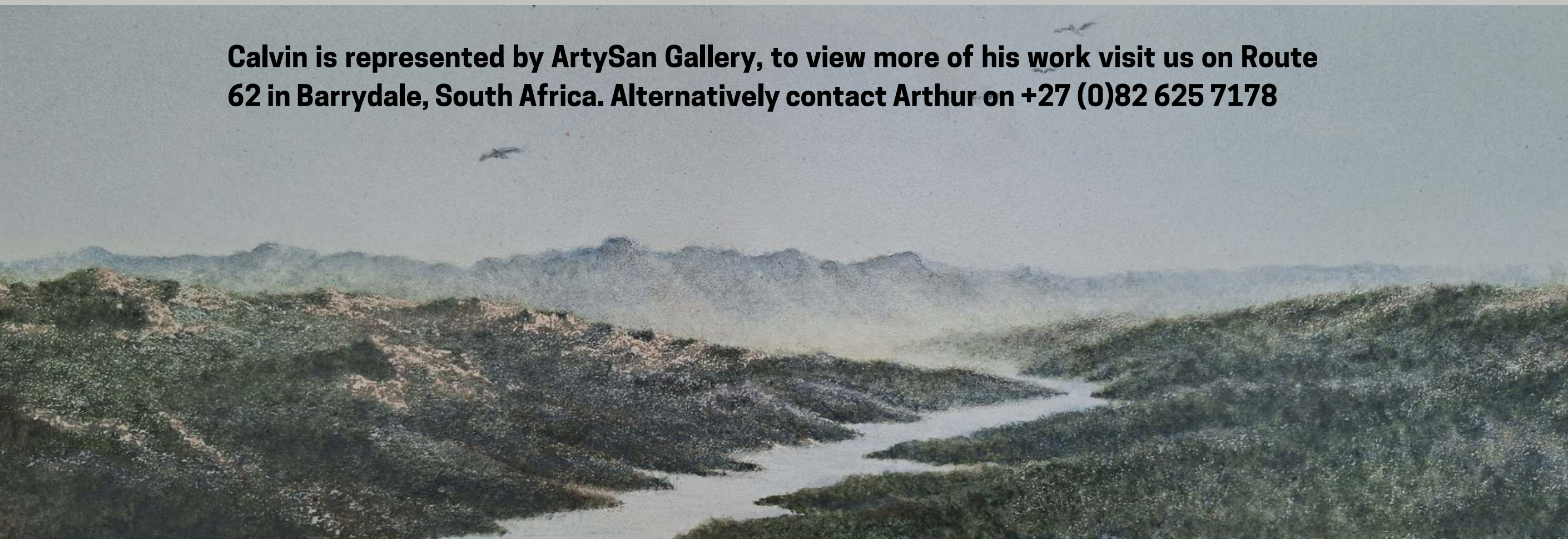
If given the chance, Calvin would combine his painting with sculpture and architecture — “things that please me.”

His favorite subjects? “Mountaintops.” Life experience is present, too: “A triple bypass — and no, I don’t draw from it.”

Finally, a word of wisdom, perhaps from Michelangelo: “Never show anything that’s unfinished to a young child or a fool.”



Calvin is represented by ArtySan Gallery, to view more of his work visit us on Route 62 in Barrydale, South Africa. Alternatively contact Arthur on +27 (0)82 625 7178



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THE ORBAPHONE: MUSICAL ART BY RIGNOLD HAYWOOD

I met Rignold about a year ago after discovering he was an artist on one of the Suurbraak Whatsapp groups. He'd invited me up to his home to check out his studio which I'd graciously accepted.

My first impressions of him was a man who had experienced a lot in life, and although we had only just met I could sense he was guarded.

That could be for a number of reasons, considering I was a stranger invited into his home and his creative space - which he built mostly himself - but intuitively I felt it ran deeper than that.

Don't get me wrong, he was warm and welcoming, and it was fascinating learning about his process, and we had a few laughs about interesting encounters with locals. Moving forward, I'd tailored some questions to try and dig a bit deeper into his life without being too intrusive, so here's a glimpse into the world of Rignold and his fascinating instrument.



Crafting Harmony in Suurbraak

In the quiet rural town of Suurbraak, South Africa, a unique musical voice rings out from an unexpected source: recycled gas cylinders transformed into enchanting instruments called Orbaphones.

At the heart of this creative endeavor is Rignold, a multi-disciplined artist and craftsman whose hands and intuition have given birth to a new way of making music — and a new way of finding meaning.

From Drum Circles to Discovery

Rignold’s path to the Orbaphone began with a lifelong love of rhythm. “I’ve been a drummer and percussionist since I was a kid,” he says.

It was his involvement with djembe drumming and weekly drum circles in Hout Bay that sparked the urge to contribute something new to the communal soundscape. “There was a continuous popping up of simple instruments there and I decided I’d like to make something to bring along.”

His first experiment (a five-note pentatonic pipe instrument) was fun, but not quite what he was looking for. Inspiration soon struck when he stumbled on the work of Dennis Havlena, a prolific tinkerer and instrument maker.

“It was pretty rough and I put my own spin on it,” Rignold explains, recalling how he brought his first creation to the drum circle and immediately received two orders. “It flowed from there.”

Innovation Through Independence

While tongue drums are now made around the world, Rignold’s Orbaphones stand apart for their custom finishes and unique designs. “I’ve not seen any that offer the options I do, especially the custom finish that makes each instrument a once-off unique creation.” The result is an oval-shaped instrument with carefully cut lines on the top — each one playable like a hand drum, each one resonating with its own visual identity.

The process of refining the Orbaphone has been largely solitary. “Over the years the instrument has made significant progress from painstaking refinement in time.” For Rignold, the workshop is both sanctuary and creative laboratory.

Balancing Art and Life

Juggling artistic ambitions with other responsibilities is a challenge familiar to many creatives. For Rignold, the Orbaphone business began as a supplement to his work as a video editor. “It slowly became a significant part of my income and I was able to ease into that. I have other artistic outlets as well but was never under any pressure to ‘make it’ as an artist.”

As his creative process evolved, Rignold learned to trust his instincts. “It’s not so much the process itself that’s evolved, but more a case of learning that my ideas and intuition are valid and that I should trust them and just go for it for myself. The rest will follow.” He admits, “That’s a difficult lesson to learn and I’m still moving down that path. School is still in session.”





Lessons in Creativity and Courage

If Rignold could share one lesson with his younger self, it would be to value every idea and recognize his own talent. “It’s not important that every work is a masterpiece. Do the work and the highlights are the gems to treasure.”

His advice to aspiring artists? “Create for yourself. Don’t create art for what you think people will like. Once you create for yourself, your best work follows together with an appreciative audience.”

Self-doubt and anxiety have been constant companions, but Rignold has learned to accept them.

“Self doubt, or ‘The way of the Artist’ as I think of it, is a monkey on my back but I’ve learned to accept his presence and not feed him any bananas.”

Compliments from others and learning to accept them have also been vital in sustaining his motivation. “Taking others’ compliments and accepting them as real and valid keeps me going.”

A Life Shaped by Place and Perspective

Rignold’s workshop, nestled against the mountains in Suurbraak, is his “temple.” Daily rituals — simply being in his workshop or walking across his land — help him stay grounded and grateful. Living in this space has shaped his mindset as much as his art.

Over time, his worldview has shifted too. “I’ve always been very scientific and an atheist but over the last ten years I’ve become comfortable with the idea that there is a connection of sorts that binds us. No idea what that is exactly but the universe is infinitesimally large and we cannot possibly write anything off.”

He’s also accepted some difficult truths: “I’m not going to get rich doing what I do, but I’m doing what I want to do when I want to do it.”



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Legacy and Lasting Impact

When asked about the impact he hopes to leave through his work, Rignold is humble yet hopeful. “I can only hope that it has brought joy and some meaning to people. That’s been the best part of making the Orbaphones — people mostly buy them as a gift for themselves and spend time away from the world for a while.”

His guiding principle is simple and profound: “I did unto others as I’d have them do to me.” As for the future, Rignold is content:

“I’m happy with how things are now. If it continues to grow a bit I’ll be happy.”

His advice for the next generation of creators is as courageous as his art. “Art is where there was nothing and now there’s something. What you do has value and is important — even if only to yourself. Keep playing.”

If you'd like to see an Orbaphone in person, feel free to visit ArtySan gallery on Route62, Barrydale, or contact +27 (0)82 625 7178 for more information.



FORK'N FOOD

EXOTIC TALK WITH MUD MODERN



Where Earth, Art, & Flavour Meet on Route62

Tucked along the rustic road of Route62 in Barrydale, MUD Modern is more than a restaurant — it's a living canvas of flavour, family, and creativity. Born from a serendipitous opportunity and shaped by the unique energy of its surroundings, MUD Modern brings an exotic, artistic flair to the Karoo's culinary landscape.

A Gallery Reimagined

The seeds of MUD Modern were planted when Michelle and Kyle heard that the space at MUD had become available. "The building itself is largely built from mud and has always been called Mud," Michelle explains. "We took that name and made it ours by adding 'Modern' to imply that art features." The name MUD Modern pays homage to both the building's earthy origins and the contemporary art that now fills its walls.

[Click here to view in browser](#)



FORK'N FOOD

CONTINUED: EXOTIC TALK WITH MUD MODERN

Barrydale's flow of travelers both local and international inspired the vision for the restaurant. "Route 62 is a very popular travel route, hosting journeys from all around the planet. We try to bring world flavours to our dishes, with a Karoo element always featuring in some way."

A Leap of Faith and a Spark of Excitement

When MUD Modern opened, Michelle and Kyle made a bold decision: to change the model from their previous restaurant, Mez, making the operation more manageable for their small team. "We were uncertain of the response," Michelle admits.

"But so far, it's proven successful."

The greatest excitement came from the blank slate that a new project offers: "Curating a space had great challenges, but great joys with that."

Artful Plates and Bold Flavours

At MUD Modern, the menu is a playground of the exotic and unexpected. "We try to bring a different flavour to the Barrydale food scene," Michelle says. "Dishes you wouldn't typically find are what we like to bring to the table, with our own unique stamp."



If one dish tells the story of Michelle's culinary journey, it's the Klein Karoo Lamb Kleftiko — a local twist on a classic Greek recipe, featuring Karoo-grown ingredients and locally sourced lamb. "Our patrons keep coming back for more."

Michelle approaches every plate with the gusto of an inspired artist. "The visual aspect of food is so important. Technically, the dishes might not be perfect, but they look pretty damn good!" Not every experiment is a hit, she laughs, recalling a pear poached in coffee that didn't quite win over guests.

And then there are the bold pairings — like keiapple and chilli ice cream - where the risk paid off.

"I wish I could again see those faces as they take the first bite. Great joys with that."

FORK'N FOOD

CONTINUED: EXOTIC TALK
WITH MUD MODERN

Perfect Pairings and Local Pride

Pairing drinks with food is an art form at MUD Modern. “Flavours that either compliment each other or balance each other is the formula we use,” Michelle says with a wry wink. Some combinations, like kiwi fruit and Springfield Wines’ ‘Miss Lucy’ wine sorbet surprise even the chefs with how well they work together.

MUD Modern champions South African spirits, particularly those from their own region. “Our local distillery, Metanoia, is making spirits that can compete with the best. We need not look any further.” If the restaurant were a bottle, it would be Joubert Tradauw Syrah — a true testament to the valley’s potential.

Family, Rituals, and Rhythm

MUD Modern is a family affair. For Kyle, working with his mom has been a lesson in humility and patience. For Michelle, watching her son take the reins is both a relief and a point of pride.

“He’s surpassed my standards of what I started all those years before.”

Their shared vision means disagreements are rare, and their unspoken rituals — like turning on the music the moment they arrive — set the tempo and the vibe for each day.

Atmosphere and Experience

From the moment guests walk through the door, Michelle and Kyle hope to awaken their curiosity. Aroma, flavour, and attention to detail are their calling cards, surprising first-timers with an unexpected cosmopolitan experience in a small, dusty Karoo town.

Is MUD Modern a stage, a gallery, or a home?

“I suppose in a sense a gallery, as it’s where and how we showcase ourselves.” The soundtrack to their service features artists like “Rey & Kjavik” and “Sahalé”, creating a vibrant, welcoming atmosphere.



FORK'N FOOD

CONTINUED: EXOTIC TALK
WITH MUD MODERN

Reflections and Hopes for the Future

For Michelle, the timeless scent of vanilla instantly transports her back to childhood - much like her character which is subtle and softly spoken. For Kyle, the future of MUD Modern is open-ended:

“The universe will decide that for me... haha.”

If they could host anyone for a meal, it would be Anthony Bourdain — served with their signature Honeybush & Plum Porkbelly — which he believes would have been a hit with that legend.



Having enjoyed a few dinners at both the original Mez and the new MUD Modern, I can say that there's a fantastic blend of feeling comfortable enough to relax in a curated restaurant without feeling stuffy or pretentious - and it's mostly because you're put at ease by down-to-earth seasoned veterans like Michelle and Kyle.



Barrydale has taught them the true art of hospitality:

“Remembering preferences”

chirps Kyle - a testimony to his knack for making customers feel at home. Looking ahead, they hope that in ten years, people will say, “The waiting list is three months!”

And if MUD Modern were a person, they believe it would be described as

“Well traveled, reliable, classy but unpretentious.”

If you'd like to book a table or enquire further, please contact Michelle or Kyle on:

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What is this free magazine about?

Small towns are host to many creatives that are often over-looked or simply don't get the exposure they deserve, hopefully this will bridge the gap. When I was in the advertising industry many years ago, putting magazines together lit me up. I got to do the layouts, but also write articles and reviews, create adverts and do illustrations as gap fillers.

Having those skills and the passion to do a project like this adds value not only to ArtySan Gallery but also gives me the opportunity to get to know interesting creatives I might not otherwise get to meet.

How does it work?

I select who I want to interview and feature - it's not a free for all, and no I won't cover everyone and everything, especially not just for the sake of it. I'll be searching for more obscure and fascinating creatives from all disciplines and walks of life. Although the magazine is about the art (whether its paintings, sculptures, music or food) my intention is to shine a spotlight on the humanity behind the easel, instrument or oven, in a raw and authentic manner. Before anyone is featured, I get to know them.

Can I pay to advertise?

Yes, if you fall within the creative or tourism or events sector (such as accommodation, game farms and so on).

What areas do you cover?

Towns along Route 62 from Robertson to Oudtshoorn, and anywhere off the beaten track. The Karoo and Overberg area deserves better coverage, and I've met so many talented people that I don't believe I'll run out of content anytime soon. Obviously I'm starting closer to home here in Barrydale first.

Will you be doing more than this?

Absolutely. My first extension to the magazine will be an illustrated map of creativity for each town, starting with Barrydale. I'm hoping this will not only serve as a functional source of information, but become a keep-sake for tourists and locals alike.

At a later stage I'll be extending articles on creatives into video interviews that I'll publish on YouTube, and if there's a call for it I might look at a regular podcast discussing passions and interests beyond art. In future we will look at covering creative events and exhibitions, including hosting our own.

To advertise, or enquire about being featured, you can contact:

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