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Leila Rose Fanner
THE SECRET GARDEN
The Residency Outcome

L E I L A R O S E F A N N E R

Leila Rose Fanner
Artist in residence 2024
Venezia



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Leila Rose Fanner
THE SECRET GARDEN
The Residency Outcome

Solo exhibition by Leila Rose Fanner
Sept 18 - Sept 30, 2024

The exhibition is the result of
Leila Rose Fanner artistic residency in 2024

AKKA Project
Contemporary African Art Gallery
Ca' del Duca Sforza 3052
Venezia, Italy



About
Leila Rose Fanner

Leila Rose Fanner, a Cape Town-based painter and illustrator, was born to a South African artist and an African American musician. She graduated from The JHB National School of the Arts in Johannesburg and trained in graphic design and watercolour painting. Her current preferred mediums are oil and oil pastel on wood and canvas. Leila held her debut exhibition in 1993 at the young age of 23. Her work is characterised by a blend of figurative and non-figurative elements, including dark or silhouetted figures, intricate patterns, vibrant colours, and depictions of greenery and florals. Her art weaves narratives about the soul's journey within the material world, drawing inspiration from her origin country's flora and fauna, fabric patterns, and folklore.

Leila has participated in numerous annual group exhibitions both locally and internationally.

She has also held several solo exhibitions, including ones in Los Angeles at Band of Vices Gallery and in New York at the Harlem Fine Arts Show.

She has been a headline artist for four years at Solo Studios, an annual fine art event in Riebeeck Kasteel, Western Cape Province, South Africa. In 2018, she received a Highly Commended award in the UK Rise Art competition.

Leila's artistic process is highly intuitive and reflects a distinctly feminine perspective, influenced by her upbringing in a family of women. Her mastery of various mediums and techniques is the result of a relentless pursuit of experiential learning, shaped by philosophical discussions about art, design, and music, as well as guidance from creative mentors. Her works are part of public and private collections in South Africa, the USA, the UK, France, Belgium, Australia, Kenya, Sweden, Norway, and Germany.





On the previous page:
Detail from Venezia, 2024
Oils, oil pastels and gold leaf
on canvas
100 x 150 cm

Leila Rose Fanner working on
the painting at AKKA Project
artist's studio

Venezia

'Venezia' holds a unique place in Leila's oeuvre as it was the very first piece she began painting during her residency at AKKA Project. She started working on it just a week after she arrived in Venice, a city that immediately captivated her with its unparalleled artistic and architectural beauty.

Fanner was immersed in a whirlwind of sensory experiences, having visited several remarkable exhibitions and museums. The level of artistry and skill she encountered, ranging from the intricate details of old master paintings to the opulent architecture and decorations of Venetian buildings, left her profoundly inspired and somewhat overwhelmed.

These experiences deeply influenced this canvas. She was particularly struck by the grandeur of gold details, the elegance of archways, and the vibrant play of glass and color that define Venice's visual landscape. These elements began to seep into her work, gradually shaping the painting as she continued to explore the city and its artistic treasures.



Venezia, 2024
Oils, oil pastels and gold leaf on canvas
100 x 150 cm



Throughout the residency, 'Venezia' slowly evolved alongside the other pieces Leila was working on. The painting became a canvas for the artist's reflections on her experiences and observations, incorporating the luxurious and historical elements she encountered. The piece was continually refined and adjusted, a process that mirrored her growing understanding and appreciation of the city's aesthetic richness.

By the end of her stay - Leila says - she reached a sense of completion and satisfaction as the painting stands as a testament to her journey through Venice, capturing the profound impact of the city's beauty on her artistic vision. It reflects a synthesis of her initial impressions and the deeper insights gained throughout her time in the lagoon, embodying the essence of her artistic exploration and the vibrant spirit of the island.



Print Making

Scuola Internazionale di Grafica

Leila's residency in Venice began in June with a particularly intense and fascinating experience, as she immediately enrolled in a printmaking course at the renowned International School of Graphics in Venice. The school, celebrated for its rich history and dedication to the arts, offered an ideal setting for Fanner to immerse herself in the intricate world of printmaking. During this time, she was mentored by industry experts who guided her through each step of creating customized printing plates.

Reflecting on her experience, Leila shared: "It was such a pleasure being immersed in the world of printing techniques and meeting artists from all over the world in this very old, well-established printing school. I have a passion for graphic art and experimentation, so I found the process of creating a print with both its limitations and possibilities very exciting".

Throughout the course, Leila explored various techniques, materials, and tools, allowing her creativity and sensibility to flourish. She spent countless hours in the studio, meticulously crafting her plates and refining her technique, while receiving invaluable feedback from her instructors. This immersive environment allowed her to experiment with different methods, pushing the boundaries of her artistic expression.

"The experience, though just a short week, opened my eyes to finding ways to mix a loose creative style with a more graphic language and has ignited an interest in working more with print techniques and rollers in my art", Leila comments.



By the end of the course, Leila had produced a stunning series of handmade prints that beautifully showcased her unique artistic style, influenced by the rich cultural tapestry of Venice and the expertise of her teachers. The course not only enhanced her technical skills but also deepened her appreciation for the printmaking process. It was a transformative experience that broadened her artistic horizons, enabling her to create works that were both innovative and deeply personal.

Above from left:
Printmaking studio at the ISG in Venice;
Leila with other residents at the ISG -
from left Kristen Nelson (USA), Clare Blackwell
(Ireland), Jane South (UK, Chairperson of Fine Arts
at Pratt University, Brooklyn);
Printmaking tools

Below from left:
Leila working in the printing studio;
Leather sample of the lion for printing;

Lion of Venice Black, 2024
Linocut and hand painting
80 x 50 cm
Ed. 1/2

"The Lion, symbol of Venice, was the only mythical creature of the many that there are that truly grabbed my attention, as I am from Africa where we have plenty of them, and there are none in Europe. I found it strange and curious how the ancient Venetians used the winged lion symbol for their Saint Marco and to see how prevalent it is in art and statues all over Venice. During my printing experiments I decided to use it as a starting point for my exploration into the Venice of old times."



Lion of Venice, 2024
Collagraph and linocut
70 x 50 cm
Ed. 2/6



Lion of Venice, 2024
Collagraph and linocut
70 x 50 cm
Ed. 3/6



Inspired by
The Gardens of Venice

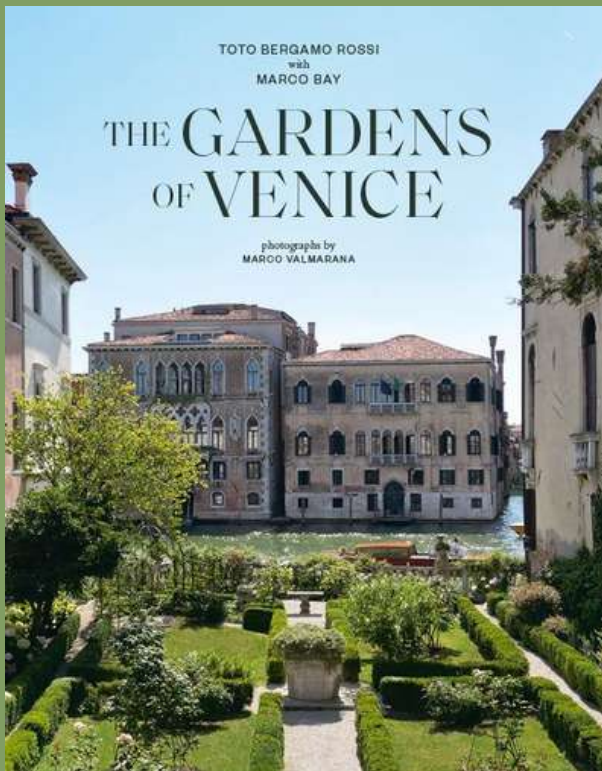
Leila is mostly known in the art scene for drawing inspiration from the flora and fauna of her surroundings, but she faced a unique challenge in Venice: finding green, open spaces amidst the city's urban landscape. Accustomed to more naturally lush environments, Fanner initially struggled to locate the botanical beauty she typically infused into her art. However, this challenge turned into an opportunity for discovery when she was introduced to the book "The Gardens of Venice" edited by Toto Bergamo Rossi and Marco Bay, featuring original photographs by Marco Valmarana.

This volume, rich with stunning photography and insightful commentary, became an unexpected yet profound source of inspiration for Leila.

She remarked, "Stunning photography and fascinating information about the origins of the gardens in Venice. I was astounded at how many gardens there are hidden away behind high walls and beautifully crafted wrought iron gates." This revelation sparked a new artistic journey, as the book unveiled a hidden world of Venetian gardens that were not immediately visible to the casual observer.

As she explored these secluded gardens, either in person or through the vivid descriptions and images in the book, Leila discovered a side of Venice that most tourists never see. She was captivated by the neoclassical arches, the intricate curved iron gates, and the lush vegetation that thrived in these private spaces. These elements, previously unknown to her, began to feature prominently in her artwork.

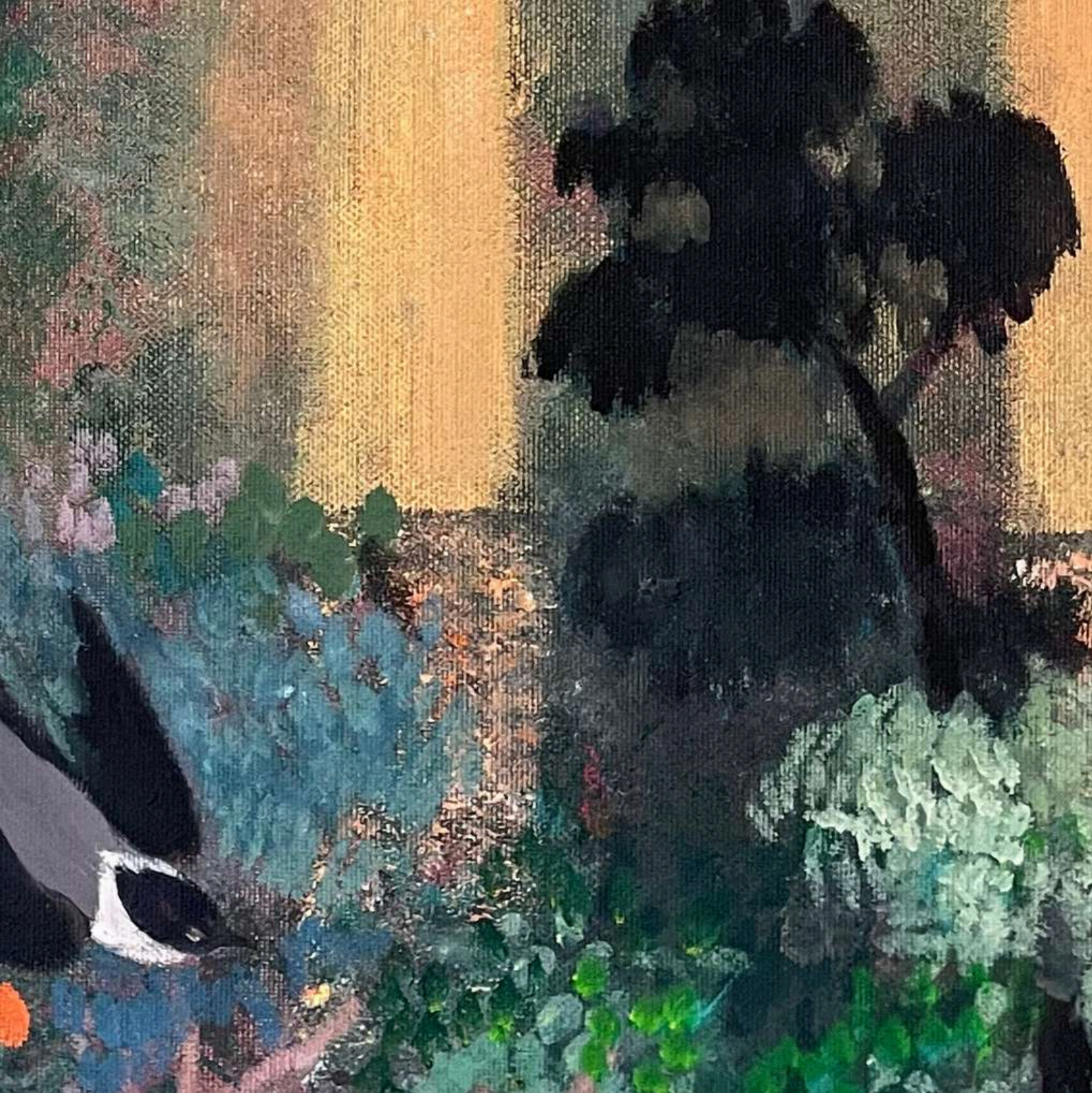
Leila's time at AKKA Project was marked by this newfound inspiration. Her pieces began to reflect the delicate interplay of nature and architecture she found in these secret gardens. The arches and gates, in particular, became symbols in her work, representing thresholds between the known and the hidden, the cultivated and the wild.



One particularly amusing anecdote from her time in Venice involved an afternoon spent trying to find a rumored garden that was said to contain rare, centuries-old magnolia trees. After navigating a maze of narrow alleys and canals, Leila finally stumbled upon the entrance - a simple, unassuming gate that opened into a breathtaking courtyard brimming with verdant life. The sense of discovery and the joy of uncovering these treasures deeply influenced her creative process.

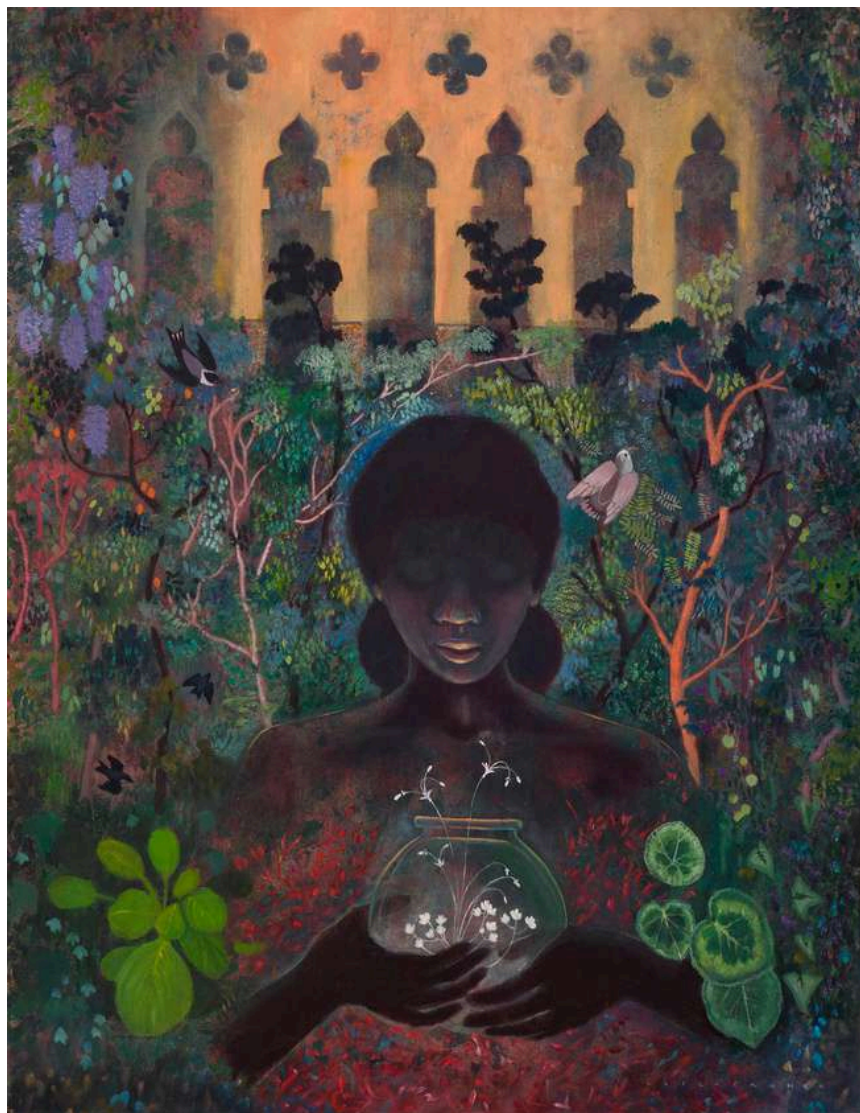
This experience not only enriched her appreciation for Venice's subtle and often overlooked natural beauty but also expanded her artistic palette. Leila's work during this period, influenced by "The Gardens of Venice", captures the essence of these secret green spaces, merging her love of natural motifs with the unique architectural elements of the city. This blend of nature and structure became a defining feature of her Venice-inspired canvases - her own 'The Secret Gardens of Venice' series - showcasing her ability to adapt and find beauty even in the most unexpected places.





On the previous pages:
Details - Precious, 2024
Oils and oil pastels on canvas
140 x 110 cm

Precious, 2024
Oils and oil pastels on canvas
140 x 110 cm



Precious

The painting 'Precious' is the first piece of Leila's 'The Secret Gardens of Venice' series. Here, she deliberately chose to experiment with oils on the reverse side of the primed linen canvas, allowing the raw texture to serve as the foundational substrate. This decision marked her first experience with this medium, driven by her curiosity to explore how its natural fibers would interact with and influence the fluidity and expression of her painting technique.

The inspiration for 'Precious' is deeply rooted in Fanner's engagement with Venetian history and culture. The literary exploration of the mentioned "The Gardens of Venice", coupled with her visit to Palazzo Franchetti where she was surrounded by the grandeur of Venetian architecture, provided a rich tapestry of ideas and emotions that Leila channeled into her work.

In the painting, a female figure emerges as the central subject, depicted with a sense of reverence and care as she cradles a

glass jar where a precious new seedling lies, symbolizing life, growth, and the continuity of nature. The seedling has been carefully brought to Venice by the figure, who intends to nurture and propagate it within her nursery. This imagery is not merely symbolic; it reflects a historical truth that deeply resonated with the artist. Through her readings, she discovered that the first gardens of Venice were created by the city's early inhabitants, who transported plants one by one to cultivate food and medicinal herb gardens. These gardens served as vital resources for the residents and their communities, embodying a profound connection to the land and a commitment to sustaining life in an environment where space was so limited. Thus, 'Precious' becomes a tribute to this legacy, blending the historical with the personal, and the natural with the artistic. The painting encapsulates the delicate balance between nature and human ingenuity, capturing a moment of quiet determination and hope as the seedling takes root in a new and foreign land.



Secret Garden

The window that inspired the painting;
picture shot by the artist in Venice.



On the previous page:
Secret Garden, 2024
Oils and oil pastels on canvas
90 x 90 cm

'Secret Garden' captures a moment of peaceful reflection and harmony with nature. It portrays two individuals gazing through a leafy archway intertwined with iron fencing, unveiling a hidden garden beyond. This secluded and unspoiled garden allures the observer into a realm where time seems to slow down, and the usual busyness of life fades away.

The simplicity of the setting is deliberate, enabling the viewer to appreciate the intricacies: the interplay of light through the leaves, the graceful curves of the gate, and the vibrant greenery that exudes vitality. The artist delves into the concept that even a small, seemingly insignificant corner of nature can profoundly influence our state of mind. Despite its modest size, the garden symbolizes the soothing and revitalizing essence of nature. It acts as a gentle nudge that amidst the world's chaos, there exists a serene refuge where we can reconnect with ourselves and the natural world.



Velvet Plum, 2024
Oils, oil pastels and gold leaf on
canvas
150 x 100 cm

Velvet Plum

In 'Velvet Plum' Leila delves into a rich narrative of luxury, nature, and complex emotions. It portrays a woman in the midst of her garden, exuding elegance and poise as she sits surrounded by lush greenery. The woman is adorned in a velvet dress, a garment that holds particular significance in the composition and was inspired by a remarkable piece that Fanner encountered and photographed during her visit to the Tessiture Bevilacqua in Venice, a place renowned for its exquisite craftsmanship and historic velvets.

In the woman's hand, she holds a ripe plum, freshly picked from the fruit trees that populate the background. The plum, with its rich color and fullness, is a symbol of life's bounty and the pleasures of nature; yet, its ripeness hints at the passage of time and the inevitability of change. The fruit serves as a focal point within the painting, drawing the viewer's eye and inviting contemplation of its symbolism.

The velvet that inspired the painting;
picture shot by the artist at Tessiture Bevilacqua.



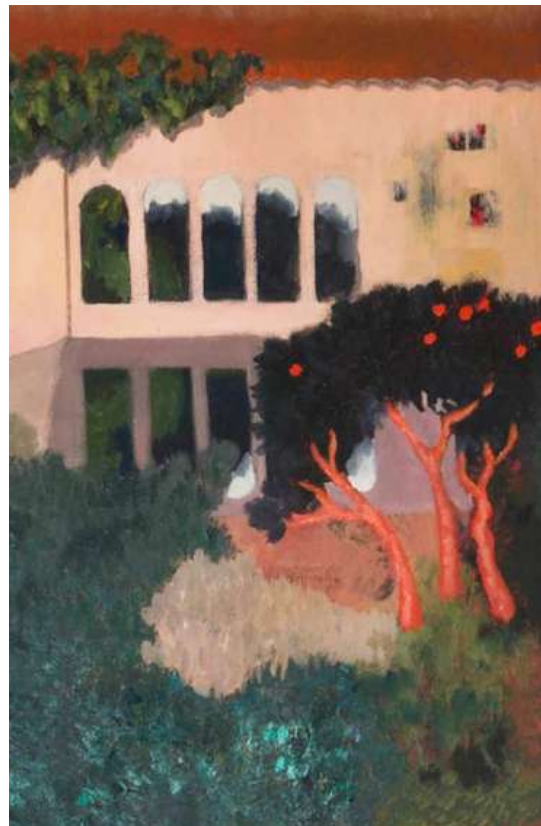


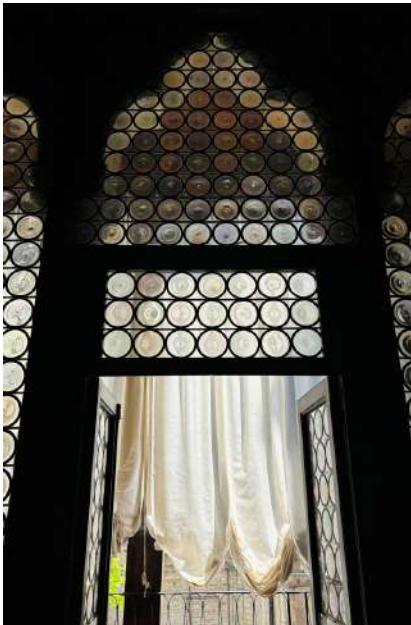
On the previous page:
Detail - Velvet Plum, 2024
Oils, oil pastels and gold leaf on canvas
150 x 100 cm

Detail - Velvet Plum, 2024
Oils, oil pastels and gold leaf on canvas
150 x 100 cm

While the overall atmosphere of 'Velvet Plum' is one of richness and luxury, Fanner has also woven a subtle thread of melancholy into the canvas. This complexity is most evident in the woman's expression, which reveals a glimpse of sadness or introspection, adding depth to the work and making it more than just a portrayal of beauty and wealth. It suggests a narrative beyond the immediate visual, one that touches on themes of transience, longing, or perhaps the bittersweet nature of memories.

Fanner leaves this emotional layer open to interpretation, acknowledging that different viewers may perceive the painting in various ways. Some might see only the opulence and elegance, while others might pick up on the more somber tones within the piece. This openness is a hallmark of Fanner's work, inviting each observer to bring their own experiences to the interpretation of the scene.





Elements captured by the artist while strolling through Venice, seeking for inspiration for the 'The Secret Gardens of Venice' canvas series.



A Special Encounter *with Collectors*

During her stay in Venice, Leila had the unique opportunity to meet Carla and Pieter Schulting, renowned collectors with a profound appreciation for contemporary art.

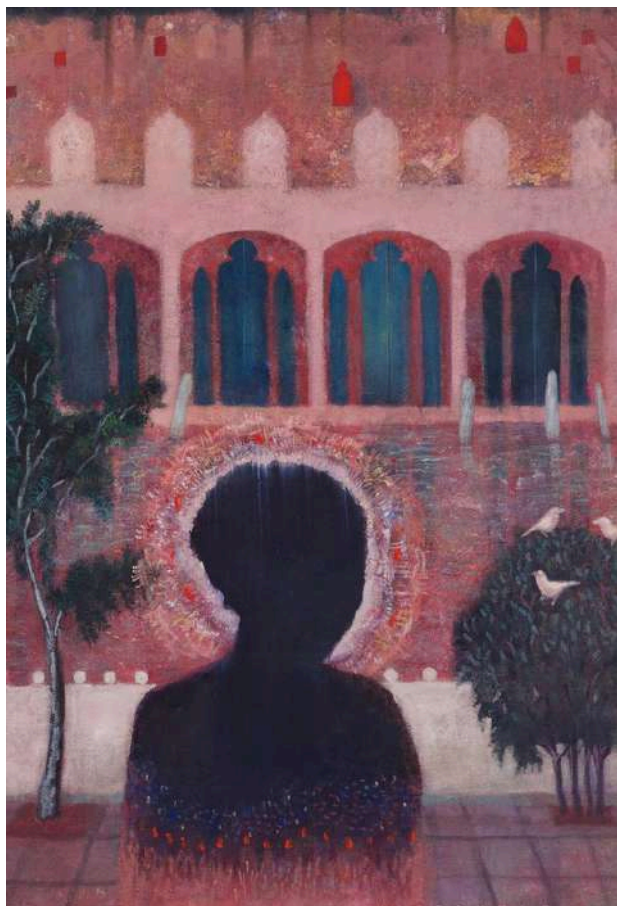
The Schultings, who have meticulously curated a diverse collection, made a special visit to AKKA Project Gallery in Venice to connect with the artist in person, whose work is not only part of their collection but has also been exhibited in the museum exhibition Africa Supernova - The Contemporary African Painting Collection of Carla and Pieter Schulting - at Kunsthal KAdE in Amersfoort, Netherlands, running from September 2023 to January 2024, and included in the related recently published catalogue.

Reflecting on the encounter, Leila shared: "It was a special moment to meet Carla and Pieter Schulting at AKKA Project, knowing that my work has found a place in their collection and is featured in their show. Our conversation was filled with insights and shared inspirations, reinforcing the meaningful impact art can have in bridging people across distances. This encounter has further enriched my creative journey, and I am honoured to be a part of their collection."

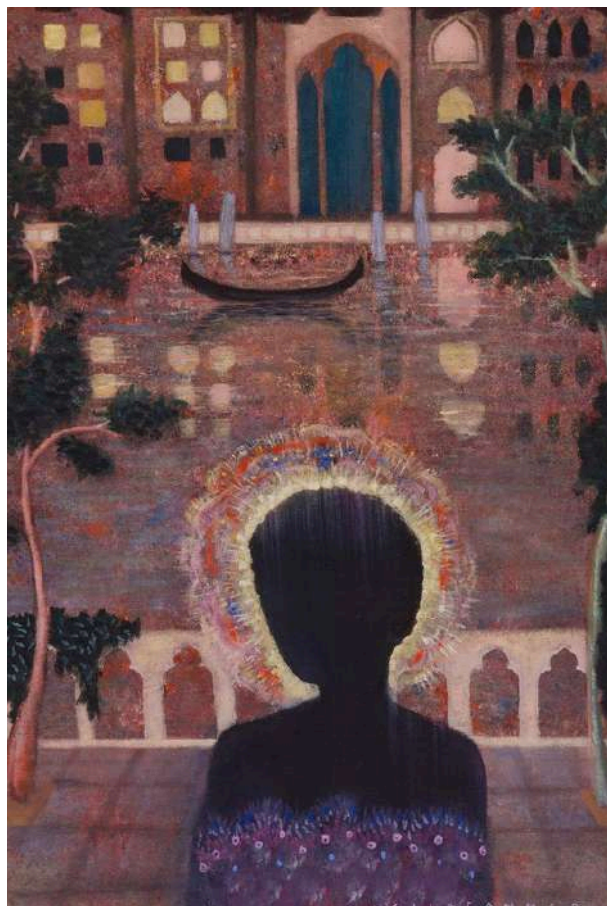
This meeting highlights the significance of artist residencies, not only as a time for creative exploration but also for the invaluable connections they foster. Such experiences, like Leila's in Venice, demonstrate how these opportunities can lead to meaningful relationships that extend beyond the studio, contributing to the artist's growth and the broader art community.



Carla and Pieter Schulting with
Leila Rose Fanner at AKKA Project
in Venice



Evening at the Palazzo I, 2024
Oils and oil pastels on canvas
65 x 45 cm



Evening at the Palazzo II, 2024
Oils and oil pastels on canvas
65 x 45 cm

Evening at the Palazzo 1 and 11

More and more engaged with the city's allure, in the "Evening at the Palazzo" series, Leila Fanner employs oils and oil pastels on raw linen to evoke the unique atmosphere of Venice's summer evenings. These two paintings capture the warm, golden light that envelops the canals and buildings during the humid nights of Venetian summers.

Fanner's creative process was heavily influenced by Venice's iconic elements, particularly the wooden 'bricole' that mark the canal pathways and the elegant gondolas that glide through the water. These features are intricately depicted on canvas, highlighting both their physical form and their reflective qualities on the water's surface. The interplay of light and shadow on the canals is a key focus, with the evening light dancing across the ripples to create a shimmering effect that adds warmth and depth to the paintings.

The inspiration for this series also comes from Venice's historic palazzi. The grand buildings lining the canals fascinated the artist with their architectural splendor. The reflections in the water, the intricate play of light on the canal's surface, and the majestic presence of the palaces all contributed to the development of "Evening at the Palazzo." Through these elements, Fanner captures not only the physical beauty of Venice but also the evocative atmosphere that defines the city.

This series is a testament to how Venice's unique features have profoundly influenced Fanner's artistic style. The paintings illustrate her ability to translate the city's enchanting ambience into visual art, blending historical grandeur with the fleeting beauty of evening light and its reflections on the canals.



View from the AKKA Project during late evening that served as inspiration for the backgrounds of the canvases; the photograph was taken by the artist.

Below:
In progress - Evening at the Palazzo I, II
and They Bring Their Gardens I, II



They Bring Their Gardens I and II

On the previous page:
Detail - They Bring Their Gardens II, 2024
70 x 70 cm

They Bring Their Gardens I, 2024
70 x 70 cm

In "They Bring Their Gardens I" and "They Bring Their Gardens II," Leila Fanner once again uses raw linen to evoke the profound historical and visual richness of Venice. Created during the final stages of her residency, these paintings are infused with quintessential Venetian style, reflecting the artist's deep immersion in the city's unique atmosphere.

The works symbolically represent the early Venetians transporting their lush gardens by boat, transforming Venice's canals into floating paradises. Fanner captures the essence of these gardens as they journeyed through the waterways, bringing nature into the heart of the city.



They Bring Their Gardens II, 2024
Oils and oil pastels on canvas
70 x 70 cm



In these pieces, the artist emphasizes the vibrant interplay of light that defines Venice at night. The warm glow from the palace windows illuminates the darkened streets, casting luminous reflections on the canals below. The shimmering yellow lights on the water, along with reflections of boats and surrounding architecture, create a captivating visual effect. Fanner skillfully portrays how the city's nighttime lights dance across the rippling canal surfaces, adding depth and vibrancy to the paintings.

The texture of the raw linen enhances the tactile quality of the works, making the reflections and light play even more striking. Through the "They Bring Their Gardens" series, Fanner captures the enchanting essence of Venice's nocturnal beauty, blending historical symbolism with the city's dynamic visual elements.

Through the artist's eyes
Looking for some green

As previously mentioned, Leila is a creative with a deep passion for nature and floral elements. During her time in Venice, she focused on exploring and documenting the green spaces both within the city and in its surrounding areas. Her research went beyond the said photo book on Venice's secret gardens, becoming an immersive and personal journey.

Leila began her exploration on the Lido of Venice, where she cycled along the island's tranquil paths. Here, she discovered a serene contrast to the bustling city, with coastal greenery and many intimate spaces that offered a peaceful retreat.

Venturing further afield with some of the friends she made at AKKA, she traveled to the Dolomites, where the rugged mountains and mysterious caves presented a completely different aspect of nature's grandeur.

They inspired her to reflect on the ancient connections between the land and its flora.

Leila also spent time navigating the Venetian lagoon and its islands, observing how nature coexists with the unique water-based environment of the city. As she traveled by vaporetto and boat, she encountered small, verdant patches on the islands.

Throughout her residency, Leila remained attuned to the subtle signs of nature, finding inspiration in the smallest details like a sprig of ivy climbing a crumbling wall, a patch of wildflowers by the lagoon, or a hidden garden tucked away behind an old building. Her time in Venice became a deep exploration of how nature quietly persists and flourishes, even in the most unexpected places, enriching the city's timeless allure.





Through the artist's words

The End

As Leila Rose Fanner's first art residency ever comes to a close, it's time to reflect on the incredible journey she has experienced over the past three months. Venice has proven to be a canvas of emotions and inspirations - unexpected, wondrous, awe-inspiring, lonely, kind, challenging, overwhelming, deeply cathartic, generous, and magical. As she shares: "Venice, for 3 months in summer, has been quite an experience, definitely one I could write a book about."

Leila's time in the lagoon has been filled with unforgettable moments. She experienced her first Festa del Redentore, marveling at the breathtaking fireworks display and crossing the votive bridge to Giudecca. She visited the Berengo Foundation on Murano, where she admired the stunning glass works of international artists. A highlight was meeting the artist Ghizlane Sahli at AKKA Project, exchanging ideas and creative visions. And who could forget the awe of climbing the Scala del Bovolo, where history and architecture converged to inspire her further?

Reflecting on her time in Venice, Leila admits: "As a first-time Art Residency, I had no experience to compare it to - only that of my artist friends". This residency has profoundly impacted her art practice, and she notes: "The change in my art practice in terms of my style, approach, and methods will become apparent as time goes on when I am back in my own studio".

Now, as she prepares to return to Cape Town, Leila's heart is full of anticipation: "I cannot wait to get back! South Africa pulls my heart - to my home, my people, my garden, my doggie, the mountains, the clear, wild ocean, and all my loves". Venice has been a chapter filled with growth and inspiration, and while this residency may have ended, it has undoubtedly laid the foundation for the exciting creative journey that lies ahead.





Artist's Statement
Leila Rose Fanner

"I tend to answer with a little reticence about the intellectual aspect of my process. Unlike many creatives I read about who are motivated by the shadow aspects of their psyche or by the pain and suffering in the world or the political circus and the state of society etc, my creativity is not complicated. It is a joyful escape. I often refer to the profound impact that my childhood memories of the illustrated books of myths, legends and fairy tales has on my work.

I find that creating something beautiful and uplifting is almost impossible to achieve without a heightened state of love, joyful enthusiasm and powerful feelings of appreciation...

Believe me, I have tried to create when sad, angry or depressed and I simply can't.

When I'm painting, I feel connected to a powerful stream of consciousness. I feel like I'm riding a wave of light, colour and sound. I know that I am not only creating a painting, but also a precious moment in my life.

This state isn't easy to achieve on a daily basis - life being what it is.

I find that it's easier to connect to this state during meditation. So I do whatever it takes to extend that into my work life."

- Leila Rose Fanner

Selected solo exhibitions:

- 2024** • The Secret Garden, AKKA Project Venezia, Venice, Italy
- 2019** • Flourish, Aity Gallery, Franschhoek, South Africa
- 2016** • Annual 'Solo Studios', Riebeek Kasteel, Western Cape, South Africa
- 2018** • Ceremony of the Soul, Eclectica Contemporary, Cape Town, South Africa CAETEC, Soweto, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2008** • Superwomen, Kunsthouse, Cape Town, South Africa

Selected group exhibitions:

- 2024** • Fire in Her Eyes, Kvasnevski Schwartz Project, New York City, USA
- 2023** • Africa Supernova, Schulting Art Collection at Kunsthal KAdE Museum, Amersfoort, The Netherlands
- 2022** • Empire State of Mind, CK Gallery, New York, USA
- 2021** • Memoir, Deepest Darkest, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2020** • I See You, RK Contemporary, Riebeek Kasteel, South Africa
- 2018** • Look Me In The Eye, RK Contemporary, Riebeek Kasteel, South Africa
- Moussa-ya/Womanhood, Band Of Vices Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- Group Show, Candice Berman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Harlem Fine Art Show, New York, USA

Art fairs:

- 2024** • AKAA - Also Known As Africa, Paris, France with AKKA Project
- 2022** • SCOPE Miami Beach, with Galerie Carole Kvasnevski, Miami, USA
- AKAA Art Fair, with Galerie Carole Kvasnevski, Paris, France
- 1-54 Art Fair London, with Galerie Carole Kvasnevski, London, UK
- 2021** • 1-54 Art Fair New York, with Galerie Carole Kvasnevski, New York, USA
- Art x LAGOS, Lagos, Nigeria
- PRIZM Virtual Fair, Miami, USA
- 2018** • Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Milan, Italy
- FNB Joburg Art Fair, with Eclectica Contemporary, Johannesburg, South Africa

About

AKKA Project

AKKA Project introduces an innovative dimension to the gallery experience, offering a vibrant showcase of unique contemporary art from Africa and cultural initiatives in Dubai, Venice, and Lugano. As a commercial gallery and project space, AKKA Project is dedicated to promoting and supporting artists of African descent.

Our galleries serve as intimate spaces carefully curated to encompass a diverse range of mediums. Each artwork and project we present reflects a personal journey, encapsulating the unique experiences encountered while exploring the multifaceted African art scene. In our commitment to nurturing and enhancing the creative process of our artists, AKKA Project organizes artist residencies in Venice, with a particular emphasis on young artists. We relish the freedom that the gallery space provides, allowing us to redefine the concept of a 'gallery' both artistically and conceptually, while also serving as a catalyst for change within the broader community.

We represent African contemporary artists working across disciplines, with a key focus on championing our artists through curated solo exhibitions and collaborative initiatives. We emphasize contextual specificity in art, focusing on the particular context in which a piece of art is created and understood. This involves considering the cultural, historical, social, and geographical factors that influence the artwork. By highlighting these aspects, we aim to provide a deeper understanding of the artwork's significance and relevance, ensuring that the art is not viewed in isolation but as part of a broader narrative that includes the artist's background, the societal issues they address, and the cultural traditions they draw upon. This approach allows for a more nuanced appreciation of the art and its ability to convey diverse perspectives and realities. In addition to planned and curated exhibitions, AKKA Project facilitates presentations and exhibitions by visiting lecturers, guest artists and curators.

A.R.P.
The Concept

The AKKA Project Venice **Artist Residency Program** is dedicated to young artists from Africa, providing them with an enriching experience at AKKA Project Venice, located in the cultural and artistic heart of the Venetian lagoon. Each year, the residency program invites 2-3 innovative artists to elevate their artistic practice in this vibrant international setting.

This residency complements the artistic and cultural schedule of AKKA Project, a gallery promoting contemporary art from Africa through its venues in Venice, Dubai, and Lugano. By supporting artists in their artistic and personal growth, the residency allows them to experiment with their creative processes in an international context. Artists have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the rich cultural heritage of Venice and Italy, creating new points of encounter and interaction with both the local and international art scenes.

AKKA Project organizes a tailored educational program built according to the ambitions, interests, and techniques of the hosted artist. This approach fosters a greater connection between the artist and the local environment, offering a comprehensive overview of the cultural landscape. In addition to visits to cultural sites in Venice and Italy, artists are invited to participate in talks and workshops with local artists, enhancing their exposure and engagement.

During the residency, artists create a dedicated portfolio of works rooted in their current practice, enriched by their experiences in Venice. This portfolio is then showcased in a solo exhibition at AKKA Project Venice at the end of the residency, highlighting the growth and development achieved during their stay.



The catalog is published on the occasion of the solo exhibition Leila Rose Fanner: The Residency Outcome.

The exhibition is the result of Leila Rose Fanner's artistic residency at AKKA Project Venice from 03.06 to 28.08.2024.

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In the photographs:

Ghizlane Sahli, Moroccan artist (p. 38)

Manuel Meneghel, Venice Tour Leader (p. 38)

Lidija Kostic Khachatourian, AKKA Project's Founder (p. 39)

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