

Christine Dixie's Trade-Off Exhibition Explores the Intersection of Art and Language

FACULTY OF ART, DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE



Renowned South African artist Christine Dixie, a senior lecturer at Rhodes University, presents her latest exhibition, *Trade-Off*, at the SARChI Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture Gallery. Running until the end of October, this exhibition centers on *DisOrder – Trade-Off*, a series of nine prints created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The work grapples with the media's portrayal of the "trade-off" between economic stability and public health during lockdowns.

In *DisOrder – Trade-Off*, Dixie explores the intricate relationship between language and image, a concept further developed through the inclusion of *Extract*, a text-based artwork composed of six components resembling an open book. This piece incorporates the writings of Prof. Brenda Schmahmann, who has critically engaged with Dixie's work over many years. By transforming Schmahmann's text into visual form, Dixie reflects the deep interconnection between art and scholarly analysis.

The exhibition's opening, held on 22 August 2024, saw a large turnout. Prof. Federico Freschi, Dean of the Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture (FADA), introduced Dixie, who gave an insightful overview of her work. On 26 August, a seminar provided further discussion, with Dixie focusing on the three central figures in *DisOrder – Trade-Off* and the complex dialogue between words and images.

Dixie emphasized that *Trade-Off* represents not only a collaboration between herself and Prof. Schmahmann but also a broader conversation between art and theoretical writing. She sought to honor Schmahmann's scholarship and the role it has played in shaping her artistic journey, demonstrating how art and theory can support one another in a dynamic exchange.

This exhibition is a profound reflection on the power of interdisciplinary collaboration, inviting viewers to engage with both visual art and academic discourse.

The artwork DisOrder – Trade-Off was created with the consent of Ileana Parvu, the editor of Brenda Schmahmann's chapter, and the publisher, de Gruyter. Schmahmann's chapter, "Between the Conceptual and the Artisanal in South African Art," explores the work of Christine Dixie and Senzeni Marasela. The chapter will appear in the forthcoming book A Show of Hands: Crafting Concepts in Contemporary Art, edited by Parvu.

For more details, see the publication link:

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/isbn/978311018737/html>

Watch a video of the Trade-Off exhibition:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtkIwe5frdc>

