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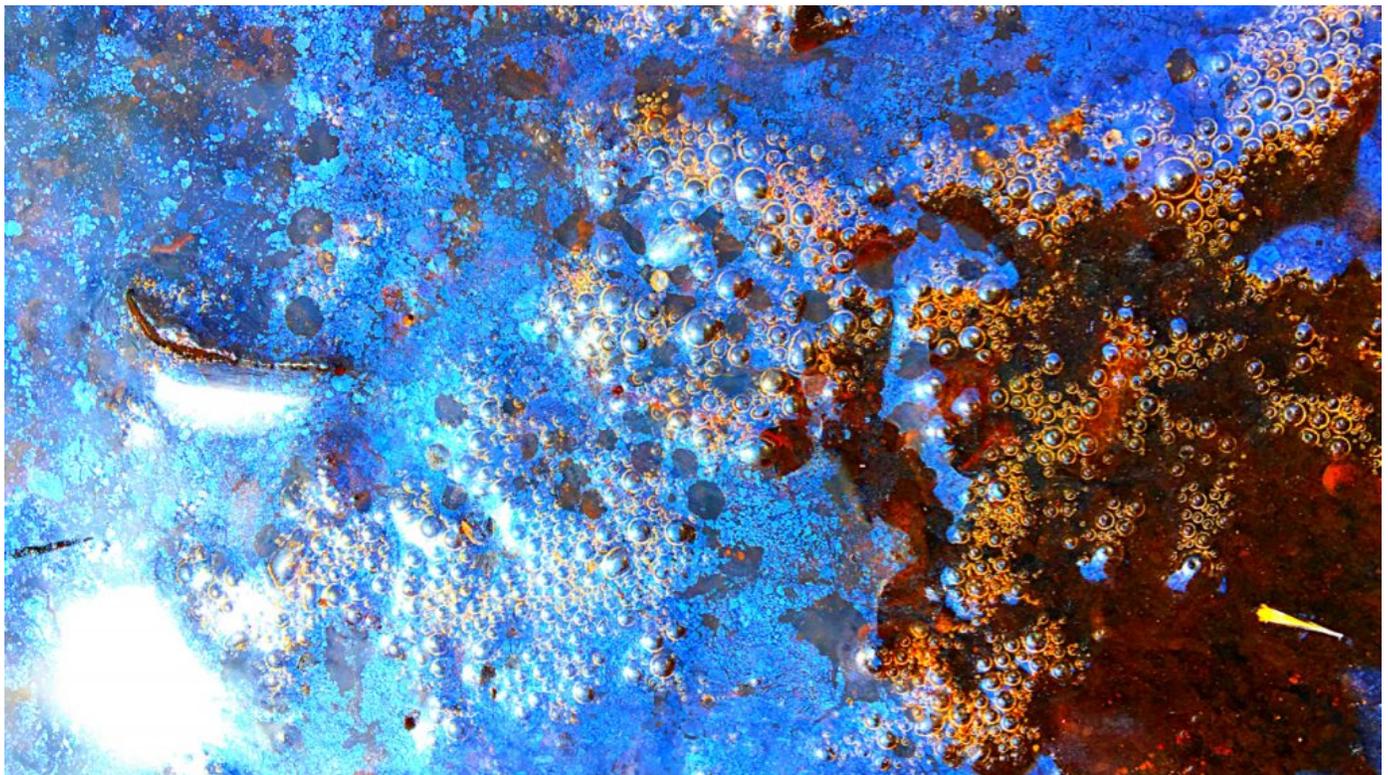
INTERVIEW

SaySay Love: The Matrix of Water

June 1, 2018 - by Colin Hambrook

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SaySay.Love is an internationally renowned blind photographer who has developed a technique for making stunning images of water that highlight the growing global problem of water shortage as a result of climate change. DAO talked to the artist following a recent exhibition at Coningsby Gallery, London.



SaySay.Love Water Series 2

If the water industry does not improve the infrastructure of water supplies and water efficiency, London will face terrible drought in the coming decades. That we should consider our plentiful water supply while we can, is the stark message of 'The Matrix of Water' – a series of large-scale photographic images that dive into the power, structure and beauty of H2O.

Photographer SaySay.Love was born in Berlin and now spends half his year in Cape Town. It was here that he, along with over three million other residents, recently experienced the worst drought in the city's history.

"Being European, water shortages are outside my life-experience. Until now water has always been in abundance, something that I took for granted, an almost invisible resource, like air."

The drought changed all this, and prompted the artist to embark on a journey of discovery into water itself. SaySay.Love spent six months photographing water across the world, from Africa to Poland, in settings varying from oceans and rivers to inside plumbing and bottles. The resulting series of images show the artist's interpretations of the mercurial structure and beauty of water and its integral relationship to environment.

"We are losing more and more connection to mother nature and in our economic growth, we use resources and destroy nature so we can 'live'. But this only results in us destroying our own environment. We are water and we are beautiful, yet we are poised to destroy nature, and thereby destroy humanity."

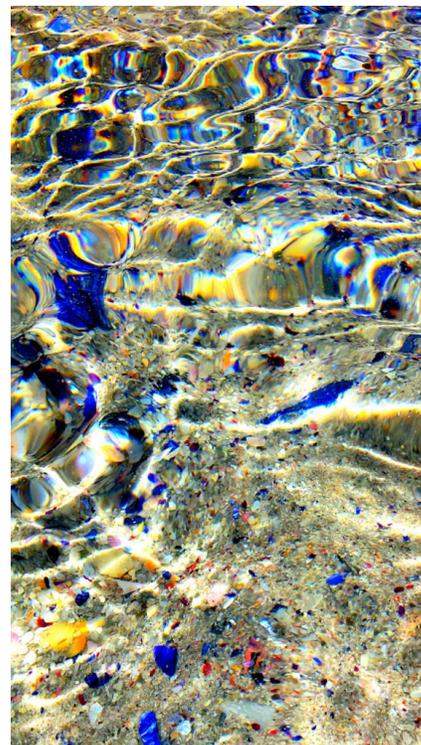
SaySay.Love's body of work includes photography, video, social activism, installation and wearable art. The artist is partially sighted in one eye from birth, an impairment that he says has added to his visual appreciation of the world and is one of the reasons he took up art as a career.

"I just use an iPhone and a simple app to take the photos. I follow my emotions and although the creative process is complex, the art happens in a moment. If you close one eye and experience the world with one eye you get a taste of my world. I don't see any depth. I believe that this reduces fear and gives me the freedom to see and experience the world differently. My pictures depict reality transformed into an abstract reality."

SaySay.Love's photographs create an intriguing and poetic abstract impression. They are like images seen under a microscope or taken from outer space – capturing moments in nature that seem in one sense divorced from reality and in another almost too real.

"For me, abstract art has no rules and no regulation. In real daily life we are adapted to rules and regulation. That limits us in our expression. I use the freedom of abstract art to express myself."

"My works look at all areas of the compound and essential resource that is water: it's structure, the way it transforms lives, places and experiences. It is both beautiful and destructive. My works aim to make us question our perception of life's reality."



SaySay.Love Water Series 10

As part of the recent exhibition an installation entitled 'Message in a Bottle' presented direct messages from the residents of Cape Town, South Africa to Londoners about their experiences of drought.

"We are always overwhelmed and bombarded by messages through media wherever we are. I think that this can make us immune to bad news. The messages from the people in Cape Town are 'real' messages and I have personally experienced what is like when a city runs out of water."

"It is not imaginable in a civilized and technology-wise well-developed environment. According to a BBC report of 18 February 2017, there are 11 major cities in the world facing a water drought in the near future. One of those cities is London."

"The 3 million people in Cape Town have a very hard life and are fearful. A part of this project is to raise awareness and I pleased to support WaterAid who work incredibly hard in their global water projects."

Recent exhibitions of SaySay.Love's work have been held at Gallery One11 and Ava Gallery in Cape Town (2017) and solo shows at Agog Gallery and Melrose Gallery in Johannesburg (2018). His work was featured at the Investec Cape Town Art Fair as part of the AVA Gallery display. In addition to the London exhibition at the Coningsby Gallery, The Matrix of Water has been shown at Rutger Brandt Gallery, Amsterdam 9-13 May and in Moscow 15 May-6 June with highlights shown at Elite London 11-12 May.

Find out more about SaySay.Love's work and upcoming exhibitions by visiting his website.