

bodyTime(*fugitivity*)

Introduction

In a small Randburg studio, every second weekend, artists gather—novices to masters—all tracing bodies in quiet focus. A soft “How’s everyone?” fills the air, grounding life-drawing that pares humanness bare—flesh poised, breath caught, doubled in two exposures. *bodyTime()* skims time’s edge—neither locked nor lost—skin tracing a toe’s reach, a hand’s drift, a veil’s bend. Pareidolia glints: what’s there, what’s not, shimmers in the overlap.

At Stokvel Gallery, Melville, 15 to 16 March 2025, André Clements offers 16 prints—each a body folding into itself, sharp yet soft. No fixed frame pins them; every curve dares a quiet yes—steady, then gone. Here, they’re finite, rare, raw. Step in; meet the glimmer where presence bends its shadow play.



20241101_1 (Toe)

A toe teeters at the frame's edge, taut, twisting—its arch flares, slicing through shadow to graze an armpit's dip. Wrinkles ripple up an ankle, brushing a neck's faint tilt, then ease downward, meeting flesh that holds steady where the foot strains. Toe traces a line to a distant curve—nipple, a silent tie across the span.

No neat frame binds it; tension hums between the lean reach and the body's grounded weight—a spark of motion tipping against stillness, articulation testing what's whole. Light bends soft across the overlap, shadow pooling where edges blur—a form caught mid-shift, alive, elusive.

Step closer; bear the invitation.



20241101_2 (Elbow)

An elbow juts, bending shadow across a breast's curve—upper arm stretched, fine hair glinting in the Canon 5DSR's crisp gaze. No blur here; every strand catches light, a quiet testament to flesh meeting lens. The breast rests, steady, where the arm angles—less a clash, more a crossing, like lines on a map half-drawn.

No pose holds still; the overlap shifts—arm guarding or reaching, breast simply there, a tension that's soft, not strained. Light pools, then spills, carving edges where hair prickles against smooth skin. It's raw, close—yet pulls back, a form caught in mid-thought, mid-breath.

In bodyTime()'s triptych, it follows the toe's twist—here, the elbow turns the page. Not loud, not lush—just real.
Step closer; trace the grain.

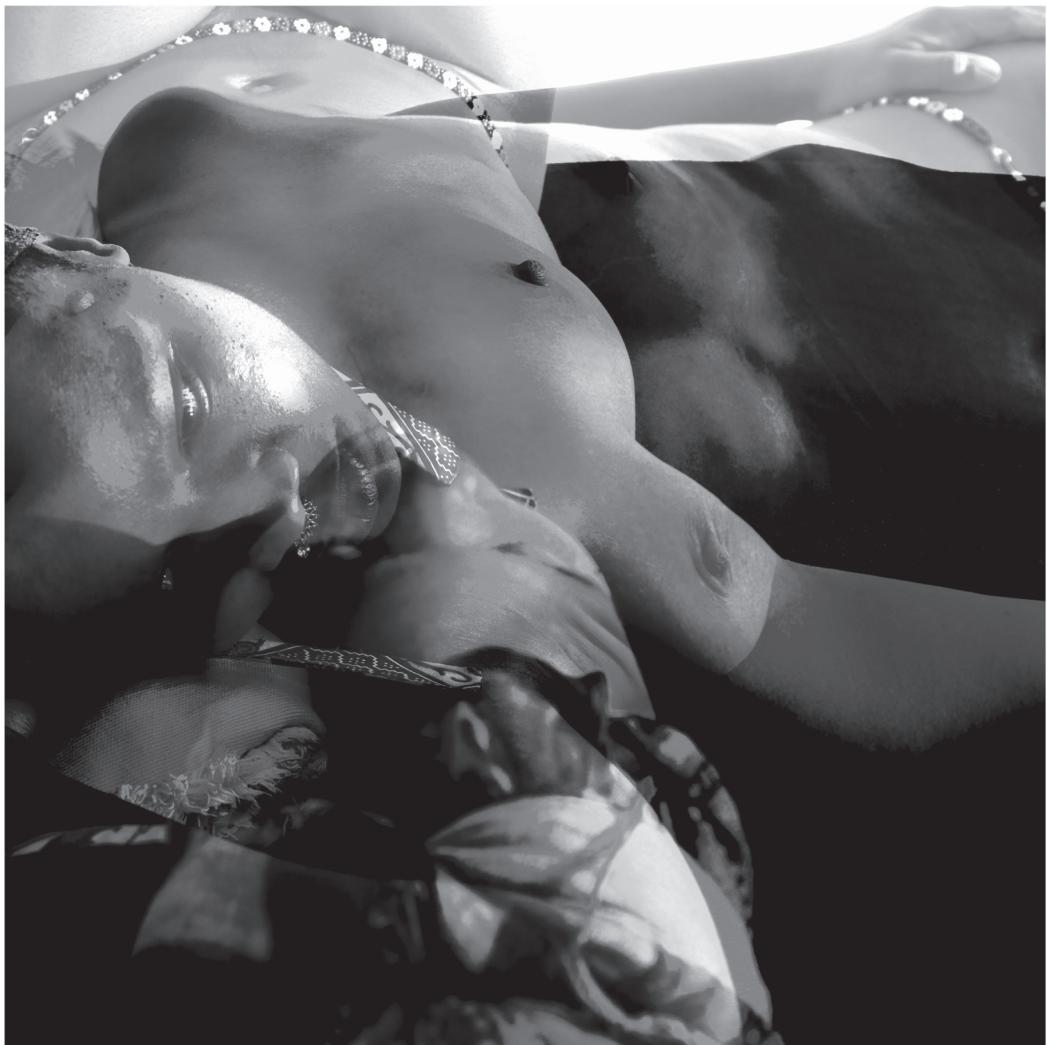


20241101_3 (Hand)

A hand rests—or drifts—fragile veins tracing whispers beneath skin, hovering over the body's quiet sweep. A light-curve lifts from a belly-button's neat slit to a nipple's soft peak, etching a vesica piscis in shadow. Below, the pubic delta stirs, half-shielded by the hand's faint arc—protective, seeking, unanswered.

Time folds here: double-exposure sinks belly into softness, pubis rooting it still. Curves melt into shadow, lines yielding to quiet. Veins, barely there, sketch maps without claim—echoes of touch too light to grasp. The hand bridges nipple to delta, a tender thread of doubt.

In bodyTime()'s triptych, it seals the arc—toe's pull, elbow's edge, now hand's grace.
Step closer; feel its quiet gravity.

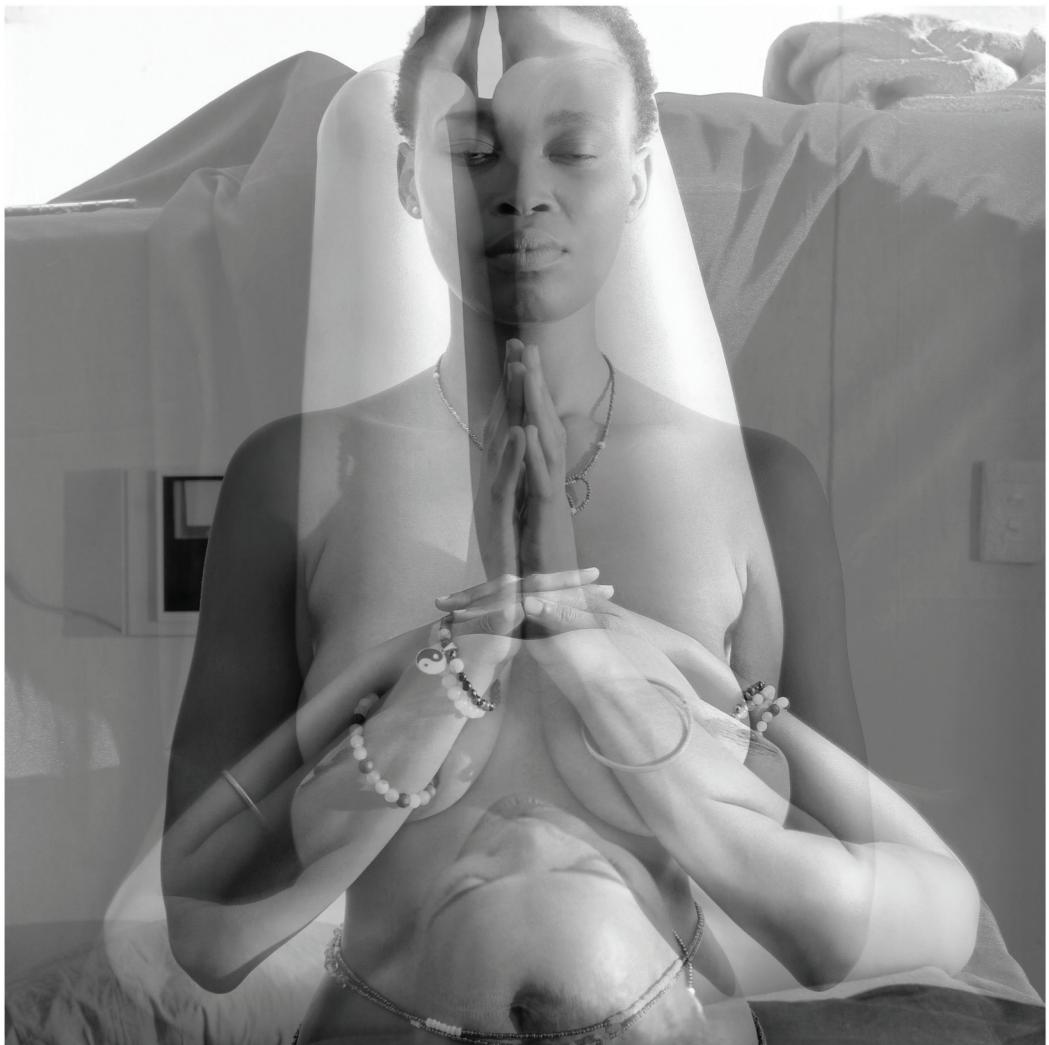


20231201_3 (Dancer II BW)

A dancer hovers—still, yet stirring—her doubled form unfurls from soft repose into motion. Skin skirts light, tracing a quiet arc where shadow bends, as if time stumbles—neither fully here nor gone, a breath snagged mid-turn.

No moment traps her; she's a spark between then and next. Gravity tugs, then slips, threading a texture—real, yet fading. A living trace eludes the frame. The glow drifts, unhurried, easing us into a pause like memory, motion hushed for now.

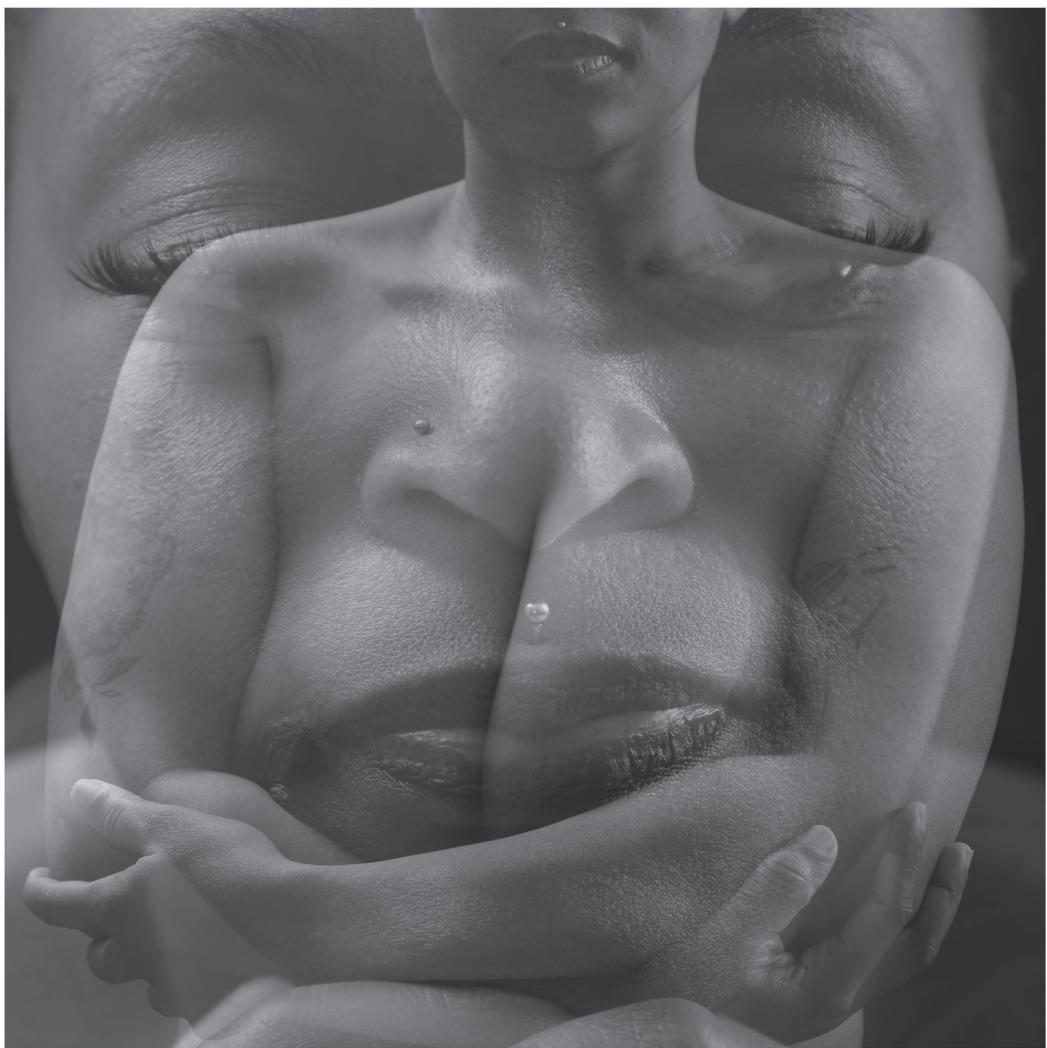
She dances without sound—her glance a quiet call, her becoming a shadow cast.
Stay with it—dance with the dark and with the light.



20231203_III (iHubmyOfferTheCandleThatIsn'tThere)

Two exposures softly align—a figure seated upright, facing forward, and reclining, head tilting toward us. Her hands, clasped prayer-like yet light, converge in quiet meditation, birthing an illusory candle—a gentle artifact flickering between poses. This phantom glow, unlit yet present, emerges from the tender overlap of inward stillness and outward offering, a whisper of illumination that never fully forms.

Beads and bracelets ground her in embodiment, while the candle's mirage lifts it beyond—hinting at the unseen, the relational, the fleeting. In `bodyTime()`, this work reflects meaning's quiet dance: not fixed in objects, but born where authenticity meets vulnerability, where consent lets presence shine softly. It's a contemplative pause—echoing Nussbaum's gentle gaze, Khayyám's shadows—inviting us to see not what's forced, but what's allowed to drift into view, delicate and true.



20241005_1 [Still to update text and or title]

This layered composition captures a profound intimacy, blending facial and bodily forms into a unified yet fragmented presence. The closed eyes of the subject evoke introspection and stillness, while the overlapping contours of arms and torso create a sense of quiet containment, as though the figure is holding both themselves and the viewer in an embrace.

The dual perspectives—face and body—merge to suggest an interplay of vulnerability and strength. The textures of skin, subtle details like a piercing, and the faint hint of tattooed lines emphasize individuality while dissolving boundaries between inner and outer experience. The grayscale palette heightens the tactile and emotional resonance of the work, offering a moment suspended between reflection and connection.

As part of *bodyTime(fugitivity)*, this piece explores themes of self-possession and relationality. The layering implies the simultaneity of being both seen and unseen, whole yet multifaceted. It invites the viewer to consider how touch, gaze, and memory shape identity, rendering the body not as a fixed object but as a vessel of layered experiences and meanings.



20240810_1

This composition captures a dynamic tension between rest and motion, layering bodies to create a sense of fragmented, overlapping temporality. The figure's gaze, directed outward yet introspective, contrasts with the fluidity of limbs and torsos intertwined through the composition. The layering of forms evokes a dialogue between the body as an object of stillness and as a site of continuous becoming.

The interplay of light and shadow emphasizes the contours and musculature, while the translucent overlaps suggest movement caught mid-transition, as though multiple perspectives of a single moment coexist. The positioning of the figures—poised yet relaxed—creates an ambiguous narrative that feels both intimate and distant.

Within bodyTime(fugitivity), this piece explores the relational complexity of self-awareness and embodiment. The composition invites the viewer to consider the body not as a fixed entity but as a series of layered impressions, shaped by time, touch, and gaze. It holds a quiet yet striking presence, speaking to the transient nature of being and the intersections of identity and perception.



2023110_1 [Still to update text and or title]

This composition balances duality and convergence, layering the nude figure in a way that both fragments and integrates its form. The central figure, upright and illuminated, becomes the focal point, while the shadowy contours of the background figure anchor the composition in a broader spatial dialogue. The hands, delicately placed, frame the body with a quiet tension, suggesting both containment and openness.

The interplay between light and shadow emphasizes the softness of the flesh while introducing a sculptural quality to the figure. The layering creates a subtle distortion, where the subject becomes both singular and plural, embodying multiple moments and perspectives simultaneously. The result is a body that feels both grounded in physical reality and suspended in an abstract temporality.

As part of *bodyTime(fugitivity)*, this piece speaks to the complexity of identity and embodiment. The body, presented in overlapping states, suggests a negotiation between presence and absence, the tangible and the transient. The composition invites the viewer to reflect on the layered nature of being, where the self is continually shaped by movement, memory, and perception.



20240505_2 [Still to update text and or title]

This composition intertwines light and shadow, where cascading hair and delicate wrinkles intersect to form a trail of life's unfolding—like sparks suspended in slow motion, yet imbued with a quiet darkness. The flowing hair, luminous and soft, contrasts with the stillness of the face, creating a tension between motion and restraint. This interplay evokes time's dual nature: as both fleeting and weighty, a gentle passage that leaves indelible marks.

The layered contours of expression feel intimate yet elusive, as if the subject is caught between reflection and concealment. The necklaces, draped like strands of memory, anchor the piece in materiality, their beads resonating with the rhythmic pulse of time. Yet amidst this layering of light and texture lies a subtle heaviness, a darkness that lingers in the spaces between presence and absence.

Within bodyTime(fugitivity), this work captures not just the beauty of time's traces but also its shadows—the emotional weight carried within each moment. It reflects on the fragility of identity and the inevitability of change, inviting the viewer to confront the layered complexities of existence, where light and darkness are inseparable.



20240922_1 (Folds) [Still to update text and or title]

This piece captures the human form as a study in curves and layers, where the folding of limbs and the interplay of overlapping contours evoke a sense of enclosed intimacy. The body, partially obscured and fragmented, becomes a terrain of texture and light, its curves inviting yet elusive. The tattoo etched into the skin punctuates the composition, an anchor of individuality within the abstraction.

The layering of forms softens the boundaries of the body, transforming it into a flowing rhythm of lines and shadows. The folds of the figure echo the folds of fabric beneath, blurring distinctions between the subject and its surrounding environment. The result is a meditative exploration of enclosure—both physical and emotional—where vulnerability is offered and concealed in equal measure.

As part of bodyTime(fugitivity), this piece highlights the transient and relational nature of embodiment. The layered folds suggest moments of protection and surrender, inviting the viewer to reflect on the interplay between self-containment and connection. It is a quiet yet potent reminder of the body's dual role as both a boundary and a bridge.



20241103_1 (Reach) [Still to update text and or title]

This composition constitutes a complex interplay of introspection and outward motion, where the figure's direct gaze contrasts with the layered, fragmented forms of the body. The subject's chest and arm stretch across the frame, creating a gesture that feels simultaneously vulnerable and assertive. The layering of profiles and shadows introduces a dialogue between presence and reflection, where the act of reaching extends beyond the physical to the emotional and symbolic.

The intersection of the eye with the sharp line of the shoulder subtly evokes a visual tension reminiscent of Un Chien Andalou. This implicit reference to the surrealist slicing of perception deepens the work's layered exploration of vulnerability, self-possession, and dissolution. The fractured eye—a locus of seeing and being seen—speaks to the recurring tension of the fragmented self within the composition.

Within bodyTime(fugitivity), this piece engages the act of reaching as a metaphor for relationality and self-discovery. The gesture extends outward yet folds back into itself, suggesting that reaching involves both connection and exposure. The work draws the viewer into the space where bodies, fragmented and layered, navigate the shifting boundaries between interiority and outward offering.



20240907_01

This composition layers bodies in a gesture of grounding and intimacy, where the central figure's hands rest gently on their own form, creating a connection that feels deeply self-reflective yet relational. The framing emphasizes the symmetry and rhythm of limbs, with overlapping forms producing a softened interplay of vulnerability and strength. The downward gaze of the figure suggests contemplation, their pose both open and inwardly held.

The layering of legs and hands introduces an ambiguity of positions, blurring the distinction between singular and shared presence. The folds of the fabric beneath the bodies mirror this multiplicity, creating a sense of undulating motion beneath the stillness of the composition. The grayscale tones further abstract the forms, shifting attention toward the interplay of shapes and the emotional resonance of touch.

Within bodyTime(fugitivity), this piece reflects on the body as a site of connection—not only between individuals but within the self. The gesture of hands meeting the torso evokes both reassurance and an invitation, a quiet assertion of presence amidst the flux of layered moments. It invites the viewer into a space where the body becomes both anchor and question, holding time and touch in dynamic balance.



20241117_2 (Veil of Folds)

A back arcs, arms braced at its sides—steady, carved, poised. Through it, a chest glints—angled, arms splaying in a breath's faint echo. A veil of light and texture cuts across—skin's ridge or fabric's ghost, a trace of what was. The body hovers, neither whole nor split, alive in its merge and fade.

Flesh grazes shadow—muscles taut, then fleeting. Shoulder blade juts, hip creases sink—contours flare where time folds in cascading locks. The second figure, softer, haunts within—ribs rising through the veil, gaze heavy, unseen.

Solidity bends, then slips—form giving way to apparition.
Let the veil shift.



20240113-20240922_1 [Still to update text and or title and produce B&W version]

This composition intertwines sensuality and dissonance, layering fragmented forms into an intricate interplay of skin, texture, and shadow. The seated figure, framed by overlapping planes, evokes both vulnerability and power, as though caught between states of presence and dissolution. The faintly visible second face, partially obscured, deepens the image's complexity, suggesting a dialogue between inner and outer selves.

The muted palette, punctuated by moments of rich color, lends a tactile quality to the image, where flesh and shadow converge into a rhythm of contrasts. Jewelry and subtle adornments draw attention to the body's contours while grounding the ethereal layering in the material world. This balance of the physical and the abstract transforms the body into both subject and medium, carrying the marks of movement, time, and gaze.

Within bodyTime(fugitivity), this piece captures the tension between intimacy and abstraction. It invites the viewer to confront the multiplicity of the body as a site of beauty, memory, and transformation. The layered composition resists singular interpretation, instead creating a dynamic space where embodiment becomes an open question, alive with ambiguity and resonance.



20241116_2 [Still to update text and or title]

This composition brings focus to the tactile and intimate, layering hands and torso into an interplay of curves and gestures. The overlapping forms create a rhythm that blurs distinctions between movement and stillness, presenting the body as both whole and fragmented. The hands, delicately resting, suggest comfort and introspection, grounding the piece in a moment of quiet presence.

The soft gradients of light and shadow emphasize the contours of the skin, giving depth to the layered forms. Subtle scars and textures add individuality, contrasting with the abstraction created by the layering. The repetition of shapes evokes the cyclical nature of touch, time, and self-perception, turning the body into a site of memory and transformation.

As part of *bodyTime(fugitivity)*, this work reflects on the layered complexity of embodiment, where the body becomes a space of both vulnerability and resilience. It invites the viewer to engage with the overlapping narratives etched into flesh, exploring how touch and time inscribe meaning onto the physical self. The result is a meditation on presence—both grounded and transient, intimate and universal.



20240712_20250118_1 (Bending Diamonds)

Two moments softly meet—one distant, arms folding gentle against black; the other near, a far hand brushing a close ear. A diamond's light bends through—faint from a mouth's edge, firm across a bicep—fragile, sharp, threading a quiet pull.

Not all shield, not all bare—skin maps a whisper where inner folds graze outer lines. The gaze holds—steady, soft, daring in its drift—neither giving nor guarding full. Presence curls inward, then out, a gesture snagged mid-breath.

It glimmers—bending diamonds of stance and gaze.

Step closer; find your reflection in its way.

Saying Yes, Softly

A small group gathers in my studio for a few hours. It's been this way regularly since 2017: just a handful of artists and a someone who will pose, sometimes friends, sometimes strangers, all sorts of bodies, all sorts of lives. We begin not by drawing, not by positioning, but by checking in gently: "How's everyone today?"—model included, always. There's a moment of quiet recognition, simple consent to share this space. No assumptions, no roles forced upon anyone—just a soft yes, freely given, freely received.

In that moment, something quietly shifts. Layers of everyday pretense soften and dissolve. We move gently into presence—no forcing, no pushing, just being there, together. Time slows; the body settles. This gentle space is about more than art—it's a subtle invitation to authenticity, to vulnerability offered without exposure, to honesty emerging not from pressure but from permission.

That's where *bodyTime()* begins. Not as an abstract idea, nor some grand claim to absolute truth, but simply as an extension of these weekly encounters, this familiar, shared humanness. *bodyTime()* quietly carries that same energy into a collection of gentle black-and-white double-exposure photographs, softly layered, shown briefly at Stokvel Gallery in Melville, just for two days (March 15–16, 2025). Each piece is priced playfully at R3,333.33—not market logic, just shapes and curves that feel right.

But more deeply, *bodyTime()* offers something else—a gentle exploration of how we meet each other and ourselves, how we handle power, how we say yes to vulnerability without becoming victims or heroes or saviours. This space we create each week through life-drawing—soft, consensual, honest—quietly opposes the noisy, often hidden drama of everyday interactions. That exhausting cycle of victimhood, blame, and forced rescue—what psychologists call the Karpman Drama Triangle—is diffused simply by our careful consent. No one takes power from another here. Power is never truly shared, only taken or relinquished—but here we invite each other softly to take only our own power, no more, no less.

Vulnerability within consent becomes something gently profound. The difference between vulnerability freely offered and vulnerability taken is subtle but essential. Without consent, vulnerability becomes mere exposure, harsh and unsafe. But within clear, quiet consent, vulnerability opens softly, beautifully, honestly. It becomes safe precisely because it is freely chosen. This is the gentle thread running through *bodyTime()*: consent as the quiet heartbeat that makes honesty safe, makes vulnerability beautiful, makes authenticity possible.

Honesty, in this space, quietly dismantles the drama that often dominates life. No pretense, no masks, no hurried performance. It becomes integrity—a quiet resistance, gentle defiance against a louder world often built on domination and coercion. This integrity aligns softly with my broader Vita-Socio-Anarco ethos, which values life, community, and non-domination over control, profit, or forced outcomes. Integrity isn't moral superiority; it's a quiet choice—sometimes successful, sometimes failing, always striving toward authenticity.

This gentle rebellion shows itself subtly in the consistent pricing of my work—always R3,333.33, an absurdity designed to undermine the art market's insistence on seriousness. It's playfulness, quiet defiance, a softly spoken resistance. Stokvel Gallery echoes this ethos perfectly. Founded by Gordon Froud, it's artist-run, commission-free, raw walls, simple lights—nothing grandiose, no hidden agendas. It mirrors the quiet humility of the life-drawing space, a gentle invitation extended to everyone equally, softly, honestly.

But bodyTime() also invites us to reconsider the way we see, the way we look. Philosopher Martha Nussbaum offers the nuanced possibility of non-pathological objectification—a respectful gaze, intimate yet non-invasive, possible only with clear consent. Consider images like 20241101_1—a foot, a breast softly dissolving—or (Dancer) 20231201_1—a dancer suspended gently between stillness and movement. The gaze in these works isn't about possession, but quiet recognition. Intimacy without invasion, openness without forced exposure. Consent, again, makes this gentle exchange possible.

Gender freedom subtly emerges here too, quietly dismantling rigid stereotypes. Life-drawing, bodyTime(), and the spaces around them intentionally reject binary assumptions or fixed roles. Bodies are simply bodies; people simply people. Everyone steps forward as themselves, without needing permission to be anything other than what they naturally, softly, authentically are. There's no loud activism here—just quiet inclusion, subtle equality, gentle openness.

All of this—consent, vulnerability, honesty, integrity, quiet resistance, respectful looking—leads gently to the recognition of life's inherent transience, the shadow play described by Omar Khayyám. The body, illuminated briefly by life's candle, casts shadows that flicker softly across walls. Beingness drifts quietly through moments we never fully grasp. In bodyTime(), nothing is claimed or fixed—only gently offered, fleetingly held. It's a humble recognition that the map we've drawn—this treatise, these photographs—is never the territory itself. Every map is simply a territory—provisional, incomplete, but real enough to feel and explore.

My role as an artist, facilitator, and photographer is intentionally minimal, a “light-touch” process. I don't direct; I gently invite. I create spaces, not outcomes, because outcomes are never fully ours to control. We strive quietly, humbly, sometimes successfully, sometimes falling short—but the artistry lies in this honest striving. It's not perfection we seek, but the gentle courage to say yes, to take our own power without imposing upon others.

Ultimately, bodyTime() doesn't promise certainty—only possibility. It's an invitation to stand quietly in our authenticity, gently claim our own power, accept vulnerability, reject drama, and embrace integrity. It reminds us softly that we are transient, shadows briefly cast upon a wall, phantom spirits quietly illuminated, each for a brief moment saying yes.

In the end, perhaps all we can truly offer is this quiet yes—a soft, humble invitation to meet each other honestly, vulnerably, briefly, before the candle dims and shadows fade. To gently claim our own power, no more, no less. To stand simply as we are—openly, gently, authentically—together.

And then, quietly, let go.

André Clements

Artist Statement

bodyTime(): Bodies between stillness and being—two moments layered, tracing movement, touch, and life's elusiveness.

Advance Praise

You give the viewer an opportunity to view the model from several points of view; clearly, it takes time to look at anything or anyone from different angles in different poses, so you present that opportunity to the viewer. Wonderfully anachronistic, showing us glimpses in black-and-white that remind us of Duchamp's "nude descending a staircase", Balla's futurism, Boccioni's "Unique forms of continuity in Space" and Edweard Muybridge's Studies in motion.

- Carl Jeppe

...everything about these are quite something . The overlayed exposures take me into an imaginary surreal erotic world. Controversial French psychologist, (post-Freud) Jacques Lacan comes to mind.

- Anton Uys

Curatorial Background

The 16 works in bodyTime(fugitivity) are exhibiting in their inaugural showcase at the Go Naked naturist stand at The Sex Expo, 29 November to 1 December 2024, Gallagher Estate. Go Naked naturist advocates for the theme: nonsexual nudity in a sexualised world.

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