

*Christiaan remains faithful to his own truth and encounter with the arts; his work stems from a sensitive creative process that transforms his ideas into creation.*

*His artistic activity commences at the moment in which he is confronted by the visible world; the space and time which at first presents itself as something inalterable. But, his artistic essence allows him to disrupt, mould, record and fictionalize it. This question of addressing the visible world as though it were his raw material, arises from a conscious, dynamic and fundamental need. Christiaan Conradie, from the conscious to the unconscious, from his lucid life to his dreams, is dedicated to his art and to his pieces.*

*His art is a transformation of the world into other forms, a poetic act in the sense that he takes ownership of reality, delineates where the borders lie between this reality and our understanding of it, and then plays with the multiplicity, the possibilities and the apertures to other configurations, other lives. Christiaan's art doesn't pretend to understand reality, but rather recognizes the 'fragment', sees in it infinity, and takes it to other realities.*

*The various stages in Conradie's work correspond to essential needs, not as they occur chronologically, but rather in order of significance. A question often posed to him in interviews over the course of the last few years is, "Who are the subjects in your paintings? Why are they old?" Christiaan answers with a profound silence. It is always tempting for a spectator or a critic to hear an 'interesting' story or narrative. There isn't one. What is to be made of this decision by the artist? Sensitivity. That which recognizes the 'other'. The passing of time in the 'other'. And in some way it is a kind of mirror, which reflects those old, tired eyes, full of stories. It is this pathos which is inherent and at the core of his work. The purpose of his choice of subjects is not to express sentiment, but to give them form, to find a correlation between these lives and his own. The artist is not to be found at a distance from his subjects, but in constant connection with them. These old men are parts of the artist himself. Every stroke, layer of colour, of skin, gives life. A metaphorical act in which every brushstroke evokes new symbols, new areas of sensitivity and of contact with the 'other'.*

*Christiaan adopts symbols which he employs in his work, symbols which are preserved in the memory. Signs which he gathers in life, which he is surrounded by in all their richness, by virtue of form, colour and their position in space. Conradie is an aesthetic being, absorbed by form, image and emotion. He moves in this way along his own paths, taking on symbols as he goes, transforming them into his own language: the lightning bolt, the droplets, the birds, the dots of colour, the Mexican flowers, the saints – symbols which he inserts into his work, giving them new meaning.*

*In addition to this, Christiaan lends a participative role to the spectator, confronting him with disproportion, decomposition; inviting him to complete that with which he is presented as though it were a suggestion, or a fragment. The spectator, with his gaze, is empowered to bring the artwork to its culmination, the point at which it sparks into life.*

*Beyond his astonishing technical ability, his works are about moments. He himself has said, 'I often compare my working process to that of CPR; the minute I feel as though I have breathed enough life into a piece, I leave it to live on its own'. This aura of life, is the artwork itself. – Andrea Aviña*

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# CHRISTIAAN CONRADIE

**SOMETIMES A BLACK NIGHT IS AS PINK AS THE SKY!**  
PAINTING - DRAWING - PHOTOGRAPHY AND EMOTIONS



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