About Amy Rusch

Amy Rusch (b. 1990) is a Cape Town-based multidisciplinary artist whose practice spans diverse mediums. Her work explores a vibrational expression of mark-making through stitched threads on layers of found plastic bags. The layering of plastic, shaped by the motion and soundscape of the stitching process, reflects both the aural and material aspects of contemporary culture. The threads serve as an attempt to connect and comprehend the vastness of stratigraphic time, stretching across millions of years.

Rusch's current body of work is informed by ocean crossings, archaeological excavations, and microscopic studies of the living world. Her practice acts as tracings, translations, or mappings of sensory, lived experiences, forming multisensory fusions of sound, vibration, line, and color. As she describes:
"Cutting, stitching, heating, pulling, binding, gathering, layering—these practices demand their own rhythm, alternating between slow, meticulous processes and quick, intuitive interventions. The motions enacted in making provide a retrospective link to embodied experiences, transmuted in the process. The machine stitching into plastic is not about replicating an experience or object, but about sitting with the remnants of man-made materials—human time contrasted with elemental and deep time."

Rusch has exhibited widely, including as a finalist in the Norval Sovereign African Art Prize 2023 at the Norval Foundation. Her work has been showcased at the Pretoria Art Museum, Iziko South African National Gallery, and Zeitz MOCAA. She has participated in numerous group exhibitions, and notable solo exhibitions include *Seeing with a Listening Ear* (2022) at SMAC Gallery, the culmination of three years of work.

Rusch holds a qualification in Motion Picture Production Design from CityVarsity, School of Media and Creative Arts (2009–2011). Her training in sculpting, moulding, casting, prosthetics, and special effects has equipped her to work not only in film and theater, but further in freelance projects across disciplines. Notable projects include creating museum display replicas of artifacts from archaeological sites Blombos Cave, Klipdrift Shelter, and Klasies River Mouth, which were featured in the 'Origins of Early Southern Sapiens Behaviour' exhibition at Spier, the Iziko South African Museum, the Wits Origins Centre in Johannesburg, and the University of Bergen in Norway. Rusch's work is held by public collections including the IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town among other notable private collections.

In February 2026, Amy Rusch was awarded Homo Faber's inaugural Materiality Prize at the Cape Town Art Fair. Rusch participated in a group exhibition earlier in 2026 at the THK Gallery in Cape Town which was titled *A Grammar of Belonging*. Looking ahead, she will be a part of a group exhibition in December 2026 with the THK Gallery in Cape Town.





The Wind inscribes - reverberations of a Kalahari thunderstorm, 2024 - 2025

THK

CV

Residencies

2023
RASA, Art Connects Residency, Uitzicht, Kasteelberg, Riebeek West, South Africa

2022
Lion Sands Artist Residency, (More Family Collection/ Amy Ellenbogen/ Saffca.eu), Sabi Sands, Kruger National Park, South Africa

Awards

2023
The Norval Sovereign African Art Prize (Finalist), Cape Town

2021
Sasol New Signatures (Finalists Exhibition), Pretoria Art Museum

Solo Exhibitions

2022
Seeing with a Listening Ear (ArtistRoom), SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa

2016
Plasticity, 196 Victoria Road, Cape Town, South Africa

Group Exhibitions

2026
A Grammar of Belonging, THK Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

2025
Solstice II, THK Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Aerial Seams, THK Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Stellenbosch Art Mile, Oude Leeskamer, Stellenbosch, South Africa
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Suburbia Contemporary, South Africa
Collective Memory, THK Gallery, Cape Town

2024
FNB Art Joburg, Suburbia Contemporary, Johannesburg, South Africa
Sculpting Textual Bodies, Oude Leeskamer, Stellenbosch, South Africa
Time goes bye, The Ramp, Paarden Island, Cape Town, South Africa
Approximations to a voice: ellipsis, Johannes Stegmann Gallery, Bloemfontein, South Africa
RMB Latitudes Art Fair, Suburbia Contemporary, Johannesburg, South Africa
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, Suburbia Contemporary, Cape Town, South Africa
RASA Breathe, Breeze and Winged Things, SOLO Studios Art Encounters, Riebeek Kasteel, South Africa
Things take time, time takes things, Pool Space, Greenpoint Park, Cape Town, South Africa
Ifestile, Suburbia Contemporary, Bo-Kaap, Cape Town, South Africa

2023
Liminal States, THK Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Norval Sovereign African Art Prize, Norval Foundation, Cape Town, South Africa
Room with a View, curated by Karen Elkington, EBONY/CURATED, Cape Town, South Africa
FNB Art Joburg, Suburbia Contemporary, Johannesburg, South Africa

2022
Scratch, curated by Amy Ellenbogen at Lion Sands, Sabi Sands, South Africa
Thresholds, (LINEATIONS and Times Pathway), SESSIONS Group Exhibition, Woodstock, South Africa
Breakfast, curated by Amy Ellenbogen at Sister by Studio Ashby, London, UK
Within the Fold II, SMAC Gallery, Stellenbosch, South Africa
Peter Clarke Art Centre Group Exhibition, Cape Town, South Africa
Within the Fold, SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
Art on the Walls, Artfor Action, Orms Cape Town School of Photography, South Africa

2021
Sasol New Signatures Art Competition Finalist Exhibition, Pretoria Art Museum, South Africa

2020
Home Is Where The Art Is, Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, South Africa
Materality, Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, SMITH, Cape Town, South Africa
FNB Art Joburg, SMITH, Johannesburg, South Africa
Stories, Gallery @ Glen Carlou, Paarl, South Africa
Farewell to Good Good Friends, SMITH, CapeTown, South Africa
Hard, but Soft, Gallery at Glen Carlou, Paarl, South Africa

2019
Investec Cape Town Art Fair, SMITH, Cape Town, South Africa
Rendezvous II, Summer Exhibition, SMITH, Cape Town, South Africa
Imibala Gallery December Group Exhibition, Somerset West, South Africa
Emphatic Whispers, SMITH, Cape Town, South Africa
FNB Joburg Art Fair, SMITH, Johannesburg, South Africa

2017
AKAA–Also Known As Africa, Contemporary Art and Design Fair, Paris
'Calibrating Wonder', SMITH, Cape Town

2015
'Take Two: Second Life of Objects', Design Indaba, CapeTown

2012
The Handmade Collection (CDI), Design Indaba, Cape Town

2011
The Handmade Collection (CDI), Design Indaba, Cape Town