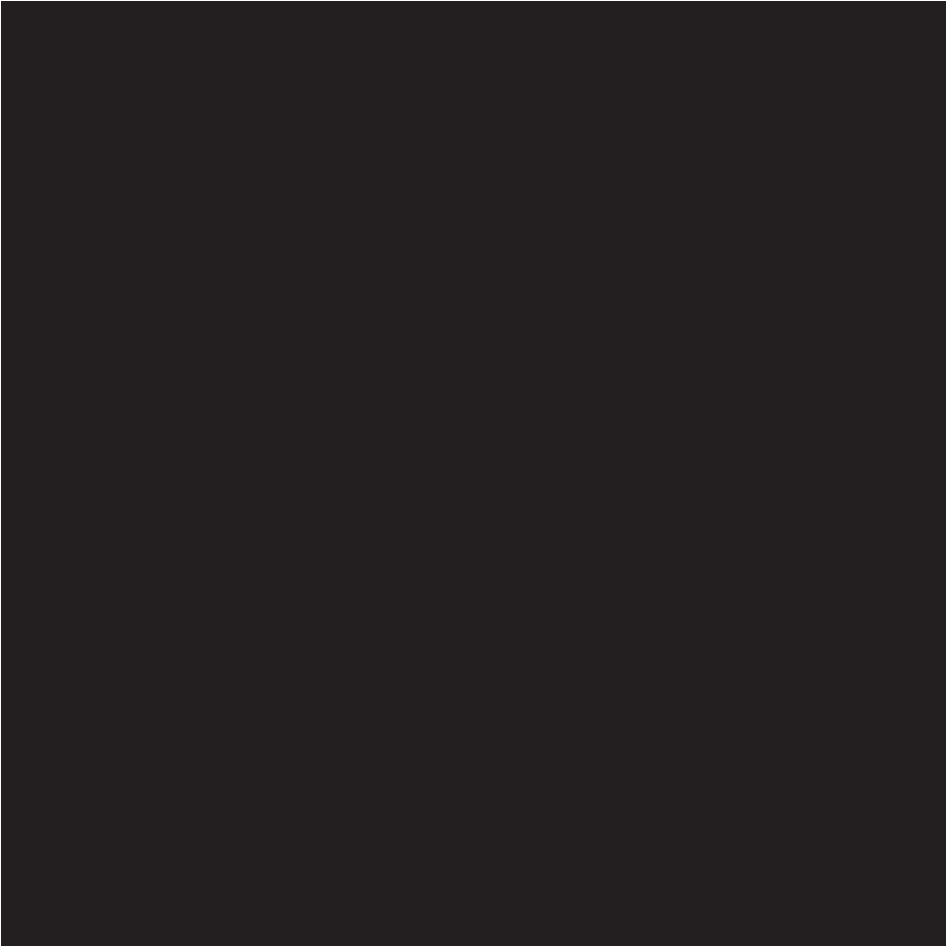




Bloom

Kendall Buster *Bloom*

Kendall Buster is an American sculptor whose practice moves between sculpture, architecture, biology, and speculative models of space. Her relationship with South Africa spans more than two decades, through exhibitions, research, periods of work in the country, and her ongoing artistic collaboration with South African artist Siemon Allen. South Africa has consequently become a recurring site of production and enquiry within her practice.

Bloom is an ongoing project in which individual forms accumulate, expand, and are repeatedly reconfigured, evoking processes of growth across both built and natural environments. What began as an architectural model—a field of enclosure walls forming hexagonal shapes alongside small structures resembling buildings—has evolved incrementally, adopting different configurations in response to the spaces it inhabits.

The work brings biological morphologies into contact with speculative architecture. Fortress-like yet fantastical, its forms suggest mazes and labyrinths, enlarged honeycombs, futuristic towers, flowering stems, and imagined urban structures. The resulting cityscape appears at once botanical and brutalist.

Constructed from paper, cardboard, and glue, the sculptures are physically light and somewhat fragile. Their graphite surfaces, however, resemble sheet steel, giving the forms an unexpectedly heavy and impenetrable presence. This tension between vulnerability and fortification lends the work a dystopian quality—as if to suggest: *this is what blooms under extreme circumstances*.

At MAPSA, *Bloom* takes on another iteration within Buster's longstanding engagement with South Africa. The installation occupies the Dark Room, a former corner shop in Richmond, a small Karoo town in the

Northern Cape situated along one of the country's principal north-south routes. The whitewashed building is illuminated only by shifting natural light, while bricks create an undulating terrain beneath the work.

As the light changes throughout the day, so do the surfaces, shadows, and the installation's apparent scale. Within the modest architecture of the Dark Room, *Bloom* becomes simultaneously a structure, a landscape, an organism, and a settlement—an imagined environment temporarily taking root in Richmond.









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BLOOM

Curated by Abrie Fourie

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