

# TERRY KURGAN

Born in Cape Town, South Africa.  
Lives and works in Johannesburg.

## Short Bio

Terry Kurgan is a South African artist and writer. Her work explores the medium of photography. In particular: the complexity of the photographic interaction, and the way photography *acts* in the world. She explores this through a diverse body of multi-media artwork and writing. She has exhibited and published widely in South Africa and internationally, and has received numerous prestigious project grants, fine art and writing awards.

Kurgan has recently turned to creative non-fiction in relation to an archive of family photographs and a haunting family history. *Everyone is Present: Essays on Photography, Memory and Family* was shortlisted for the 2019 Recontres d'Arles Book Prize (France), selected as a finalist for the 2019 National Jewish Book Awards (USA), and recently won South Africa's premier non-fiction literary prize, the 2019 *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Award.

She is currently a Research Associate at WISER, The Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, where she is working on a new book that draws upon her soldier/father's photographs documenting his participation in the 1948 Arab/Israeli war. She teaches and supervises on the Masters in Creative Writing Programme at the same university, and is co-director of the independent publishing project, Fourthwall Books ([www.fourthwallbooks.com](http://www.fourthwallbooks.com)).

## Education

- 2016** MA in Creative writing – Cum laude, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
- 1992** MFA – Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town
- 1984** BAFA – Cum laude, California College of Arts, San Francisco

## Recent Selected Publications: Books & Articles by Terry Kurgan

- 2018** *Everyone is Present: Essays on Photography, Memory and Family*, Terry Kurgan, published by Fourthwall Books, Johannesburg, 2018. <https://bit.ly/2VuP9jX>  
 "Object Lessons" published in a special issue of *Critical Arts* on Vernacular Photography: Terry Kurgan (2018), *Critical Arts* 32:1, 107–121 <https://bit.ly/2BaQ3ch>
- 2016** "Relational Politics: Zen Marie and Terry Kurgan in conversation" in *Public Intimacy: Art And Other Ordinary Acts In South Africa*, published by SFMOMA and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 2016.
- 2015** "My Father, and a Fish," *ITCH – The Creative Journal*, Issue 14 - *VALUE*, published online by University of the Witwatersrand's School of Literature, Language and Media <https://bit.ly/2AXIQfh>

Tegan Bristow and Alexander Opper, in *Museum Transformations*, Annie E. Coombes and Ruth B. Phillips (Eds.) Volume 4 of *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies*, published by Wiley-Blackwell, UK 2015.

“Hotel Yeoville-Reflections on the advantages of working together,” co-authored by Terry Kurgan and Alexander Opper, in *New Spaces for Negotiating Art and Histories in Africa*, Kerstin Pinther, Ugochukwu-Smooth C. Nzewi, Berit Fischer (Eds.), published by LIT Verlag, Berlin 2015.

**2013** *Hotel Yeoville*, Terry Kurgan (ed.) published by Fourthwall Books, Johannesburg, 2013 <https://bit.ly/35naSz2>

“Public Art/Private Lives”, in *Cultural Studies*, Volume 27, 2013 – Issue 3: “Private Lives and Public Cultures in South Africa,” Kerry Bystrom & Sarah Nuttall (eds.) published by Routledge, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA. <https://bit.ly/2M5VMGB>

“Checking into Hotel Yeoville”, Alexandra Dodd and Terry Kurgan, in a special issue of *Third Text, The Art of Change in South Africa*, Nomusa Makhuba & Ruth Simbao (eds), Volume 27, Issue 3, 2013 <https://bit.ly/2B0k91U>

**2012** “Park Pictures” in *UNFIXED: Photography and postcolonial perspectives in contemporary art*, Asmara Pelupessy and Sara Blokland (eds ) published by Jap Sam Books, 2012, Netherlands.

**2010** “Park Pictures: on the work of photography in Johannesburg”, Louise Bethlehem and Terry Kurgan, in *Rethinking Labour in Africa, Past and Present*, Lynn Schler, Louise Bethlehem, Galia Sabar (eds.) Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, UK 2010 <https://bit.ly/2MwjMkW>

## Recent Selected Bibliography: Chapters & Articles about Terry Kurgan

**2019** “Oluremi Onabanjo on Terry Kurgan’s Everyone Is Present: Essays on Photography, Memory and Family” in *The PhotoBook Review* 017, Fall 2019, Aperture Publishers. <https://bit.ly/39flwX>

“Terry Kurgan, Everyone Is Present: Essays on Photography, Memory and Family” *Journal of Visual Culture*, Alexandra Dodd, Volume: 18 issue: 2, page(s): 250-252, Sage Publications, 2019. <https://bit.ly/2OHNfeC>

“Terry Kurgan’s ‘Everyone is Present’” Andrew van der Vlies, *Africa in Words*, <https://bit.ly/2B889va>

**2017** *Affective Images: Post-apartheid documentary perspectives*, Marietta Kesting, published by State University of New York Press, 2017. Includes Kurgan’s *Hotel Yeoville* project as a case study.

“Writing Johannesburg” Naomi Roux, *Thesis Eleven* Volume: 141 issue: 1, page(s): 115-122, 2017. <https://bit.ly/2jZniJJ>

- “Home, family and intimacy in recent writings on and from South Africa, Carli Coetzee”  
*Africa*, Volume 87, Issue 2, May 2017, pp. 407-418. <https://bit.ly/2IBUAbA>
- 2015** *Democracy at Home in South Africa: Family Fictions and Transitional Culture*, by Kerry Bystrom. Published by Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2015.
- 2014** “Between Politics and Poetics: Terry Kurgan’s Hotel Yeoville,” by Federico Freschia, in *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies*, Vol. 15, Iss. 2-3, 2014, Routledge, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA.
- “Johannesburg Interiors” by Kerry Bystrom, *Cultural Studies*, Volume 27, 2013 – Issue 3: “Private Lives and Public Cultures in South Africa,” Kerry Bystrom & Sarah Nuttall (eds.) published by Routledge, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA <https://bit.ly/2OAFsix>

## Awards & Fellowships

- 2019** Winner of the 2019 *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Non-Fiction Award  
Finalist 2019 National Jewish Book Awards (USA)  
Shortlisted for the 2019 Photo Arles Book Prize (France)
- 2018** Ampersand Foundation Fellowship, New York
- 2015/16** Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WiSER , Wits University) Writing Fellowship/Artist in Residence
- 2012** Winner of the 2012 Mbokodo Award for Photography  
*Hotel Yeoville* project shortlisted for the first “International Award For Excellence in Public Art” (IPA AWARDS).
- 2008/9** The African Centre for Migration & Society/ Wits University/Research Fellowship
- 2000** Winner of the FNB Vita Art Prize

## Recent Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2019** **Highly Personal**, Stephen Daiter Gallery, Chicago, USA.  
“... *she finds not her sum but her differences: a project in parts*” gallery, gallery project space, Johannesburg. Curated by Sara-Aimee Verity and Chloë Reid
- 2018** **Collaboration. A Potential History of Photography**. A project by Ariella Azoulay, Wendy Ewald, Susan Meiselas, Leigh Raiford, and Laura Wexler. Ryerson Image Centre, Toronto.
- 2014** **Public Intimacy: Art And Other Ordinary Acts In South Africa**  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA)
- Nine Urban Biotopes: Negotiating the Future of Urban Living**  
Urban Dialogues: Berlin, and travelled to London, Paris, Turin, & Johannesburg
- 2013** **Sharp-Sharp Johannesburg**  
La Gaité Lyrique, Paris  
**Splice: At the Intersection of Art and Medicine**  
Pratt - Manhattan Gallery, New York  
**Makers in Print**

- 2012** **Featured artist, Johannesburg Art Fair**  
Represented by AOP Gallery
- 2011** **Figures & Fictions: Contemporary South African Photography**  
curated by Tamar Garb, Victoria & Albert Museum. London.  
**Wide Angle: Photography as Public Practice**  
Goethe Institute, Johannesburg

## Recent Solo Exhibitions

- 2014** **Let's Talk: 30 Days At The Spreefeld**  
*Nine Urban Biotopes Project,*  
*Spreefeld Boathouse, Spreeacker, Berlin*
- 2013** **Public Art/Private Lives**  
Gallery AOP, Johannesburg
- 2011** **Still, life**  
Gallery AOP, Johannesburg
- 2009** **(I promise) I love you**  
Gallery AOP, Johannesburg
- 2006** **Terry Kurgan Photographs 1924 - 2006**  
Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg

## Recent Public Presentations & Lectures

- 2019**
- **Polygon Museum** (of Contemporary Photography and Media Art), **Vancouver BC**. Public presentation as part of the Vancouver Jewish Book Festival: *Everyone is Present: Photography and storytelling*.
  - **South African Jewish Museum, Cape Town**. Book Talk: *Everyone is Present*. Terry Kurgan in conversation with Prof. Steven Robins.
  - **Magnum Foundation, New York**. Book Talk: *Everyone is Present*. Terry Kurgan in conversation with curator/writer/scholar Oluremi Onabanjo.
  - **Institute for Advanced Studies, UCL, London**. **Book Talk:** *Everyone is Present*. Terry Kurgan in conversation with curator/writer/scholar Prof. Tamar Garb & Polish writer/scholar Prof. Eva Hoffman.
  - **Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WiSER)** Panel Discussion: *Everyone is Present* Terry Kurgan in conversation with scholars and writers: Prof. Sarah Nuttall, Prof. Pamila Gupta and Prof. Hlonipha Mokoena.
- 2018**
- **Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, (Wiser) Wits University, Johannesburg** : "Governing Intimacies Project, Telling Lives: Trust, Lies, History." Speaker, with Shireen Hassim, Gail Smith and Sisonke Msimang on Msimang's book, *Always Another Country*.
  - **Columbia University, New York**. Presentation of upcoming publication *Everyone is Present* to the *Cultural Memory Seminar*, convened by Professors Marianne Hirsch and Andreas Huyssen.

- **Ford Foundation, Johannesburg: Colloquium:** "Art of Change – Disrupting Narratives, Claiming Identity. I presented a talk on the panel: "Art and Identity-Disrupting Narratives."

#### 2015

- **Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, (Wiser)** My talk was titled "Family Affairs: Acts of Memory and Imagination" Lunchtime Lecture series.
- **Goethe-Institut Johannesburg,** "9 URBAN BIOTOPES - THE FUTURE OF URBAN LIVING", Public presentation on this South African /European artists exchange and residency programme. It ran through 2014. I was both South African curator and one of the artists selected to work Berlin.
- **Wits Institute of Social and Economic Research (WISER) Wits University:** My talk was titled "My father, and a fish". A symposium curated by Prof. Pamila Gupta. Collections, Preservation, Dialogue  
- Vernacular Photography – Africa and India.

#### 2014

- **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA)** My talk was titled "Acts of Intimate Exposure" – part of the Visual Activism Symposium, programed by SFMOMA in association with the exhibition: *Public Intimacy: Art and Other Ordinary Acts in South Africa*.
- **University of Johannesburg,** My talk was titled "Between Writing and Drawing" A presentation to a Practice-Led Writing Conference convened by the Research Centre - Visual Identities in Art and Design, Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, Universty of Johannesburg.