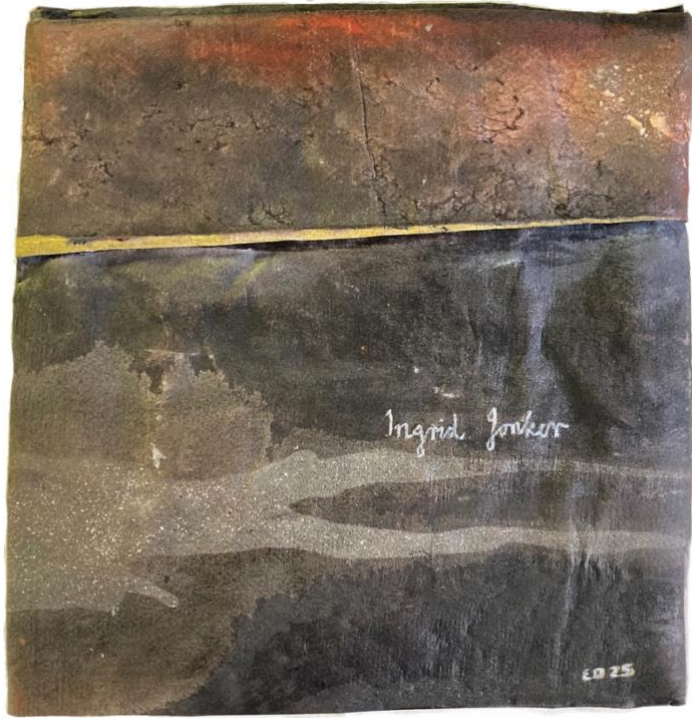


Elfriede Dreyer, *Bitterbessie Dagbreek* (2025)





Artist book, front and back pages



Elfriede Dreyer. *Om daarlangs te draf* (2025). Ink en akriel op doek, ongeveer 460x840mm

Bitter-troesie dagrees  
 bitter-troesie van  
 'n speet het gebreek  
 tussen my en hem  
 Soek ek na die grootste  
 om daarlangs te draf  
 oral draai die padjies  
 van sy woorde af  
 Dennelbos herinnering  
 dennelbos vergeet  
 het ek ook verduaal  
 trap ek in my hand  
 poppetjie-bont eppo  
 klerang klerang my  
 totdat ek bedro  
 weer die koggel kry

Ingrid Jonker. *Op Die  
 Voetpad Van Kanteleer*  
 (1906, postuum 1955)  
 Op die voetpad 'n bakke  
 Jou hand die myns  
 En ons hante staan kloor  
 In my hart se lysie  
 Daar die dag van die by  
 tot dit rookrens 'n bakke  
 Vuurang sluit hant toe  
 In ons pondakke  
 Kluuat van jou h  
 'n medje deusag

... En die woorde siffer reeds  
 sy bont kloue af





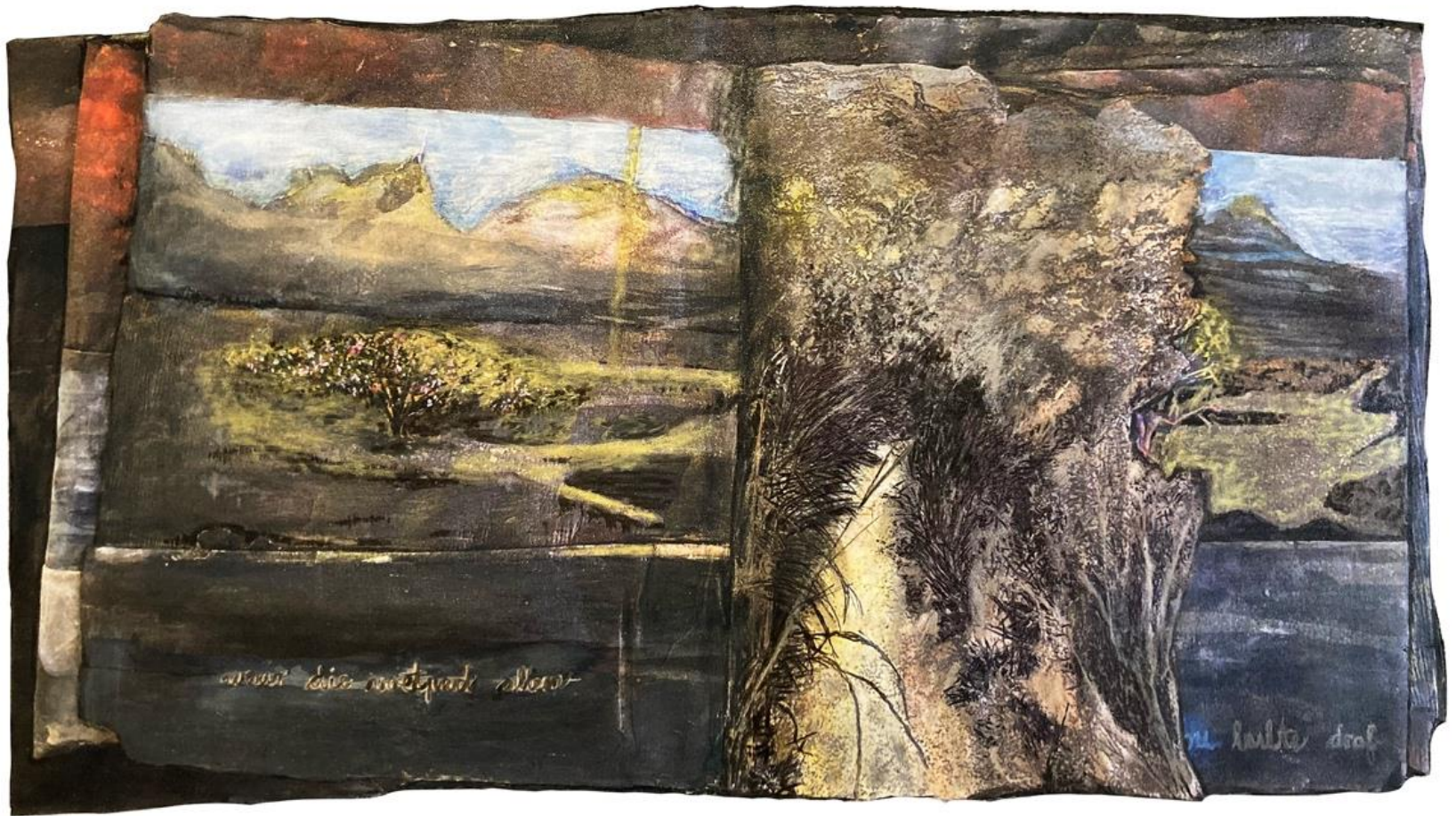




Elfriede Dreyer, *Denneboom herinnering, denneboom vergeet* (2025)  
Ink and acrylic on canvas, Approximately 460x840mm



Elfriede Dreyer, *Het ek ook verdwaal* (2025).  
Ink and acrylic on canvas, Approximately 460x840mm



Elfriede Dreyer, *Waar die voetpad alleen* (2025).  
Ink and acrylic on canvas, Approximately 460x840mm



Elfriede Dreyer, *oor die blou bulle draf* (2025).  
Ink and acrylic on canvas, Approximately 460x840mm



Elfriede Dreyer, 'n Spieël het gebreëk (2025).  
Ink and acrylic on canvas, Approximately 460x840mm



Elfriede Dreyer, *Om daarlangs te draf* (2025).  
Ink and acrylic on canvas, Approximately 460x840mm



The *Bitterbessie Dagbreek* series of six works and artist book were commissioned by academic curator Professor Gwenneth Miller for the national Aardklop festival of 2025. I was subsequently invited to exhibit the works at the Gallery at Glen Carlou in the Western Cape for subsequent exhibition.

The series follows on my ongoing exploration of the intermedial, semantic and hermeneutic relationships between work, image and sound. In this series there is no sound but the imagery evokes the sound of crackling fire.

The works were inspired by Ingrid Jonker's poems *Bitterbessie Dagbreek* and *Op die Voetpad*. The works extend my ongoing exploration of the shifting relationship between word and image, where meaning is never fixed but continually re-formed. The works developed from an artist's book created as a visual response to these poems, which speak of loss and the solitary path each person takes in processing grief. I experienced the burning of my house, and Jonker's imagery of the pine forest (in front of our house), the road (from the lake to our home), and dawn resonated deeply with my own lived experience. When morning breaks in red and orange after a traumatic event, the full impact of what has occurred becomes unavoidable.

Existential metaphors emerge throughout the series: the road as the walk of life; daybreak as the searing moment after disaster; landscape as event; and the orange sky as an unfolding process of reckoning and becoming.

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Die *Bitterbessie dagbreek* reeks het ontwikkel uit 'n kunstenaarsboek wat ek gemaak het as 'n visuele respons op Ingrid Jonker se gedigte *Bitterbessie Dagbreek* en *Op die Voetpad*. Die boek was die vertrekpunt vir die gemengde media werke. Bogenoemde gedigte handel oor verlies en die eensame pad wat elke mens met die verwerking van hartseer loop. Self het ek die afbrand van my huis beleef, en veral Jonker se beelde van dennebos (voor ons huis), pad (van die meer na ons huis) en dagbreek het met my eie ervaring geresoneer. Wanneer die dag in rooi en oranje na die traumatiese gebeurtenis breek, tref die volle impak daarvan 'n mens. Hierdie reeks neem my ondersoek van die semantiese en konseptuele verwantskappe en ooreenkomste tussen woord en beeld verder.


**Ingrid Jonker, *Bitterbessie dagbreek*. Uit *Rook en Oker* (1963)**

Bitterbessie dagbreek  
bitterbessie son  
in spieël het gebreek  
tussen my en hom  
Soek ek na die grootpad  
om daarlangs te draf  
oral draai die paadjies  
van sy woorde af  
Dennebos herinnering  
dennebos vergeet  
het ek ook verdwaal  
trap ek in my leed  
papegaai-bont eggo  
kierang kierang my  
totdat ek bedroë  
weer die koggel kry  
Eggo is geen antwoord  
antwoord hy alom  
bitterbessie dagbreek  
bitterbessie son

**Ingrid Jonker, *Op Die Voetpad*. Uit *Kantelson* ( 1966, postuum 1965)**

Op die voetpad o bokkie  
Jou hand die myne  
En ons huisie staan klaar  
In my hart se lyne  
Deur die dag van die by  
tot dit rooikrans o bokkie  
Vannag sluit hom toe  
In ons pondokkie  
Klimaat van jou lyf  
o meidjie dousag  
Maar jou oë vlieg wyd  
oor die nimmermeerdag  
En die aand skilfer reeds  
sy bont kleure af  
Waar die voetpad alleen  
oor die blou bulte draf  
... En die aand skilfer reeds  
sy bont kleure af

## Elfriede Dreyer

Elfriede Dreyer is a South African conceptual and intermedial artist, curator, and mentor. She has exhibited widely in South Africa, France, and beyond, with work held in public and private collections including UP, Unisa, Telkom, DBSA, and FNB. After 25 years of teaching at UP and Unisa, she was appointed Extraordinary Professor of Art at Unisa in 2015 and founded the CAP Institute for Contemporary Art Practice. She is Vice-President of the South African National Association for Visual Arts, a postgraduate examiner, and a regular adjudicator of national competitions. Active as a curator since 1995, her projects include major South African institutions and international venues such as the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (Antwerp) and Latuvu Gallery (France). Her academic publications have appeared in local and international journals and books, supporting her NRF researcher rating.   
[www.elfriededreyer.com](http://www.elfriededreyer.com)