

Affordable images of longing, desire

**LOUIS JANSEN VAN VUUREN —
RECENT WORKS
AVA GALLERY
35 Church Street, Cape Town
Tel: (021) 424-7436**

IF YOU have any designs on work by artist Louis Jansen van Vuuren, now is the time to get it.

His work, apart from being reasonably affordable, is immensely popular.

His career spans three decades, beginning in the mid-1960s. Jansen van Vuuren, who has lectured in art and graphic design, has held more than 80 exhibitions in SA and abroad.

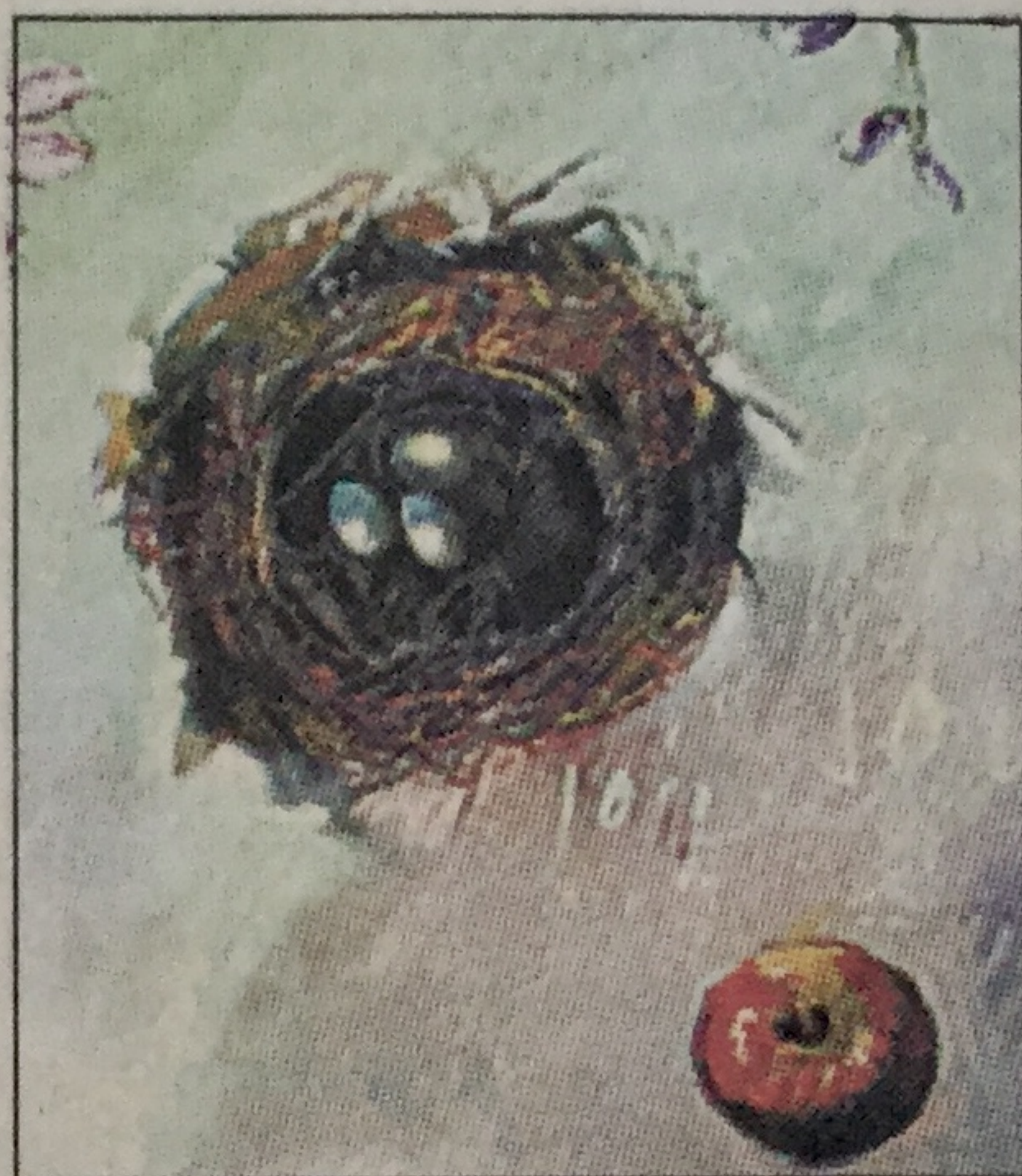
While his predominant influence is Van Gogh, a section of the exhibit entitled *Homage to Matisse* adds insight into his intuitive use of colour and form. In another series, *Homage to Cezanne*, he mirrors some of Cezanne's themes without losing his unique methodology.

His work juxtaposes indigenous imagery with Eurocentric aesthetics, revealing his gift for composition and placement.

Jansen van Vuuren's latest works were created in the Limousin region of France, where he now lives. These influences are evident in *The Shadowed Garden* series, which depicts stylised French gardens, as well as vibrantly coloured roses.

While his preferred medium is pastel on paper, *Night Dance* is a mixed media work. Soft gauze covers a figure, allowing the eye to see beneath the surface.

At the *Lake and Ocean/Sea*, which both mirror this partial uncovering of the body form, take the analogy a step further by making the human form soluble, dissolute, with the body represented in different moods through use of colour and light.



Detail from *Souvenir de Marcel Proust*: pastel on cotton paper, by Louis Jansen van Vuuren

In *Nautilus*, two bodies are swimming in the electric blue swirl found so often in his work. One gets the feeling that the evocative sensuality of these human forms is at the heart of the artist's strength.

His series of apples, figs and blue pears have wonderfully rich colouring, with deep blues and purples alongside a lighter background to retain movement.

In *My Heart Longs for the Boland* he reflects his attachment to mountainscapes and nature.

My favourite piece, 'n Berggans Het 'n Veer Laat Val ... 11, speaks, perhaps, of a longing to merge with familiar elements.

Overall, serenity and tranquillity are placed alongside energetic compositions, but the dividing line is hard to draw.

For each image a counter memory is evoked: the work achieves what we require it to do: evoke personal history alongside longing and desire.

Prices range from R500 to R18 000 and the exhibition runs till January 14.

Suzanne Joubert