

Ruby Swinney

*Portfolio*

## About

Cape Town-based artist **Ruby Swinney (South Africa, 1992)** is known for her sensitive oil paintings on silk or tracing paper. The semi-recognisable and timeless landscapes she depicts are inhabited by peculiar figures who seem to encapsulate – what? The fragility of our existence? The ethereal nature of her paintings expresses a state of uncertainty and longing for the natural world, one that is slowly vanishing. In her work, Swinney is inspired by the Romantic movement as well as by archetypes of Ancient Greek mythology, but also by Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophical ideas on the etheric realm and the human soul. Her use of a mostly monochrome palette further expresses this concept, effectively casting each scene in a haze of nostalgia that longs for a time that could have been. In her own words: 'I think I have certain responses to the present technological revolution that echo the Romantics earlier responses to industrialisation. They reacted by embracing ideas of the sublime in the natural and spiritual or mythical world... In my work I'm trying to evoke this painful longing and uncertainty of what it is to be human, as we fearfully peer out at a shifting world that is becoming dark and unfamiliar.'

*Since graduating from the Michaelis School of Fine Arts in 2015, Ruby Swinney (b. 1992) has hosted two solo exhibitions with WHATIFTHEWORLD in Cape Town, ZA: 'Hold Still' in 2019 and 'Ignis Fatuus' in 2017. She has also held her solo exhibition 'Human Nature' at Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Arts Africa (MOCAA), in Cape Town. In April 2021, Ruby Swinney will have a solo exhibition at AKINCI, where in 2018 she was part of the group show 'Let's Talk about Nature' and in 2020 part of the group show 'In Addition to Everything Real'. Her work is part of various private and public collections, including the Zeitz MOCAA collection. She currently lives and works in Cape Town, South Africa.*





*The Distance Between Us* by Ruby Swinney at AKINCI 2021





*Concerning Plants, 2021,*  
195 x285x5 cm, (Polyptych) each panel:  
1 x (140 x 55cm), 1 x (220 x 50cm), 2 x (85 x 55cm), 2 x (130 x 50cm)





*Concerning Plants, details*



*The Distance Between Us* by Ruby Swinney at AKINCI 2021





*Out of the Silent Planet*, 2020  
oil on silk  
each panel 70 x 125 cm





*On the Verge*, 2020  
oil on silk 105 x 55 cm



Groupshow *In Addition To Everything Real* at AKINCI 2020



*Waterfall, 2021*  
Oil on silk  
100 x 50 cm





*Waterfall, detail*



*The Distance Between Us* by Ruby Swinney at AKINCI 2021





*Mangroves, 2021*  
Oil on silk  
(Diptych) 2x 110 x 103 x 5 cm





*Mangroves, detail*



*The Distance Between Us* by Ruby Swinney at AKINCI 2021





*Fruit, details*





*Fruit, 2021*  
*Oil on silk*  
*85 x 55 x 5 cm*



*The Distance Between Us* by Ruby Swinney at AKINCI 2021



*Secret Pool, 2020,*  
Monotype print on Fabriano cotton paper, framed with museum glass  
42 x 29,7 cm





*Uninvited Guests, 2020*  
Oil in drafting paper, framed with museum glass  
29,7 x 42 cm





*Tomfoolery, 2020,  
oil on drafting paper, 29,7 x 42 cm, framed with museum glass*