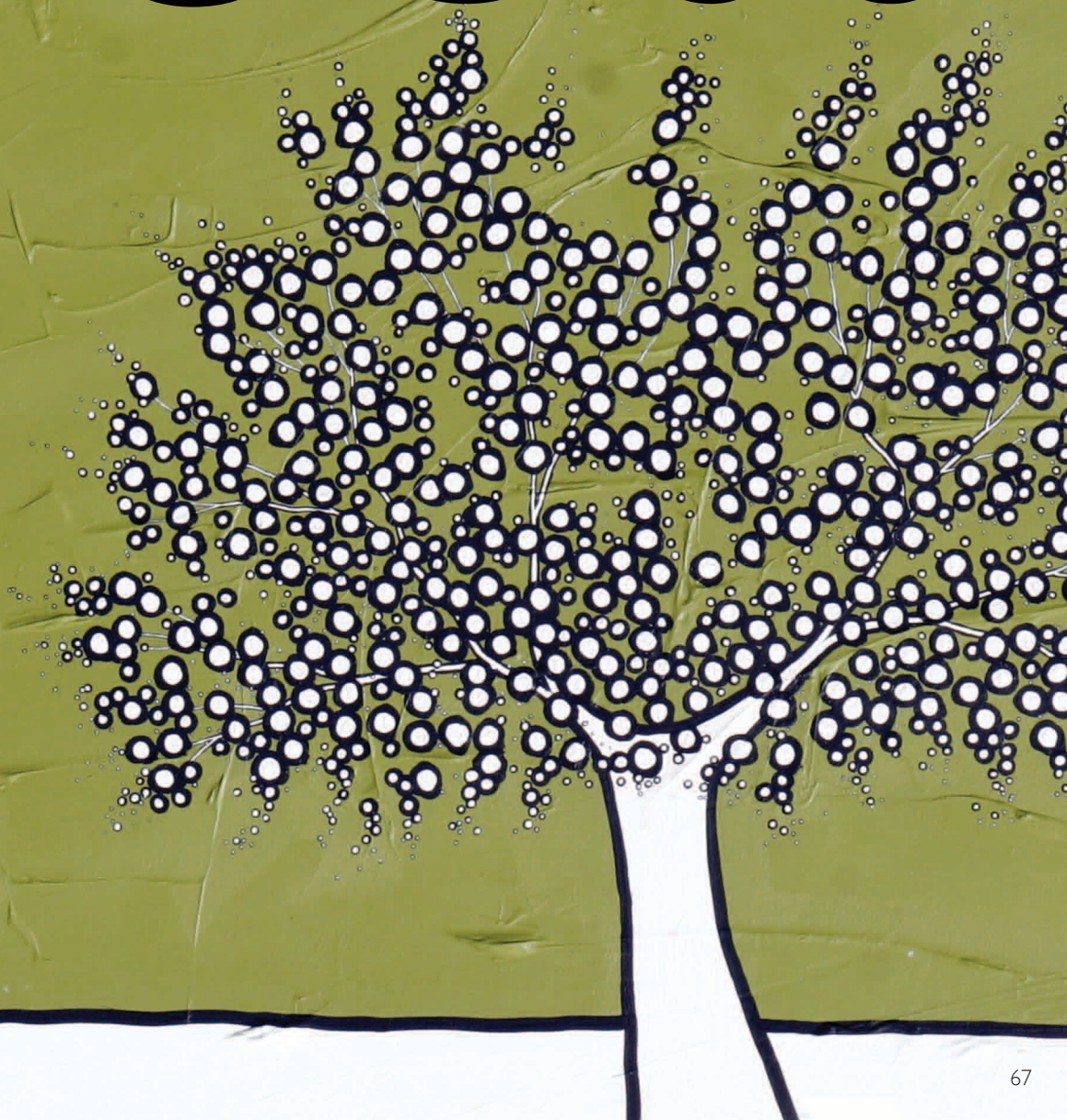


Great Scott

Richard Scott evolved into art from a background in technical illustration and commerce, developing a distinctive graphic style of work and marketing it successfully. He spoke to **Chris Buchanan** >



Richard Scott may not have started his professional career as a full-time painter but he has certainly made up for the lost years, gaining a following in the art world for his distinctive style.

What motivated you to become a full time artist?

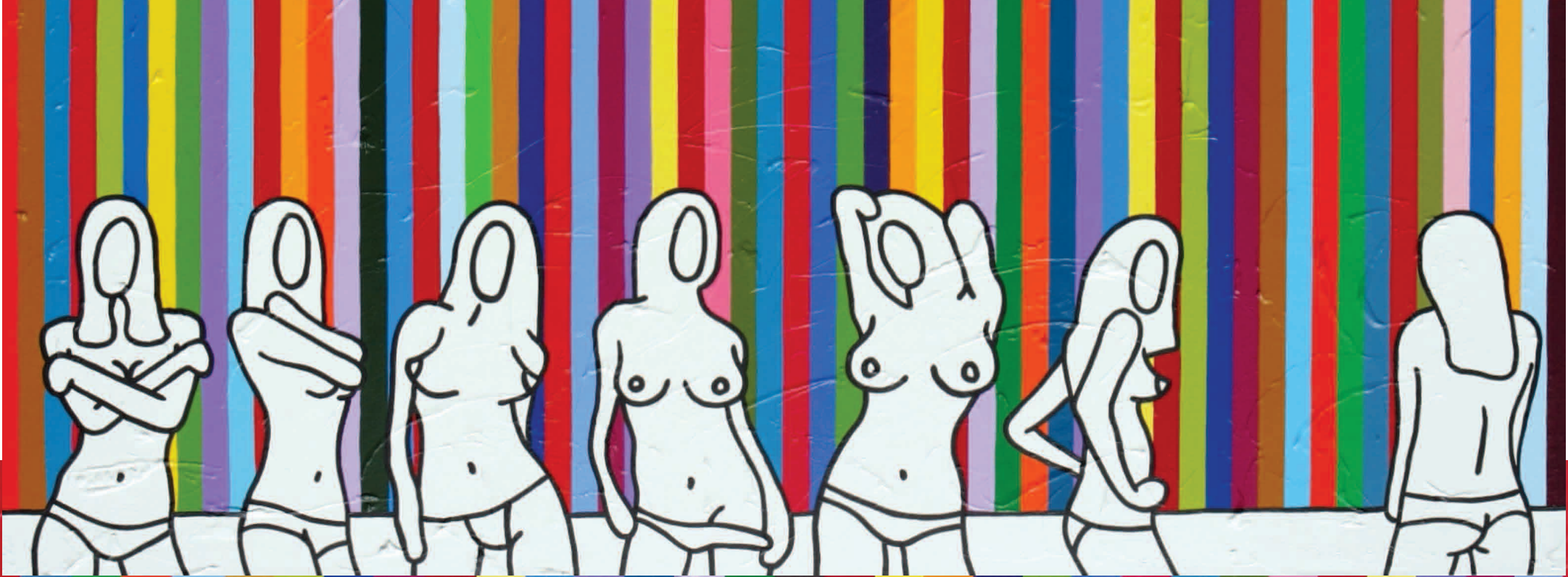
I had a lifetime ambition to retire at the age of 35 and focus on bringing up a family. I managed to do it at the age of 34. While I was in the process of selling the equity in a business to my partner, my wife said I better do something to keep myself busy. I decided to focus on another lifetime ambition and that is to paint a painting that someone actually liked, even more so, a painting that I actually liked. So I did some research, painted five paintings and took them to Hout Bay Gallery. It was 1st January 2002. The work all sold in four days and then 25 in six weeks and until today it's around 2 500. The motivation to become a full-time artist started to appear and when my wife said I need to start or buy another company because my retirement money was running out, I decided to take up art full time and push with all my energy.

The cat, the mountain, lighthouse, sexy girl and tree are recurring themes in your art. What is their significance?

I have been asked this question many a time and the answer is that there is no meaning or significance. I see something, I like it and then I sketch it and if it works I paint it.

Your work has been classified in the “neo pop art” genre. How do you interpret “neo pop art” and what, for you, are the main ingredients?

I try to steer clear of art labels, specifically to movements and or art. I would prefer >





to make such a massive impact one day, that a movement is named after me. I'm not sure at all what Neo Pop means. New Pop perhaps, or Singularly Unique Pop. My main ingredient, excuse the pun, is to take pages out of books of famous artists, visionaries, and successful businessmen and create my own recipe. Once that has been formulated then teach it.

How do you feel about South African art and its evolution in a post activist society?

I just came back from a six country, 12 city visit of Europe and am very excited. Europeans are so much more deeply cultured in art. They ooze with knowledge of art and culture. South Africa has been good to me, but my clients are 75 percent European. South African art has its place and it's fortunately or unfortunately going to stay where it is and what it is. Artists are slowly educating the public with the masses of high quality art produced, both commercial and academic. Deep down inside I feel someone, if there is someone responsible, is not doing enough to get South Africans out of first gear and into second gear culturally and artistically. It will happen one day. William Kentridge and Marlene Dumas are putting us on the map, but that someone needs to be found.



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You are extremely business savvy, is there ever any conflict between the artist and the businessman?

Yes all the time. Every second and every thought. My mind is 10 years ahead of what I produce. I come with a creative idea and my business mind kicks in and that kills most of my ideas and concepts. Business is a reality, you need to do commerce in order to make money, in order to live and feed yourself and family. Art and creativity are dangerous luxuries. If you can get the two to balance on a scale, as I have, then you have found the main ingredient to becoming a successful artist. It's about business. I have a big vision to build seven buildings across the world under the Richard Scott Art Foundation. You reap what you sow.

A self-confessed "Scottaholic", successful entrepreneur Carl Smyth has invested a substantial amount on acquiring Richard Scott's art. He personally owns every Richard Scott painting in his collection. The Carl Smyth Collection – his "destination gallery" which was opened last year at Eden on the Bay in Blouberg, Cape Town – highlights the distinct character and beauty of the art by complementing it with exquisite surroundings. Carl does not only believe in the aesthetic beauty of Richard's art, but also in the value it will return for those who make an investment in it. Carl's gallery currently displays the works of three artists, ensuring that exclusive attention can be given to the promotion of these select few.

To book an appointment to view Carl's Collection, visit www.thecarlsmythcollection.com or contact The Carl Smyth Collection on +27 73 915 8897. ☎