



Featured Artist
Martli Heyns

South African artist Martli Heyns presents an amazing collection of mixed media wildlife images. Enjoy her portfolio, and view her [website](#) to see more.



"Rhino's Delight" mixed media (collage & acrylic) on canvas, 30" x 40"

I was born and raised in South Africa, where I still live today. From my earliest memories, creativity and a fascination with wild animals have been inseparable parts of who I am.

My artistic journey began when I was eight years old, when my mother enrolled me in drawing lessons with a local professional artist in the small town where I grew up. Some years later, I discovered oil painting through another teacher, and those early lessons cemented my love for translating what I saw and felt onto canvas.



"Ever Present" acrylic on canvas, 24" x 48"

Although I studied art in school with every intention of pursuing it as a career, life took me on a different path. My parents viewed art as a hobby rather than a profession, and encouraged me to follow a more conventional path. I built a successful career in IT and later ran my own web design agency, which allowed me to exercise creativity in a different way. Yet the dream of becoming a professional artist never faded. At 50, I finally decided to follow that lifelong passion.



"Profiles in Survival" acrylic on canvas, 24" x 48"



"Where Currents Meet" acrylic ink on canvas, 30" x 24"

Animals and birds are woven into South African culture, and here symbolism shapes creative expression. You'll find them in art, in music, in stories, and even in dance, where movements often echo the grace or power of creatures from the wild. This cultural richness inspires me to portray wildlife not merely as subjects of beauty, but as living symbols of resilience, spirit, and belonging.



"Striations and Strife" mixed media (charcoal & acrylic) on canvas, 30" x 40"



"Spirit of the Painted Wolf" acrylic on canvas, 30" x 40"



"On The Edge Of Night" acrylic on canvas, 47" x 32"

Nature has always been my greatest inspiration. As a child, I spent countless hours in South Africa's game reserves, developing admiration and respect for the wild animals of the bush. There is a raw energy and inner spirit that radiates from truly wild animals, that is often lost in captivity.

It is this essence, the spirit of the "great heart" as the late South African musician Johnny Clegg so beautifully put it, that I strive to capture in my art. I invite you to go watch his [music video](#) on YouTube for a better understanding of exactly what I mean and what I feel when I paint.



"Woven Stories" mixed media (collage & acrylic) on canvas, 16" x 24"

My style is best described as abstract realism, and my preferred medium is acrylic and mixed media on canvas. I'm not interested in creating hyper-realistic replicas of what I see. Instead, I combine textured, abstracted backgrounds with more representational subjects, allowing both imagination and recognition to coexist. This approach lets me honor the animal while also capturing the emotion and energy of their stories.

Through my work, I want to share the spirit of Africa and its wildlife with collectors around the world. At the same time, I hope to spark conversations about conservation. I believe art can play a role in reminding us what we stand to lose, and why it's worth protecting.



"Inner Alchemy" mixed media (acrylic, graphite & modelling paste) on canvas, 40" x 30"

My goal is not only to create pieces that are visually striking, but also to ensure that the "spirit of the great heart" continues to beat for generations to come.

Martli Heyns invites you to follow on [Instagram](#).