

Linde Kriel

Artist name: Linde Van der Linde · he/him · Johannesburg, South Africa

Full Biography

Linde Kriel (b. 2000, Vanderbijlpark, South Africa) is a Johannesburg-based conceptual artist, curator and researcher whose practice moves across papermaking, printmaking, painting, sculpture, installation, photography, cyanotype, drawing and digital media. His work engages identity, grief, belonging, desire, ritual and queer experience within South African and Christian social contexts, often turning to material processes as a way of thinking through what it means to be shaped, marked, dissolved and remade. He also works under the name Linde Van der Linde, his mother's maiden name, taken in honour of his late grandparents.

Water-based papermaking sits at the centre of Kriel's practice. Trained in hand papermaking by a master papermaker from Poland, he has made paper from kozo as well as from locally sourced materials such as cow dung, banana fibre and used teabags. For Kriel, papermaking is not only a technique but a ritual: fibre is broken down in water and reformed into something new, a process he reads alongside baptism, memory and the remaking of the self. His installation *Selfbound* comprises more than 11,000 sheets of handmade paper made from his own disintegrated undergraduate artworks, while *Words that Refuse to Dry* uses photography and digital collage to hold paper in its unstable, wet state. Printmaking forms a second core medium, its logic of pressure and impression read as a metaphor for the social pressures placed on queer bodies.

Kriel holds a BA in Fine Arts with distinction from the University of the Free State, having also studied theology for a year at Stellenbosch University, a background that continues to inform his engagement with religious ritual and symbolism. He is a Master of Visual Arts candidate in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at the University of Johannesburg, supervised by Prof Brenda Schmahmann, SARChI Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture. His practice-led research draws on phenomenology, new materialism and queer theory. In 2026 he presented his research at Making and Interpreting Art: Art Research Futures (University of Johannesburg), the South African Postgraduate Philosophy Society (SAPPS) Symposium, the 39th SAVA Conference at Rhodes University and the Artivism Conference at Tshwane University of Technology, and he will present at the Bearing Witness Conference at Stellenbosch University in December 2026.

Kriel has exhibited at venues including the Pretoria Art Museum, Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Turbine Art Fair and Google Offices Johannesburg, and at the 2026 SAVA Conference & Festival exhibition in Makhanda. He received a Merit Award at the Sasol New Signatures competition in 2022, the first competition he entered,

and has been a Sasol New Signatures finalist in 2022, 2023, 2025 and 2026. At the Phatsoane Henney New Breed competition he was a finalist in 2022 and 2023, winning the Runner-Up Award and the Digital Category in 2023. He is also a recipient of the Dot Vermeulen Prize.

Alongside his own practice, Kriel works as a curator and as an advocate for emerging artists. He is the co-founder, owner and curator of Makwande Art Prints, a youth-led, student-owned enterprise that helps fine arts students exhibit and sell hand-printed works while learning the professional skills of pricing, contracts, presentation and marketing. Through Makwande he curated *Makwande l'Abondance* at the Alliance Française, Pretoria, in 2026, bringing together 94 prints by 42 artists. He was also head curator of *Embodied Reflections* (2024) at The Living Gallery @ Lake Umuzi, Secunda, and designed the catalogue for the international exhibition *UPROOTED | REROOTED*.

His solo exhibition *Ag My* opens at the Alliance Française, Pretoria, in May 2027.