



**MEET THE ARTIST** Liz Coates from Pure South introduces ceramic artist and friend, Tania Babb.

## Meeting Tania Babb

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Most people love to browse. Spending time in a gallery, admiring the exquisite artworks is not only relaxing, but also inspiring. It is becoming increasingly popular to merge art galleries or exhibition spaces with coffee shops or restaurants, combining all the elements of a good time – visual stimulation, taste bud sensation and of course, good conversation in an attempt to make the whole art experience more rewarding.

Liz Coates from Pure South in Main Road recently took the concept of a gallery opening to a new level when she invited Tania Babb – well-known for her miniature porcelain sculptures of voluptuous and playful female figures – to her first “Meet the artist” evening on Friday, 18 April.

At the opening of an artist’s exhibit the artworks tend to get the most attention and so it should be – that is what people come to appreciate, but meeting the artist in person could lend insight and a deeper sense of appreciation of the art on display.

Last week columnist for the Hermanus Times Arts Page, Patrick Chapman, briefly introduced Babb, but meeting the bubbly Babb in the flesh was a real treat and I left feeling enriched by this creative soul. After chatting to her about her art, what inspires her and the road she has had to travel to become the successful artist she is today, I was intrigued at how much of her personality has

spilled over into her miniatures. Although not nearly as rounded as her figurines, hearing Babb’s infectious and uninhibited laugh, I could not help but think that the confidence, playfulness and childlike innocence evident in her sculptures must come from a very personal place.

With this realisation, right or completely off the mark, I felt a deeper connection to the artworks and left thinking that I would love to own one of her sculptures to remind me to be playful and confident.

Babb says her miniatures are undoubtedly her best sellers and explains that she has found her niche as “gift artist”. Her obsession with miniatures? “When I fell pregnant I constantly thought about this tiny person inside me and I became preoccupied with all things small,” she explains.

Babb has been exhibiting at Pure South since it first opened and even designed the logo that has become the gallery’s signature. Her works are on permanent display here as well as at various other galleries in South Africa, Namibia, Europe, the UK, the US and Australia.

Good news for Hermanus residents is that this was just the first of many for Coates who has already decided who her next guest artist will be.

Sadly we will have to wait for summer to return, but I assure you it will be worth it!