

Your ref: media: We are open -136
Our ref:11/2/3/1
Date: 15 January 2021
Who deals with this: Emma

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum
1 Park Drive
Port Elizabeth 6001
Republic of South Africa
Tel: +27 (0)41 5062000
Fax: +27 (0)41 586 3234
www.artmuseum.co.za

PRESS RELEASE: WE ARE OPEN

The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum is once again open to the public 9:00 to 16:00 weekdays (closed Tuesday mornings for cleaning). To support the prevention of the spread of COVID we will continue to limit the amount of people entering the venue to groups of 20. Larger groups can book in advance to ensure proper adherence to COVID safety regulations. To enter the exhibition masks must be worn.

WHAT IS CURRENTLY ON

REFLECTING ON LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID

20 January to 26 March 2021

Youth from across the city with different artistic mediums reflected on their experiences over the past year. The exhibition includes poems and images from the Helenvale poets, sketches made by youth art groups from New Brighton, Joe Slovo and Motherwell. In the center of the exhibition is an interactive Wishing Tree and craft table. We are inviting you to write a message of hope or a wish for a loved one that can be added to the tree.

THROUGH OUR EYES:

Celebrating 25 years

Journey to South Africa / Journey to America

20 January to 26 March 2021

Through Our Eyes is an annual exhibition coordinated by the RITZ THEATRE AND MUSEUM in Jacksonville, Florida. In 2018, this annual exhibition turned 25 and local Jacksonville artists were invited to make works in response to the theme "Journey to South Africa: Struggle & Resistance" as part of the International Partnership between the cities of Nelson Mandela Bay and Jacksonville.

You can view our online **VIRTUAL EXHIBITIONS** on our webpage: www.artmuseum.co.za

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

REFLECTING ON LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID

On 12 December 2020, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum, opened an exhibition in which youth from across the city used different artistic mediums to reflect on their experiences of what life has been like over the past year.

The exhibition is made up of three components:

- 1. IMAGING THE VOICE: A PHOTO AND POEM PROJECT BY HELENVALE POETS**
- 2. SKETCHBOOK: LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID**
- 3. WISHING TREE**

1. IMAGING THE VOICE: A PHOTO AND POEM PROJECT BY HELENVALE POETS

IMAGING THE VOICE is an exhibition of poems and images created by the HELENVALE POETS. The project was funded through the Nelson Mandela Bay Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture small grant programme and combines poetry and photography. Poet, mentor and project leader, Brian Walter, assisted the group by collating over 100 poems and images into a poetry book and visual exhibition. The poems reflect the experiences of 19 young people living in Helenvale. The poems describe the impact of the current COVID pandemic, reflecting on life in the Helenvale community and celebrating the beauty we can still find around us. Contributors, Leonie Williams, Shenesia Booyesen and Charné Williams were team leaders and assisted the younger members of the group to make the project possible.

The project, administered by the SADRAT Institute, received additional support from Volkswagen Community Trust, Dryad Press and members of the community who donated pre-owned phones or cameras. The Swiss TPH Support Group provided equipment and the Nelson Mandela University CCT helped with T-Shirts which were printed by Goshawk Printers. Silke Heiss provided proof-reading and language advice, and Mike Barwood did design and layout.

2. SKETCHBOOK: LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID

Over the past six months, the Friends of the Art Museum in conjunction with the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum sponsored art journals to art groups across Nelson Mandela Bay. Participants in these groups have used their journals to draw and reflect on life during the COVID pandemic. In the last month the groups have visited the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum to produce large scale sketches.

The four participating groups are:

HAND IN HAND STUDIO founded by Sakhumzi Nyendwana and his brother, Mzindsi as an art gallery and tourists' attraction in Motherwell township.

ARTWORKS FOR YOUTH based in the community of Joe Slovo. Artworks for Youth is facilitated by John Lombardo and provides free visual art instruction, academic support and mentoring to students in Nelson Mandela Bay.

IZ'KOLI ART was founded in 2019 by a group of young artists from Red Location, Anele Zephe, Makhonsandile Molose and Theo Zonke. They aim to uplift local New Brighton youth through various community projects including creating murals and organizing street cleanups.

RAW NATIVE KREATIVES was founded by six young creatives who share a passion for community development. Mhlehi Hallom is the managing director. The goal of the group is to help equip township youth with acquiring life skills through art education.

The Friends of the Art Museum is a non-profit organisation that has supported the Art Museum for over 40 years. In recent years this organisation has assisted to bring underprivileged kids to the museum for art workshops. While the Museum is closed to the public due to COVID, the Friends decided to support local NGO's who use art to uplift the lives of kids from our most impoverished communities.

3. WISHING TREE

An interactive exhibit where we ask the public to participate. Visitors to the exhibition will be invited to write on a piece of paper and add messages of hope to our wishing tree.

THROUGH OUR EYES:

Celebrating 25 years

Journey to South Africa / Journey to America

Through Our Eyes: Journey to South Africa – This is an annual exhibition coordinated by the RITZ THEATRE AND MUSEUM in Jacksonville, Florida. In 2018, this annual exhibition turned 25 and local Jacksonville artists were invited to make works in response to the theme “Journey to South Africa: Struggle & Resistance” as part of the International Partnership between the cities of Nelson Mandela Bay and Jacksonville.

Through Our Eyes: Journey to America - Local Eastern Cape Artists were invited to participate. Both exhibitions were exhibited separately last year at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum. Due to delays caused by the COVID pandemic, the American exhibition did not return and the South African exhibition was unable to travel to Jacksonville. We have exhibited the separate shows as one exhibition this year. The rehanging has allowed for dialogue between the two groups of works and have created a dynamic exhibition. We look forward to these works making their way to the USA this year.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum, 1 Park Drive, Central, PE
www.artmuseum.co.za

Emma O'Brien, Assistant Director, NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN ART MUSEUM
Contact: 079 490 0690
Email: eobrien@mandelametro.gov.za

ENDS