

Your ref: media10
Our ref: 11/2/3/1
Date: 17 October 2014
Who deals with this: Emma/Roxanne

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PRESS RELEASE

CELEBRATION OF EASTERN CAPE ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE: THE NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN ART MUSEUM BIENNIAL EXHIBITION

Join the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum in celebrating top Eastern Cape art at the opening of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum Biennial on 29 October 2014. Guests are welcome from 17:30 and Guests will be entertained by one of Nelson Mandela Bay's hottest young acts, Just Friends. The exhibition will be opened by international renowned New Brighton alumni and Tony Award winning actor, director and playwright, Dr John Kani, who is in town performing his play *Missing*. *Missing* opens at the Port Elizabeth Opera House on 28 October and runs until 1 November 2014.

The Biennial Exhibition was born out of the desire to foster local talent and artistic excellence and to present a noteworthy contemporary exhibition of Eastern Cape art. Art professionals from across South Africa were invited to participate in this important visual arts event by nominating artists they felt had significantly contributed to the Eastern Cape art scene. Twenty six artists have been selected from nominations received to participate in this celebration of Eastern Cape artistic excellence. Two young South African artists Nicholas Hlobo and Athi-Patra Ruga have also being invited to participate on this prestigious exhibition.

The NMM Art Museum launched the Biennial in 2006 as part of this commitment and since then has helped to promote thirty-five top established artists and new signatures through three group exhibitions and four outstanding solo award exhibitions.

This year's nominations were received from around South Africa and adjudicated by a committee of local art professionals. The selection committee comprised: Dr Melanie Hillebrand (Director, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum), Uthando Baduza, (Chief Curator of the Red Location Art Gallery), Mary Duker (Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University), Gregory Kerr (Director, Greg Kerr Fine Art) and Jeanne Wright (artist and fine art journalist).

Selected artists are Dorothy Barnes, Cleone Cull, Maureen de Jager, Beverly de Lange, Christine Dixie, Derrick Erasmus, Charmaine Haines, Anthony Harris, Nic Hauser, Lydia Holmes, Tim Hopwood, Christiaan Kritzing, Alhyrian Laue, Carla Leisching, Nomusa Makhubu, Brent Meistre, Nigel Mullins, Siyabonga Ngaki, Susan Opperman, Jennifer Ord Monique Pelsler, Tanya Poole, Marc Pradervand, Stephen Rosin, Dolla Sapeta, Zach Taljaard, Jonathan van der Walt, Rat Western. Practicing artists from the selection panel were also invited to submit a work to the exhibition.

The NMM Art Museum is once again looking forward to producing an exhibition of outstanding Eastern Cape art. The Biennial exhibition will run until the end of February 2015.

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