

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA MUSEUMS

e-NEWSLETTER

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HOD's MESSAGE

I am pleased to present the University of Pretoria Museum's spring edition newsletter for 2024. These are a few highlights of what we do, how and who does it, but more importantly, the focus is why we do what we do. From our community outreach, engagement, impact, excellence in our curatorial programmes, conservation and exhibitions to transdisciplinary collaborations and digital transformations, we continue to strive forward, always trying our best to improve, progress, be agile and bring about micro change that matters.

As a professional service under the Office of the Registrar, the UP Museums continue to demonstrate sustained relevance, filtered and focused on fit-for-purpose partnerships, both internally and externally with greater impact. Partnerships and meaningful collaborations such as those with Creative Education SA, the South African Reserve Bank, the Rupert Museum, Strauss & Co, the UP Weskoppies Mental Hospital Museum, SANParks, Enterprises, Pretoria Art Museum, School of the Arts and the Google Cultural Institute amongst a host of many others contributes to our steadfast performance and success thus far.

Academic engagement with and by the UP Museums has increased to nearly twenty undergraduate and postgraduate teaching modules across faculties directly and actively accessing and using our collections and archives. The museums remain critical resources for students, national and global scholars and this further influences our national and global footprint and success rate as university museums and archives as ever-increasing transdisciplinary platforms.

For this year, we have focused acceleration into wider transdisciplinary platforms, elevating levels of engagement and are more inward facing to the university community, enhancing impact more than ever before. The ongoing demand is evidenced with ever-increasing numbers with over 30 793 visitors welcomed so far through our doors. The museums have received about 88 000 school learners from our partnership with [Creative Education SA](#), a programme implemented to enhance the Department of Education's curriculum in creative arts receiving disadvantaged school learners across three provinces on a monthly basis. Our impressive and diverse art collection has been showcased in three exhibitions for this year: [To Not Forget \(1994-2024\)](#) marking 30 years of democracy, the highly successful, *Homage to Pretoria: narratives from the museum art collection* in the Bridge Gallery and [Artology](#) currently on temporary loan to the prestigious Rupert Museum in Stellenbosch until end of October.

The UP Museums thank all of the UP community, partners, collaborators, students, staff, internal supporters and external, the tourism industry as well as those within the creative industry and GLAM sector that contribute to our accomplishments. I remain certain that university museum's must take small incremental steps (there is no need for giant and profound leaps in these uncertain times) to bring about lasting and profound change. Our efforts in curation, research, conservation, archives and our research and social responsibility are driving our gradual success as small university museums. Happy warmer days too as spring approaches with summer rains.

"When spring unlocks the flowers to paint the laughing soil" - ESG Elliott, 1918

Dr Sian Tiley-Nel
Head of UP Museums

STAFF MATTERS

Meet Uthando Baduza

The UP Museums would like to welcome to the team, Uthando Baduza, the new Curator of Art Exhibitions and Galleries to the University of Pretoria Museums. Before taking up his new position on 2 April 2024, he was the Chief Curator for the Red Location Art Gallery at the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth). He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Studies from the University of the Western Cape, a Post-Graduate Diploma in Heritage and Museum Studies, a joint programme of the University of Cape Town, University of the Western Cape with the Robben Island Museum, and a MA in Public and Visual History (cum laude) at the University of the Western Cape.



Uthando is currently pursuing his PhD in Developmental Studies in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria. He has worked previously for the District Six Museum, the Human Sciences Research Council and Press, the Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training at Nelson Mandela University and the Department of Higher Education and Training. He has consulted and served for various government departments, Ministerial Task Teams and organisations in the areas of arts, culture, heritage, policy, higher education and publishing. He was a *Mail and Guardian* Top 200 Young South African in 2016 for Arts and Culture. Uthando has curated and co-curated several exhibitions for various institutions and has served on various adjudication panels for several juried exhibitions locally and globally abroad. He most recently completed the Courant du Monde Programme (*Itinéraire Culture*), focusing on the organisation of temporary exhibitions and the circulation of cultural goods in African Institutions run by the French Ministry of Culture in Paris. Uthando is currently creating the museum's curatorial programming for *Homage to Pretoria* as well as planning exciting exhibitions coming in 2025.

ON EXHIBITION

Homage to Pretoria

16 May 2024 - 18 October 2024

This year's exhibition ***Homage to Pretoria: Narratives from the University of Pretoria Art Collection*** was marked by International Museums Month #IMD2024 and formally opened on the 15 May 2024 by Prof Caroline Nicholson, Registrar of the University of Pretoria with Dr Alastair Meredith from Strauss & Co as guest speaker. The Bridge Gallery has been officially allocated as of March 2024 to the responsibility of the UP Museums as a contemporary location to host the permanent institutional art collection.

The artworks in *Homage to Pretoria* are curated across time and space, drawn from a wide selection of leading South African artists from the 19th to 20th century such as JH Pierneef, F. Oerder, H. Pennington, P. Wenning to more contemporary artists such as Michael Mmutle, Lucky Sibiyi, Diane Victor, Peter Sibeko, Judas Mahlangu and Christo Coetzee to name a few.



Homage to Pretoria seeks to surface the complex and nuanced histories of city which are woven into the fabric of the entire country. Through the narratives in the artworks on exhibition it poses pertinent questions about the possibilities and difficulties in paying homage to this city of power that has been a symbol of state control and repression for many people in the country. The exhibition aims to be a visual and artistic commentary on the thirty years of democracy, exploring how the city has changed over history and each artwork reflects the city (and South Africa) as an eclectic and complex social, cultural and heritage landscape. The exhibition is therefore an opportunity to reflect on how the country has been shaped by the city and how the city has shaped the Country, and how artists have responded to this question.

The exhibition is accompanied by curatorial programming with a guest lecture by Bongani Njalo (curator, artist, and Cultural Programmes Co-ordinator at the Goethe Institute), walkabouts with Visual Arts students; painting

conservation lectures on-site and teaching demonstrations including a performance of melodies and songs about Pretoria by the Ovuwa Cultural Ensemble inspired by the artworks for 24 September, Heritage Day. The exhibition *Homage to Pretoria* concludes on 18 October 2024.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Advocating for university museums

The UP Museums this year have been actively engaged with activation days such as Orientation Week in February, other corporate events, the Principal's concert in September and many other student engagements across eight campuses with three major events highlighted:

In May, for a week we welcomed over 600 guests with free guided tours from 13 to 17 May 2024. The event was a celebration of **International Museum Day** to mark the global theme aptly titled, "Museums for Education and Research". For #IMD2024, we partnered with Javett-UP, UP Campus Tours, House Education, and Creative Education South Africa. All of the UP community from students, and staff participated and joined by domestic and international tourists.

As a university museum we are firmly committed to serving the UP community. During July, the museums joined in the collective effort to raise funds for students for the **UP Giving Day Campaign**. For this good cause, the museums advocated for the importance of university museums, and archives and how arts, culture and heritage are integral to student campus life. The campaign included activations on all eight UP campuses to help fundraise for the 'missing middle' UP students in need. The museums were fortunate to have help with a student volunteer, Nqobile Mthombeni, a third year education student identified from the UP Career Services to support the **Ready-For-Work Programme**.

In August, the UP Museums honoured an invite from **Junior Tukkies** to celebrate its 20th anniversary. Established in 2004, Junior Tukkies has been committed to equipping learners (Grade 9 to Grade 12) with important skills and educational programmes to get school learners ready for university life and working life after university graduation."



NEW ACQUISITIONS



Mashego Johannes Segogela (b. 1936)
Devil with Three-Headed Snake, 1992
Carved and painted wood
615mm x 760mm x 380mm



Simon Moroke Lekgetho (1929-1985)
Rock Art Composition, 1971
 Oil on canvas board
 455mm x 590mm

MUSEUM DONATION

Twelve sculptures by the famous South African artist and sculptor, Hezekiel Ntuli (1912-1973), were bequeathed to the UP Museums by Johannes Roets (1929-2024).

Roets studied BA (LLB) in 1950 at the University of Pretoria. One of the most iconic works in this unique collection, is an unpainted clay sculpture, which would become Ntuli's final and last work he produced just before he passed away in 1973 in Pietermaritzburg.

In 2025, the UP Museums will host the first retrospective exhibition of Ntuli with the aim of also compiling an important first-ever Hezekiel Ntuli archival collection. This donation links to the 2023 MA research by Chelsea Roberts, [“Ubumba Olungashi: A Case Study of South African Artist Hezekiel Ntuli's Unfired Ceramics”](#).



CONSERVATION NEWS

Conservation of [Harlequins Homage to Guernica](#) (1987) is a large canvas painting (2070mm x 4860mm) by the South African artist, Christo Coetzee (1929-2000) that forms part of a recent collaborative museum research project with the Tangible Heritage programme, with support of art analysis by the Yale Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage. There is extensive damage to the sensitive medium of alkyd resin/enamel on the painting's canvas which requires museum conservators to stabilise and conserve the artwork to prevent further deterioration.

The research project will include material analysis and technical art analysis to determine among other matters, the binding medium, pigments used, the layering of paint and its active deterioration. Techniques employed will include technical imaging, microscopy, spectroscopy and sample analysis in order to better understand the materiality of the artwork, as well as to provide better insight into Coetzee's techniques and methods. Knowledge gained from the art conservation analysis will be needed to make informed decisions regarding the remedial conservation of the painting going forward into 2025 by the UP Museum conservators.



DONATE AND SUPPORT

The University of Pretoria Museums relies on support from those who enjoy the collections and treasure the contents of our diverse galleries. Please make a donation today to support our continued digital strategy, maintain visibility, and care for our high-quality exhibitions and new gallery upgrades. In 2025, we aim to roll out fund-a-frame initiative for the acclaimed Rorkes Drift collection, a recent donation and bequest, and other important artworks. The University of Pretoria has several convenient ways in which you can support the UP Museums and benefit. All manners of giving are secure and only take a few minutes. Click here to [Donate to UP Museums](#).

#UPMUSEUMS



The University of Pretoria Museums

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