

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA MUSEUMS

e-NEWSLETTER

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HOD's Message – Dr Sian Tiley-Nel

September is a season of growth, and the UP Museums are blooming with purpose, excitement and productivity. Spring brings a time of renewal, and we're embracing the season with vibrant updates and exciting progress. As nature blossoms, so does our art collection, as we are thrilled to share a few recent acquisitions, an exciting student exhibition that draws our collections from museum storage, and some digital milestones that continue to reflect our commitment to technological growth, creativity, and collaboration.

We're excited to announce our new artworks by Sidney Kumalo, Mary Sibande, and Masonwabe Ntloko. Did you know that some of Kumalo's famous bronze sculptures were cast at South Africa's oldest bronze foundry, Renzo Vignali Foundry, right here in Pretoria? It's a joy to bring these works onto public display in our new acquisition gallery for all to appreciate and admire.

The popular ***Bokgabo ba Mashela: Art of Textiles*** exhibition is drawing to a close on 17 October 2025. This is after a jam-packed season filled with engaging events ranging from a **Women's Day seminar** in partnership with UP Archives and the Department of Historical & Heritage Studies, and our guest speaker, Siphokazi Tau from the University of Johannesburg. An artist's talk was held early in September by the Black Rock Residency recipient, art practitioner and researcher Wezile Harmans, and his screening of *Lan Moon may la dunde*. The final aspect of curatorial programming for our exhibition was the brilliant and thought-provoking *Unwrapped* performance directed by Dr Stephanie Jenkins that explores museum theatre through exhibition storytelling performed by honours Department of Drama students.

Our academic engagement continues to thrive as well, with Kirsten Krause's MA Fine Art exhibition, *(Re)presentations*, which explored decolonial exhibition strategies and brought under-represented works from our storage into the spotlight. The UP Museums actively support over 20 academic modules, making the institutional collections an essential part of student life and integral to research programmes at the university.

Finally, we're thrilled to announce that progress has been made with over 1,241 items from our collection, including works by Hezekiel Ntuli (1912-1973), that are now available on **Google Arts & Culture**, expanding global access to UP's rich heritage. Adding to our digital transformation efforts, the photography project of 174 objects from the specifically declared Mapungubwe Collection is now complete, preserving this unique part of our national estate for future generations.

Thank you for being a part of this journey with us, and to the sustained support from all academic departments, external partners and collaborators, staff, students, and dedicated museum patrons, we hope you have a blooming September.

Happy reading!

Digitisation Heritage Project

The specifically declared Mapungubwe Collection gets photographed



The photography project commissioned to Thania Louw from Art2Motion was a major curatorial project spanning several months. This initiative for the specifically declared Mapungubwe Collection actively promotes the digitisation of cultural heritage to enhance its safeguarding, accessibility and preservation for future generations. The principle of leveraging technology is enshrined by UNESCO, and UP Museums are not only updating their documentation of the national estate but will intensify efforts in the coming year so that the Mapungubwe Collection will incrementally become more available on wider digital platforms.

New Acquisitions



Mary Sibande (b.1982)

Leisurely Sailing: Sophie with her Binoculars, 2025

Woodcut

765mm x 1050mm

Filling a much-needed gap in the University of Pretoria's art collection on contemporary artists is a new acquisition of *Leisurely Sailing: Sophie with her Binoculars* by Mary Sibande (b. 1982). Through a multidisciplinary practice that includes sculpture and graphic works, Sibande reclaims agency for the Black female body in post-apartheid South Africa, challenging and rewriting her family's history of domestic work. Sibande's alter ego, Sophie, appears in vivid garments of Victorian-era domestic worker uniforms.



Sidney Kumalo (1935 - 1988)

Untitled (Dancing Woman), 1982

Colour Pencils on Paper

230mm x 185mm

Adding another magnificent piece of artwork to the institutional art collection is a work by the inimitable sculptor and sketch artist, Sidney Kumalo (1935-1988). *Untitled (Dancing Woman)* was done in 1982 when Kumalo had already developed a steady following in the South African art market as a sculptor. His drawings are often overlooked, yet they provide a much-needed glimpse into his flowing drawing style that was so prevalent in the 1980s Black art movements in South Africa.



Masonwabe Ntloko (b.1996)

Transkei Editions 1-4, 2024

Silkscreen print on incisioni paper
440mm x 320mm

This new acquisition is a series of four separate stamp-inspired editions of silkscreen prints by Masonwabe Ntloko, titled *Transkei* (2024). Ntloko is a visual artist, illustrator, and textile design graduate known for his modern heritage style that blends cultural richness with contemporary expression, with his art deeply rooted in his Xhosa culture. His works mostly entwine his heritage and personal experiences, which he intricately weaves into his visual narratives.

Re(present)ation: Selected narratives of the UP Museum Collection

MA Fine Arts Candidate Student Exhibition



Re(present)ation: Selected Narratives of the University of Pretoria Museum Collection is a beautiful, thoughtful, practice-led curatorial research project by a Masters Fine Arts student, Kirsten Krause, that explored the University of Pretoria's Museum Collection. The exhibition was held in the Student Gallery from 15 to 27 August. Krause kindly hosted members from UP Museums for an informative curatorial walkabout through her exhibition and to express her appreciation. Her exhibition engaged the art archive as an incomplete story, one filled with gaps, contradictions, and silences where both presence and absence matter. Her exhibition deliberately invited multiple interpretations and questioned artworks and their meaning. This was purposefully done to reflect on the act of revisiting objects, interrogating how they have previously been displayed, and representing alternative peoples, histories, and cultural contexts that have often been overlooked or excluded. The UP Museums welcomed the opportunity to be part of her curatorial vision and the collaboration with the Department of Visual Arts.



UP Museums' New Wheels



This spring also marks a new level of mobility and care for our art collection and other museum collections, thanks to a brand-new golf cart. Our dedicated "art chauffeur", Maurice Shirinda, now has more reliable means to transport over 400 artworks across campus with ease. It's a small change that makes a big difference in keeping our collection accessible and well-preserved. Thank you to the Department of Facilities, Prof. Susan Adendorff, Cornelia Basson and the Transport Services team for ensuring this new transport came through in 2025 to meet the operational needs and demands of our museum collections across the campus landscape.

UP Museum Corner Shop

New merchandise just in!



The UP Museum Corner Shop is now a popular spot in the Old Arts Building on the Hatfield Campus. New canvas tote bags with bespoke designs of artworks of the Old Arts Building are now available. Other new items include t-shirts and wooden key rings featuring the Old Arts Building, favourite keepsakes or museum souvenirs for graduates. Other items on sale include coffee mugs, cork mousepads, pens, water bottles and card holders. Postcards, museum catalogues and art books are also on offer.

For students, staff members and visiting scholars, even for conference delegates, the UP Museum merchandise is an ideal memento of the Old Arts Building, an iconic landmark of the University of Pretoria. For enquiries, telephone **012 420 5191** Email: kgomotso.mathole@up.ac.za for further information.

DONATE AND SUPPORT

The University of Pretoria Museums relies on any form of support from those who appreciate the collections and treasure the contents of our diverse galleries. Please make a donation today to support our continued digital strategy, curatorial programming, art conservation efforts, and care for our high-quality exhibitions and new gallery upgrades. 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](#).



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Open **Monday to Friday, 08:00 - 16:00**

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