

UP MUSEUMS e-NEWSLETTER

April 2022 ○ ISSUE 7 OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA MUSEUMS



MESSAGE - Dr Sian Tiley-Nel, Head of UP Museums

At the time of writing this April 2022 message, the University of Pretoria (UP) Museums have just exited over 750 days, marking the end of the Covid-19 national lockdown. Slowly creeping back to some normality, yet within compliance, safety, care, sanitisers and compulsory face masks remain in place. This year, the museum doors opened on the 17th of January 2022 and professional university museum services have resumed with beyond 951 visitors.

Curation commenced with the installation of the annual Rectorate exhibition located in the Administration Building of the University of Pretoria. This space is occupied by members of the UP Executive and is well-curated presenting over 30 works from the art collection in the exhibition titled, *Corporeal Bodies*. This thematic installation shows where the human body is explored and translated to having a physical material body, comprised of flesh and bones, however provides the opportunity for the subject matter of the human body to exist within both time and space. Likewise, the body is accordingly not static, for it breathes, it moves, and it lives- metaphorically so does art. Still on, and gaining in popularity is the *Unspoken* exhibition of South African ceramics from the signature Corobrik Collection.

Sharing the levels of impact and statistics that drive the museum's strategy and decisions is always pleasing, particularly since they are positive. Hybrid data from both physical engagement and digital statistics are indicating an upward trajectory on the level of impact that the museums have both within, and beyond the community with student visitors as our current lifeblood. We are also pleased to continue to receive both incoming domestic tourists, international tourists, hosting researchers and contribute to over 14 academic modules and the annual art conservation internship. These figures demonstrates an optimistic future for tourism and the university museum's contributions to the economy and promoting wider access and inclusivity. Physical users for this year amount to over 950 in person visitors, yet remains exponentially outweighed by increasing digital engagement platforms. This is evidenced by 2429 Facebook members, 623 LinkedIn and 584 Instagram followers. The UP Museums also have 750 works digitised on Google Arts & Culture and we appreciate the 653 subscribers to this e-newsletter.

On a newsworthy note, in February, the Museums officially launched the Mapungubwe Archive, a world-class African repository in partnership with the US Embassy. In March, a new staff member commenced, a proud young graduate and UP Alumnus, Steven Matsobane Motena joined the team as the Museum Interpretative Officer. In addition, the Museums are also pleased to announce that the Museum Art Conservator, Sandra Markgraaf has been appointed to the international Scientific Advisory Board for the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) conducting an exploration to

develop an online research platform for gathering and sharing information about the history, conservation and restoration of paintings on canvas.

Lastly in closing, the UP Museums look forward to the coming next six months. First coming up in May, is the annual worldwide call to join over 37, 000 museums globally, in celebrating the “Power of Museums” for International Museum Day (#IMD2022). A second celebration expected soon, is a new museum publication, marking 100 years of collecting [1922-2022] with the first acquisition by the University of Pretoria of Maggie Laubser’s *Arum Lilies* in 1922. This newsletter also shares UP’s first acquisition for this year by Avitha Sooful titled, *The Last Supper* (2021). The UP Museums wish all a normalised as possible 2022 going into winter and appreciate the support from the UP community, staff and students. Including the wider public who continue to visit and ensure university museums remain relevant in a topsy-turvy world.

HIGHLIGHT



UP launches the Mapungubwe Archive – a unique African archival repository

The University of Pretoria and the Embassy of the United States of America in Pretoria officially launched on the 24th of February 2022, the opening of the Mapungubwe Archive as a research repository held under the curatorship of the UP Museums. A commemorative plaque was also unveiled during the event to acknowledge the US Embassy’s grant from the US Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation for the preservation of Mapungubwe Archive primary materials which was carried out between September 2018 and November 2021.

Curatorial Matters



***Corporeal Bodies* Rectorate Exhibition 2022**

At the beginning of each year the UP Museums curate the Rectorate Foyer located in the Admin Building on Hatfield Campus. For 2022, the UP Museums chose the human body as a topic for discussion. The UP Museum curators accordingly explore the phenomenon of the human body as a corporeal entity within the University of Pretoria’s art collection. Read the curatorial statement and more about the exhibition [here](#).

STAFF NEWS



Welcome Steven Motena

On 1 March 2022, the UP Museums openly welcome the new addition to the team, Mr Steven Matsobane Motena in the position as Interpretative Museum Officer. He has just completed his Master's Degree exploring *Dark Tourism as a management tool for dark and dissonant heritage: political change and public perception in South Africa and Russia* in the Department of Historical & Heritage Studies supervised by Dr Ian McQueen. Steven brings his social Instagram skills, and deep passion for tourism as a CETA accredited Tour Guide for Gauteng and is an aspiring photographer. On behalf of the UP Museums he is welcomed to this professional cohort of heritage specialists in serving the institutions collections to the best of his abilities and gaining new one's every day as part of his experiential on-the-job training.



Museum Art Conservator joins international Scientific Advisory Board for new online research platform

The UP Museums are proud to announce that the Museum Art Conservator, Sandra Markgraaf has by special invitation been invited to join the Scientific Board of the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) conducting an exploration to develop an online research platform for gathering and sharing information about the history, conservation and restoration of paintings on canvas. The RKD is famously known for its hybrid and digital strategy of art historical content and more than 5 million artworks and a growing corpus of technical research data. The new online platforms aims to facilitate discoverability of canvas data by sharing and connecting data with institutions worldwide, since this type of material is often not easily accessible.

COMING SOON



The University of Pretoria Museums

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM MONTH

The Power of University Museums

Where: Old Arts Building,
Hatfield Campus
When: Mondays to Fridays
Morning tour: 09:00am – 10:00am
Midday tour: 11:00am – 12:00pm
Afternoon tour: 13:00pm – 14:00pm

#upmuseums

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The power of museums - International Museum Day

Join the UP Museums from 3 May to 31 May 2022 to experience, enjoy, and engage with the collections, archives and galleries in celebration of International Museum Day (IMD). This takes place on 18 May, the theme for this year will be celebrated globally and aims to express that museums are incomparable places of discovery. They teach us about the past and open our minds to new ideas - two essential steps in building a better future. Throughout the month of May there are scheduled time slots of choice available for your bespoke tour. The tours are planned through three lenses: the power of achieving sustainability, the power of innovating digitisation and accessibility, the power of community building through education. Annually this celebration has amplified its impact as IMD brings hybrid activities all around the world with more than 37, 000 museums participating, reaching 89 million Internet users through social media, the interactive IMD map, other platforms and more. We encourage you to follow us on Instagram **#upmuseums** or email us at museums@up.ac.za to make your booking now.

NEW ACQUISITION



Avitha Sooful
The Last Supper, 2021
Oil on canvas
1200mm x 1800mm

AVAILABLE DIGITALLY ANYTIME ANYWHERE



Growing digital content on Google Arts & Culture

Nearing now 750 digitised works ranging from the art collection, ceramics, sculpture, archival material and notably African collections and South African artwork, including 5 online exhibitions or stories. The UP Museums are raising the bar providing accessible and available content on the Google arts & Culture platform. As part of curatorial research data and the implementation of the UP Museum Digital Strategy, Google statistics provide measurable insights into trends, demands, preferences, demographics and data from the African continent and global community interacting with the UP Museum collections on this vastly-expanding platform.

DONATE TO THE UP MUSEUMS

The University of Pretoria Museums rely 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 the 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. Please support the UP Museum's efforts by following this link: Make a contribution to UP Museums [here](#).



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