

# The Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria – the home of the art of Africa

In recent years, there has been an increase in the worldwide interest in the art of Africa. Conversations and research have focused on contemporary practice, repatriation and restitution, the future of the creative industries in Africa and the role that they have to play in the continent’s economy.

With one foot firmly rooted in academia, and the other imbedded in the public, the Javett-UP aims to make the art of Africa accessible, relevant and engaging. The building is erected on the South Campus of the University of Pretoria and connects the University with the City of Tshwane via a bridge over Lynwood Road. Underneath the building, the student gallery links the architecture and visual arts departments of the University, and a number of other exhibition spaces that will house various temporary exhibitions.

Aside from temporary exhibitions, the Javett-UP will house, amongst others, two permanent collections. They are the Javett Foundation’s collection of 20th-century South African art, which contains a number of significant works and the Mapungubwe Gold, an archaeological collection that is historically and culturally important for South Africa, the southern region of Africa, and the world.

The Javett-UP will be a collaborative, multidisciplinary space. As part of the University of Pretoria’s research, teaching and learning resources, the centre will engage with the public by educating communities about the art of Africa, encouraging interaction and engagement. The centre aims to be an institution that encourages engagement with the ideas, methodologies and concerns of the art of Africa. In this way, the space becomes a platform for education and learning,

encouraging conversations about creativity and innovation; contributing to the discourse on the art of Africa and reflecting upon historical and political events as interpreted by artists.

In partnership with the University of Pretoria, the Javett-UP will also be the site for the MSocSci in Tangible Heritage Conservation, which is aligned with the University’s recognition of the need for the preservation, restoration and repair of tangible cultural products. It will be a locus of art and science and the Javett-UP will play a significant role in the conservation of the art of Africa and will be a catalytic space for defining its future.

