

INSTITUUT VIR EIETDSE GESKIEDENIS

Die Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat



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Some artists rise to occasion

MARTIN WELLS

HANOVER STREET was certainly a place of vivid colour, judging by the works of the artists now exhibiting in the Baxter Theatre Gallery.

It was also a place of great diversity, with peoples' perceptions thereof varying greatly.

The Hanover Street display is truly the stuff of a joint artists' exhibition, for in that place — which probably typified District Six — an artistic response lay in waiting.

The value of the exhibition lies in those responses by the artists, each different yet relating closely to the subject.

Hanover Street and District Six are also places which evoke deep emotional responses from people, even casual observers could not fail to be aroused in some way by its plight — moreso now that it has lain vacant, unwanted really, for so long. Here, again, some of the artists rise to the occasion.

Inevitably some of the artists attract more attention.

City artist Tyrone Appollis once again shows that almost anything he touches turns into something deeper. Each mark he makes appears as if it were distilled into something especially resonant.

Appollis's gouache, *The Bridge*, has deep and marine blues. Rather than anything topical, it has a feeling of pathos for the place.

Willy de Klerk's photographs, among them one of "bergies" titled *Yesterday*, show the aftermath of the place as if in a vacuum.

Joe Wolpe is also showing a large number of photographs, and then there is a wonderful picture of a coon troupe, titled *Seven Steps* 1947, by Ray Ryan. This picture brings back some abiding memories, although, of course, the coon carnival time was but one aspect of the Hanover Street milieu. Ryan also has a photograph of the *Seven Steps* in 1976.

A number of paintings by the late Cape Town artist Kenneth Bakker are included, one of which, titled *Hanover Street*, shows buildings in rustic and earthy colours. It is a simple piece that can be most appreciated in memory of the rumble-tumble colours of that place.

Works by several other artists are included, among them cartoonist Tony Grogan — whose watercolour and pen works have long documented such parts of the city — Peter Clarke, Fred Page, David Saal, Willy Bester, Patrick Cameron, Martin Stevens, JH Groenewald and Mc D'Arcy.

A considerable portion of their work is also of a historical nature, documenting the place.

Tying in with the play, *Buckingham Palace — District Six*, by the late Richard Rive, the exhibition is even more topical.

It runs until July 29.

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