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he first Johannesburg Biennale will be held from 28th February 1995 until 30th April 1995 in the downtown area known as the Newtown Cultural District. The

Johannesburg City Council hasÂ»

approved the Johannesburg Biennale as

its major cultural project for 1995 under

its Director of Culture, Christopher Till.

The infrastructure that the city can offer with its abundance of venues, accommodation and educational institutions makes it an obvious venue choice for the first South African Biennale.

The Biennale will celebrate South Africa's re-entry into the international cultural arena. Acclaimed and emergent artists and curators are invited to exhibit and curate alongside South Africans in such a way that dynamic artistic of exchange can occur. It is foreseen that several artists will Kp travel to South Africa for a period prior to the Biennale so as to produce site-specific works which respond directly to Johannesburg as a context. Projects of this nature will stimulate artistic and social interaction amongst artists from different backgrounds and inevitably call issues of cultural representation into question. The themes chosen for the Biennale locate the issue of identity as central to an art event occurring in post-Apartheid South Africa. Rather than concealing the scars which remain a part of South African identity, the Biennale intends to prompt engagement with the legacy of Apartheid. The Biennale cannot possibly redress the imbalances entrenched in South African society over decades of discrimination: it can, however, encourage critical scrutiny of these imbalances as they manifest themselves in the realm of art. The inclusion of South Africans on international exhibitions and vice versa will result in a rich cultural cross-referencing. Consequently, the Biennale hopes to start building the foundations for a broad art discourse which reflects on the themes addressed by the Biennale in specific relation to South Africa, as well as, in relation to how these themes are broached by international contributors.

The Johannesburg Biennale is conceptualised around two broad and inter-related themes. Having been hosted on a tour around South Africa, international curators have been invited to respond to these themes in any way which they felt might be pertinent to an art event occurring in Johannesburg in 1995. Each participating country has appointed a curator who has worked with a young South African trainee-curator with the intention of ini-

tiating a comprehensive programme to generate local and international support for black art initiatives. The reciprocal nature of the contact between the international and trainee curators has given the international curators

access to a South African vision during the process of Â©

curatorial selection and vice versa. Whilst the countries participating are free to decide on their own proposals, they are encouraged to take into account the potential of literal and conceptual exchanges with (South) Africa, as suggested by the themes . To this end, each of the trainees was hosted by one of the international curators in their countries, where they met foreign artists and administrators and took part in the foreign curating procedure. On their return to South Africa, they are involved in assisting the local co-ordinators.

Concurrently to proposals submitted by the international curators, the Biennale has invited proposals for exhibitions from independent international and South African curators, in response to the same themes suggested to curators representing specific countries. The inevitable complexity of the issues that arise in relation to these themes is such that much overlap is expected and few curators will restrict themselves to one or the other of these themes. In relation to each other, however, the themes provide a coherent and diverse conceptual geography for the Johannesburg Biennale.

The first theme, \VOLATILE ALLIANCESâ\200\231, encourages dialogue around cultural difference and identity. Curators engaging this theme might choose to address identity as constituted by Afrocentrism as opposed to, or in relation to, Eurocentrism. The theme also provokes exploration of the relationship of South African art to that produced on the rest of the African continent, as well as, the relationship of art made in South Africa to other international trends and paradigms. It is anticipated that the centrality of the issue of identity to this and the second theme will lead to exhibitions which deal with issues of

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marginalisation in relation to gender, race, sexuality, religion, land rights etcetera.

The second theme, -DECOLONISING OUR MINDSâ\200\231, necessarily prescribes Africa as a focus , yet takes into account the global repercussions of colonialism. Some of the issues which might be explored in relation to this theme include the relationship and effect of colonising cultures on indigenous art forms, art made by the African diaspora, the relationship of art made in South Africa by other diasporas to their cultures of origin; and the dilemma for people positioned on social, cultural and political boundaries.

It is anticipated that the celebratory and dynamic nature of the Biennale will generate strong, independent fringe events in and around Johannesburg which will respond to and set up dia-

logues with the Biennale. A comprehensive catalogue will be available during the Biennale and a second catalogue will be printed subsequently to give a sense of the specificity of events that occurred during the Biennale and to document a variety of responses. It is hoped that the Biennale will ultimately consist

entirety of their juxtaposition, offer a chal-

lenging and dynamic response to contemporary conditions in the languages of contemporary art. Whilst South Africa's problems are not unique, their particular manifestations and the clarity with which discrimination has been perpetuated at an official level, make Johannesburg an arena where tension around many issues is heightened.

Rather than calling for the establishment of Johannesburg as a new 'centre', the Biennale responds to the need to create a discourse which is

relevant to the experience of artists living in countries outside established 'centres', a discourse which responds specifically to issues around the making and exhibiting of art in South Africa in the 1990's. This is not as simple as it seems- there are many Johannesburgs, many South Africas and indeed many 'Africas', a reality which is evidenced by the model which structures the Biennale.

The Biennale was conceived when consultative politics were at their height in South Africa, a year before the first democratic elections took place. In response to this climate, the Johannesburg Biennale has evolved through a complex consultative process with three committees helping to define the aims which underwrite it. The curatorial process which was devised is both innovative and developmental, responding as it does to the needs of an important moment in South African history and placing as much emphasis on the process which is constructing the Biennale as on the appearance of the final series of exhibitions. The reintegration of cultural South Africa into the international arts community is visualised as a process which must foster developmental and educational programmes so as to facilitate cultural growth and empowerment. This aspect of the Biennale will be further enriched by collaboration between international and South African experts in the field of community projects as well as by a series of seminars to be held at the time of the Biennale.

The South African art community is, understandably, eager to begin the process of integrating South African art into the international arts community: the extent and nature of the integration that occurs during the Biennale should not, however, be forecast as ends in themselves, nor should some kind of definitive re-integration be seen as the goal of the Biennale co-ordinators. The Biennale has been conceptualised rather, as a catalyst, the most far-reaching and significant implication of which is the stimulation of discourse around contemporary South African culture both in local and international art circles. The accomplishment of a climate in which productive cultural interaction and dialogue can occur is in itself a goal worth aspiring to given the isolationist conditions which South African artists have endured during the years of formal Apartheid. The

Johannesburg Biennale issues artists and curators an invitation to embrace the diversity of an infinite range of experiences which might be labelled 'South African'. Emphasis on the resulting Biennale exhibitions has been paralleled by intense reflection on the process of the Biennale's construction in the hope that this event might begin to plot a portrait of the full range of possibilities of what might be constructed in the future.

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q GED diverse group of art thinkers, which in the

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he Johannesburg Biennale is being conceptualised around two broad and inter-related themes. Curators are invited to respond to these themes in any way which they feel might be pertinent to an art event occurring in Johannesburg in 1995. The inevitable complexity of the issues that arise in relation to these themes is such that much overlap is anticipated and we do not necessarily expect curators to restrict themselves to the confines of one or the other of these themes. It is hoped, however, that the potential for interesting exhibitions which is suggested by these themes in

relation to each other will give shape to a coherent yet diverse conceptual geography for the Johannesburg Biennale.

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This theme will allow for dialogue around cultural difference and identity. Exhibitions engaging with this theme might address:

e Identity as constituted by Afrocentrism as opposed to, or in relation to, Eurocentrism,

e The relationship of art made in South Africa to that produced on the rest of the African continent,

e The relationship of art made in South Africa to other international trends and paradigms,

e Art made by marginalised people or dealing with issues of marginalisation,

e This theme will provide the context for exhibitions which deal

with marginal identity in relation to gender, race, sexuality  
identity of gender, race, SEXUALITY,  
religion, land rights etcetera.  
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Although Africa will provide a focus here, this will not be an exclusively African exhibition in so far as colonisation has had global repercussions. Issues which might be explored in relation to this theme include:

e The relationship and effect of colonising cultures on indigenous art forms,

e Art made by the African diaspora,

e The relationship of art made in South Africa by other diasporas to their cultures of origin, for example,

the Indian and Portuguese

7 diasporas,  
e.g. The dilemma for people positioned on social, cultural and political boundaries.

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This is the second Biennale newsletter aimed at informing the art community and the public at large about this exciting event which opens on 28 February next year. An event that State President Mandela has been invited to open.

The countdown has started in earnest. The process of receiving and selecting South African exhibitions is complete, although several of the international exhibitions are still in the pipe-line. One of our main venues, Newtown's Museum Africa, opened on the 6 August with much ado. The Biennale office will be moving to the third floor of the west wing of Museum Africa during September, so that the staff can be on site in preparation for the event.

More good news! Former Wits Comparative Literature lecturer Allan Bowyer will be co-ordinating the Biennale catalogues following Candice Breitz's departure to the University of Chicago, and the catalogues will be designed by the Grapple Group's Roy Clucas. Last, but not least, there's information about the proposed conference from the AIA's Sydney Malefo Selepe and some of the trainee curators have returned from overseas - we carry some of their

accounts below.

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The Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr. Ben Ngubane has given his support to the Johannesburg Biennale. In a letter addressed to the Director of Culture, Christopher Till he expressed his appreciation for the project, declaring that the

Biennale has his blessing.

The organisers of this project are making a substantial contribution towards the development of young talent in the field of the visual arts. This initiative is

high on the priority list of the Department. el  
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This Department is honoured to be part of this Ce be

project. We are happy to be able to financially assist certain aspects. I trust that everyone involved in the Africus will be enriched by the experience..â\200\235

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ost of the South African exhibitions will be held at the core Biennale venues: the Electric Workshop, Museum Africa and the Rembrandt Gallery in Newtown, the Johannesburg Art Gallery in Joubert Park, the Gertrude Posel Gallery at Wits University, the Standard Bank Gallery, and the new Sandton Art Gallery. Some exhibitions will be held simultaneously in Newtown and townships around Johannesburg.

22 South African exhibitions were selected from 49 proposals by Biennale staff, in consultation with the Biennale committees. The exhibitions will be funded by the Biennale with the R400 000 allocated for South African exhibitions. The aim is to support the South African art community as a whole, and to that extent the Biennale has attempted to reach and support as broad a constituency as possible. There are proposals from â\200\230community arts projectâ\200\231 staff, curators of national and regional art galleries as well as freelance curators and independent artists.

The first Johannesburg Biennale is unique among international Biennales in that there is no one curatorial director controlling the exhibition but rather a number of South African and international curators all working independently towards some representation of two common themes, â\200\230Decolonising our Mindsâ\200\231 and â\200\230Volatile Alliancesâ\200\231.

Exhibition: JAG Installations.

Curator: Julia Charlton, curator of Contemporary Collections at Johannesburg Art Gallery.

The Johannesburg Art Gallery will invite selected contemporary South African artists to make new works that critically engage with aspects of the Gallery, especially through the medium of installation. Proposed Artists: Willem Boshoff; Joachim Schonfeldt; Durant Sihlali; Steven Cohen; Kendell Geers; and several other artists whose names have yet to be confirmed.

Exhibition: San/Bushman Art, past and present.

Curators: Catharina Meyer and David Morris.

Paintings and graphic works by !Xu, Khwe and Nharo (San/Bushmen) artists from small marginalised communities, will be presented in a challenging juxtaposition with examples of pre-colonial rock art commonly associated with â\200\230Bushmenâ\200\231.

Proposed artists: Qwaa Mangana; Thamae Setshogo; Canxâ\200\231ai Qgam; Nxaedom Qomaxa; Xoma Nxoko; Cgoise Xhare; Joao Dikuanga; Stefaans Hamukwaya; Fulai Shipipa; Alouis Sijaja; Thaulu Rumao; Freciano Ndala.

Exhibition: Taking Liberties - The Body Politic.

Curators: Colin Richards; Pitika Ntuli; Griselda Pollock.

This exhibition will focus on current preoccupations with the human body in South African art. In international art and discourse the body has been conceived as the prime object of social regulation as well as the site of resistance. Sexism, sexual identity, reproductive rights, homophobia, brutality, disease, death and pleasure all figure on and in the body. This show will explore the libidinal and symbolic multi-dimensionality of the human body as reflected in contemporary South African culture(s)....

Exhibition: Objects of Defiance/ Spaces of Contemplation.  
Curator: Emma Bedford, curator of Paintings, Sculpture and Beadwork at the South African National Gallery.

The exhibition explores womenâ\200\231s experiences of the world, of themselves and of art making through art works which employ a wide range of media. Marginalised genres and issues are prioritised and attention is focused on artists who consciously subvert and critique dominant ideologies and modes of representation. Proposed artists: Martha Rosler; Sandra Kriel; Kim Siebert; Marion Arnold; Helen Sebidi; Isolde Krams; Sarah Tabane; Lien Botha; Margaret Vorster.

Exhibition: Volatile Colonies.

Curator: Kendell Geers.

Kendell Geers will be curating an exhibition of artists whose ethnicity may be marginal, yet whose work is a fundamental challenge to Western aesthetics. No longer content to be represented as an exotic â\200\230otherâ\200\231 they are demanding to be read in terms that they are defining for themselves.

Proposed artists could include: Felix Gouzalez Torres; Ilya Kabakov; Gabriel Orozco; Cildo Meireles; Jac Leirner; Rikrit Tirvanija; Carlos Capelan.

Exhibition: Space/(Dis)place.

Curators: Exhibition co-ordinated by Wilma Cruise;

catalogue entry by Elizabeth Rankin.

Sculptors will make large scale works in the expanded space offered by the Biennale. In Space/(Dis)place the artists will explore the physical and ideological limits of sculpture.

Proposed artists: Guy du Toit; Russell Scott; Wilma Cruise; Marc Edwards; Wendy Ross; Walter Oltmann; Peter Schutz; Neels Coetzee; Gael Neke.

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Exhibition: Mamelodi Today, Mamelodi Tomorrow.  
Exhibition group curators: Mamelodi Theatre Organisation.

The project will celebrate Mamelodi's past and present through music, art, dance and performance using public spaces and public transport.

Exhibition: Windows, Doors and Bridges

Exhibition group curators: African Institute of Art, FUNDA, Soweto.

Curator: Sokhaya Nkosi and Funda centre collective.

To create murals at Funda using the walls of the new building that will be finished in November 1994. The murals will deal with topical news and will cover both themes of the Biennale. The curators are hoping to create 6 to 8 large canvasses that will be hung at the Biennale venue to entice visitors to travel to the Soweto murals.

Proposed artists: Funda students; Funda graduates and guest artists.

Exhibition: Kopano

Exhibition group curators: Badisha Art Association.

Curators: David Phoshoko, Ranko Pudi and Johnny Rubeiro.

The exhibition will focus on art produced in the Ga-Rankuwa area, particularly art which explores the cross-cultural context of that area of production. Artists in this region are working on the boundaries of tribal traditions and urbanised westernisation. The exhibition will explore the visual and the performing arts through performances directly related to the art of the region. Proposed artists: Isaac Nkoane; Anthony Makou; Madiba Ezekiel; Donald Mosidau; Roy Ndinisa; Moses Mohoroe; Sello Phiri; Paul Monama.

Exhibition initiative: [VASA (Independent Visual Artists of SA).  
Curator: Stephen Khoza.

Ivasa's approach is to involve people who would otherwise not be involved in the Biennale. Different ethnic groups will be depicted through large mobile sculptures that go beyond caricature to form group cohesion. The exhibition will represent a new era of multi-cultural interaction.

Exhibition: Fax project.

Curators: Marianne Meijer and Andrew Verster.

An exhibition of work faxed from all over the world, using the power of fax to connect South Africa in seconds to a new world of art and artists.

Exhibition: Jobs, Journeys, Johannesburg.

Curator: Rhoda Rosen.

At the centre of many South African narratives is the notion of movement: early colonial travellers, Voortrekkers, migrants, those subject to forced removals. This exhibition hopes to use visual material produced by or catering to those who move across the borders, the demarcations, the scars of our

landscape as migrant labourers. Using objects as wide-ranging as bumper stickers to wire toys and to examples of early apartheid bureaucracy, like pass laws and maps, it hopes to tell the history of an identity fashioned while moving through space as well as the history of dislocation, displacement, repression, loss - all terms that may be used ironically to think about the heart of South Africanness while at the same time indicating things that have moved from one place to another. This is an exhibition that explores some of the central terms that have defined what it means for some people to call themselves South Africans.

Exhibition: My Area.

Curator: Jenny Gordon.

A photographic exhibition by the Market Photography Workshop. An unusual document of our society - insights into people's lives in their own areas, ranging from northern suburbia through the inner city to townships and squatter camps.

Work will be chosen from submissions by: Kenneth Mandlazi; Johnny Onverwacht; Nic Hofmeyer; Themba Hadebe; Portia; Rankoane; Clement Lekanyane; Natasha Pincus; Tsheko Kabasia; Sally Shorkend; Peter Milton; Andrew Mudau; Ethel Radebe; Erica Behr; Ruth Motau; Jodi Bieber; Sello Jiyane; Robert Moloi; Michael Monyokolo.

Exhibition: Beyond Boundaries/ Phesheya Kwemingcele.  
Curators: Thami Jali and Terry-Anne Stevenson.

The aim of this exhibition is to bring art into the street, out of the secluded places. The exhibition, in the words of the curators, will address the need to teach people to see, to sing, to dance and to dream a common dream.

Proposed artists: A workshop involving 30 artists from Thembisa and other areas.

Exhibition: Africa Earthed.

Curator: Chani Collet.

The exhibition is aimed at bridging the contradictions and divisions inherent in South African ceramics as well as re-assessing the relegation of women as vessel makers.

Proposed artists: Josephine Ghesa; Peter Mtombeni; Susan Sellschop; Rebecca Matibe; Suzette Munnik; Amalia Beagle; Cedric Sibiso; Lauren Kaplan; Lesley Anne Hoets; Eunice Mtlana; Bonnie Ntshaltshali; V. Pieterse; Colin Kapa; Noria Mbaso.

Exhibition initiative: Katlehong Art Centre.

Curator: Group curatorship.

Katlehong artists propose to create larger than life wire figures with moving parts together with military vehicles such as Casspirs and Hippos. The East Rand has been under fire from all angles and the artists will hope to represent through their sculptures the conditions under which they have been producing their art.  
Proposed artists: Katlehong Art Centre artists.

Exhibition: Arches, Murals and Trees.

Curators: Group curatorship - Johannesburg Art Foundation.

The project will take the form of temporary arches, permanent

murals and temporary appendages to trees. A series of huge arches, built of scaffolding, canvas and paint, will be created to straddle Eastwold Way, forming an colourful, exuberant triumphal procession to the War Memorial. Murals designed by Art Foundation students will be painted on some walls on Eastwold Way. Tree sculptures and objects protruding from trees would be created as appendages to the arches and murals.

Exhibition: Mobile Art Gallery.

Curators: Gordon Froud, Jeffrey Zulu, Colleen Snyman and a committee of students.

The exhibition involves the conversion of bus into a gallery. The bus would travel to and fro between Newtown and Soweto, running workshops at various stops.

Exhibition: Soweto Outreach Project.

Curator: Group curatorship.

The project is aimed at bringing black artists and their communities closer together by taking the art to the street and public places. This will begin to create a greater awareness of art within the community of Soweto. It will involve four young black artists living in Soweto and they will exhibit completed works while producing works on sight in the presence of the public. The sights identified are the Dube complex and the Maponya area. Since this activity will be taking place in the public domain, the community will be able to interact with the artist while s/he works, and be exposed to the process of art making, such as a mural painting, in which the audience will be invited to participate. Furthermore, the project will include a programme that

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aims at exposing children to various art making processes and mediums, in the form of a workshop. Finally, the exhibition seeks to promote to the community, the image of art as a serious vocation of value and upliftment.

Exhibition: From the Far North.

Curators: Rataba Mautla and Godfried Dederen.

An exhibition of artwork from the Far North. Artists of all races and education backgrounds work in this region and seldom find a forum for exhibiting their work together. This exhibition will bring these artists together under the Biennale themes.

Exhibition: Ubuntu

Exhibition initiative: Kagiso Arts Centre.

Curator: Group curatorship.

This project will involve the community of Kagiso in the creation of murals, peopleâ\200\231s parks and sculptures in the public spaces of Kagiso.

Exhibition: International Print Exchange.

Curators: Mona Berman and Margot Amoils.

Printmaking has been nicknamed 'the democratic medium' because of its affordability, accessibility and its potential to participate in dialogues across cultural and geographical boundaries. Twenty artists from Artist Proof Studio and 24 International artists from twenty countries will participate in an exchange and exhibition at the Biennale. In addition each artist involved will receive a portfolio of prints.

Proposed local artists on the print exchange: Vincent Baloyi; Muzi Donga; Gordon Gabashane; Joe Ndlovu; Sokaya Charles Nkosi; Velaphi Mzimba; Mmakgabe Helen Sebidi; Kim Berman; Nhlanhla Xaba; Ezekiel Budeli; Flora More; Richman Mbogeni Buthelezi; Cedric Sebesi; Domenic Shabangu; Samson Mnisi; Paul Molete; Elvin Nothonanda; Philisiwe Sibaya; Yvonne Segoto;

Jabulani Nkomo  
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We are pleased to announce that many of the 'community art projects' have proposed exciting and innovative participation. The Outreach and Development programme of the Johannesburg Biennale is bringing into the Biennale 'core' exhibitions projects that have been traditionally marginalised by the mainstream artworld.

The following workshops and collaborative projects will form part of the Outreach and Development programme of the Johannesburg Biennale:

AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF ART -

SOWETO, JOHANNESBURG  
ARTS FOR AFRICA-

PRETORIA, CITY CENTRE  
BADISHA ART ASSOCIATION-

GARANKUWA, PRETORIA  
CHIAWELO COMMUNITY PROJECT-

SOWETO, JOHANNESBURG  
FROM THE FAR NORTH-

NORTHERN TRANSVAAL  
INDEPENDENT VISUAL ARTISTS OF SA-

BASED IN JOHANNESBURG  
KAGISO ART CENTRE-

KRUGERSDORP  
KATLEHONG ART CENTRE-

GERMISTON

MAMELODI THEATRE ORGANISATION-

PRETORIA

PHESHEYA KWEMINGCELE - BEYOND BOUNDARIES -

DURBAN

PELMAMA ACADEMY-

SOWETO, JOHANNESBURG

THE ART FOUNDATION-

JOHANNESBURG

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A FINAL CALL TO ALL ARTISTS TO

SUBMIT MATERIAL TO THE ARTISTSâ\200\231 A-Z

The Artistsâ\200\231 A-Z was established in December 1993 in response to the lack of an adequate resource which records artists, galleries and art institutions in and around Southern Africa. Subsequently it has developed into a highly useful and versatile resource which exists independently of the Biennale. To date we have A-Z files for over one thousand artists, with over four thousand names on our mailing list. The intention of this project is to give exposure and recognition both locally and internationally to a maximum number of artists.

Similar projects have been attempted by both the S.A.A.A. and the N.A.C. in the past. The N.A.C. handed over their data-base which formed our core of information, because they conceded that their efforts had been unsuccessful due to inadequate artist interest and response. In order for such a resource to be utilized

. in any way, whether published or in the form of a functional

data base this resource must accurately reflect Southern African artists.

We strongly urge and encourage all artists who have not yet submitted material to the A-Z to do so as soon as possible. The FINAL deadline by which we are able to receive your material is the 31" October 1994!

What we need from you is:

- (i) a brief CV
- (ii) a signed copyright agreement
- (iii) three colour slides or photographs of your work

If you have not yet received A-Z forms and wish to participate, or if you know of any other artists who may want to be involved, please notify us promptly so that we can facilitate your participation. Any queries should be addressed to:

The Artistsâ\200\231 A-Z

PO Box 1049  
Johannesburg

2000

Or you can contact us at:

Tel: (011) 339-7238/9  
Fax: (011) 403-1012

## The Catalogues

Given the very nature of the Johannesburg Biennale, as a forum which marks our re-entry to international cultural life, and as a platform from which to initiate and encourage debate on the diverse artistic activities that have emerged in South Africa in recent years, the Biennale organizers have decided to print two catalogues.

The first catalogue will contain several solicited essays by distinguished local and international scholars, including Thomas McEvilley, Sander Gilman, Jean-Hubert Martin, Anita Nettelton, Arthur Danto, Sandra Klopfer, Apinan Poshyananda, Charles Merewether, and Rasheed Araeen. The Biennale organizers conceive of these essays as "provocations" to the debates that we hope will emerge within the conference and workshop forums that are planned to take place shortly after the opening of the Biennale. This first catalogue will contain page-long contributions from each curator which will provide a brief "statement" or "curator's vision".

The first catalogue will also contain a brief overview of the aims and objectives of the various so-called "community arts projects" that will exhibit during the Biennale, projects that by definition, cannot be adequately represented independently of the environment within which they are produced and exhibited. It is the development, installation, or exhibition of the community arts projects which will be the principle focus of the second of the two catalogues, together with responses to the solicited essays, and some of the proceedings from the Biennale conference. The numerous "fringe" exhibitions or happenings that we hope will be played out within the Newtown Cultural District during the Biennale, will be similarly privileged within this second catalogue. In short, the first catalogue is devised as a stimulus or "call for contributions", while the second catalogue will document those contributions and interactions by the community.

The Biennale will be collaborating with Arts International (a U.S based organisation) and Third Text in preparation for an international visual arts conference during the Biennale on the Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup>, Friday 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> of March 1995. The opportunity offered by this collaboration for developing the debate surrounding the visual arts in contemporary South Africa will be a crucial "first". We are fortunate to have Sidney Malefo Selepe from the African Institute of Art at FUNDA Centre, Soweto as the Conference Co-ordinator.

Sidney spent a month in New York with the Arts International staff jointly developing a proposal for the conference. His report and proposal includes list of topics that would form the focus during the plenary and workshop sessions of the conferences:

### (1) art in communities:

- the role of the artist,
- the future of community based organisations,
- defining the community,

- goals of community work,
  - alternative models.
- (2) Arts management:
- leadership of existing major institutions,
  - curatorial training,
  - defining alternative structures,
  - moving into the mainstream,
  - redefining the 'centre'.

The editor of Third Text, Rasheed Araeen recently spent a short time reviewing the contemporary South African art scene. He similarly proposed a conference to run during the Biennale, although he was more concerned with the academic debates which develop from the issues proposed by Arts International and Sidney Malefo Selepe. Rasheed's proposal included such issues as:

- redefining cultural identity in post-apartheid South Africa,
- traditions and modernism in Africa,
- the redefinition of Afrocentrism.

We are pleased to announce that we were not forced to decide between these two proposals. Instead Arts International and Third Text have agreed, in principle, to combine these different foci on the debates that touch the South African visual arts communities in what promises to be an exciting conference, a conference that will need your input in order to achieve its full poten-

ential

Nine of the thirteen trainees have been abroad as guests of the international curators. The countries that they visited include the USA, France, Israel, Denmark, Hungary, the UK and Czechoslovakia. Others who have not yet departed are completing their internships. These include Belina Leburu at The Standard Bank Centre Gallery, Sarah Tabane at the Johannesburg Art Gallery, Mpho Motjoadi at UNISA. Here are some reports of those that have returned:

Nicole Kurz: Hungary

During the month that Nicole spent as a trainee curator in Budapest she became aware of a considerable similarity in the concerns and concepts of the South African and Hungarian artists. The Mucsarnok, Palace of Exhibitions, directed by Dr Katalin Keseru, has come up with an interesting concept for a dialogue to take place between these two contexts, within the Biennale. Keseru proposes to instigate a conceptual and visual dialogue between one or more South African and Hungarian artists, under the title: Traditions and New Contexts. One can expect to see the South African Geoffrey Armstrong's works participating in a tense and powerful relationship with the work of the Hungarian artist Andras Boroce. Armstrong's monumental wooden sculptures speak strongly through their source not denying the obvious

materiality of the tree. Borocz also uses wood in a manner which does not disguise its origin; in this case the graphite pencil. Armstrong manipulates and modifies through his interventions, as does Borocz. Where Armstrong's sculptures are strong and

massive, Borocz's sculptures are thin and fragile. While Borocz retains some of the characteristics of the form, he carves figures in response to the pencil's brand name (Mona Lisa, Black Venus, Giant, Plato). Traditional sculptural themes (embracing lovers, motherhood) are picked up and add to this humorous interpretation. With such obvious diversity in size and apparent context and closeness in concerns and approach, it is likely that this kind of juxtaposition will result in an intimate and fascinating exchange.

Abrie Fourie: Denmark

Abrie was a guest of the Danish Ministry of Culture in Copenhagen, during which time he visited numerous Danish artists and the South African Doris Bloom. Doris has returned to South Africa in order to represent Denmark at the Biennale together with William Kentridge on a project called Geography and Memory. The dialogue between the two is based on shared childhood memories of Johannesburg, juxtaposed with the kaleidoscope worlds in which they now live.

This dialogue will take on the visual form of constellations, names, and personal symbols drawn in white on black, to be incorporated within an animated 35mm film. William and Doris have also completed several drawings in whitewash on a burnt veld which were filmed and photographed from the air. Similarly, drawings in burning paraffin were documented from an aerial platform. The project will culminate when all of the documentation is integrated into a spectacular requiem of constellations and symbols, or 'soul maps'. These 'soul maps' will then be projected at various sites in the PWV, thus decentralising their project and show from the core of the Biennale, taking art to the man in the street.

Sgila Mazibuko: Bulgaria

Sgila was hosted by the Bulgarian curator Boris Danailov, at his home, before being whisked off to Plovdiv where he participated in a painting workshop hosted by the Union of Bulgarian Artists. Although there were several artists present at the workshop who had travelled from Brazil, Turkey, and Macedonia, Sgila was the first black South African to work with the UBA. As a result Sgila spent much of his time as an ambassador for his country as well as the Biennale. At the end of the workshop all of the participants were asked to select two of their own paintings which were to be donated to the Union. The first Johannesburg Biennale is now represented in the permanent collection of the UBA! Sgila was delighted at the opportunity to consult and work with artists many of whom he had never seen works of, but all of whom made a lasting impression on him. He hopes that during the Biennale, we will be able to provide a similarly stimulating environment for our visitors.

Ruphus Matibe: Australia

' When the sound of the didgeridoo is heard as the spirit of

Arnhem land transcends to Africa to celebrate the dawn of democracy down South, Tony Bond, the master mind behind the



nineth Sydney Biennale will have arrived, bringing uncompromising artists from Australia to the Johannesburg Biennale.

Tony will curate four artists' work, which relate to each other in both aesthetic approach, and through their common concern with the identity and oppression of minority positions. His selection of artists deliberately overlays questions of gender, race, and class; returning the debate to the personal, to the body and the domestic space of the individual. In a process of consultation, Tony and Ruphus decided to choose South African artist Belinda Blignaut to exhibit alongside the Australian artists Destiny Deacon and Brenda Croft, and the American Adrian Piper.

Belinda is concerned with violence, the body and the displacement of meaning into materials that are a lie to the flesh, yet carry the necessary connotations to give an experience of the body. This displacement opens the issues of language with regard to experience and suggests a kind of alienation of the human body in a technological environment. It extends the context for the investigation of violence beyond race to the universal. Destiny Deacon, an Aboriginal artist working with text, photography, and installations, addresses issues of identity, through the exposure and deconstruction of gender and stereotyping. She addresses both gay politics and hybridity in the Australian context. Brenda Croft, a Koori/Urban Aboriginal Australian and Adrian Piper, an African-American artist will collaborate and work on one installation, which will address the vast contrast between blacks and whites in economic and social spheres of life in both Australia and South Africa.

Clive Kellner: France and Israel

As a trainee curator on the Johannesburg Biennale, Clive spent almost a month in Paris and Tel Aviv. Clive's host in Paris, Jean-Hubert Martin (the curator of Magiciens de la Terre), introduced him to museum directors, curators from the Louvre, the Institut du Monde Arabe and well established artists such as Christian Boltanski, Anette Messager, Sophie Calle and Bertrand Lavier. The various people he met were very interested in the both the Biennale and South African Art.

Jean-Hubert Martin's exhibition, which includes works by six artists, will address the complex cultural realities that emerge within the discourse on intercultural relationships. Meir Ahronson's exhibition Invisible Borders, will include four artists, two photographers, an abstract painter and a conceptual artist. His exhibition will address the symbolic relation between internationalism and localism, the private and the collective.

Srhige

The Fringe is an essential part of the Biennale started. Working under the title The Fringe: Boundaries Unlimited, the committee believes

that the project can facilitate a dynamic and diverse exhibition schedule addressing the inner city and spaces in and around the Newtown District and Greater Johannesburg. The committee is also focused on co-ordinating community projects as a vital dimension to the fringe boundaries.