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A sens

@Joe and a friend having
a chat. Behind them are
some of Joe's paintings.

Joe tells us about one of
his ambitions to study
with great artists in
America and Europe.

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SUCCESS

Joe Maseke has
taught himself -
many things -
not least of
which is that
there is beauty
wherever you .
want to see It.
This philosophy
has helped him
fight against a
lack of
education and
make a7 ~ ;
success of
Asimself as an

artist

by IKE MOTSAPI
photographs by DUM! NOLOVU |

intending his way to

Kg OME people with
Aw â\200\230little, or no, :
44 education donâ\200\231t
iY try hard to do
anything with their lives â\200\224
others try constantly to
upgrade themselves. Artist
Joe Maseko is one of these
people.

Although he only went
as far as Standard 1 at

â\200\230school, Joe taught himself .

to paint with watercolours,
learned to speak and write

English by practising and *

correcting himself with the
â\200\230help of a tape recorder,
and through township
"scenes painted on paper
and cardboard has built
himself an amazing
success story.

â\200\234| didnâ\200\231t get very far at
school, so my main form of
communication was
through drawing,â\200\235 says

a

Joe who started painting
â\200\224 mainly with
watercolours â\200\224 in 1959"
Hungry for knowledge, Joe
Started reading art books
and studying the great
painters of every age. He
taught himself art
techniques and the history
of art by borrowing books
and spending long hours
studying in municipa!
libraries. ;

It was then that Joe
realised that township
scenes needed to be put
into drawings so that

others could see them.
Today township scenes are
his main subject matter.

There is beauty even in
ugliness," says Joe, "it
depends entirely how
people learn to see things.
This is what I am trying to
do to let people learn

BAM ge

through my paintings.
There is beauty
everywhere if you want to
see it."

Joe has experienced
both important
achievements and
disappointments in his
Career.

His early artistic career
began with him exhibiting
his township scene
paintings at the Joubert
Park Artists Under The Sun
Exhibitions. His
inclusion in the 1961
Fame And Promises
Exhibition at the Alder
Fielding Gallery really got
his career going because .
he made a good
impression on Ari Critics,
One of the highlights of his
early career was an
exhibition of his works at
the Hilton Hotel in Denver,

\$0 BONA May 1986

Colorado, USA in 1973.
Today, with 20 years of art
experience behind him,
Joe can boast of one-man
art exhibitions of his work
in West Germany, USA
and in Cape Town and
Johannesburg.

There have been the bad
times, too. Like when Joe
was asked to move out of
the Colosseum Theatre in
Johannesburg, (from
where he was running a
gallery called The Art
Mart), because it was due
to be demolished to make
way for a supermarket. He
saw his dreams of owning
a. art in the centre of
town crash, but he didn't
let it affect him too much,

It's
important _
a role
encourage
young
artists and
to make a
i.e. public
appreciate
our own
art more

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Today he still has hopes to
open up a gallery of his own
and is in fact planning
_ to do so with the help of

some of his admirers. Mr
Steve Burger, Director of
Community Development
with the West Rand
Development Board, told.
me that he was doing his
best to help Joe whom

he thinks of as one of the
finest artists around
make his dream come true.

Talking about the gallery
he plans to open in his
backyard, Joe says: "This
is the first time that so
many people who are
interested in my work are
trying to help me. I know
there will be a lot of
changes in my work. I have
a lot of feelings inside me
which I have no idea how
to paint. I do not know how
to learn to interpret these
feelings except by talking.
to and working with great
artists."

He adds that the gallery
will be a good thing
because many "both
local and overseas " visitors
cram into his tiny
Orlando home to buy or
place orders for their own
works of art. "With the
establishment of the art "

gallery tourists will be able

to go home with
something authentically
African," he says.

Joe hopes to encourage
young Black artists, and to
draw attention to their
work through the gallery.
He also feels it is
important to encourage
young Black artists to
make the Black public
aware of what they are
achieving, at the same
time as making the general
public more appreciative of
indigenous art.

An equally important

point, in Joe's mind, is to -

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