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Director of Culture

CIVIC CENTRE
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JOHANNESBURG

2000 RSA

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FEL: (011) 407 7303 Se ee eI
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ATTENTION: ELSA MILES

FAX NO: s2e 40 SHYiG 12 35 flected Thome)
FAB

FROM: CHRISTOPHER TILL

FAX NO: 403 1012

DATE: 12 MAY 1993

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Dear Elza,

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The CITY | The City has initiated a project to begin a major visual arts
Ww i nn 1! 115) event ip Johannesburg which plans to celebrate and re-introduce

| South African art, artists and the South African public 0
contemporary internativnal trends, and vice versa.

TOGETHER | It is aimed to invite acclaimed and emergent artists to exhibit
alongside southern Africans in such a way that truce international
artistic exchange can occur.

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You are cordially invited to attend a meeting of major players in the field of visual arts to outline the attached concept document and invite discussion around the proposal.

WHEN: TUESDAY, 18 MAY 1993

TIME: 15:30

WHERE : COMMITTEE ROOM D

Civic Centre, Council Chamber Wing
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ORBIS AFRICANUS 95

JOHANNESBURG'S PREMIER INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY ART

AIM;

CONTEXT:

THEMES:

To present a unique visual art event in Johannesburg which will re-introduce and celebrate the fresh introduction of South African art, artists and the South African public to contemporary international trends. This will be achieved by inviting acclaimed and emergent artists to exhibit alongside Southern Africans in such a way that true international artistic exchange can occur.

Our intention is that the internationalism of ORBIS AFRICANUS 95 will effectively celebrate with the global art fraternity, South Africa's re-integration into the international exhibition arena. It is our intention that this exciting event will bring critics, writers, dealers, artists and arts administrators into contact with the South African art scene, and Johannesburg in particular. The benefit of this will be the exposure of our cultural life through respected publications, dealer contacts and artistic interaction. The net result of a well-executed ORBIS AFRICANUS 95 will be the exposure of an almost unknown cultural vibrancy which has developed in South Africa in the recent past, to members of the art world who are curious but unaware of what South Africa has to offer. At the same time it will satisfy a tremendous appetite for cultural and artistic contact on the part of many South African artists.

It is hoped that the planned biennial nature of this exhibition will form a focus within the Southern Hemisphere (situated between South America and Australasia) and place South Africa on the calendar of major international visual art events.

The necessity of expressing individual and cultural identity by investigating.

- the relationship of art made in South Africa to that produced in the rest of the African continent.

- the relationship of art made in South Africa to international trends

- the relationships of art made by the African Diaspora, eg. Afro-Caribbean, Afro-American, etc.

- the art produced by marginalised peoples, and/or that on marginalised issues, eg. land rights, etc.

- the relationship and effects of a dominant colonising cultures on indigenous and re-emerging art forms

- the effects of the Western and European art market demands

- the art of other international cultures in the process of cultural re-integration eg. Eastern Europe, Korea etc.

- the relationships of the above mentioned to the expression of identity, 10 Multi-culturalism

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- the relationship between the intention, meaning and perception of the works on final exhibition for the artists, curators and viewers.

COMMENT ON THE THEMES:

The themes incorporate the most prevalent concerns within the international Visual Arts which pertain most strongly to the perceived needs of the South African art scene

There is enough scope within the stated themes to introduce South African artists to new developments which are concerning artists internationally

The themes are sufficiently wide to allow South African artists to exhibit alongside selected international artists who have similar universal concerns

The strongly held view within some circles in South Africa that the cultural vitality of South African artists has actively and intuitively transcended boundaries of language, race, geography and politics in the recent past can be viewed and accessed internationally

international and South African public, corporate and private collectors, dealers, critics and viewing public will be able to view South African artists within a global context for the first time for several decades

PARTICIPANTS

Exhibiting participants will be drawn from.

Europe

Eastern Europe

Britain

North America

South America

Australasia

Middle East

Far East

Africa

It is anticipated that more than 300 works of contemporary art by 100 artists from almost 30 countries will be represented

VENUES: Newtown Cultural Precinct, Johannesburg Art Gallery, and other venues

RATE: March, April, May 1995

in order to consult on themes, academic co-ordination and international visitors' outreach programme there will be broad consultation with cultural organisations and players in the visual arts area.

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