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## **UCT's Works of Art Committee rolls out consultative programme**

The University of Cape Town's newly-constituted Works of Art Committee (WOAC) has been working on finalising a programme of activity for the next four years.

This is as per the recommendations made by the Artworks Task Team following the removal of a number of artworks from display on campus.

The WOAC programme includes medium term activities, which entail – among others – developing clear curatorial policy guidelines informed by the contexts of the university's public spaces, developing an acquisitions policy and in the longer term, working towards the establishment of an art museum that will house the university's collection and create a public platform for engagement through ongoing curated exhibitions of the collection.

Short term events are also being planned. These are aimed at disseminating information about the art collection as well as inviting curators and art historians from outside and within the institution to create visions and dialogue for the acquisition, collection and exhibition of works. The WOAC also has planned talks and dialogues with artists whose work is part of the collection.

A curatorial subcommittee comprising Andrew Lamprecht, Nkule Mabaso and Dr Nomusa Makhubu will begin a process of rehanging some of the removed artworks by considering the collections at the Molly Blackburn Hall as an initial phase.

The public is invited to two events to be held on 5 October and 12 October.

The first is a lecture by curator, art historian and artist Thembinkosi Goniwe titled "Art and Discontentment in the Time of Decolonising the University". The lecture will be presented in association with the Institute for Creative Arts (ICA) at the Hiddingh Hall as part of its October 2017 Great Texts/Big Questions lecture series focusing on art, institutions, collections and curation.

The lecture, which will be followed by an open question and answer session, will take place from 18:00 to 19:30 on Thursday, 5 October 2017 in Hiddingh Hall, UCT Hiddingh Campus (31-37 Orange Street, Cape Town). RSVP [here](#).

Goniwe writes: "The potency of art to incite debates and catalyse transformation was evident during students' insurgences toward decolonising the South African university in 2015 and 2016. Art partook in politics through individual and collective interventions, curated exhibitions, creative protests and demonstrations. There was also the burning of artworks, interruption of exhibitions, removal of artworks from (public) display and subsequently contentious debates around the safety of artworks, silencing of voices and censorship of expressions. Underlying these interventions and the reactions they instigated is a curious discontentment, which is the subject and critique of this presentation."

The second event is scheduled for 12 October at 18:00 at the Jameson and Molly Blackburn halls on the UCT Upper Campus. This event – titled "Re-Making Place: Towards a New Vision for Art at UCT" – will focus on a celebration of new visions for the curation and collection of art works.

It will involve talks by, among others, Ingrid Masondo from the Iziko National Gallery and Nkule Mabaso of the Michaelis Gallery. The performances will include works by performance artist Sethembile Msezane, poet Koleka Putuma, Soul Connexion and several DJs.

Several talks and events are scheduled to follow until mid-November and these will be communicated to the public as and when the details are finalised.

There has been several other activities by the WOAC throughout September as part of their work. The Committee met with Willie Bester as the beginning of talks around engagement with students. Committee Chair Associate Professor Jay Pather has addressed the UCT Alumni Cape Town Chapter on the newly-constituted WOAC's plans for the next four years.

The Third Space Symposium was staged in association with the Institute for Creative Arts (ICA), where Associate Professor Hloniha Mokoena and Professor Desiree Lewis delivered keynote addresses on the subject of "Decolonisation and the Creative Arts" – with responses from Associate Professor Zimitri Erasmus and Dr Lwazi Lushaba. In another event hosted by the ICA, renowned architect Sir David Adjaye spoke on the topic "Heritage, Memory and Making Place".

In order to make the collection and these events around art works publicly accessible, committee member and director of Michaelis Arts School, Associate Professor Berni Searle, will be overseeing the revamping of the WOAC website – where information relating to all works of art in the collection of the university will be made more readily and widely accessible.

In addition, Dr Zethu Matebeni is developing a theoretical paper that brings together some of the essential principles informing these new developments.

**ENDS**

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