

# ARTSPACE MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

**The Artspace Mentorship Programme exposes new visual artists to the market by allowing them to work under the guidance of established artists.**

“Programmes like these are important opportunities for new artists to be able to access galleries and the market.”

Leora Faber *Mentor*

“Programmes of this kind can only be of great value to a growing cultural climate in South Africa.”

Tanya Poole *Mentor*

“This process was so meaningful in so many ways.”

Nomusa Makhubu *Mentee*

ARTSPACE

Olivier, Louis, Head: #1 Oregon pine and found objects, 2009



Nihlapo, Senzo, Detail from The Golden Train, Woven digital print, 2009



Mautloa, Kagiso Pat and Nhlapo, Senzo, Detail from Jowzi Super acrylic on canvas, 2009



Olivier, Louis, Detail from Walking Series, Charcoal on found objects, 2009



Being successful as a visual artist is not just about making good art. It takes a clever combination of delivering quality art, opportunity and astute management to turn a talent into a career.

It's an industry that does not come with a handbook nor is governed by a set of criteria for success.

Managing the sometimes complicated relationships and opportunities that it brings can be intimidating for new artists entering the market.

It is with this in mind that Artspace launched their Mentorship Programme in 2008. The only programme of its kind in South Africa, this opportunity pairs new artists i.e. mentee with an established talent as a mentor who will guide them through the process of creating their first solo exhibition in a public gallery environment.

This programme aims to expose new visual artists, who have previously had little or no exposure to the market.

"This programme is designed to give these artists a foot in the door and to expose them to working within the professional sphere. Navigating through relationships with galleries can be intimidating for a new artist with little experience." says Artspace Curator Teresa Lizamore

The process sees the mentors and mentees work together on the mentee's conceptual development and execution of new body of work for a professional exhibition. The mentors support the younger artists through their production process and assist them with the curation of their exhibitions. An often intense relationship, this process takes 8 months from start to finish and covers issues as diverse as materials, presentation and pricing as well as content, concept and ensuring the visual and aesthetic cohesion of their body of work.

Wilma Cruise (mentor 2009), Kagiso Pat Mautloa (mentor 2009) and Gordon Massie during the professional practice workshop, 2009.



Kagiso Pat Mautloa (mentor 2009) engages with the work of Sinta Spector (mentee 2009) during the professional practice workshop, 2009.



Wilma Cruise (mentor 2009) during the professional practice workshop, 2009.



Zenzo Nhlapo (mentee 2009) during the presentations of the professional practice workshop, 2009.



Launched in 2007, the programme has played host to seven new artists under the guidance of six mentors. The 2010 programme will see three mentees working under some of South Africa's most respected artists.

In 2009 the programme took on a new momentum, with the introduction of a professional practice component in the form of a workshop conducted in partnership with Art Source South Africa. The workshop brought together the mentees and mentors for intensive sessions that focused on how to strategically manage their careers and how to conduct themselves within the industry.

"There is a world outside of the studio." says Les Cohn of Art Source. "Making art is only one half of the equation. A successful artist needs to understand both their market and their networks and use them to leverage their career."

Supported by the Business and Art South Africa (BASA) Barloworld Mentoring Programme, the course also hosted a workshop by Gordon Massie, Managing Director of Art Insure who dealt with the issue of how to build value in an artists work.

"This Mentorship Programme is a valuable project and is succeeding in its goals. It is identifying emerging artists who may otherwise not have been exposed to this kind of opportunity and who are integral to the future of South African art. It has provided them with guidance and exposure in and to the art market in a professional structure. Certainly, programmes of this kind, and funding opportunities, can only be of great value to a growing cultural climate in South Africa, which is being steadily noticed both within our country and internationally" *Tanya Poole Mentor 2008*

## MENTORSHIP 2008

In 2008 Leora Farber, Director: Research Centre, Visual Identities in Art and Design for the University of Johannesburg, and artist, mentored Same Mdluli, a young artist dealing with complex issues of identity and the construction of perceptions.

Walter Oltmann, winner of the 2007 Sasol Wax Art Award which recognized innovation and excellence, mentored Willem Snyman, a Pretoria based artist who was identified by Oltmann as someone who had the talent but lacked the opportunities for exposure. Snyman, who developed a technique of painting on hemp, deals with environmental concerns through his work.

Grahamstown based artist Tanya Poole, winner of the 2004 Brett Kebble Art Award worked together with her mentees, Lindi Arbi and Nomusa Makhubu to present a show entitled Hollywood, Bollywood, Nollywood. The exhibition saw convergence of different thoughts and different narratives, some humorous, some poignant. The three film categories are used as pools of signifiers to comment on particular moments or to appraise the different industries and mechanisms of spectacle, observation and cultural production.

## MENTORSHIP 2009

The 2009 exhibitions built on the success of 2008.

Louis Olivier, a Pretoria based sculptor who was mentored by Wilma Cruise mounted an exhibition that was both critically and commercially successful, selling out during its one and a half week run. *PALE MALE- Sitting Standing Walking* used the body as a vehicle for exploring the human condition and man's sense of being in the world.

Senzo Nhlapo was mentored by Kagiso Pat Mautloa, a well known artist and one of the directors of the

internationally recognized Fordsburg Artists' Studios (aka Bag Factory). Nhlapo works with mixed media. He uses photographs and painting to revisit traditional technology within a contemporary context.

Sinta Spector was mentored by artist Usha Seejarim. Seejarim is an artist with a respected cv in both gallery and public artwork. Spector, the daughter of a diplomat has spent the great part of her life living in foreign countries. In her exhibition *Nomadixx*, she explored her transient experiences through the metaphor of clothing.

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Project Director and Curator: Teresa Lizamore  
Project Manager and Consultant: Taryn Cohn

Project Co-ordinator: Ronel de Jager

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