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Re: ‘I Will Not Compromise About My Work’

Good day,

Your article titled “‘I Will Not Compromise About My Work’: David Goldblatt on Artistic Freedom, Censorship, and Moving His Archive Out of South Africa” refers.

The article contains a number of factual inaccuracies, which must be corrected. Despite a very lengthy response forwarded by UCT prior to publication of the article, only a small section of this response was published resulting in the story being unbalanced.

The decision to remove artworks from displays at UCT was not an act of censorship. UCT reiterates that no artworks have been censored. Some artworks have been temporarily removed or covered for safekeeping given the protests in February 2016 in which some 23 artworks and portraits were destroyed. This was necessary in line with the primary custodial responsibilities of the university for works of art in our care.

The plan is for the university to hold public conversations, with the artists where possible, to explain the art, to give context and hopefully to build understanding so that the art can be displayed without threat.

UCT recognises that some art, particularly where it may offend people, should rather be displayed in a gallery where it can be contextualised, where people can choose to see it or not (unlike art in public spaces) and where it can be protected. Unfortunately UCT does not currently have a suitable gallery but we are looking for a solution for this.

The [report](#) of the Artwork Task Team outlines a number of findings and recommendations with regards to the future of artworks displays on campus.

It should be clear that the university is as concerned about censorship and artistic freedom as our critics and the artists themselves, and that we have given careful thought to finding ways to protect that freedom, to use the art collection to educate and stimulate debate, and to address the challenge of transforming the institutional culture as reflected back to students and staff from the walls of the buildings, while also ensuring that we protect the works from damage or destruction.

We kindly request that our above input be reflected either in an updated version of the same piece or in another format on your platform.

Regards,

Elijah Moholola

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