



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA • UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

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Calling township artists to reflect on the power of place

The Public Art and the Power of Place initiative of the African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the University of Cape Town, funded by the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund to the amount of R480,000, is calling for proposals for six public art engagements in Cape Town's townships.

The project will address art within the spatial legacy of apartheid, which remains 21 years into South Africa's new democracy. It is said that art producers still tend to be well-resourced and networked artists from the academy, and still primarily anchored in the affluent City Bowl.

Rike Sitas, researcher at the ACC, says: "Representations of Cape Town tend to fluctuate between tourist-friendly renditions of the City Bowl and Table Mountain on the one hand, and gang-ridden and destitute images of the Cape Flats on the other.

"Neither extreme provides an adequate account of the more nuanced realities of Cape Town. This initiative aims to address this by supporting artists exploring the power of place outside of the City Bowl."

One example of art generated by the power of place is Dollar Brand's (now Abdullah Ibrahim) 1974 song "Manenberg – Is Where It's Happening", in reaction to forced removals. It became an unofficial anthem for the anti-apartheid struggle, demonstrating how artistic response may reveal the power of place in times of crisis.

The African Centre for Cities is looking for art projects that:

- have been developed by township-based artists (original work, or developments of an existing project),
- offer new understandings or perspectives of urban realities of Cape Town's township through creative means, or
- have a public dimension, in other words engage public spaces, include people, concern public interest or face the public in a meaningful way.

Applicants should be individuals or groups from or working in Cape Town's townships (collaborations between artists and organisations are recommended) who work in any temporary or permanent public art medium or combination of media, for

example, visual arts, performance, graffiti, music, poetry or theatre.

The deadline for proposals is 16h00 on 10 July 2015. For more information on project specifications and application forms, contact powerofplace@uct.ac.za or 021 650 2042, or go to www.africancentreforcities.net or <https://www.facebook.com/publicartandthepowerofplace>.

EDITORS' NOTES:

About the African Centre for Cities (ACC)

The **ACC** is an interdisciplinary research and teaching programme at UCT. It seeks to facilitate critical urban research and policy discourses for the promotion of vibrant, democratic and sustainable urban development in the global South from an African perspective. The ACC's objectives are to identify systemic responses and to provide a base from which critique and alternatives in relation to urban issues can be launched.

About the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund (NLDTF)

The NLDTF relies on funds from the proceeds of the National Lottery. The Lotteries Act and regulations guide the way in which NLDTF funding may be allocated. The NLDTF wants the grants to make a difference to the lives of all South Africans, especially those more vulnerable, and to improve the sustainability of the beneficiary organisations. Available funds are distributed to registered and qualifying non-profit organisations in the fields of charities; arts, culture and national heritage; and sport and recreation. By placing its emphasis on areas of greatest need and potential, the NLDTF contributes to South Africa's development.

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