

DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL ART

13 June 2022

TO: Prof Laurent
Executive Dean: FADA

Dear Stephane,

PROPOSAL TO AWARD AN HONORARY DOCTORATE IN ART AND DESIGN TO MS
NORIA MABASA

In 1985, the ground-breaking BMW Tributaries exhibition opened in Johannesburg, South Africa and then went on to tour (the then) West Germany. In many ways, this exhibition was the first to pull away a veil that, up until that time, had hidden the creative work of a multitude of artists working outside of the hegemonic white-controlled South African art world. Ivor Powell proclaimed that suddenly, South Africans realised "that there is an indigenous independent and vital art in South Africa and that it has been flourishing for years, unheeded by and regardless of the machinations of the art world in general" (Powell, "Bad faith makes bad art", *The Weekly Mail*, 10 January 1986). Powell also stated that the exhibition challenged and questioned established hierarchies and for the first time in many years attracted significant numbers of visitors to an art exhibition, noting that the exhibition curator, Ricky Burnett "really did break all the rules. What he did ... was to look at South African art in its entirety" (*ibid.*). At the center of this exhibition was a set of extraordinary sculptures by the virtually unknown Venda-based artist Noria Mabasa. In an article on Mabasa's work from the exhibition Kathy Berman wrote that it "stems from and concerns her environment. Be it the land of the mind or that of the external material world, all the elements of Mabasa's Venda landscape are reflected there. Generally the clay figures arise out of her surrounding material world, while the woodcarvings are drawn from the vistas of her mind (K. Berman, "Noria among the gods of her household", *The Weekly Mail*, 26 June - 2 July 1987).

Noria Mabasa is now considered a South African living treasure who has been practicing and perfecting her artistic practice as a sculptor since 1974. She is a custodian of indigenous knowledge and is a respected teacher who willingly shares her knowledge and skills. Known for her pottery and wood sculptures, she is a recipient of the 2002 Silver category of the Order of the Baobab, also receiving several other national and international accolades and awards for her outstanding artistry and creativity.

Motivated by a series of dreams in which her ancestors spoke to her, she turned to wood as her chosen medium. As the first Venda woman to work in wood, she broke cultural and gender stereotypes as the material had always been the preserve of male sculptors. Mam Noria's carvings depict Venda mythology and spirituality, as well as portray traditional ceremonies and the daily lives of those in her community: women, children and babies. She explores the hardships women suffered under apartheid: violence, loss and displacement, while dealing with themes of race and gender. Her artworks depict the harsh realities of life in rural areas and strives towards social transformation.

Mabasa currently resides at the Tshino village in the Vuwani area of Venda, where she runs an art school in which she instructs her students in the art of clay-pot and sculpture making. Numerous articles have been written about her and are in circulation both locally and internationally including a book published and released by the Department of Arts and Culture in 2019.

Her artworks have been exhibited extensively both locally and internationally and grace numerous important private, corporate and public collections.

The Department of Visual Art recognises the role that Noria Mabasa has played in decolonizing the South African art world and exposing South Africans to the richness of diverse cultural practices which had remained hidden for many years. We applaud the manner in which she has courageously encouraged many women to explore artistic labour outside of the conventional domains of 'male art' and shared her indigenous knowledge with, not only those in her community, but the wider world.

She works with equal facility in all media moving from clay pots, to wooden sculpture and back to clay figures during the course of one day. Her myriad forms provide a dense and complex picture of her as both artist and woman. Her preference, however, is for woodcarving because, remarkably, she sees it as less labor-intensive and less arduous, as wood simply requires carving and polishing, no baking, no drying and/or painting.

The Department believes that it is timeous and most important that Noria Mabasa be recognised for her valuable contribution to contemporary art over the last fifty years. Amongst the more exceptional aspects of her sustained career as an artist, is Mabasa's committed activism for women's' and human rights. She continues to educate the next generation of sculptors. Mabasa has always been an innovator and disruptor of the western canon of fine art and has won global acclaim for the quality of her works and the significance of her practice. Many black South African artists, especially women, were side-lined during the Apartheid period and have failed to be fully recognised for their invaluable contributions. In acknowledging this, the Department argues that it is necessary for Mabasa to be recognised by our academic institution whilst she is still with us to witness it.

With particular relevance to her linkage with the University of Johannesburg, Mabasa recently completed a residency at the Nirox Sculpture Park, north of Johannesburg. This residency included an extensive exhibition of her latest work as well as the conducting of a workshop, attended by Honours and Master's student from the Department of Visual Art, UJ, who gained much from working with this living legend.

The Department of Visual Art, University of Johannesburg, holds Noria Nabasa in extremely high esteem as an elder artist who brings another dimension to the work of the academy, opening the eyes of her pupils, including out senior students, to indigenous knowledge systems and ways of conceptualisation that are often unavailable within the conventions of academic study and the studio arts.

The University makes such awards to distinguished individuals whose accomplishments are worthy of academic celebration, who make an exceptional contribution that is

innovative, beyond the norm, characteristic of a leader in the field, and is self-directed. The Department of Visual Art is convinced that Noria Mabasa has, over a period of 50 years, made an exceptional intellectual and creative contribution to the South African art world over this time, and, through her visionary work, she has caused a paradigm-shift in a discipline relevant to the University.

It is in recognition of a life devoted to visual arts practice, its teaching, and the uncovering of local forms of envisioning the purpose in such practice, that we request the University to award Noria Mabasa a PhD in Art and Design, honoris causa.

Sincerely



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Stephane LAURENT
Ex. Dean
20/6/22



T H E
MELROSE
GALLERY

Noria Mabasa

Lives and works in Limpopo, South Africa

Education

During the 70s, although she had no formal training, she began making clay sculptures and figures which represented traditional themes and visions from her dreams. In 1985 she joined the "Ditike - The Craft House of Venda"¹¹

Awards

The Order of the Baobab in Silver

Exhibitions

- 2020 Oliewenhuis Art Museum Permanent Collection Exhibition, Bloemfontein, South Africa
- 2019 SculptX, The Melrose Gallery, Johannesburg
- 2018 Notes on Spectrality, Sorcery and the Spirit, Norval Museum, Cape Town, South Africa
- 2017 The Horse: Multiple View of a Singular Beast, Everard Read/CIRCA, Johannesburg, South Africa
- 2004 University of Stellenbosch Museum Exhibition
- 1994 Johannesburg Biennale
- 1994 Union Buildings, Pretoria
- 1994 South African Association of Arts, Pretoria
- 1994 Images of Wood - Johannesburg Art Gallery
- 1994 Sanderling Gallery, Johannesburg
- 1993 Everard Read Gallery, Johannesburg
- 1993 Stedelijke Museum, Amsterdam, Holland
- 1990 Africa Now - Sanderling Gallery, Johannesburg
- 1990 Art from South Africa - Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, UK
- 1988 South African Association of Arts, Pretoria
- 1988 University of South Africa, Pretoria
- 1987 Vita Art Now - Johannesburg Art Gallery
- 1987 National Gallery, Cape Town
- 1987 Grahamstown Arts Festival, Grahamstown
- 1987 Cape Town Triennial



THE
MELROSE
GALLERY

- 1986 Solo Exhibition - Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg
- 1986 University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

- 1985 BMW Tributaries - West Germany and South Africa
- 1985 African Museum in Progress, Johannesburg

- 1984 Venda Sun Hotel, Thoyouandou

Collections

- Johannesburg Art Gallery
- Oliewenhuis Art Museum
- Department of Arts and Culture
- Guildford College
- Leshiba Wilderness, Limpopo
- Museum of Modern Art
- Oxford, UK
- SABC
- Johannesburg; Sandton Convention Centre
- Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape
- Tatham Art Gallery, Pietermaritzburg
- University of Fort Hare;
- Humphrey Art Gallery, Kimberley
- Standard Bank Gallery
- University of Fort Hare, Ciskei
- Pretoria Art Museum
- SASOL Collection
- University of Western Cape
- University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
- Sandton Convention Centre
- Various private collections in Netherlands, Belgium, USA

NORIA MABASA: SHAPING DREAMS

Noria Mabasa has been making art for almost half a century, yet public knowledge of her work is still very limited, framed by a handful of people who sought to revise the exclusionary nature of South Africa's institutions in the mid-to-late 1980s and integrate her work into the commercial sphere.

In 1985, when her art was included in the exhibition *Tributaries*, it was categorised as 'rural transitional' (Mdluli 2015, 60), a framework that has had a lasting impact on the reception of her work. Unable to grasp the full complexity of her practice, yet eager to find a home for it within the canon of South African art, the term 'transitional' applied to works that did not fit easily into pre-existing categories such as 'traditional' or 'modern' (2015, 60), but were thought to occupy a liminal zone between the two. Similarly, the term 'rural' - which is often associated with tradition (and therefore, the past) - presented a romanticised view of her work, untainted by the world at large or the passage of time.

Framed through a Eurocentric lens, such categories have led to a variety of misconceptions that emphasise the artist's ethnicity and the mythological associations of her practice at the expense of her everyday lived experience. Offering an alternative reading to the mythological place of crocodiles in Mabasa's work, for example, Sandra Klopper retells the story of how the artist's own granddaughter narrowly escaped the clutches of a large crocodile, and how she was witness to a man being pulled under by another, surfacing moments later while 'trapped in the reptile's jaws.' We see such imagery employed in a number of her other works too, where the image of an impala pinned down by a lion is employed as a metaphor for human greed and the predatory nature of people. Rather than the single perspective proffered by the mythological, such stories open up a complex world of different interpretations that help to ground readings of the artist's practice in the everyday.

As such, this exhibition asks what assumptions we bring to the work of Noria Mabasa, and how much of what we think we know is informed by things that have little to do with the artist and her work? To this end, the title of this exhibition, *Shaping Dreams*, is intentionally multifocal. While it acknowledges the artist's dreams as a source of inspiration, it also emphasises the artist's hand and experience in the making of her work, her role as a mentor, and her determination to carve out a place for herself in an otherwise hostile world. At the same time, it asks that we question our own myth-making processes, taking the opportunity to talk directly with the artist while here in residence in order to enable a deeper and varied conversation with her work.

**CELEBRATING MAMA
NORIA MABASA
DURING AFRICA
MONTH: OUR
NATIONAL TREASURE**



**N'IROX
FOUNDATIO**

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VILLA WILL TRUST



CELEBRATING MAMA NORIA MABASA DURING AFRICA MONTH: OUR NATIONAL TREASURE

!KAURA Contemporary Art from Africa , in collaboration with NIROX Foundation, the Villa-Legodi Centre for Sculpture and Vhutsila Arts and Craft Centre are thrilled to announce the launch of *Noria Mabasa: Shaping Dreams* (2022) this Africa Month. With her birthday on 1 May, Africa Month presents the perfect opportunity to celebrate her life, work, and contribution to South Africa's rich artistic and cultural heritage.

Comprised of an artist residency, an evolving exhibition of old and new work (held across two exhibition spaces), a series of workshops, talks, and educational initiatives, as well as a publication and documentary, *Noria Mabasa: Shaping Dreams* is the most comprehensive celebration of Mama Noria Mabasa's life and work to date.

The proposed title is two -fold. On the one hand, it makes reference to the artist's source of inspiration-dreams-and their physical manifestation in clay and wood, emphasising

the nuance of her practice and her unique blend of the 'current' and 'custom ary'; 'spiritu al' and 'political'; 'traditional' and 'contempo rary'.¹ On the other hand, it alludes to Mama Noria Mabasa's contribution to the preservation of South Africa's cultural heritage and her con tribution to future generations , made manifest through the various workshops held throughout.

Located within the Cradle of Human Kind World Heritage Site, the NIROX Foundation and the Villa-Legodi Centre for Sculpture are perfectly situated to host this milestone initiative, ensuring the artist's continued legacy as a sculptor and cultural figure for generations to come, both within South Africa and further afield.

1. See Department of Arts and Culture. 2019. "Chapter 3: Themes and Subject Matter: The Artist as Social Comment or "In Noria Mabasa: Sculptor of Dreams, Department of Arts and Culture, Johannesburg, p. 28.

About Noria Mabasa

Mama Noria Mabasa is a world-renowned South African artist who has been creating and perfecting her art as a sculptor since 1974. Her sculptures are precise objects, constructed by employing a visual language that foregrounds colour and texture to an exacting degree - ultimately pointing to the way we encounter nature by seeking spiritual guidance from them.

The Shona-Venda pottery style was developed around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; certain styles have clearly defined identities that have been appreciated by multiple generations. Sparked by a dream from her ancestors, Noria Mabasa's artistic journey is influenced by the canon of Vhutsila - meaning art is inclusive of all art forms including traditional drum making, pottery, murals and sculpture. Her work largely centres on indigenous traditions of material cultural production, in particular pottery and woodwork. Her rustic vessels are hand built by grounding, coiling, then wood and smoke firing clay in a pit, imbuing the vessels with a natural ash patina, which can then function for daily use.

This process supports a need to acknowledge the inclusive nature of African art, which has no concept of the decisive notion of separating art and craft as perceived in Western tradition. Her pots are functional, exhibiting purity of form and embellished with simple reliefs. Her work is decorated with geometric traditional patterns that feature animal motifs and mythological figurines in fantasy narratives.

She lives and works in her rural home, where she remains a traditional potter and runs an art school teaching young children the art of Venda traditional pottery and sculpting. To borrow from an essay entitled "A Room of One's Own" by Virginia Woolf, her central point on the essay is that every woman artist always works alone in isolation, and she needs a room of her own - to provide her with space and time to engage in an uninterrupted creative process. That art should have a kind of "incandescence" in which everything that is purely personal burns away. Her work has been exhibited locally and internationally and is displayed in museums, private and corporate collections.

Residency (Part II): 18 June - 14 July

During the second half of her residency, Mama Noria Mabasa will exhibit the new works produced during Part I of her residency - whether complete or in process - as the inaugural exhibition at the newly built Villa-Legodi Centre for Sculpture.

At the same time, she will co-facilitate workshops in collaboration with well-known South African artist Collen Maswanganyi - who was also born in Limpopo, and will be exhibiting his own artworks as part of NIROX's Winter Sculpture Exhibition 2022 - at the Villa-Legodi Centre for Sculpture, drawing from the newly produced exhibition as a source of inspiration.

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For this leg of the residency, the pair will run a specialised, twenty-one day woodcarving workshop for three invited participants which focuses on the sharing of knowledge and skills across generations, whilst providing an opportunity for young artists to gain exposure for their work, providing a critical platform that values experimentation and the exploration of new ideas, recognising the role of artists and creative processes in achieving social cohesion.

About Collen Maswanganyi

As an artist, Maswanganyi's career spans over twenty years, having been introduced to sculpture through his father, Johannes Maswanganyi (an internationally acclaimed artist), as well as his grandfather, Piet M a femani, who carved functional artefacts.

In 2001, Maswanganyi was awarded a top ten prize at the ABSA L'atelier, developing a long-lasting relationship with the institution which resulted in his first solo exhibition, *Footsteps* (2013). In 2016, ABSA made a film about Maswanganyi's art titled *The Mbatlo Story*, which was aired on several media platforms. It is a story about his broad family legacy. In 2014 and 2015, he participated in the NIROX



Winter Sculpture Exhibition, in which he repurposed a destroyed oak tree to make *wild and loud* (2014), and a series of small sculptures from a willow.

Towards the end of 2021, Benji Liebmann approached Collen to say that another big oak had fallen in a storm. While thinking of what to do with the fallen logs, Collen remembered a number of artists who had approached him over the years.

Online exhibition

Even though the residency and physical exhibition of Mama Noria Mabasa's work is critical to give audiences a deeper appreciation and understanding of the haptic nature of her work, we recognise the need to make her work accessible to a wider public who are unable to attend in person.

As such, both exhibitions will have an online presence, with the purpose of also promoting the sale of work to corporate collectors, museums, universities, and private art collections. The sale of work is intended to enable the artist's practice and ensure the continued legacy of her work and teachings.

Works produced over the course of the residency will be incorporated into the online exhibition, and supplemented with explanatory texts about the making of the works and their significance to the artist.



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Documentary

Dependent on the extent of funds available, we would like to shoot a documentary over the course of Mama Noria Mabasa's residency, which will become a cornerstone for educating people across South Africa and the rest of the world about the importance of her work and legacy.

Given that Mama Noria Mabasa speaks Tshivenda, the documentary will be sub-titled where needed, and would include footage captured during our initial site visit to the artist's home / studio, providing some context to where the artist lives and works, as well as the community with whom she works.

It would also include footage from her residency: footage of the artist at work, the exhibition of old and new work, inspired by her time at NIROX, and the various talks programmes, walkabouts, tours, and workshops conducted throughout, and interviews with specialists in the field.

Norria Mabasa
Tshivenda
2023



Publication

In thinking about the publication that will be produced over the course of the artist's residency, what has become apparent is the importance of indigenous knowledge systems; the need for an alternate approach to writing or thinking about Mama Noria Mabasa's work that keeps in mind the longstanding traditions that inform it and that it continues to inform. To this end, the proposed publication would adopt the form of storytelling as its basis, recreating the many personal encounters had with the artist and her work while in residence, but also interwoven with a series of fictional stories - either by a single author (such as Gcina Mhlope) or different short story writers - that play up the mythological aspects of Mama Noria Mabasa's work.

What is important here is that each story might open up a new avenue through which to understand the variety of effects her work has on different people, and to acknowledge that not everybody has the same response. As a result, we have in mind a collection of thirty stories, told initially in oral form, and latter transcribed and

Noria Mabasa, *Flower pot*, 2020.

edited. While it may be possible for individuals encountering her work for the first time to be moved by it, our approach would be to have conversations, with those who have worked with Mama Noria Mabasa for some time, as well as those from her family and community, interspersed with transcripts from the various discussions held during the residency and think pieces by leaders in the field, thus painting a rich (yet varied) perspective of the artist and her life's work.

Potential contributors for the various fictional stories produced include: Gcina Mhlope, Njabulo Ndebele, and Philippa Kabali-Kagwa, amongst others.

Marketing and Publicity



LEFT: Noria Mabaso, Traditional beer calabash, 2020; **RIGHT** Noria Mabaso, *Flower pot*, 2020.

The main purpose of our PR and marketing campaign will be to create awareness and recognition around Mama Noria Mabasa's work, and to attract positive feedback.

The tone of our content-driven marketing campaign will be bold. Paired with strong visuals, informative content, and a focused message of empowerment, it will target young and established artists, media, audiences from the surrounding communities (including Johannesburg and Pretoria), tourists, art enthusiasts; educational initiatives; and the general public.

The campaign will make use of a variety of platforms, from social media (Facebook, Instagram) and our extensive mailing list (Mail chimp), to newspapers (*Mail and*

Guardian, Sunday Times, Daily Maverick), radio, online arts platforms (*ART AFRICA, Artthrob, ArtTimes*), a podcast (produced by NIROX), and through our partner institutions' own platforms (NIROX, the University of Johannesburg, the University of Pretoria, !Kaura Contemporary Art from Africa).

The campaign will begin as soon as possible, first through the various social media outlets, partner institutions, and mailing lists, then through the various newspapers and online platforms, and finally through the marketing of the publication.

** In addition to the various talks programmes, tours, and publications produced over the course of this residency, all marketing material will acknowledge the sponsors and institutions who support this initiative.*

Timeline:

Wed, 23 March

Site visit to meet Mama Noria Mabasa in person; to see what artworks are available for exhibition / which need to be refurbished; to show Mama Noria the kinds of wood available on site; and to learn more about her process (e.g. firing in a pit) and what we need to do on our side to accommodate this, and to tentatively shoot footage that could be included in the documentary.

Fri, 1 April

Final selection of artworks for Covered Space exhibition.

Wed, 13 April

Refurbishing of artworks.

Tues, 3 May

Insurance of artworks.

Mon, 16 May

Transportation of artworks; NIROX and !Kauru team to send out various press releases and begin social media campaign.

Mon, 23 May

Mama Noria travels to Nirox to begin her residency. The first four days (23 - 27 May) will be a time for Mama Noria to familiarise herself with the space and settle in.

Wed, 25 May

The NIROX team installs work for the Covered Space exhibition (to be completed on 27 May).

Sat, 28 May

Official launch of Covered Space exhibition and online exhibition, accompanied by an artist walkabout and exclusive (50 guests), celebratory lunch with key stakeholders (Department of Arts and Culture), media, and collectors.

30 May - 3 June

Mama Noria Mabasa begins making work at the NI ROX Residency Workshop.

Sat, 4 June

2 - 4PM: Talks programme, where the general public are invited.

5 - 7 June

Mama Noria Mabasa continues making work at the NIROX Residency Workshop.

Wed, 8 June

School workshop with Columbo, in which Mama

Noria demonstrates how she makes her work. The workshop will also be supported by a tour with NIROX's curators.

9- 14 June

Mama Noria Mabasa continues to make work at the NIROX Residency Workshop. Her work at the NIROX Residency Workshop will conclude on 14 June.

Wed, 15 June

Transportation to, and installation of, new works at the Villa I Legodi Centre for Sculpture (to be completed on Friday, 17 June).

The exhibition in the Covered

Space remains open.

Sat, 18 June

Official launch of Villa I Legodi Centre for Sculpture, through the inaugural exhibition of Mama Noria Mabasa's new work; with a guided tour between the Covered Space exhibition and the Centre, conducted by the NIROX team.

19 - 21 June

Opportunity for Mama Noriato relax, prior to the start of the woodcarving workshop.

Wed, 22 June

Beginning of workshop with Collen Maswanganyi and

participants. The workshop will run for 21 days. Mama Noria's involvement in this workshop will be for the first 7 days, from 22 - 29 June, in which she will transfer skills and knowledge to participants, in the production of a large-scale work.

Thurs, 30 June

Mama Noria travels home.

1 - 8 July

Collen Maswanganyi continues to run workshop. During this time, participants worked to produce their own works, applying the skills taught to them by Mama Noria Mabasa and Maswanganyi.

9 - 12 July

During this time, Maswanganyi and the Centre's curator, Sven Christian, will work with participants and learn about how to exhibit, write about, and

market their work. These sessions will be practical and will involve

the actual installation of their work in the exhibition; a way of highlighting their own work and the skills transferred through their learning with Mama Noria Mabasa, with whom they will have an opportunity to exhibit alongside.

13 July

Workshop ends. New works produced over the course of the workshop are incorporated into the exhibition at the Villa-Legodi Centre, remaining on show until the end of the month.

Wed, 27 July

Works transported back to Mama Noria.



School workshop with the legendary Esther Mahlangu in 2018.

The NIROX team will record and document various moments throughout the course of Mama Noria Mabasa's residency, including making audio and film recordings of the talks programmes and workshops, as well as other moments documented during the residency that will become important archival documents in the future, aimed to preserve the rich heritage of Mama Noria's legacy.

The recordings will be transcribed, and can be

incorporated into the publication, along with the other texts described on page 7



!Kauru Contemporary Art from Africa

The !Kauru African Contemporary Art aims to facilitate conversations that change perceptions of the African continent through contemporary art. It provides a platform for African contemporary artists and cultural practitioners to engage with a showcase of contemporary art from the continent. !Kauru is focused on dialogue around social and economic cohesion, transformation and access within the creative sectors in South Africa but also across the continent to strengthen engagement and build sustained relationships with creatives in countries around the African continent. The project began in 2012 and over the past 10 years. !Kauru has exhibited over 200 artists from over 25 African countries.

What we do:

- Showcase the finest of African contemporary art.
- Sensitise and mobilise South African/African audiences and media to appreciate African visual art.
- Promote inter Africa/Diaspora cultural exchange in a direct and meaningful way.
- Create a network and visibility for artists, artist promoters and academic cultural institutions.
- Skills transfer, empower young and up coming local artists through our skills development workshops and community outreach programmes.
- !KAURU not only recognises the visual arts as a means to celebrate heritage, but it strives to position the visual arts as an important contributor to the economy of the region and stimulate ongoing investment in this field.

The Villa-Legodi Centre for Sculpture

The Villa-Legodi Centre for Sculpture is the manifestation of a fellowship between the Claire and Edoardo Villa Will Trust and The NIROX Foundation Trust. It is a generative project space for artists, curators, writers, and cultural practitioners to gather, create, and share. Our objective is to foster the arts, especially sculpture, and to pay tribute to the life and work of Edoardo Villa and his co-conspirator, Lucas Legodi.

Villa's lifelong humanist concerns, vitality, and experimental approach to art-making are reenacted in the Centre's multifaceted programme of workshops, residencies, talks, publications, exhibitions, and educational initiatives.

The Centre's programme is intentionally organic, echoing Karel Nel and Amalie von Maltitz' observation that Villa did not view his sculptures as 'end products, but rather as phases in a continuous process.' Our approach is rooted

in the understanding that art is not produced in a vacuum and that inspiration takes many shapes and forms. We do not view ourselves as a stand alone space, but one that exists as part of a community, supporting the work of artists at every level whilst enriching critical debate about sculptural practice and providing an intimate platform for public engagement.

We support and nurture the work of artists, young and old, regardless of whether their work fulfils a commercial objective; for example, work that is ephemeral or process-orientated, working diversely with sound, scent, touch, or in the virtual sphere. The Centre also supports the work of established artists-particularly those wanting to experiment and exhibit work that may be too risky or ambitious in another environment.