A Cultural Bridge to Hyderabad, India

Land: "Diversity and Unity"
An exhibition of selected works on paper by South African artists in the Chowmohalla Palace, Hyderabad, from 23 July to 7 August 2010
Curated by the Association of Arts Pretoria and Gwen Miller

The year 2010 is a significant year for the South African Indian community, as it marks the 150th year since the first Indians arrived on South African shores.

The Director of the Centre for Exposition of World Arts and Culture (CEWAC) in Hyderabad, India, Mr G Kishan Rao, has taken the initiative to reach out to the South African Association for the Visual Arts (SANAVA), suggesting a bilateral exchange in the field of visual arts to commemorate this event. CEWAC is situated in the Chowmohalla Palace, Hyderabad, which served as the seat of the Asaf Jahi dynasty. The palace is the private property of the Nizam of Hyderabad and offers a splendid venue and setting for this cultural exchange between CEWAC and SANAVA.

In response to CEWAC's invitation, SANAVA and its branch, the Association of Arts Pretoria, organized an exhibition of selected works on paper as well as digital art works by member artists and guest artists of SANAVA branches to be held at the Chowmohalla Palace from 23 July to 7 August 2010. In return, from 1 to 16 September 2010, the selected works of Hyderabad artists will be exhibited in the Mackie Street art gallery of the Association of Arts Pretoria.

Later, during the first half of 2011, the Association of Arts Pretoria will host a selling exhibition of the works exhibited in Hyderabad as well as all the other works that had been submitted for selection.

The theme of the South African works to be exhibited in Hyderabad is: **Land: Diversity and Unity.** These works, being a series of personal interpretations by a selection of practising South African artists, will demonstrate the diversity of South Africa's terrain, including geographical, industrial and urban sites and the identities of the people who inhabit them. At the same time, since they all embrace the same land and are inspired by a shared sense of place, they will engage with a notion of unity.

Further, the works will also reflect a critical consideration of traditions in landscape art. The subject of South African landscape art is surrounded by a steadily expanding atmosphere of both receptivity and polemics. In the past, landscape art was almost exclusively narrative and romantic in approach. Land was portrayed as empty, quiet and untainted. Many contemporary artists depart from this ideology and tend towards more contextual and abstract imagery. They would re-map our mindscape by including objects that are reminiscent of the environment and cultures particular to specific regions. In this exhibition a spectrum of traditional and contemporary sensibilities find a place to present a broad understanding, including the moving image and sequential narrative of time. The visual exploration of land becomes a vehicle for a deliberate play with psychological, political, ecological and archival realities.

‘n Kultuurbrug na Hyderabad in Indië.

“Land: Verskeidenheid en Eenheid”
‘n Uitstalling van uitgesoekte werke op papier deur Suid-Afrikaanse kunstenaars in die Chowmohalla Paleis, Hyderabad, van 23 Julie tot 7 Augustus 2010.
Saamgestel deur die Kunsvereniging van Pretoria en Gwen Miller

Vanjaar is ‘n besondere jaar vir die Suid-Afrikaanse Indiërgemeenskap want in hierdie jaar vind die herdenking plaas van die aankoms van die eerste Indiër immigrante, 150 jaar gelede.

Die Direkteur van die Sentrum vir die Uitstalling van Wêreldkuns en Kultuur in Hyderabad, mnr G Kishan Rao het die inisiatief geneem om uit te reik na die Suid-Afrikaanse Vereniging van Visuele Kunste (SANAVA) en voorgestel dat ‘n bilaterale uitruil van visuele kunste gereël word om hierdie jaar se herdenking te vier. CEWAC is gesetel in die Chowmohalla Paleis, Hyderabad, die tradisionele woonplek van die Asaf Jahi dinastie. Die paleis is die private eiendom van die Nizam van Hyderabad en bied ‘n unieke plek en omgewing vir hierdie kulturele uitruil tussen CEWAC en SANAVA.

In antwoord op CEWAC se uitnodiging, het SANAVA in samewerking met sy Pretoriase tak, die Kunsvereniging Pretoria, ‘n uitstalling van kunswerke op papier en digitale werke onderneem. So ‘n uitstalling van gekeurde werke deur lede-kunstenaars van die Pretoriase Vereniging sowel as ander kunstenaars van die verskillende SANAVA-takke, gaan nou plaasvind in die Chowmohalla Paleis van 23 Julie tot 7 Augustus 2010. In wederkeer word daar van 1 tot 16 September 2010 in die Mackiestraat-kunsgalery van die Kunsvereniging Pretoria, ‘n uitstalling van gekeurde werke van Hyderabad-kunstenaars gehou.

Later, gedurende die eerste helfte van 2011, gaan die Kunsvereniging Pretoria ‘n uitstalling reël waartydens die Suid-Afrikaanse werke vir die Hyderabad-uitstalling sowel as al die ander werke wat vir dié uitstalling voorgelê is, uitgestal en te koop aangebied sal word.

Die tema van die Suid-Afrikaanse werke wat in Hyderabad uitgestal gaan word, is **Land: Verskeidenheid en Eenheid.** Hierdie uitgesoekte werke weerspieël die persoonlike inspirasies van die verskillende kunstenaars en beeld die verskeidenheid van Suid-Afrikaanse terrein, insluitende geografiese, industrieële and stedelike liggings uit sowel van die mense wat in die verskillende landstreke woon. Omdat hulle almal as tema die Suid-Afrikaanse land ondersoek en geïnspireer word deur ‘n gedeelde gevoel vir die gees van plek, word daar in gesprek getree met ‘n idee van eenheid.

Voorts werp die uitstalling ook ‘n kritiese blik op tradisionele landskapskildering. By ons word landskapskildering deesdae ruimer en selfs polemies aangevoer. Voorheen was die benadering van dié skildering hoofsaaklik verhalend en romanties. Die land was verbeeld as stil en rustig, sonder mense en onbesoedeld. Deesdae is daar heelwat kunstenaars wat hierdie ideologie verlaat en na die kontekstuele en abstrakte beweeg. Hulle her-karteer ons geestesbeeld deur die toneel lewend en dinamies te vul met verwysings na die mense en kulture van spesifieke areas. In hierdie uitstalling is daar ‘n wye spektrum vanaf traditionele tot aktuele uitbeeldings verteenwoordig, insluitende die bewegende beeld en verhalende dimensie van tyd. Die uitbeelding van land word dan die bewuste raamwerk vir allerhande sielkundige, politieke, argivale en ekologiese boodskappe.