

Black ink. is a collective of printmakers, educators and artists based in and around the Stellenbosch area who are committed to effecting change within local communities. More specifically, the collective aims to provide a platform for creative engagement and expression, with a particular focus on printmaking, through which individuals can realise their personal and combined agency. Working on a completely voluntary basis, the collective regards the enrichment of young and creative minds as the sole profit of this endeavour.

Black ink. collective was formed out of a realisation that there is a need for young learners to have the opportunity to pursue and foster an interest in the creative arts, despite the current economic climate and shifting attitudes attached to the creative arts in basic education. The collective aims to provide a platform for learners to receive skill-based training in the visual arts in their own environment with a specific focus on learners from schools where visual arts is not offered. We recognise the urgency for creative interventions of this nature and also endeavour to use this platform to address the unequal socioeconomic demographics Stellenbosch as a town is faced with. Although various art schools are already in existence, we feel that these spaces are not necessarily inclusive and accommodating to learners from lower income groups.

We are currently hosting workshops at Visual Arts Department where we are working with a group of learners from Khayamandi High School and Cloetesville learners from various schools. These workshops have been hosted every second Saturday since mid-September 2016-2017. The collective would like to expand its reach to other schools in the Stellenbosch area.

The project culminated into an exhibition of the learners and educators work in October of 2017 with the title: *Press Release* at GUS Gallery in Stellenbosch.

Press Release: a group exhibition of printed works

3 – 27 October

GUS is proud to present artists of all ages coming together for a group exhibition celebrating local printmaking. Titled *Press Release* the exhibition will be on show at Gallery University Stellenbosch (GUS) until 27 October.

As an educative tool, printmaking has historically and in its present form produced many thought-provoking narratives in a South African cultural and visual landscape where ideas of exchange and collaboration are brought to the fore as well as questioned. This exhibition is an intergenerational celebration of such printmaking in South Africa. The body of work presented in this exhibition intends to create an environment where printmakers, educators, artists and students/learners alike are given the opportunity to express themselves through various printmaking

disciplines. With an intergenerational approach, the exhibition intends to open up a dialogue surrounding the various ways in which printmaking is used in South Africa

The show includes more than 20 Participating artists: Roderick Sauls, Vulindlela Nyoni, Emily Fitzgerald, Bonolo Kavula, Jessica Lee Staple, Terri Dennis, Joshua Mclean, Stephané Edith Conradie, Ledelle Moe, Velile Soha, Jaco van Schalkwyk, Learners from Black INK. Collective, Learners from Nyanga Arts Printmaking workshop.

The exhibition is a collaborative initiative of three local educational arts institutions:

Black Ink is a collective of printmakers, artists and educators based in and around the Stellenbosch area who are committed to effecting change within local communities. The collective aims to provide a platform for creative engagement and expression, with a particular focus on printmaking. The artworks in the exhibition are the outcome of workshops in which participants explored screen printing, stenciling and papermaking techniques.

The Nyanga Arts Development centre Printmaking workshop (nicknamed "Young Blood" by the participants) is a young collective driven by Velile Soha and Ledelle Moe. They have coordinated two pilot workshops with a group of young learners from Nyanga. The organisers hope to introduce sculpture workshops, theatre artists, and more printmaking in the near future.

GUS is a public multi-disciplinary community centre, creating a space for sharing of knowledge, ideas and inspiration in Stellenbosch. The gallery is a home for exhibitions, poetry events, live music performances, open lectures and screenings; operating as an off-campus extension of Stellenbosch University Visual Arts Department.

Curated and organised by Stephané E. Conradie



Image 1. Learners and educators participating in a papermaking workshop



Image 2. Printmaking Studio where workshops took place



Image 3. Wesley with his work at the exhibition.



Image 4. Ayabonga with the collaborative print the learners made in the workshop



Image 5. Learners and educator enjoying the exhibition



Image 6: Exhibition opening



Image 7. Learners and educators enjoy lunch after a workshop



Image 8. Beautiful print created by one of the learners



Image 9. Learners doing surface rubbings for printmaking workshop in lino cut technique



Image 10. Group photograph