



## Ifa Lethu at the London Olympics 2012

bargehouse  
oxo tower wharf

coming home



An exhibition of South African art repatriated  
by the Ifa Lethu Foundation of South Africa

**26 July – 12 August 2012**

Admission free Open daily 11am – 6pm

Bargehouse  
Oxo Tower Wharf, Bargehouse Street, South Bank, London SE1 9PH

Bargehouse is owned and managed by  
Coin Street Community Builders

[www.coinstreet.org](http://www.coinstreet.org)  
24-hour information line 020 7021 1886

Winston Churchill Masokeng Sothi, detail from *Unsettled*,  
undated, mixed media. Donation: Steve Itzkowitz.



“Coming Home”, the travelling exhibition of works repatriated by the Ifa Lethu Foundation, was sponsored for the London Olympics by the Department of Arts and Culture South Africa, and was staged at the Bargehouse, Oxo Tower Wharf, London, SE1 9PH from 27 June –to 12 August 2012.

## The Exhibition

The exhibition of 40 paintings, prints and drawings, as well as 14 Resistance Posters was curated from the Ifa Lethu permanent collection of art made during the apartheid years. The art has been repatriated by the Foundation as much of it was taken out of the country due to a lack of interest by museums and collectors. The majority of

the artworks were made by black artists who struggled to survive in difficult economic circumstances.

Exhibiting this collection during the Olympic Games was highly significant as the International Sports Boycott against South Africa has been considered as one of the main initiatives which brought about the end of apartheid. South Africa was banned from the Olympics for over 30 years and now can take its rightful place in this event. This curated exhibition provides images which lead to discussion

about life during apartheid and also emphasizes the fact that artists never lost their hope and faith and played an important role in liberation.



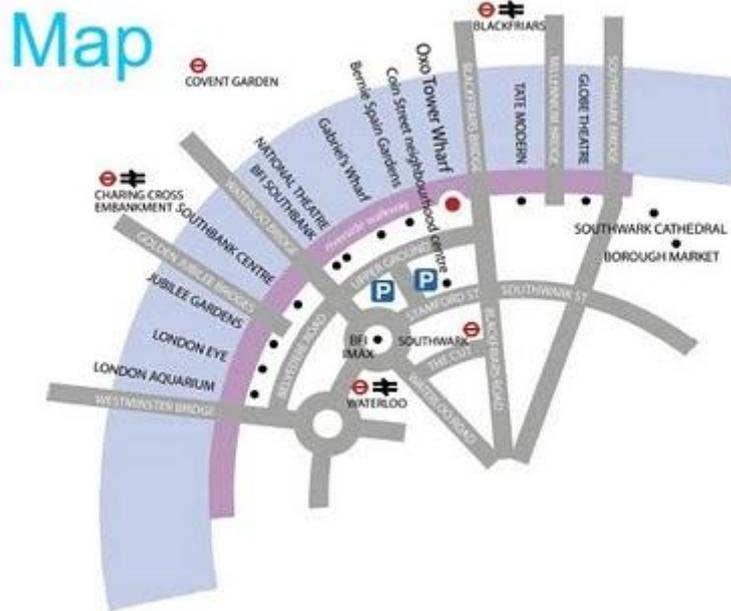
## London Venue

The venue of the Oxo Bargehouse was chosen mainly for its location on South Bank and its proximity to the Ekhaya project at Queen Elizabeth Theatre. This proximity led to a connection between the two venues with audiences being attracted to both.

The gallery is a non-profit space which is part of the Oxo complex of buildings. It is an old building and the space of 3 floors suited the exhibition well. As written by Susanne Verdonk of the London Bureau for Independent Newspapers.

“One of the exciting aspects for the exhibition is the venue. The gallery, with its brick walls peeling off paints, stained windows and makeshift staircases looks as if it had to fight battles of its own. The derelict feel of the building lends the perfect atmosphere for the Struggle art”





## Marketing

A commemorative 2012 Olympic Games catalogue was produced for the exhibition. This 94 page publication was given free to interested visitors to the exhibition and serves as a historic record of the artists and the event. Copies will also be given to South African archives.

EDUCATIONAL BROCHURE - An educational brochure was produced with information about the context of the exhibition. This gave background information about issues such as Apartheid, Mines and Works Act, Sports Boycott, Ifa Lethu, Group Areas Act and various artists.

FLIERS – Several thousand fliers promoting the exhibition were distributed at various galleries on SouthBank and also the Ekhaya venue.

POSTERS – Posters advertising the exhibition were placed along SouthBank and 4 A Frame posters were placed in the public area outside the gallery.

BANNER – 2 large information banners were placed in the exhibition venue  
*See Appendix B for posters, flyers and banners.*

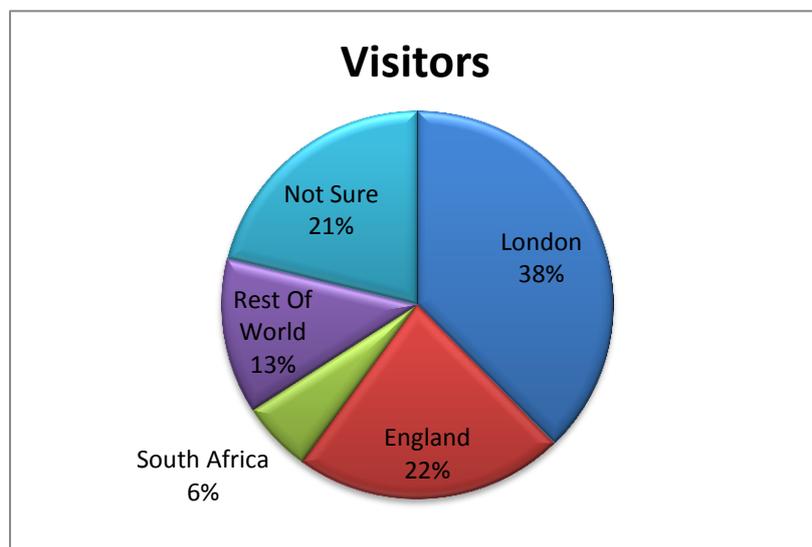
## AUDIENCE

4200 visitors attended the exhibition

*Visitors from DAC: Xoliswa Phenya, Cultural development Officer, Masali Baduza, Veliswa Baduza, Chief Operating Officer, Winnie Nkhuna Marketing Officer*



As London was buzzing with people from all corners of the globe, the exhibition got exposed to people from places such as Canada, Italy, Sweden, China, New Zealand, USA and Latvia. The information that we collected from the comments tells us that the highest number of visitors was



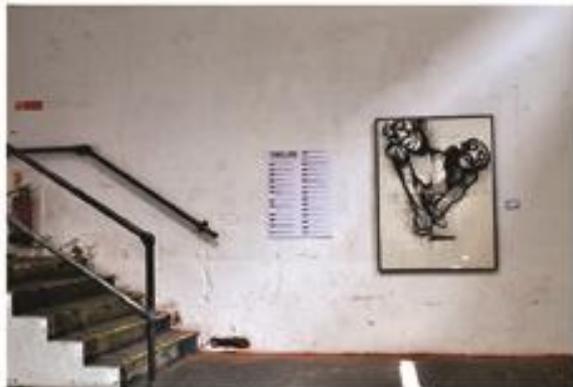
from London, followed by the rest of England.

A selection of comments

- "Feni (for the Children) has made me go home and paint today."
- "Liked Flute Player, found some images depressing but that's what Apartheid was – depression and suppression."
- "Brilliant. It was very moving. Some real emotion behind the artwork and it is a great collection of work. Loved the gallery space."
- "Really fine lot of art and looks wonderful. Needs more people to see it! The Foundation is a great idea and this is an important collection. Thank you."
- "It was interesting and educational. Good exposure to South African art which I hadn't seen before."
- "Absolutely astounding exhibition, beautifully curated and incredibly powerful."
- "Truly inspiring artists who express themselves and their struggle so powerfully. Amazing venue. Good luck! You should be in the Tate."
- "The most wonderful exhibition I have ever seen."

Appendix A







Caring home: an exhibition of South African art organized by the Ifa Letchu Foundation of South Africa is a unique exhibition that features artworks created during the apartheid years of 1948 to 1990. During this period works by black artists and artists who expressed criticism of the regime were not considered worthy of inclusion into South Africa public or private collections. But it was not only critical works which were ignored - it was also works which showed black people as intellectually or engaged themselves. The apartheid era did not acknowledge that they could have an existence or identity outside of labor. This resulted in the purchase of many works by individuals residing outside South Africa who have generously donated works back to the country allowing the formerly neglected artists to become part of the heritage of the country.

The Letchu Foundation focuses, sponsors and promotes an important part of our heritage that was created during the struggle-erased period of our country during those turbulent years. When Ifa Letchu officially launched in December 2002, their collection of apartheid heritage art works was growing rapidly. From humble beginnings with the collection of 30 artworks, followed quickly by that of another Australian former diplomat Bruce Hough, the foundation had a significant beginning to its reputation of art.

The Letchu Foundation is recognized as the largest heritage repository in South Africa. There are currently over 300 art works - paintings, drawings, sculptures, mixed mediums, and prints in the collection. This heritage material also serves as the springboard for ongoing efforts in educational communities and has resulted in numerous educational programmes across the country - from arts and crafts workshops to gallery and creative writing studios. These areas of young people are nurtured and enabled to take part in the struggle and 1970s which works have been represented and made in the 20 years collection.

The Letchu Foundation has acquired collections from countries such as Holland, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, Spain, Holland, the United Kingdom and Germany - more than 12 countries to date. On being contacted by CEO Dr. Letchu, these artists further about the unique work, generous donors located South with great pleasure to possibly spend their time to be shared with the youth and people of South Africa.



The exhibition which consists of approximately 30 works also includes an installation of historical photos from the era. The exhibition seeks to create an awareness of South Africa's black consciousness, oppression and struggle as well as showing culture and the human capacity to rise above its circumstances. The exhibition has travelled from South Africa especially for the Olympic season. This is an opportunity first as it means it is not generally been considered that the sports boycott against South Africa, to which the country's sports team from the Olympic Games was also severely affected, was one of the most effective in bringing about the abolition of apartheid. This is the main reason of why that historical position of the country never thought, a African sporting a major role in the 1990 Mandela struggle when the South African team were the victim of fame. Mandela's willingness to wear the colors of the national team made him one of apartheid.

Artwork acquired by Ifa Letchu Foundation in 2002. Artist: Mkhulu - Mkhulu's Heritage of Art.

## Treasure Hunt

Find these artworks in the exhibition and complete their unfinished labels



**Kenneth \_\_\_\_\_**  
Time, 1988  
watercolor on paper  
42 x 29.5 cm  
Donated by \_\_\_\_\_  
Mokwena



**Miles Pele \_\_\_\_\_**  
Secret of the \_\_\_\_\_  
Great Madiba  
43.5 x 24.7 cm  
Donated by Bruce Hough



**Nkomo's Way**  
Nkomo's Way  
With the \_\_\_\_\_ of an  
A.A. 1973  
\_\_\_\_\_ on paper  
Donated by Bruce and Ellen  
Lavin



**Secret of the \_\_\_\_\_**  
Great Madiba  
21 x 21.5 cm  
Donated by S. Rodenstein

## South Africa

was banned from the Olympics until 1992 when apartheid laws were repealed in the country.

In 1964 South Africa's inclusion in the Summer Olympics was withdrawn by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) which the country insisted that the team would not be racially integrated.

In 1966, the IOC was asked to readmit South Africa after assurances that its team would be multi-racial, but a widespread boycott by African nations and others prevented this. In 1970 South Africa was formally expelled from the IOC.

In 1976 (S) African countries withdrew from the Olympic games in protest that no team should be sporting links with South Africa. The IOC's refusal to ban New Zealand, whose rugby team was at that time touring South Africa, resulted in the boycott.

In 1980 the IOC adopted a declaration against "apartheid in sport", for the total isolation of apartheid sport.

In 1990 the Nelson Mandela was released from jail. It was clear South Africa was now under a democratic system. After a vote by an IOC commission the decision was on 23 July 1991 invited to participate at the Games in Barcelona in 1992.

In 1995 South Africa hosted and won the Rugby World Cup. This was a powerful boost to post-apartheid South Africa's return to the international sporting arena.

**"The sport boycott played a key role in the dismantling of Apartheid so it is fitting that this exhibition looks back on the Struggle Era in a manner that brings our visual arts or lost heritage to the fore".**  
Dr. Marissa Rambotham, CEO of Ifa Letchu



The Anti-Apartheid Movement was a 9-month, multi-racial struggle that was at the core of the 1980-1990s movement which abolished South Africa's system of apartheid and supported South Africa's democratic transition.

Imagine it is 1968 and you are part of the movement. Design a poster to persuade members of why South Africa should not participate in the Olympics.

## What is Apartheid?

Apartheid, in practice, meant that Whites were defined as full citizens of South Africa - controlling more than 80% of the country's land, all its mines, nearly all of its manufacturing and commercial industries, and all of its political power. All the people of other races were defined as second-class residents of the country:  
 • they were only permitted to live in designated areas (the Group Areas Act)  
 • were only permitted to own certain types of property and certain types of businesses  
 • and were not permitted to possess any political rights  
 • They were not permitted to marry or socialize with members of different race groups (the Immorality Acts.)  
 • Restrictions were placed on the right to travel in the country  
 • Africans were not permitted to live or work in most parts of South Africa and could be evicted at any time simply for being in the "wrong" part of the countryside or the "wrong" city (the Pass Laws)



South African artist Gertie Mkhulu "Gertie" was born on 21 May 1942 in Worcester, Western Cape. He received no formal art training and while in hospital in Johannesburg, he was given art materials. It was in this way that he began his drawing career in earnest. Gertie decided to go into voluntary work in London. He arrived there at the beginning of 1968. In London, Gertie again engaged various and irregular, showing his work among other exhibitions, at the Grosvenor Gallery and London Art Centre. He left for the United States in 1970 spending his last decade in New York. His income was mainly derived from retail covers, posters, collections and book illustrations. In 1991 he also had been before while shipping for a record in New York.



From Gertie For the Children 116.5 cm x 86.5 cm Charcoal on paper

## Activity:



Misa Quth  
Mines and Works Act, 1967  
pencil and paint on paper  
65,5 x 45 cm

## Mines and Works Act

This act legally established South Africa's employment "labour law" and was enacted to establish the duties and responsibilities of workers in Mines and Works in South Africa. Basically, only whites were permitted to hold skilled jobs in the mining industry.

### Activity

In groups, discuss what you think would have been skilled jobs that white people did in the mining industry and what would be defined as unskilled.

What do you think the benefits of the skilled jobs were?

Miners were often extremely ill, why do you think this is? Think about the conditions they worked in.

The term "occupational disease" refers to those illnesses caused by exposures at the workplace.

What other artworks in this exhibition depict the Mines and Works Act? Write down the titles and the artists name and discuss the artworks in your groups.



Misa Quth (1967)  
Mines and Works Act  
oil on canvas  
60 x 50 cm  
Donated: Steve Roberts

### ACTIVITY

Imagine you are the person in the painting.

What is the headline of the article you are reading?

How do you feel when you read this story?

This painting is titled, what do you think would make a good title?

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

Misa Quth (1940 - 2010) was born in Durban, Natal, South Africa on the 2nd January 1940. When he was 13, his family moved to Johannesburg where he was exposed to a variety of new influences that motivated his style and interest for art. In 1959, when he was 19 he studied at the King Edward Art School and in 1961 he took his first, and only, exhibition at the Durban Gallery. He was at the very core of the brightest generation on the South African art scene. Quth's work captured the life experiences of black people during apartheid - a life of history, suffering, love, conflict, violence and the fight against the apartheid regime. In 1971 he was represented, in solitary confinement, at a beauty exhibition that the artist chose after he was "selected" as a member of a group entitled "The Beauty of the Apartheid System". Quth, in Quth's, had started the time thing what he had most, painting and drawing. With his pencil, brush, and charcoal he used his imagination, objects and his hands to produce pictures on the walls of the prison. As he grew before and after his prison experience, he found his style for relief and comfort in the days, months and years to follow he found the life of a time, disappearing for days, weeks. The color was indeed a bit of death for the young artist.

In 18 June 1976, school students in Soweto embarked on a march from their different schools to a central sports field in Orlando. They were protesting in protest against new policies proposed by national Department of Education, including - more curricula - the desire to expand the number of subjects taught in Afrikaans. Other issues included a general dissatisfaction with the language quality of education given to African students, and a massive overcrowding of schools in Soweto South. Soon after the march had begun... the police opened fire on the students, killing at least one child - Hector Pieterson - immediately several others were wounded and possibly killed. In the past, when the police began shooting at a crowd, people would run away and try to hide. On this day in Soweto, though, many of the students did not flee. Instead they stood up stones and threw them back at the shooting policemen. They found white, and in bottles of petrol on fire. They fought back and - in doing so - completely changed the country's political landscape.

## The Group Areas Act

The Group Areas Act was drawn up under Apartheid legislation to assign different racial groups to different areas. This was achieved by forcibly removing non-whites from the more developed areas and placing them in areas which were often on the periphery of the bigger cities.

White owned business in the cities needed access to cheap black labour and the government was determined to strictly control the access of this labour into the cities. Pass Laws were thus brought into effect. They were essentially a "pass" or reference book which all black Africans travelling into the cities were required to carry which included their employers details, signature and government authorization to be in that particular area.



1950s Mzatha (1948)  
Mzatha Family (Mzatha's address)  
1000mm x 600mm  
oil  
55 x 40 cm  
Donated by Thabo Makhanya

In 1950, Mzatha together with 12 other South Africans, emigrated to England and Wales. The exhibition was organized by David Rabin, a South African living in exile, and working with the Mendon Arts Council, the exhibition was known as "Mzatha Images" to commemorate something of the richness and vitality of African culture and to demonstrate the actuality of life in South African townships and villages in exile through the poetic imagination of the artist. Mzatha's work was widely praised and he was awarded a stipend by the Mayor of Milton.

### UNSCRAMBLE THE LETTERS TO FIND THE CORRECT ANSWER

A **toilet** is a building that has at the edge of what major South African city?

### UNCOMMON

A **beach** which major South African city is the beaching ground?

### WRAPS

A **WMA** (in South Africa's first South president)?

### UNLEASH DANTUM

## Treasure Hunt

Find these artworks in the exhibition and complete their unfinished labels



\_\_\_\_\_ (1965)  
oil, ink and pen and ink on paper  
50 x 35 cm  
Donated by \_\_\_\_\_



Mzatha \_\_\_\_\_, 1975  
\_\_\_\_\_ on paper  
10,4 x 51,1 cm  
Donated by \_\_\_\_\_



Mzatha (1948 - 1950)  
\_\_\_\_\_ 1973  
\_\_\_\_\_ on paper  
55 x 50 cm  
Donated by Jany Louw  
Makhanya



\_\_\_\_\_ (1940)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Paper, 1973  
Chalk and \_\_\_\_\_ on paper  
Donated by Thabo Makhanya