

Arts incubator opens

Stephen Selaluke

In a joint effort the Ifa Lethu Foundation, South Africa's leading heritage repatriation and creative development organisation, officially launched the first Art and Creativity Incubator at a function on March 16 at the University of Pretoria's Mamelodi campus.

The arts incubator is sponsored by the US embassy.

The event showcased the economic benefits of the fossil training programme undertaken in collaboration with the Origins Centre. Ifa Lethu's CEO, Dr Narissa Ramdhani, says the incubator is the culmination of a three-year development programme for creative entrepreneurs.

"We started our development work three years ago in Mamelodi by choosing 12 talented young people who showed real promise in the visual arts," said Ramdhani.

"We developed these talents by using some of our heritage artists to transfer their artistic skills to these youngsters in a series of workshops," said Ramdhani.

The next phase was designed, together with the University of Pretoria, to teach the participants both entrepreneurial and business skills and how to make a sustainable living for themselves and their families from their artistic talents.

"The opening of the Art and Creativity Incubator will complete the project by giv-



Mr Edwin Smith from the University of Pretoria, Mamelodi campus, Dr Narissa Ramdhani, CEO of IFA Lethu Foundation, Dr Anna Mokgokong, Ifa Lethu board member, Me Helen Lalime, deputy chief of Mission USA embassy and Professor Sibusiso Vii-Nkomo, executive director at the University of Pretoria, officially opened the incubator facility at the University of Pretoria's Mamelodi campus.

ing the young people a place to work and to create market-ready products particularly for the tourist market."

"We have since expanded the programme to Soweto and have built on our lessons from Mamelodi," says Ramdhani. Soweto will shortly also have its own Art and Creativity Incubator.

In addition, the foundation will be working together with tourist and other organisations to put the incubator on the tourist map for the region.

"We envisage tourists visiting the incubator and engaging with the artists as they create their pieces and ultimately buy professional standard art works from these emerging artists," she added.