

DUT permanent art collection

Naledi Hlefan

Art is sometimes regarded as a practice or career with very little significance to life. Even with the progression of time and the gradual popularity this art form has gained, these sentiments still exist. Nkosinathi Gumede, curator at the DUT Art Gallery, argues that art has a huge impact on life as it retains history and heritage, the latter being core aspects of life.

“Art has tremendous power. Take the image of Jesus Christ for instance. For years people have been able to associate Christ with that image, even though they have not met him. Had it never been drawn, this would not have been the case,” Gumede said.

For the first time in three decades the DUT Art Gallery revealed that it has been collecting the artwork of internationally renowned artists. Gumede believed it would be of public interest, thus the artwork of 20 artists from this permanent collection was exhibited during February.

“I wanted to give the public a glimpse of what the strategy has been. I also wanted to show DUT's contribution to retaining the work of local artists and how the institution contributes to the art industry. By buying and collecting artwork you enrich the artist and it is a prestigious thing to belong to a collection,” Gumede said.

According to Gumede, international art industries benefit from artworks of local artists. He explained the various reasons for purchasing art. “Some buy for investment, which means you collect to make profit at a later stage. Another reason is documenting history and that is what the institution aims to do,” he said.

Local artists have sold numerous artworks internationally due to little financial support locally. The international market then thrives from this as it is expensive for the local industry to buy back art.

The exhibition was not themed, the work was simply hung to show part of the permanent collection and also to educate the public on artists who have made an immense contribution to the art industry.



Vintage artwork sketched by Dumile Feni in 1967. An illiterate artist, Feni is internationally renowned. for this piece he used pen and ink on paper.



Artist J Harding, among those exhibited at the art gallery, utilised oil on board to create this piece titled “Duck basket key”.

DUT Scientists receive the CV Raman Fellowship Award

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) is proud to announce that two scientists from the Centre for Advanced Computer Modelling and Manufacturing (ADCOMM) have been granted the prestigious CV Raman Fellowship Award, for the African Researchers' Programme, by the government of India.

Professor Richard (Ramu) Naidoo and his doctoral research candidate Chanilall Dwarika, will collaborate with leading experts in the field of renewable energy, particularly in photovoltaic solar engineering, computer science and education.

Prof Naidoo is an esteemed academic and scientist locally and internationally and has been awarded the CV Raman Senior Fellowship award. His research areas include Advanced Computer Dynamics, Information Communication Technology and Education. He has published extensively in Peer Review Journals, written and co-authored books and has delivered over 50 peer reviewed conference papers, workshops and reports. He has been involved in numerous research collaborations and community outreach projects.

Prof Naidoo is one of three successful candidates in Africa to receive the Raman Senior Fellowship. He also aims to establish links with various institutions in India and intends on collaborating with researchers, scientists and manufacturing experts. The fellowship provides a platform to collaborate with technology centres and to create academic relationships between Africa and Asia. Prof Naidoo said using the skills obtained from the fellowship students at DUT will guide business development in the field of renewable energy to create companies that will be geared to contribute to economic growth in South Africa. The fellowship will also improve research, design and manufacturing which will be beneficial in the development of a prototype manufacturing plant for photovoltaic cells.

Dwarika, an ADCOMM doctoral research candidate, received the fellowship as one of six candidates in Africa. His area of expertise is Photovoltaic Engineering. In the field of Television Engineering, he was employed at SABC from 1982 to 1996 where he gained experience with Opto Electro transducers and CCD structures with video cameras. Dwarika has extensive experience in the conversion of optical images into video signals. His field of research also embraces photovoltaic engineering and engineering and application of Opto Electro transducers such as photovoltaic solar panels.

Dwarika welcomed the research fellowship award which will give him the opportunity to study and explore his research interests. He intends using this opportunity to produce alternative and affordable solar power electricity, manufactured in South Africa using local material. He said: “It can be achieved using a photovoltaic generator as an alternative storage and will provide skills training and job creation. All this will be possible through thin film manufacturing of photo technology system.”

The fellowship will also enable the scientists to establish strategic business and research partnerships with India while developing new skills and knowledge in Solar Engineering.

Town and Regional Planning student orientation

Naledi Hlefan

The Department of Town and Regional Planning at DUT gave newly enrolled first-year and BTech students an exciting welcome during orientation on 31 January. In keeping with tradition, the new students were in for an exhausting day including a tour and exercise.

Lecturers, Alan Hansen and Robynne Hansmann, were determined to give students a different and exciting orientation as opposed to only highlighting the code of conduct, the expectations for the course and the departments of relevance around Steve Biko campus. They decided to cover the latter for an hour and dedicated the rest of the day to playing games at the sports field next to the Fred Crookes Sports Centre.

Hansmann said the reason for the tour was to familiarise students with their surrounding environment. Since some students hail from different towns and provinces, this would help them to know basic information such as the modes of transportation and shopping centres in the vicinity.

“Also important is that the students will learn about map navigation, which is important in their field. But besides that, this is another way to get the students to interact and break the ice,” she said.

So, as intended, the ice broke and conversations spurred, topics ranged from the “scorching heat” to the hospitality of the city residents. After engaging in a few games of monkey-hopping, water balloon tossing and running backwards, the anxiety had finally subsided. By the end of the day they all agreed that they had an exciting orientation and were eager to begin lectures.

Red’s Family Affair

An Exhibition by Celeste van der Merwe

Naledi Hlefan



From left: Lee Scott, Gerhard and Celeste van der Merwe

Red's Family Affair, a collection by M-Tech Fine Arts student, Celeste van der Merwe, was exhibited at the DUT Art Gallery in January. Van der Merwe worked on this collection, which was partly a submission for her MTech theory, over three years. Her theme revolved around the issue of teenagers living in or coming from dysfunctional families.

“My heart breaks for teenagers who suffer for reasons beyond their control. I am surrounded by teenagers all day and by listening to them chat, I hear their concerns and their pain,” van der Merwe said.

Being a teacher and having come across many distraught teenagers van der Merwe has come to see a trend in the problems affecting these teens. She said, “Often roles are reversed and children become the parents in the relationship. Due to high divorce rates children are often forced into an adult role while they are still teenagers.”

Comparing these ordeals to Grimm's Red Riding Hood fable she saw that the two corresponded. Red's mother sent her daughter out into the woods, risking the attack of wolves. The father in Red's story is absent, which coincides with the challenges faced by modern teens.

With this revelation van der Merwe began the artwork. The collection originated from Grimm's allegory thus every detail of her artwork, from the paper and cotton textures and the red and black colours, was influenced by this.

She used torn paper and reconstructed it artistically. This symbolised the way society tears up teenagers and her desired restoration process. Van der Merwe said by combining breakdown and reconstruction she intended to show the availability of “light at the end of the tunnel.”

She said doing her Master's course challenged her creativity. She explored drawing using a sewing machine and this taught her the importance of having fun while making art.

Weaving with the blind

Naledi Hlefane

Highly acclaimed decor and gardening magazine, *Garden and Home*, featured the work of ten second-year Interior Design Students from DUT in the 2011 January issue. This came after the success of a two-week community project organised by the Interior Design department where the entire second-year class wove furniture pieces, as part of their course mark, for the KwaZulu-Natal Society for the Blind (KNSFB) last May.

KNSFB, situated in Durban, has been operating for 90 years offering rehabilitation services to blind and partially sighted children and adults in the Province. It has developed into a dynamic, multifaceted organisation striving to improve rehabilitation, education and employment opportunities for the blind community. The Society runs a weaving business where a group of the organisation's members produce cane-woven baskets and furniture.

To improve on the designs the society members were producing over the years, KNSFB challenged the students to come up with innovative and modern furniture designs that the weavers could easily adapt to. A rare material for furniture, and one not easily compatible with other popular furniture materials, students knew utilising cane would not be an easy task.

Angela Sagar, featured in the magazine, said: "Working with cane was challenging because you'd have to soak it for about twenty minutes before using it, for the bending effect. After a while it [the cane] would bruise your fingers." Sabrina Schaller said her challenge was finding a way of creating a rigid laundry basket using cane, which she ultimately achieved by using wire.

Students drew inspiration from various sources such as robots for Sibahle Dladla, who designed a mini wine storage unit, and Weylandts furniture whose table design, Kelsey Sutton modified.

Students agreed that involvement in this project was a learning curve both on a personal and academic front. Linda Knox added that she would definitely use cane in her designs now that she has acquired the skill.



Pictured from left to right: Sabrina Schaller, Sibahle Dladla, Linda Knox, Kelsey Sutton, Sphiwesihle Memela, Angela Sagar
Photographer Naledi Hlefane

Selection of students work



Sphiwesihle Memela



Angela Sagar



Sabrina Schaller



Sibahle Dladla



Linda Knox

Joy!



Joy Kistnasamy, Lecturer: Programme – Environmental Health (EH), Department – Community Health Studies, Faculty of Health Sciences has been elected as Provincial Secretary and National Treasurer of the South African Institute of Environmental Health (SAIEH).

The SAIEH is a non-profit organisation for EH professionals throughout South Africa and is affiliated to the International Federation of EH and fully recognised by the National Department of Health. Its mission: to promote the science and practice of EH in SA.

National Drive to 'Know Your Status' comes to DUT

Naledi Hlefane

Innovative Medicines South Africa (IMSA) has partnered with Higher Education Institutions across South Africa in response to governments call to promote mass free voluntary HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT). The initiative saw the launch of *First Things First* campaign, a mass drive to educate and promote site testing and counselling.

The campaign, endorsed by Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, was strategically held on the eve of Valentine's Day, from 9-11 February, at DUT's Durban campuses and forms part of IMSA's aim to test 34 500 first-year students by March 2011. *First Things First* is geared towards empowering students to live responsibly by knowing their status. The national project will coincide with government's HCT campaign, which hopes to test 15 million citizens by June 2011.

IMSA executive director, Val Beaumont said South Africa is globally ranked with one of the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence and an estimated 5.7 million people living with the virus. Beaumont said a decision was made to reach entry level students as the incidence of HIV amongst high school leavers was low. However, school leavers are exposed to escalating risks of infection thereafter.

The campaign was well received with many students eager to support the cause. First-year Taxation student, Mbali Thusi said she was motivated by her friend to undergo HCT and vowed to test regularly. Second-year Human Resource Management student, Nomfundo Ntombela said: "Mobile test centres motivates students to test. Most people would not think of going to test either out of fear or laziness."



Students actively participating in the *First Things First* Campaign
Photographer Naledi Hlefane

International Volunteer Day



Delegates and organisers pictured at DUT's ML Sultan Campus
Picture Supplied

The United Nations (UN) annually observes International Volunteer Day for economic and social development on 5 December.

This day is known as International Volunteer Day (IVD).

Volunteers are given an opportunity to work together on projects and campaigns and their contributions help to promote the economic and social development at local, national and international levels.

Rights Based Network (RBN), a Section 21 company, promotes volunteering in its broadest sense. RBN hosts European volunteers under the Youth in Action programme. RBN has a Memorandum of Understanding with eThekweni Municipality and DUT.

A workshop for DUT students was co-ordinated by the International Office, together with International Facilitators Signe Lange, Joe Moller Short and Sebastian Saborio at DUT in December 2010.

This was an opportunity to increase the awareness about the contributions volunteerism can make to develop local economy and social cohesion among the citizens of Durban.

Alpine Food Services upgrade

Naledi Hlefane

Alpine Food Services at DUT's ML Sultan Campus has upgraded its look as a fresh start to the new year. The cafeteria was recently refurbished to cater for staff and students while providing quality food and beverages.

The month long renovations are now complete, the cafeteria is sub-divided into staff and student dining areas and a smoking zone with pool tables. Alpine Food Services Managing Director, Zoliswa Nodada said the cafeteria required a much needed refurbishment and an energised new look. She said after having worked at the premises for the last two years, she longed for a change of ambience and is very pleased with the outcome.

DUT Hotel School alumnus, Nodada has carefully planned an exciting menu for 2011 which promises an eclectic mix of flavours and a wide variety of different food. She started off as a Tabeisa client which empowered her to stand on her own and prosper in the hospitality business.

The cafeteria's operating hours are from 7am-7pm on weekdays and from 8am-5pm on Saturdays.



Newly refurbished staff cafeteria at ML Sultan campus
Photographer: Bhekani Dlamini

Architects promote recycling

Naledi Hlefane

First-year Architectural Technology students at DUT were hard at work at the beginning of this academic year on an assessment set to test their research skills, rational thinking and stimulate their creativity. Each individual was required to produce a device for capturing natural energy, such as wind, water or the sun, by utilising only six cool-drink cans, wire, a pair of robust scissors and pliers.

Magda Cloete, the First-year Co-ordinator, said the purpose of this assessment was to introduce students to sustainability, a notion that goes hand-in-hand with environmental friendliness and recycling and is currently imperative in architecture. By comprehending sustainability students simultaneously understand "workmanship and the opportunities offered by any materials."

Students worked on a variety of designs, however a majority were fascinated by the windmill - a device with panels that capture wind to create electricity. Others, like Minenhle Mazibuko and Thulasizwe Xaba opted for a different design creating wind turbines. This device is similar to a wind and water mill in that it requires a network of panels and wind as a natural energy. Through a series of transferred energy the device produces an electric current.

Justin Savage created a completely unique device called the solar cooker. The device resembles a bowl structure with a centre piece on which objects requiring heat are placed. When the sun's rays are reflected off the inner bowl material, which would be steel in normal circumstances, that energy is transferred to the centre piece. With a sufficient amount of energy the object is heated and thus can boil water or cook food.



A can model of a watermill created by Ricardo Nair
Photographer: Naledi Hlefane



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