

Prominent artists address SA's social issues at Sculpture Fair

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The turbulent history of South Africa has left its women with several challenges to overcome, many of which are linked to gender-based violence, exploitation and underrepresentation, as well as minimal economic empowerment. This became clear, this past weekend, when the likes of Zanele Muholi, Sophia van Wyk, Nandipha Mntambo and Frances Goodman exhibited artwork that addressed entrenched patriarchy in today's society, at the NIROX Foundation Sculpture Park, during the 2018 American Express Winter Sculpture Fair.



Goodman's *Siren* art piece was an image of a scantily clothed woman dangling seductively from a pole. This epitomised the exploitation of the female body for male pleasure, and yet symbolised ownership of one's own body and sexuality. While Muholi showcased *Koze Kubenini*, which highlighted the reality of black queers, lesbians and the trans community, a group that remains one of South Africa's most marginalised, Van Wyk's *A Foot In The Door* sculpture evoked a transgressive cake topper as a starting point to create unsettling and fantastical objects which reflect gender complexity.



Themed "Not a Single Story", a line inspired by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *The Dangers Of A Single Story*, the 2018 American Express Winter Sculpture Fair was as a result of the new partnership between American Express® and Artlogic and was attended by 6,000 visitors.

"American Express South Africa is synonymous with quality, lifestyle and unlocking access to the creation of amazing memories. More so, partnering with a pioneering company like Artlogic, as a result, ensures that we continuously bring our Cardmembers memorable and informative experiences like the Winter Sculpture Fair," said Chris Wood, Executive Head:

The fair appealed to locals who were interested in experiencing coming into contact with seasonally curated larger-than-life sculptures dotted across the landscape, combined with the best food and wine from the Franschhoek Valley brought to the fair in partnership with Franschhoek Tourism.



“What we witnessed here today was impressive body of artwork which sought to shift people’s perspectives and subsequently transform societies,” said Mandla Sibeko, Director of Winter Sculpture Fair. “If there is one key lesson to take away from today’s exhibitions, it is the fact that art can take the edge off the numbing effect borne by country’s history and motivate people to turn thinking into doing.”

Some of the artists who exhibited at the 2018 American Express Winter Sculpture Fair included the Berlin and Nairobi-based Mwangi Hutter, South Africa’s Mary Sibande, Sethembile Msezane as well as the Japanese multimedia artist, Yoko Ono.

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