



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION PRETORIA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australian support for South Africa's cultural heritage

The Australian Minister for Early Childhood Education, Child Care and Youth and Minister for Sport, Ms Kate Ellis MP, officially opened on Monday 14 June an exhibition of South African and international art from the apartheid era entitled *'Home and Away: A Return to the South'* at the Old Fort, Constitution Hill, Johannesburg.

The exhibition, assembled by the *Ifa Lethu Foundation*, consists of some of the many thousands of artworks taken out of South Africa during the apartheid period, but subsequently repatriated by donors from eleven countries, including Australia.

At that time, there was no market for art which expressed resistance to apartheid. Many artists either went into exile or remained in poverty. Most of the artists have received little or no recognition and one of the aims of the exhibition is to accord them the place they deserve in South Africa's national heritage.

Australians have played an integral role in supporting this repatriation effort, with veteran Australian diplomats, Bruce Haigh and Dianne Johnstone, providing the very first donations in 2004. Johnstone and Haigh will be in South Africa for the official launch. The former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser AC CH is also a member of the *Ifa Lethu Foundation* Global Advisory Council.

Ms Ellis said "It is pleasing that so many Australians have donated their South African art collections from the apartheid era and supported the important repatriation effort lead by *Ifa Lethu*. These artworks form a valuable part of South Africa's heritage and we are delighted they have been returned to their rightful home and can now be shared by the people of South Africa."

'Home & Away; a Return to the South' is scheduled to visit Australia in November 2011.

For further information about the exhibition, please contact the *Ifa Lethu Foundation* on +27 12 346 2985

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