



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG
METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY



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JOHANNESBURG ART GALLERY RESTORATION: A NEW CHAPTER FOR JOBURG'S CULTURAL LEGACY

The Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Councillor Dada Morero, is proud to announce significant progress in the ongoing restoration of the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), a cornerstone of the City's cultural heritage and one of its most treasured public institutions. The planning and redesign phase of JAG, led by the Johannesburg Development Agency, has now reached an advanced stage.

As the project moves into the construction preparation phase, restoration work cannot proceed while the art collection remains inside the building. To ensure the safety, preservation, and continued accessibility of the City's invaluable artworks during this period, three temporary relocation venues have been secured: the Johannesburg City Library, Museum Africa and the Brixton Multipurpose Facility.

These facilities will serve as interim custodians of the collection while critical upgrades are made to secure the gallery's future. A multi-stakeholder inspection team is overseeing the process to ensure that all storage locations meet the necessary preservation standards before relocation begins. This team comprises representatives from Friends of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, the Johannesburg Heritage Foundation, the South African Heritage Resources Agency, the Anglo Centenary Trust, the City's Community Development Department, the Presidential Johannesburg Working Group, and a group of specialised auditors.

The City also confirms that the Executive Mayor, as convener of the Art Gallery Committee (AGC), has convened three AGC meetings this financial year. These sessions have advanced key decisions and strengthened governance in support of the restoration programme. The AGC is now fully compliant with the deed of donation, with representation from the national sphere, the art industry and the Council.

Members of the committee entrusted with guiding the vision and stewardship of the Johannesburg Art Gallery are Councillor Sello Dada Morero, Mr Shane Maja, Mr Khwezi Gule, Ms Molemo Moiloa, Dr Nontobeko Ntombela, Mr Joseph Gaylard and Mr Pfunzo Sidogi. The City is pleased to confirm that the entire Johannesburg Art Gallery collection previously loaned to South Korea has been safely returned and securely housed.

A total of 145 artworks were loaned to the Gyeongju Arts Centre as part of an official international exhibition tour undertaken in line with the City's Loan Policy. Upon return, all works were thoroughly inspected and authenticated by the South African Heritage Resources Agency, Dr

Gerard de Kamper of the University of Pretoria Museums, and the South African Revenue Service's Customs Division.

Every artwork has been accounted for, and contrary to circulating rumours, no items were stolen. These claims are false and misleading. The City remains firmly committed to transparency, accountability, and the highest standards of cultural asset management. The restoration of JAG and the temporary relocation of its art collection mark a bold step in reimagining Johannesburg's cultural landscape.

To ensure that the spirit of JAG remains alive throughout the refurbishment, the City, in partnership with the Standard Bank Art Gallery, the French Embassy, and other stakeholders, will host public exhibitions and programming at satellite venues.

The Johannesburg City Library will also host the JAG Library to ensure ongoing access to learning and research materials. The City expresses its sincere appreciation to all partners, artists, and heritage journey. Together, Johannesburg is building a future in which art, history, heritage and innovation thrive.

ISSUED BY THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR

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