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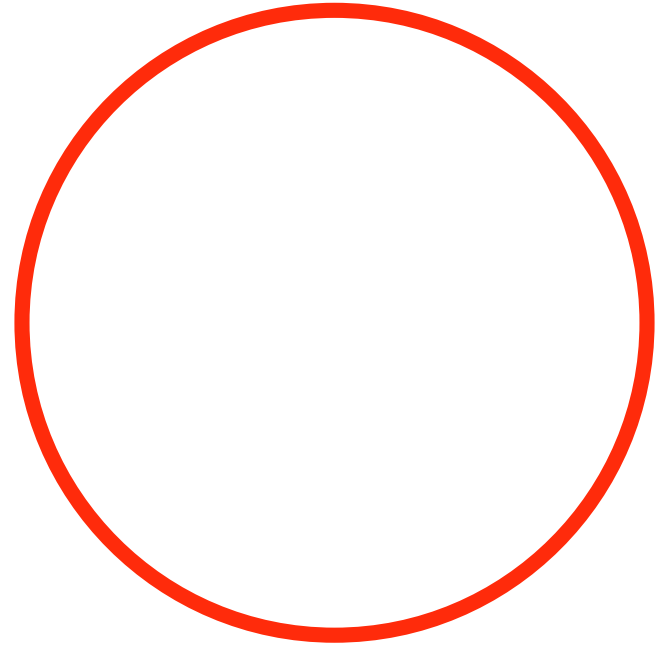
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ASSOCIATION FOR VISUAL ARTS
LAUNCHES
COLLECTORS' CIRCLE
FOR ART-LOVERS TO CONNECT
- AVA 50 COLLECTORS -

THE ASSOCIATION FOR VISUAL ARTS – arguably South Africa's oldest arts organisation with a lineage dating back to 1850 – launches the Collector's Circle in 2019 limited to just 50 members, the Circle will provide art collectors with an opportunity to connect over their shared love of art while participating in a number of exclusive art events.

The Collectors' Circle commemorates 50 years since the AVA moved into its premises on Church Street in central Cape Town. The annual R25,000 fee contributed by each member (or R50,000 for companies) will go towards the establishment of an endowment fund that will ensure the AVA's ongoing sustainability.

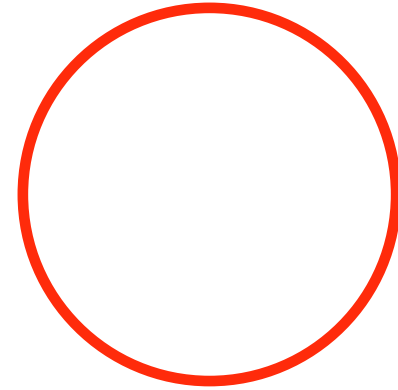
"The AVA advances and promotes South African contemporary art. It provides exhibition space for artists - with a particular focus on those who may be excluded from, or limited by, the constraints of the commercial art scene," explains Director Mirjam Asmal.

The non-profit organisation's ArtReach programme, which launched in the 1980s, funds a broad spectrum of artists' needs, including: art materials, art tuition/workshops, studio rentals, exhibition costs and many other art-related matters. AVA ArtReach has launched several emerging artists who have gone on to achieve success, notably Maurice Mbikayi, iQhiya and Mandla Vanyaza.

In 2001 the AVA formed a partnership with Spier, who, through the donation of the AVA's premises, became its major sponsor.

"The Collector's Circle, which we are proud to be associated with, is a fantastic way for lovers of South African art to support the local art scene, all the while enjoying the company of fellow collectors," says Andrew Milne, Spier's CEO.

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CONNECTING ART-LOVERS

The Collectors' Circle will host a variety of events up to four times a year. The 2019 launch will be shaped around the launch of art expert Mary Corrigan's new publication, *Primary Market Patterns & Pricing in South Africa*.

Events in the pipeline for 2020 include:

- * **Dinner with the Artist:** Featuring art-inspired food, hosted in the artist's studio or at his/her exhibition at the AVA. AVA alumnus artist 2020 - to be announced soon.
- * **Curated Collector's Pop-Up Show:** The AVA will match a curator with one of the member-collectors to curate an exhibition to be mounted at the AVA, consisting of works from the collection in question, augmented by new works by the same artists.
- * **Excursions and discussions:** These will include visits to platforms like William Kentridge's The Centre for the Less Good Idea in Johannesburg and panel discussions - such as one exploring Miami and Cape Town's emergence as global hotspots for contemporary art

Already, a number of notable collectors have committed to becoming members. These include Jonathan Bloch of Investec, Herman Steyn of the Scheryn Foundation, collectors Josie Grindrod and Lizelle Kilbourn, as well as auction house Strauss & Co. executive chairperson Frank Kilbourn.



A HOME FOR DARING ART:

WHY THE AVA MATTERS

In a time of political and economic upheaval, when support for the arts is not a policy priority and commercial considerations invariably pressure artists and gallery directors to play safe, the AVA's role is more important than ever. The Association offers a much-needed space for daring ideas and maverick conversations to flourish. Through its exhibitions and other kinds of support, it's created a rare and vibrant home for fresh, original thinking and unconstrained art-making.

Associate Professor of Painting at Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town Virginia MacKenny highlights the diversity of the AVA's programming. **"All sorts of capacities, ages, concerns and demographics presented in almost every media imaginable are shown here. It is probably the most egalitarian gallery in Cape Town which is a real reason why it needs to stay open as it provides a platform that no other gallery does. Its rental is accessible, its commission low, and its doors open to all. Its site is also beautifully placed right in the heart of Cape Town so it is seen by both locals and international visitors."**

MacKenny emphasises the role the AVA plays in supporting emerging artists. **"The AVA is the place to go if you don't yet have a gallerist, if you are not yet famous, if you wish to put on an interesting group show. It often provides a springboard for a career. Its function has not been superseded by other galleries which each tend to have quite a particular bias and often are limited by a stable of artists. It is a good place to start making a collection, too, as it is not as highly priced as other galleries whose overheads tend to rocket."**

Collector Lizelle Kilbourn, one of the inaugural members of the collectors' circle, says, **"The AVA plays a meaningful role in the South African art ecosystem. With its can-do management team and support from the art community, it has the potential to flourish and continue to benefit current and future artists."**

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Circle - AVA 50 Collectors, contact Annie on admin@ava.co.za, on +27 21 424 7436, or by completing an online form: www.ava.co.za/join

Association for Visual Arts

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Spier: A proud supporter of South African art. Spier Wine Farm's sponsorship of the AVA and its collectors' circle is part of its longstanding support of South African contemporary art. Spier's collection contains over 3,200 artworks, featuring a wide

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