
Quarterly Newsletter

ARTROUTE

October 2025
edition



ART ROUTE

Greetings, art lovers!

As the new season unfolds, we're thrilled to share some of the highlights and discoveries that have inspired us over the past few months. At the Johannesburg Art Fair, we were captivated by the first full public presentation of Santu Mofokeng's Concert at Sewefontein - a landmark moment in South African photography - and moved by the intimate, everyday scenes in others.

Back in Cape Town, exhibitions continue to surprise and delight us with fresh perspectives, while our own offerings are expanding. We're especially excited to introduce our new Art, Nature & Wine Experience in the Cape Winelands - an immersive journey combining curated art encounters, world-class wine, and the natural beauty of the region.

Stay tuned as we share what's happening in the art world, the experiences we're curating, and the stories behind the work we love.

From the ArtRoute Team.



SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHT: JOHANNESBURG ART FAIR

We attended the 18th edition of FNB Art Joburg, held in Johannesburg from 5–7 September. As the continent's leading and longest-running contemporary African art fair, FNB Art Joburg has spent 17 years championing African and diasporic artists. Widely regarded as the commercial and cultural heartbeat of contemporary African art, the fair continues to drive collector development, institutional engagement and innovation across the sector. FNB Johannesburg Art Fair got a fresh new look this year - the flow was smooth, the artworks easy to take in, and the mix of ideas truly inspiring. From intricate miniatures to bold installations, we spotted some incredible new talent to keep an eye on.

This year's edition featured seven curated sections, blending curatorial excellence with commercial opportunity:

- Gallery HUB – The fair's core, showcasing the best in contemporary African art from across the continent and beyond.
- Gallery LAB – An incubator for emerging galleries and hybrid spaces testing new ideas and models.
- MAX – Large-scale and experimental works that challenge traditional booth formats.
- GIF – Spotlight on photography within participating galleries' programmes.
- ETC – Books, prints, catalogues and zines from master printers and publishers.
- ORG – A reimagining of how audiences engage with Johannesburg's seminal art institutions.
- AUX – Talks, screenings and public programmes sponsored by ITOO ArtInsure, featuring leading voices on contemporary art.

Beyond the three-day fair, FNB Art Joburg extends its reach through ArtJoburg.com, the BMW Young Collectors Co. and Open City, reinforcing its year-round commitment to education, access and audience development.



A LANDMARK MOMENT AT FNB ART JOBURG: SANTU MOFOKENG'S CONCERT AT SEWEFONTEIN

This year's FNB Art Joburg marked a milestone in South African photography with the first full public showing of *Concert at Sewefontein* by the late Santu Mofokeng (1956–2020). Long known for a single iconic image, the series is now revealed as 17 photographs capturing a 1988 concert organised by labour tenants on a Bloemhof farm. The work offers a rare glimpse of music, movement and community during apartheid, showing moments of joy and self-expression away from daily hardship.

Mofokeng, a protégé of David Goldblatt and a member of the Afrapix collective, later joined the University of the Witwatersrand's African Studies Institute. There, he deepened his research and refined seminal projects such as *Black Photo Album/Look at Me: 1890–1950*, reshaping how South African histories are seen. We still see his legacy reflected in the works of Lindokuhle Sobekwa and Jabulani Dhlamini.

Concert at Sewefontein underscores Mofokeng's legacy as a photographer who combined empathy and critique to transform overlooked stories into powerful visual histories about community, identity and power.

“Many who live in places like the sleepy tenant labour community of Bloemhof imagine a better life elsewhere, without the endless toil and drudgery of farm life. Rarely do they get to put their talent on display. Sewefontein is the place to be for anyone who's worth his or her salt. Here people are offered the chance to sing or perform—or do both. Out of the purview of employers and minders they are free to frolic, mate or get drunk, according to their wish or inclination. It is on weekends like this that shebeens thrive.”

—Santu Mofokeng



Artist highlight: Banele Khoza

Across the art world we're seeing a quiet but powerful change: artists moving away from overt politics and deconstruction toward intimacy, vulnerability and the poetry of everyday life.

At this year's FNB Johannesburg Art Fair, Banele Khoza (Goodman Gallery) stood out with tender paintings of a toothbrush, a set of keys and the thrill of owning a car. These small domestic details, rendered with luminous brushwork, become symbols of dignity and self-acceptance.

It's a reminder that art doesn't always need to be loud to be meaningful. In these quieter gestures, we discover honesty, beauty and the grace of daily living.

Exhibition Highlight:

Kamyar Binestarigh's Group Show at Shouthern Guild Gallery, Cape Town



Kamyar Bineshtarigh's *Group Show* at Southern Guild Cape Town is Bineshtarigh's second solo exhibition with the gallery and marks a refinement of his signature surface transfer technique, which lifts paint, plaster, dirt and incidental marks from artists' studios to preserve the traces of creative labour and human connections embedded in the making of art.

Group Show is on view at Southern Guild Cape Town until 10 November 2025, offering a rare glimpse into the intimate, lived-in spaces where South African art is created.

New Season, New Experience: Introducing our Art, Nature & Wine Experience in the Cape Winelands

This season we're thrilled to launch our Art, Nature & Wine Experience in the Cape Winelands - a journey that brings together South Africa's world-class wines, its rich natural heritage, and an inspiring commitment to sustainability. South Africa is not only celebrated for its exceptional wines but also recognised globally for its leadership in sustainable wine production and nature conservation.

At Waterford Estate, wine production exists in harmony with the environment. More than half of the farm remains untouched, preserving indigenous fynbos and wildlife habitats. Through the Biodiversity and Wine Initiative, the estate protects endangered species and maintains a thriving balance between vineyards and nature.

Spier Estate champions regenerative farming, recycles over 90% of its water, and invests in local biodiversity projects, while Vergenoegd Löw famously employs a team of Indian Runner Ducks to naturally control pests without the need for chemicals.

Our new experience celebrates this remarkable harmony. Guests will explore vineyards on foot, learn about sustainable farming practices, enjoy curated art encounters, and of course, taste exquisite wines that carry the story of the land itself.

Join us in the Cape Winelands this season for an unforgettable journey that celebrates creativity, honours the earth, and nourishes the senses.





Until next time -
Here's to More Art Adventures Ahead!

The 18th edition of FNB Art Joburg has come to a close, and we're still buzzing from the energy, conversations, and extraordinary art that filled the fair. A heartfelt thank you to every artist, collector, and visitor who made this year's edition truly unforgettable.

While the doors may have closed, our commitment to growing a sustainable ecosystem for contemporary African art continues. We carry the excitement and momentum forward, looking ahead to another year of innovation, engagement, and celebration of the vibrant creativity across the continent.

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