



NEW ANGLE ON GREEN
This Living Wall is said to be the largest of its kind in Africa
PHOTO: SUPPLIED

The ongoing renovations to The Zone section of the Rosebank Mall, which I am a big fan of, have just given the centre a bit of new life with its first public green space called the **Living Wall**. The impressive 60m² vertical wall garden is also, according to the mall, the largest living wall in Africa.

The structure has been built and designed by Organic Space - a South African landscape design firm who have mastered the art and implementation of vertical and roof gardens.

"The Living Wall is a great example of our work and how an urban space was transformed. But this is just the beginning and we have lots of exciting projects in the works for 2016 and beyond," says Mario Thompson, owner of Organic Space.

Passers-by are treated to an immediate mood-enhancer created by the contrasting greenery the wall provides to the surrounding concrete urban landscape.

DESIGN OF THE WEEK

Green IN THE BIG CITY

Thirty species of plants, most of which are indigenous, contribute to the peaceful details, particularly the water feature, which is framed gracefully by a wooden architrave. When gently lit up by its evening lights, this architecturally simple design comes alive.

French botanist and artist Patrick Blanc, speaking to WSJ magazine in an interview recently, said the biggest thing about

vertical gardens was "the positive psychological effect they can have on those who look at them. Instead of there being nothing or maybe a scrawl of graffiti, a simple wall can become something poetic."

You can see the wall at The Zone @ Rosebank near the new News Cafe and the banks, towards The Firs section of the development. - **Avantika Seeth**



NEOTRIBAL Postcolonial 'hangover cultures' inform much of the work
PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Hwati wins big at CT Art Fair

GARRETH VAN NIEKERK

garreth.vanniekerk@citypress.co.za

Zimbabwean-born artist **Masimba Hwati** took home R75 000 last week at the Cape Town International Art Fair as winner of the best booth - a small ray of transformational hope for the festival that was last week criticised for the "marginalisation of black people" by art critic Stefanie Jason.

Hwati's work, according to the artist, interrogates postcolonial "hangover cultures" and formed part of the special projects section of the fair co-curated by Azu Nwagbogu (director of the LagosPhoto Festival in Nigeria) and Ruth Simbao, a professor of art history at Rhodes University.

"I am excited by the Cape Town Art Fair's goal to engage more meaningfully with artists and galleries in other African countries," says Simbao. "I hope that, through the special project, we can take small steps towards engaging across the continent in more meaningful ways."

Masks made of rugby balls, a spear made of skateboards and a leather cricket helmet topped with an animal's tail called **Neo-tribal III (pictured)**, lined the booth walls. "My process is both intuitive and research-based; I am fascinated by myths and esoteric histories. On the one hand, research like this offers an in-depth understanding of a term that is commonly thrown around as a symbol of 'far away', and, on the other hand, makes you feel like you know something most people don't - you feel 'special'," said the artist.

Smac Gallery in Cape Town, which represents Hwati, says that his winning the prize for this show will allow him to further his dream, enabling not only the emphasis and accentuation of his own, personal practice, but the creation of opportunities for others in Zimbabwe "to practise and heal through art" at a holistic institution the artist is planning. It will be based on the ideals of art therapy and education.

Other artists included in the special projects section were Gresham Tapiwa Nyaude, Mathias Chirombo, Kyle Morland, Rehema Chachage, Lady Skollie, Ruby Onyinyechi Amanze and Thania Petersen.

Hwati will be presenting a solo exhibition at Smac in September.

That melanin magic

The diversity of toys and materials is getting better and better. Last week we saw a new wave of black dolls, and this week we heard about a book that puts a black girl front and centre as the hero in a modern fairy tale.

Titled **The Girl Without a Sound**, it was written by local actress Buhle Ngaba and celebrates the beauty of black girls. She describes the text as a rebellious response to all the fairy tales "about white princesses with blue eyes, long flowing locks of hair and an eerie awareness of their beauty".

The character in Ngaba's book is different - she's "a little girl with a fluff of hair, a mouth the shape of a cherry blossom and brown pools for eyes".

What's even better is that the book is accessible for free download as a PDF.

The author regards **The Girl Without a Sound** as a "healing balm" to what she feels every time "the black female body is

BOOKS



MAKING THE RIGHT NOISES
The Girl Without a Sound
PHOTO: SUPPLIED

dismissed or violated in a white, patriarchal and racist society".

"As an act of restoring power and agency to the young black girl in South Africa, I wrote a story about a voiceless girl of colour in search of a sound of her own."

The book will be made available in hard copy at a later stage and a Setswana version called **Mosetsana A Didimetseng** will be distributed in North West.

In coming months Ngaba aims to auction A3 prints of the photos in the book to encourage a campaign to supply feminine hygiene products to young girls who miss up to 50 days of school a year while on their periods. Everything will be done under the banner of her not-for-profit organisation **KaMatla Productions**. - **Amanda Sono**

● Download the book for free at girlwithoutasound.com

Good things happen over coffee

There's a new coffee shop in town, and it's doing more than just serving croissants and sandwiches.

Situated at 2 Long Street, Cape Town, **Brownies & downieS** boasts a staff of waiters consisting mostly of individuals with Down's syndrome or other special needs.

The concept started in the Netherlands in an attempt to create employment for people with special needs who could not find jobs.

Says its website: "Brownies & downieS



SERVING FRIENDSHIP Most of the staff have intellectual disabilities
PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Cape Town is a coffee shop and lunchroom that is open to the public, tourists and businesses. First and foremost, however, it

is a training centre for people with intellectual disabilities and a vessel to create change and acceptance in the South African culture."

Many have raised concerns about the name of the restaurant, with some calling it "utterly offensive". Says owner Wendy Vermeulen: "The name was created by parents in the Netherlands who are parents of young adults with Down's syndrome.

"Before we took it over to South Africa, we talked to a lot of parents at the Down Syndrome Association Western Cape, and they are fine with the name."

We think they could have chosen a better name, but still respect them for creating these opportunities. - **Grethe Koen**

● Visit browniesdownies.co.za for more

FOOD NEWS