

'Attached to the Soil' photography exhibit presented by NWU Gallery and Vinco

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NWU students showcase photographic flair through exhibition titled *Attached to the Soil* presented by NWU Gallery, in collaboration with Vinco, the Fulbright Scholar Program and the Michigan State University.



The North-West University Gallery in collaboration with Visual Narratives and Creative Outputs (Vinco), the Fulbright Scholar Program and the Michigan State University presents *Attached to the Soil*. The exhibition will run from 11 August to 16 September 2022 at the NWU Main Gallery.

“To my compatriots. I have no hesitation in saying that each one of us is as intimately attached to the soil of this beautiful country as are the famous jacaranda trees of Pretoria and the mimosa trees of the bushveld. Each time one of us touches the soil of this land, we feel a sense of personal renewal.” Nelson Mandela, 10 May 1994

In 2019, Professor Peter Glendinning, Fulbright scholar and professor in art, art history, and design at Michigan State University, USA, visited several South African universities where he collaborated with staff and students on the collaborative project, *Attached to the Soil*. The project's title and genesis is the metaphor proposed by former president Nelson Mandela in his first words to the people of South Africa upon his inauguration in 1994.

At the North-West University, Potchefstroom campus, Glendinning collaborated with students and members of the research niche Vinco to create their own photographic projects. The students were asked to develop their own metaphor derived from their perception of South Africa, to collaborate with Glendinning in recording an oral history interview regarding the insights and story of their chosen portrait subject and create a tableau portrait of the sitter in a setting that captured the metaphor and the sitter's oral narrative. The product of this phase (2019) of the project was a collection of 50 portraits, each accompanied by the students' metaphors and the stories of the portrait subjects. Those works comprise the content of the exhibit, *Attached to the Soil*.

This year, in a Fulbright Specialist Project coordinated by the University of Pretoria, Glendinning will visit six South African universities where the 50 portraits and accompanying oral history accounts will be exhibited. The exhibition at NWU Gallery opens on 11 August 2022, with the launch of an exhibition catalogue, walkabouts and photography workshops for students and emerging artists. The workshop participants will be invited to create their own new projects based on the original concept, including soil-related metaphors, oral history interviews, and locations portraits of subjects with the relevant life experiences. The new projects will be exhibited worldwide on the digital platform of the Global Youth Advancement Network (GYAN), hosted by the Michigan State University International Studies and Programmes (<https://globalyouth.isp.msu.edu/>).

Exhibition title: *Attached to the Soil*

Venue: NWU Art Gallery (North-West University, Building E7, Hoffman Street, Potchefstroom)

Time: 6pm – 10pm

Opening date: 11 August 2022

Closing date: 16 September 2022

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