

YCSA encourages sculptors to reimagine concrete

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The Pretoria Portland Cement (PPC) Young Concrete Sculptor Awards (YCSA) celebrates its 21st year in existence, and is the longest running competition of its kind in South Africa. It is now more accessible to emerging artists and an additional category has been added.



"To capture the new format of the competition, our theme for 2012 is Reimagine Concrete. We encourage young emerging artists to use this platform to showcase their talent and explore their creativity," says Richard Tones, Customer Executive at PPC.

This year, the competition introduces a Functional Art category - Functional Art is an artwork that has a practical use beyond its own aesthetic appeal, such as jewellery, furniture, clocks and electronics.

Another change this year is the discontinuation of photographic entries and the introduction of regional judging points across the country where artists will have the opportunity to submit their works. If their work is selected for the exhibition, it will be transported to the Association of Arts Pretoria by Stuttford Van Lines, at no cost to the artists.

"We're delighted to have Stuttford Van Lines on board. Their contribution makes a significant difference to this competition. More artists around the country now have the opportunity to participate, which previously was a challenge," adds Tones.

Entries are open for both Fine Art sculptures and Functional Art. For the Fine Art category, a grand prize of R50 000 will be awarded to the artist with the best sculpture on exhibition, the runner-up will receive a cash prize of R25 000 and two merit award winners will receive R5 000 each. The Functional Art category winner will receive R15 000. Artists are allowed to submit one work per category.

Kay Potts, National Chairperson of YCSA explains, "The judging panel will be looking for contemporary and cutting edge works that demonstrate outstanding craftsmanship, aesthetic appeal and respect for the medium of concrete."

YCSA was created as part of PPC's centenary celebrations 21 years ago, and is run in partnership with the Association of Arts Pretoria. It is aimed at artists who are 18 years and older, who are either novices or not professionally established. In celebration of its 21 years, other exciting features will be included to this year's competition.

PPC, in partnership with the National Arts Festival will auction sculptures done by 21 previous YCSA winners, especially for this year's Festival. The proceeds of the auction will be donated to 21 beneficiary NGOs across the country.

Recently, PPC partnered with South African fashion icon, Suzaan Heyns, for her 2012 Spring/Summer Collection that was launched at SA Fashion Week in March. Her collection, also titled Reimagine Concrete, showcased the versatility of concrete. "It is a great honour to be associated with the 21st year of the PPC Young Concrete Sculptor Awards," adds Heyns.

"The PPC YCSA competition grows in strength every year and entries have consistently improved both technically and conceptually," concludes Potts.

PPC will be hosting one-day workshops around the country to provide young artists with basic skills and techniques for working with concrete. The workshops will demonstrate the versatility and best practices in working with concrete. Each

workshop can accommodate a maximum of 30 people on a first-come first-serve basis, at a cost of R75 per delegate.

The official opening of the exhibition and prize-giving ceremony will be held on Wednesday 7th November 2012 and the exhibition will continue until Tuesday 20th November 2012.

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