

11 reasons not to miss the 11th Investec Cape Town Art Fair

This year, Investec Cape Town Art Fair (ICTAF), which runs from 16 – 18 February 2024 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), offers visitors an especially rich array of special features, highlights and extras. Investec Cape Town Art Fair is in its 11th edition and to celebrate, here are 11 things that you simply cannot miss, including some fresh new additions to the lineup of events.



Photo by Markus Spiske via www.pexels.com

The theme for the curated sections of the 2024 edition of the fair is 'Unbound', aiming to break free from constrictive narratives and focus on emerging, diverse 'unbound' voices as a catalyst for the creation of new possibilities.

More than ever, Investec Cape Town Art Fair will celebrate the city of Cape Town, Unbound, offering visitors a programme packed with opportunities to explore the artistic life of the Mother City and experience its cultural institutions, meet the artists and interact with the creative community, gaining unprecedented insight into the South African and International art world.

First-time features will join the lineup of favourite talks, walkabouts, parties, tours and opportunities to explore the Mother City's art ecosystem, including the Yawa Off White Capsule and Lukhanyo Mdingi collab (the first of its kind at the fair), the brand-new focus on ceramics and GENERATIONS, a debut section featuring cross-generational dialogues between artists.

For the first time, five emerging artists selected from 20 artists who have been through the City of Cape Town's Emerging Artists Programme, will be represented by a dedicated booth curated by curator Igsaan Martin. Additionally, Bo Kaap is set to bind the city with an activation which speaks to the theme of Unbound.

Investec Cape Town Art Fair 2024 invites visitors to see how the Unbound theme is interpreted in 11 ways at the 11th edition of the largest contemporary art fair in Africa.



Zeitz Mocaa to honour Wangechi Mutu and Louis Norval with prestigious awards at 2024 Gala
DNA Brand Architects 7 Feb 2024



Fired up

This year, for the first time, the Investec Cape Town Art Fair will present a special project on one of the most exciting artistic mediums emerging as a major force in contemporary artistic expression.

Titled 'Cabinet|Clay', this project brings together a selection of ceramic works that showcase artists working in clay. From the refined work of master ceramicists such as Ian Garrett to those who embrace its potential to express contemporary feminist concerns, such as Frances Goodman, others who explore current evolutions of local heritage and traditional techniques, such as Madoda Fani, Chuma Maweni and Clive Sithole, and yet others, like architect Michal Korycki, who engage with clay's materiality and inherent ability to express form and construction, 'Cabinet|Clay' explores the modern embrace of this ancient medium.

Other artists include Amogelang Maepa, John Newdigate, Lisa Ringwood, Siyabonga Fani, Githan Coopoo, Jeanne Hoffman, King Houndekpinkou, Chuma Maweni, Louise Gelderblom and Geena Wilkinson.

A new GENERATION

Making its debut at this year's fair, Generations sets artists from different generations in dialogue with each other to create intergenerational conversations and engender a deeper understanding of both emerging and established voices.

By setting off interactions between a selection of 10 artists at different stages of their careers, this section aims to bring to light new insights into both evolving concerns that span generations as well as the jumps and discontinuities, intersections and departures.

Curators Natasha Becker and Amogelang Maledu hope that such conversations will catalyse a more meaningful cultural relationship between past and present.

Participating artists include Esther Mahlangu (The Melrose Gallery) in conversation with Bonolo Kavula (SMAC Gallery), artists from Rorke's Drift (Riaan Bolt Antiques) in conversation with Terence Maluleke (Southern Guild), Lulu Mhlana (Jonathan Carver Moore) in conversation with Sedireng Mothibatsela (Ora Loapi), Barry Salzman in conversation with Emme Pretorius (both IS Art Gallery), Kimathi Mafafo (EBONY/CURATED) in conversation with Ayobami Ogungbe (Rele Gallery).

What's the ALTernative?

The popular ALT section, which made its debut in 2022, has been expanded this year. This fascinating section is dedicated

to projects that reflect the “anti-booth”: the many ways in which newly established and non-traditional art project spaces have emerged as the art world has been forced to adapt to circumstance and invent ways that depart from conventional and traditional models.

ALT represents manifestations of emergent thinking and modes of practice that have broken away from the existing arts ecosystem to reveal the diverse, innovative and alternative artistic universe that exists in and around the continent.

There are 14 exhibitors, which include the likes of 16 Lerotholi, Art Formes, arthARARE, Borna Soglo Gallery, Vela Projects and Untitled, who make up the lineup for ALT section.

Off the WALL

This year, WALL will explore one of the hottest and most fascinating areas of recent local art history: the development of South African modernism. WALL will present an overview of work from the 1940s to the recent past that disrupted traditional modes, challenged the art market and forged the foundations of contemporary art production.

This year’s presentation begins by exploring early shifts in the palettes of the works of the likes of Gregoire Boonzaier, George Pemba and Gerard Sekoto and progresses to a more radical rethinking of representational modes in the abstract work of Cecil Skotnes, Ezrom Legae, Lucas Sithole and Edoardo Villa.

It traces the early ‘scapes’ of Kenneth Bakker through to the mystical icons of Larry Scully, Douglas Portway and Kevin Atkinson and the ‘hidden universe’ made visible by Karel Nel and culminates in the woven ‘spiritualist’ statements of Igshaan Adams. The exhibition also weaves in the narrative approaches in a selection of works by Sam Nhlengethwa, Willie Bester, Peter Clarke, Cecil Skotnes, Robert Hodgins, Sydney Kumalo and Mary Sibanda, another key component of South Africa’s artistic heritage.

Global gathering

After more than a decade, the Investec Cape Town Art Fair has the unique ability to bring together artists from around the globe in a single space.

Works from prominent artists from 50 countries around the world are represented by galleries far beyond the traditional art centres, co-mingling and interacting on an equal footing with those from Europe and the USA.

This grand gathering offers art enthusiasts an unparalleled opportunity to appreciate emerging trends and gain insight into the forces shaping cutting-edge collections. The global gathering of artists from around the world includes – from A to Z – the likes of Romina Ressa (Argentina), Pieter Vermeersch (Belgium), Alfredo Jaar (Chile), Cinthia Sifa Mulanga (DRC), Ibrahim Khatab (Egypt), James Mishio (Ghana), Manjot Kaur, (India), Daniele Sigalot (Italy), Carl-Edouard Keïtai (Ivory Coast), Maria Sosa Ruiz (RojoNegro) (Mexico), Ikeorah Chisom Chi-FADA (Nigeria), Dan Perjovschi (Romania), Robert Gabris (Slovakia), William Kentridge, Igshaan Adams, Maria Lai, Sam Nhlengethwa (South Africa), Marc Herrero (Spain), Ardan Özmenoğlu (Turkey), Daniel Atenyi (Uganda), Gabe BC (USA), Yinka Shonibare (UK) and Helen Teede (Zimbabwe).

Such diverse influences make for an incredible viewing of contemporary art.

It’s a material world

The meaningful, unconventional and original ways in which artists from Africa and the diaspora harness the expressive power of materials in contemporary art practice is nothing short of breathtaking, opening avenues of expression that can be difficult to categorise.

Fabric and textiles, as in the work of Zanoxolo Sylvester Mqeku and Sizwe Sama Sibisi, have become an important and

widespread medium, as have various craft-based techniques such as Pierre Fouché's lacework, and in others, wire sculpture and Zenaéca Singh, who works with molasses, sugar paste, panes of crystallised sugar and resin.

The use of found and discarded materials is multifaceted. Nicholas Hlobo and Tesprit's use of sculpted rubber, is just one particularly powerful example. Chris Soal's use of mundane objects such as toothpicks and bottle caps has the most unexpected results, and Usha Seejarim's reinterpretations of ordinary and domestic objects such as safety pins, wooden pegs, irons and brooms are among the better-known artists using assemblage as a way of incorporating found objects into artworks. Laetitia Ky's use of hair, for example, has become the basis of a unique methodology.

Fashion Forward + Retail Therapy

A pioneering addition to Investec Cape Town Art Fair 2024 is Black Coffee, Themba, and Arie Fabian's fashion, music and art platform Yawa.

Yawa will exclusively launch their limited-edition fashion capsule collection in collaboration with eponymous designer Lukhanyo Mdingi in an immersive retail experience. As an LVMH prize alumnus and the recent winner of the Amiri prize, Lukhanyo Mdingi and YAWA's co-branded "LM x YAWA" collaboration takes inspiration from 1970s/80s music colorways.

The limited-edition fashion pieces will be available for purchase at the fair. Mdingi will also speak in the Talks Programme as part of "Creativity Unbound" - an exploration into creative collaborations, taking place on day two of Investec Cape Town Art Fair.

YAWA will also release its limited edition "OFF-WHITE™ □ LOGIC" capsule collection, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the late fashion designer Virgil Abloh's label. The fair's organisers have produced a selection of notebooks, chocolates, T-shirts and totes available for those seeking Investec Cape Town Art Fair memorabilia.

The fair has also collaborated with various local designers on an 'Exclusives' range, which includes candles, espresso and cappuccino cups. Granadilla Swimwear has produced an exclusive artist range of swim shorts, especially for the fair, too.

A curated range of jewellery by Pichulik will also be available. Beyond this dedicated retail section, the fair will also have a range of art magazines, journals and publications available for visitors to purchase.

Through the lens

The medium of photography has assumed a hugely significant role in the rise of contemporary art from Africa, enabling the representation of new perspectives, being harnessed in the exploration of place, history and identity, and being used by artists to develop new aesthetics.

It remains a medium through which artists find seemingly unending possibilities, from conventional photography through video work and digital manipulation. The fair includes a broad range of works throughout its sections, ranging from historic documentary work by the likes of the legendary Jürgen Schadeberg to contemporary masters of the medium such as Andrew Tshabangu, Guy Tillim, Jo Ractliff and Daniel Naudé.

These established photographers are complemented by the most exciting newcomers like 21-year-old Sarfo Emmanuel Annor of Koforidua, Ghana, who uses his smartphone to revive the art of portraiture. The likes of Sabelo Mlangeni and Jabulani Dhlamini (and his protegee Theminkosi Hlatshwayo) keep the documentary tradition alive and well, while photography as a medium continues to spill over in other experimental media, as is the work of LegakwanaLeo Makgekgenene.

Many renowned multimedia artists include elements of photography in their work, not least images of the artists themselves in various guises by the likes of Mary Sibande, Thania Petersen and Nandipha Mnthambo. Ugandan photographer Ethel Aanyu does something similar.

And everywhere, photography and video art combined with performance, assemblage and other multimedia forms. The ongoing innovation through the medium of photography in contemporary art from Africa and the diaspora remains hugely significant and a burgeoning field of invention.

Cultural connections

Investec Cape Town Art Fair not only brings together galleries and artists, but also a wide range of the city's other cultural institutions. Large foundations with private collections such as the Norval Foundation, Zeitz MOCAA, Irma Stern and the A4 Arts Foundation all play a significant role in the cultural and social life of the region, sustaining the artistic ecosystem, education and broader artistic and cultural economy as much as public museums and institutions such as Iziko Museums do.

Through research, public exhibitions, publications and educational programmes – as well as the custodianship and preservation of collections – these organisations contribute enormously to the enrichment of the region's cultural life.

Educational projects like the Lalela Project, which will also participate in the fair, collaborate with contemporary artists in an innovative after-school arts education programme to bring positive social change to at-risk youth. Visitors to the fair will have an opportunity to gain insight into and understanding of the non-commercial arts activities that sustain contemporary arts production and establish the cultural climate that catalyses artistic innovation, not to mention fostering cross-cultural understanding in the region.

Bo-Kaap and beyond

Among the events, a public art and urban intervention has been planned for the historic inner-city area of the Bo-Kaap, giving visitors a taste of how Cape Town has established itself as one of the most attractive and interesting art destinations in the world.

In Bo-Kaap, two pop-up exhibitions hosted by international galleries, Galerie EIGEN + ART, will run for the duration of the Fair, from 10th to 18th February and Suburbia Contemporary, will run from 10th to 15th February.

All participating Cape Town galleries will also be open with exciting exhibitions, tours and picnics taking place throughout the city. The Bo Kaap Museum will host a performance piece by Thania Petersen, accompanied by local dancers and musicians in a reimagining piece about the Cape's history and the stories of its people.

Talks and walks

One of the major draw cards of the Investec Cape Town Art Fair has always been its programme of talks, dialogues, conversations, debates, discussions and presentations by artists, curators, gallerists, academics, writers and collectors.

A daily programme of guided walkabouts will again be on offer this year – a perfect opportunity for first-time visitors to orient themselves, gain an overview of the offerings on the fair and establish an understanding of the artists and artworks on view. The full programme of talks and the schedule of walkabouts is available on the fair website.

The Walkabouts Programme, curated by Art School Africa, will feature walkabouts by Dr Mariella Franzoni (curator of Tomorrows/ Today), Sean O'Toole (curator of SOLO), Phokeng Setai and Alex Richards (co-founders of Exhibition Match), Natasha Becker and Amogelang Maledu (co-curators of the new GENERATIONS section), Alice Toich (Artist), Max Melvill (Creative), Karabo Morule (Entrepreneur) and Andrew Lamprecht (Curator).

There will be 115 exhibitors represented by 24 countries both on the African continent as well as internationally, with 400 exhibiting artists made up of 50 different nationalities from across the globe, showcasing artworks in over thirty art forms.

The 11th Investec Cape Town Art Fair will run from 16 to 18 February at the Cape Town International Conference Centre

from 11am to 7pm.

Tickets can be purchased via the Webtickets link on www.investeccapetownartfair.co.za

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>