

Entries open for Sasol New Signatures art competition

The Sasol New Signatures art competition, established by the Pretoria Arts Association in the 1960s, is recognised as the longest running national art competition in South Africa.



This year, Sasol celebrates a milestone in its contribution towards the development of South Africa's arts and culture industry in its 25th year as a lead sponsor of the Sasol New Signatures art competition.

Reflecting on the art careers of former winners and considering the acclaim they gained in our country, as well as internationally, it can be said that the Sasol New Signatures competition is not only a stepping stone into the South African art milieu but it has also become a gateway to the visual arts on a global level.

The competition provides an excellent platform for emerging artists to apply their skills, to express their creative talent and to enter into the professional arts world.

"There is no doubt that art is one of the biggest platforms of expression. As a company, we are a proud corporate sponsor of arts and cultural projects and we are privileged to have been a part of this competition over the past 25 years," said Richard Hughes, Sasol Sponsorship Manager.

"Each year we see an increase in the quality of entries submitted and the competition continues to prove that there is immense artistic talent that exists in our country. More than that, we are committed to developing South African artists. In 2012 the competition received recognition from Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) for increasing access to the arts, which is testament to the role and value that this competition has played in taking arts to a broader society," he continued.

Artists will be able to enter their works at various national collection points, giving participants from all over the country an opportunity to be part of the competition. The competition winner will receive a R100,000 cash prize as well as a solo exhibition at the Pretoria Arts Museum next year. The runner up will receive a cash prize of R25,000 and the five merit winners will each be awarded R10,000.

Information sessions

In partnership with the Association of Arts Pretoria, Sasol will also be hosting nationwide university information sessions. The information sessions will cover the history and logistics of the competition, concepts and titles of works, presentation techniques, installations, as well as issues related to working in different media.

"The bar has been raised in terms of the quality of work and the standard is exceptionally high. Although hundreds of works are received, only the best works are carefully selected to form part of the competition. The information sessions serve as a tutorial on how to prepare entries for consideration," explained Peter Binsbergen, Chairman of Sasol New Signatures art competition's judging panel.



"Looking back over the past 25 years, we can clearly see the evolution of art through the finalists' works and how these have changed from more traditional to contemporary works including digital and performance elements. We are looking for artists who push boundaries and challenge social issues with innovative and conceptual thinking and we encourage artists who are able to explore overlooked issues and encourage debate through their works," said Binsbergen.

"Sasol and the Association of Arts Pretoria together believe that this is the way forward, not only for artists to participate but through this competition we hope to highlight art's contribution to, and its relevance in contemporary society," he continued.



2013 Sasol New Signatures finalists

Emerging artists who believe they have what it takes to make an impact in the art industry are encouraged to submit one or two artworks at one of several collection points around the country on Tuesday, 15 or Wednesday, 16 July 2014 between 10h00 and 16h00 on both days. The competition is open to artists who are 18 years and older and have not held a solo exhibition (a body of at least 20 works exhibited in a commercial gallery) except for academic purposes.

Artists can visit [Sasol New Signatures](http://sasolnewsignatures.co.za) or contact Nandi Hilliard at the Association of Arts Pretoria on 012 346 3100, 083 288 5117 or via artspta@mweb.co.za for further information on the competition.

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