

Brett Murray participates in Wavescape exhibition, auction

Fresh from the controversial Spear affair, Cape Town satirical artist Brett Murray has joined in on a unique charity art project. Murray joins 10 other artists, including Roger Ballen (the creative force behind Die Antwoord music video "I Fink You Freeky"), who have decorated 10 surfboards for the Wavescape Art Board Exhibition and Charity Auction, which recently launched in Cape Town.



Photo courtesy of
Jonx Fillemer.

Hanging with their two surfboards will be other works by internationally acclaimed artists, photographers and even a tattooist, who have decorated single fin surfboards based on a shape by the grandfather of South African surfing, the late John Whitmore.

Murray, otherwise known as the dark prince of pop art, was forced underground after he exhibited a controversial painting of Jacob Zuma, which was sold to a German buyer for R136,000, even though the object of the furor was defaced.

Ballen, the 62-year-old veteran famous for his dark treatment of light, was a natural fit to the rap-rave masters of Zeph who famously spurned Lady Gaga, who in turn spawned a Parktown prawn on Youtube.

Ocean-related charities

The surfboards on show at Superette in the Woodstock Exchange will be sold for ocean-related charities on Wednesday, 5 December by comedian Mark Sampson, who raised almost a quarter of a million rand last year. The charities are the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI), the Shark Spotters and the Isiqalo Foundation's Waves for Change HIV programme.

Newcomer to Wavescape, Wim Botha - a celebrated South African sculptor famous for his twisted, beast-like renditions of religious iconographic conflict - joins world-renowned former war zone photographer Guy Tillim, who has a list of

international press photo awards under his belt.

Tillim's board comes from his Second Life exhibition, shot on location in the South Pacific after he learnt to sail and bought a yacht in the Caribbean - hopefully in that order - before a solo mission that yielded the famous collection. His adventure included a de-masting off the Marquesas Islands and as a beginner surfer he tackled the terrifying tubes of the infamous Teahupo'o surf spot in Tahiti.

Annual favourites Kim Longhurst and Scott Robertson, both from Durban, bring their unique and witty style to the mix, with Longhurst continuing her richly hued autobiographical renditions of a sea-creatured mer-woman with red hair, while newcomer Simon Berndt, from the rich illustrative world of his One Horse Town studio, joins the fray this year.

Peter van Straaten, who has virtually created a new glazed oil painting style of his own, brings his delicate treatment of light to another sumptuous piece. Manuela Gray has etched her work into the board using tattooist tools to create a unique first for surfboard art, with both sides of her board applied in fine detail.

Claire Homewood and One Love Studio have again teamed up with kids from Masiphumelele to produce another two-sided board based on the theme of freedom of expression. One Love Studio works with the Isiqalo Foundation's Waves for Change programme, and are a popular urban art studio based in Muizenberg, Cape Town. Lisolomzi Pikoli, aka Fuzzy Slippers, brings his unique street art techniques to blend traditional African expressionism with a suave modernity, injecting a rich quirkiness to what promises to be another bumper exhibition and auction.

Ross Frylinck from Wavescape, in collaboration with Conn Bertish, the activist who gained notoriety for hacking the fins off a surfboard in front of the Chinese Embassy to protest shark finning and also carved a surfboard out of ice to highlight the effects of global warming, have announced a collaboration that promises to capture the surfing world's imagination.

Ross Frylinck says that the Family Board, the original board by John Whitmore that provided the inspiration for the surfboard shapes this year, has been inscribed with a message urging people to pass the board on. "We'll give the board to someone, with a camera, on condition that they record and write about their experience with the board before passing it on to someone they trust. The only requirement we have is that the board is returned late in 2013."

Curator Shani Judes, impressed

New festival co-ordinator and art board curator Shani Judes was amazed at the quality of the work this year. "The best part has been interviewing the artists and getting to know their process, their ideas for the boards, their connection/ fear of the Ocean and finding out what this project means to them on a personal level. Giving an artist free reign to create, and then receiving the boards back is really exciting for a curator."

Murray is a regular contributor to Wavescape. His 2012 board is the fifth since 2005. His 2011 board fetched a record R41,000 and the 2012 edition, which features a spoof of a struggle poster from the 1980s created by a then young Jonathan Shapiro, could go for a lot more.

Tillim's 2011 board - on his debut - sold for R27,000.

To see the boards, visit Superette, Cape Town, from Wednesday 28 November to Wednesday 5 December, from 9am to 5pm), or go to www.wavescapefestival.com.