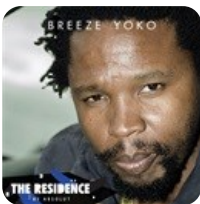


Residence programme changes downtown Jozi

Transform Today, Absolut South Africa has announced six multi-disciplinary creatives for an artist residency programme called The Residence, which will see them working collaboratively to bring about meaningful change to the Johannesburg CBD in May.

"Continuing the brand's history of championing the cultural impact of contemporary art, it has sought out collaborators with daring spirits and a dedication to transform the possibilities of personal expression continuously. The collaborating artists craft their work by changing things, breaking things, challenging conventions and recreating themselves in order to become something more," says Shirley Mabiletja, Absolut brand manager. "From 5 May 2014, the chosen six creatives will be seen applying their collective creative talents to solve real problems and challenges within the CBD."

Residents



1. **Breeze Yoko**, a Johannesburg based, but Gugulethu born and bred, multimedia artist whose whimsical yet thought-provoking artworks transform both spaces and minds. Informed by global street culture and the universal language of hip hop, his work concerns pan-Africanism, culture and politics.



2. **Io Makandal**, a 20-something multi-disciplinary artist and co-founder of the Open Drawer Projects. Based in Joburg, her work is concerned with creating narratives through re-appropriating urban debris and found objects and how those narratives can be translated into sculptural paintings.



3. **MJ Turpin**, a musician, artist, curator and director who drifts between Cape Town, Joburg and the world creating works that explore themes including identity, geometry, diaspora, socio-politics, geography and violence. He is the founder of the Kalashnikov Gallery in Joburg where they've stopped asking what art is, and rather answered where it can be found.



4. **Linzi Lewis a.k.a. Liliana Transplanter**, guerrilla gardener and co-founder of AMbush eCo-Art Collective, a Joburg

native with a Master's in Sustainable Tropical Forestry and a passion for urban greening. Co-creative intervention is at the heart of what she does, reflecting the local social and environmental context wherever she works.



5. Bogosi Sekhukhuni, a mixed-media artist who grew up wanting to be white. Using digital platforms, performance art, architecture and sculpture as his chosen mediums, he explores the role of art in addressing the burdens of South Africa's past.



6. r1, a street artist with a Fine Arts background. His work is placed in urban environments, where he plays with familiar spaces, raising questions and offering different alternatives. In his interventions he often works with found materials, transforming them and relocating them back into the city, as modified artistic contributions. His interventions are inspired by his immediate environment, and aim to revive places and objects that are taken for granted. All of his artworks deal with the notion of change in urban environments, and the documentation of this process.

"Creativity really does have the power to create a meaningful impact when applied in the right way. Through this program we're giving these South African creatives a platform to apply their creativity to make a difference," remarks Ryan McManus, executive creative director of Native VML, the brand's digital agency.

Procedure

For two weeks in May, the artists will live together in a fully serviced apartment located in the Maboneng Precinct, immersing themselves in the environment so they can fully understand and appreciate the challenges at hand. They will self-organise and execute projects of their own choosing.

The entire process will then be documented online - a blog will feature a live stream of content from the creatives themselves and the brand's YouTube channel will feature intimate videos that introduce the creators, ideas that inspire them and the goals of their work.

"The six creatives will also be bringing the brand's social communities into the creative process by involving them in the key decision-making via Facebook and Twitter," says McManus. Each day, one creative decision will be put out to the community, which means that not only can they follow the progress of the Residence as it happens, but they can be part of the collaboration and play a part in the outcome of the entire project.

Follow their journey online at www.absolutres.co.za, Facebook: [facebook.com/AbsolutSA](https://www.facebook.com/AbsolutSA) and Twitter: twitter.com/absolutSA