

## Ruth Carneson Artist CV

### Artist : Ruth Carneson



Cut-out dolls



Home is where the heart is

## Ruth Carneson Artist CV

story by: Sonja Wilker 21 May 2010

**Ruth Carneson** was born Cape Town and grew there.

She went into exile when she was 14 and lived in Britain for 24 years where she obtained a BA Honours in Visual Arts. She exhibited extensively in Britain as well as producing cards, calendars and posters of her work.

She worked as a visiting artist in schools where she used art as means of exploring human rights issues.

For a short period she taught at the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania.

In 1991 she returned home to South Africa and in 1997 she went to live on Robben Island, initially as an Artist in Residence. She continued to live and work on the Island for the following ten years.

IN 2007 she moved back to the mainland and has a studio in Muizenberg, located on the False Bay side of Cape Town.

The ANC used her “struggle art” for marketing on T-shirts, posters, and cards.

Her recent works have been autobiographical installations where she has combined text with visual images, artefacts and sound. These were exhibited at the Nelson Mandela Gateway at the Waterfront and at the Scalabrini Centre in Cape Town as part of the Voyage Ensemble Exhibition.

In May 2008, Ruth Carneson, as part of Voyage Ensemble, represented South Africa at the HIFA **Festival of Determination** in Harare, Zimbabwe.

She also held a very successful exhibition in March 2008 at the Lindbergh Arts Foundation.

In October 2008 she was part of a Thupelo “Found Objects” workshop and group exhibition at Greatmore studios in Woodstock, Cape Town.

*She says: “Art is as natural as breathing. The creative process is a healing one and has helped me through difficult times. It is a magical space where unexpected things happen, where I play with shape, colours and surprising images. It is a place where I do not have to prove anything, where things unfold naturally, exploring without judgment.*

*The themes in my work are intensely personal as well as social and political. It is trying to make sense of the horror that we perpetrate against each other, the contradictory images media feed us about war, how we cope with it, and the absurdity of it all.*

*Often it is what is most personal and specific that speaks most to what is universal. It is those small, private experiences that contain valuable information that cut across generalizations. It is important to me that my work speaks to what is human in people.”*

Ruth Carneson’s Art history:

- **Practising Freelance Artist** since 1975
- *Art and Design in a Social Context* at **Dartington College of Arts, Devon, U.K.** Sep 79 to Aug 81.
- *Diploma in Higher Education : Art and Design* at **Newham College, London**, Sep 88 to Jun 89
- **B. A. Honours** in *Fine Art, Art History, Art In The Community* at **Middlesex University, London**, Sep 89 to Jun 91.
- **Postgraduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies**, Jul 98 to Oct 99
- **Artist in Residence at Robben Island Museum, Cape Town**, Sep and Oct 97
- **The Artrepreneur**, Business partnership, printing and marketing artwork since 2004

If you'd like more information about the artist's work, or to schedule an interview with the artist, please send me an email.

## REFERENCE

Website: African-Arts-N-crafts.

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# **SACP Mourns Fred Carneson Issued by SACP General Secretary, Blade Nzimande**

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07 September 2000

Fred Carneson , a staunch member of the Communist Party since 1936, passed away yesterday, 6 September 2000. The entire SACP membership mourns the passing of this loyal stalwart of the liberation struggle and the struggle for socialism. Our heartfelt condolences are extended to the family, friends and comrades of Comrade Fred, especially to his wife and life long comrade, Sarah, their three children, Lynn, John and Ruth and their five grandchildren.

Fred Carneson was born in Goodwood in 1920 in a wood and iron house with no electricity, the bucket sanitary system and well drawn water. One of nine children in a working class family, Fred was made acutely aware of class oppression, exploitation and poverty by his life experience. A bursary, which Fred won at school, had to be forfeited because his family could not afford for him to continue his education.

Comrade Fred was a worker, an activist and a soldier, who fought against the Fascists and Nazis in WWII and the racists in South Africa thereafter. His entire life has been dedicated to the Party, the ANC and the struggle against apartheid and capitalism. After his discharge from the army Fred became a full-time activist, first working with the Springbok Legion and soon after as the fulltime Secretary of the Cape District between 1946 and 1950. He also worked to organise the Party underground after its dissolution in 1950. At various times he held the positions of member of the Central Committee, member of the National Executive Committee, National Treasurer and was a full-time functionary at the time of his arrest in 1965. He was also a candidate for the party in the 1948 election and was elected to the Cape provincial Council by African voters in 1949.

Comrade Fred also worked for the Guardian newspaper from 1952 until 1963, when Spark as it was then known, was finally closed down by the apartheid regime. He served first as the editor and later as business manager for the paper.

A thorn in the side of the racist regime, Fred was arrested in 1946 and charged for sedition in connection with the African Mine workers strike. He was again arrested in 1956 and charged as one of the 156 in the Treason trial. Comrade Fred joined Umkhonto We Sizwe at its foundation and served as a political commissar. In 1965 he was again arrested, detained under the 180 day Act and charged under the Suppression of Communism Act. He was sentenced to 5 years and 9 months in prison and was released in 1972. He left the country to join his family and continue his political work against the racist regime in the Anti-Apartheid Movement, the ANC and the SACP. While in exile Fred worked full-time for the National Union of Teachers and chaired the Trade Union Committee of the Anti Apartheid Movement.

On his return to the country in 1991, Fred immediately took up the struggle once again. He served as the provincial Treasurer for the SACP from 1991 until 1996. He was also a local councillor on the interim local government structures in Cape Town until 1995. Fred Carneson embodied the Alliance, working tirelessly to rid our country of racism and oppression while understanding the relationship between national oppression and class exploitation.

The Party salutes this loyal, dedicated, working class hero who gave his life to his people and his class in the struggle for a better world, free from poverty, crime, violence and ignorance, in short, for socialism. Comrade Fred will be cremated on the 16 September and a memorial service will be held for him on the same day.