



# McGregor Museum

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### FINAL REPORT : TEMPORARY EXPORT OF TWO OBJECTS FROM THE MCGREGOR MUSEUM (KENILWORTH HEAD AND KATHU HANDAXE)

This is to report that the two above items loaned to the British Museum for the exhibition *South Africa: the art of a nation*, were safely returned to South Africa and that both were in good order. The artefacts, which were accompanied by a courier, were inspected when they were unpacked in Kimberley.

By all accounts the exhibition was a success.

Dr John Giblin, principal curator of the exhibition, has reported as follows:

#### *South Africa the art of a nation – letter of thanks*

#### **The British Museum 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016 – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

You will be pleased to hear that *South Africa: the art of a nation* was a great success with visitor numbers exceeding our target and expectations bringing a total of 57,000 people in to see the exhibition, with the gallery at full capacity and tickets selling out in the final week of the exhibition run.

The exhibition was supplemented and supported by a popular programme of public events, all of which were well attended and very positively received. A particular highlight was *Ubuntu: sharing South Africa*, an evening event of music, performance, and workshops that saw the Great Court and Clore centre come alive with the sights and sounds of South Africa. The event was held in collaboration with the South African High Commission and saw pop up performances of *The Robben Island Shakespeare* performed by members of The South African Youth Ambassadors; performances by Eugene Skeef and his Abantu Ensemble; a participatory performance of vibrant South African songs by



Joyce Moholoagae; DJ sets; film screenings; a fashion show, craft workshops; and a special themed menu served to visiting guests and artists.

The exhibition was highly praised by visiting members of the public and received acclaim from the international media. I have included a number of press quotes for your interest as a small sample of the many positive reviews that were published. If you would like a complete file with a selection of full press articles and website links please let me know.

Thank you for all of your support with the exhibition. It was wonderful to be able to exhibit the Kathu Pan Handaxe and the Kenilworth Head alongside some of South Africa's other archaeological, historic and contemporary artworks. It was a real pleasure to meet you in South Africa and to host you in London and thank you for your contribution to the conference. I do hope we can work together again in the future.

John Giblin  
Head of Africa Section

**Press quotes from *South Africa: the art of a nation*  
The British Museum 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016 – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

“[A] thoughtful and illuminating exhibition about the art of South Africa” *The Guardian*

“....Savour the British Museum’s universally-praised exhibition of 100,000 years’ worth of South African art...It’s a painstakingly crafted exhibition of both art and social history....And, most tellingly of all, it is one which stays with you. It successfully challenges our Eurocentric view of culture, and challenges the visitor to consider how British colonialism has fundamentally impacted not only the creative output of South Africa, but that of its entire continent and beyond.”

*Guardian Local*

“An excellent exhibition on the art of South Africa [that] raised challenging question on the role of art in reflecting the state of a nation past and present” *Morning Star – 5 star review*

“The exhibition is as stirring as South Africa itself – a journey to the heart of our common humanity”

*The Guardian – 5 star review*

“The exhibition may be called Art of a Nation but could really be called Heart of a Nation. One thing South Africans don’t lack is passion – and in every artwork you will discern its creator’s love for their land and their culture....Come, and hear the ancestors speak.”

*The South African*



“This is where we all began; it is where art and language began....All this and more is celebrated in the current, very carefully chosen exhibition at the British Museum....and which everyone with even the most remote interest in art, human history and Africa should see.”

*Christies*

“South Africa; the art of a nation at the British Museum takes visitors on an extraordinary journey exploring interactions between human beings and works of art. From the earliest known forms of human culture to the country’s intense struggle to heal after the apartheid movement, this exhibition offers an insight into a nation and into human nature itself.”

*The Up Coming- 5 star review*

“From the pre-historic era to the Boer wars to Mandela’s struggle against apartheid – this show encapsulates the powerful narrative of South Africa’s history” *Evening Standard*

“[South Africa] *Art of a Nation* is a fascinating odyssey through South Africa’s past and present. It tells the story of human origins, colonisation, conflict, segregation and resistance in SA through 200 archaeological, historical, and contemporary artworks” *The South African*

Cited from an email from Dr Giblin.

The two artefacts have been returned to storage at the McGregor Museum.

Yours faithfully



David Morris  
Head of Archaeology, McGregor Museum

