



a world class African city



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JDA RESTORES JOHANNESBURG'S PUBLIC ART COLLECTION, PRESERVING THE CITY'S STORIES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



The City of Johannesburg, through its [Directorate of Arts, Culture and Heritage](#), has successfully completed a Repairs and Enhancement of Public Art Programme, implemented by the [Johannesburg Development Agency](#) (JDA), to conserve and restore some of Johannesburg's most culturally significant public artworks.

Led on the ground by Sticky Situations, the programme reinforces the City's commitment to preserving Johannesburg's rich cultural heritage while strengthening the quality, identity and vibrancy of its public spaces.

Building a better city

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Public artworks form an integral part of Johannesburg's urban fabric, they tell the stories of the people, cultures and historic moments that have shaped the city.

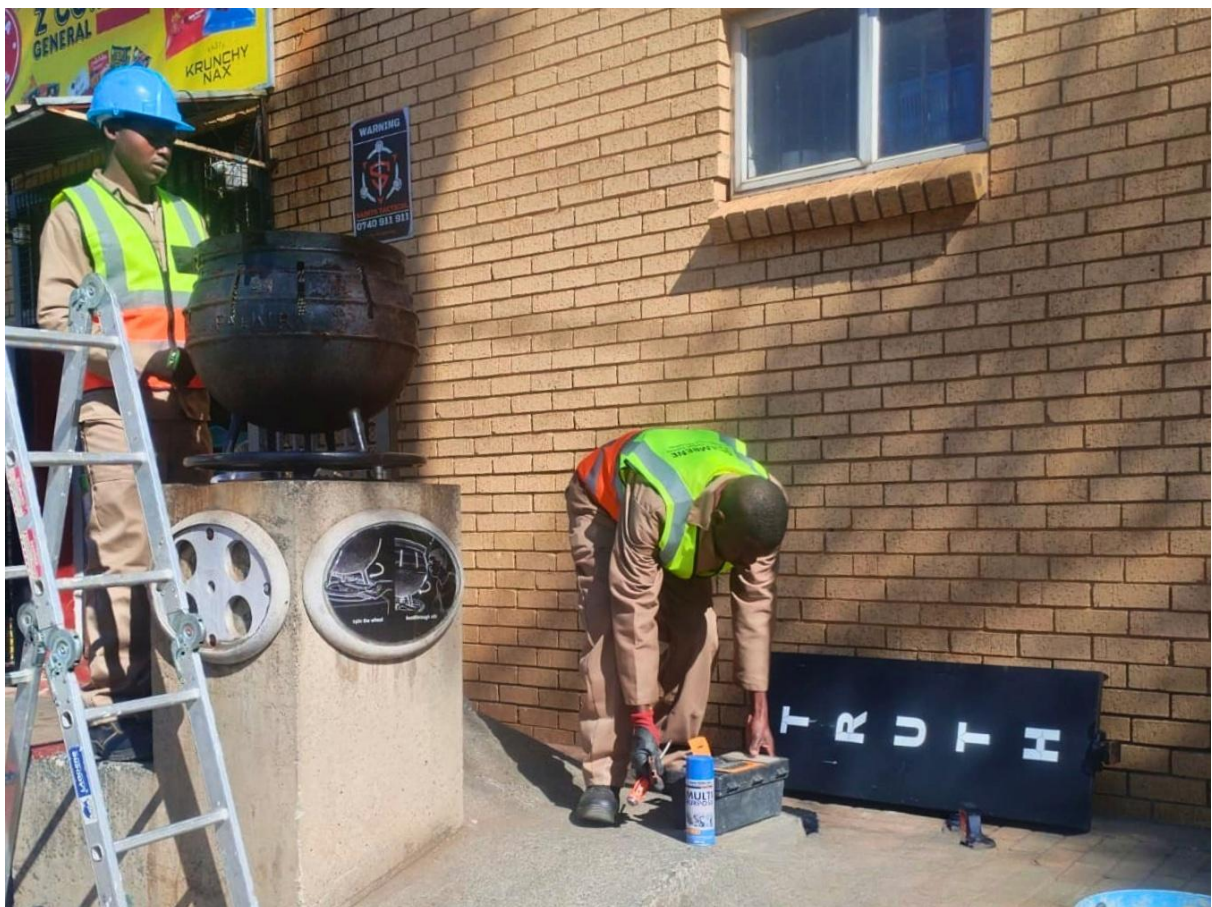
As the City of Johannesburg's infrastructure development agency, the JDA views public art as a vital component of place-making. The Repairs and Enhancement Programme focused on the conservation and restoration of four iconic public artworks located across Johannesburg's historic precincts.

Margaret Mcingana Tribute Mural – Newtown

The Margaret Mcingana Tribute Mural, created by acclaimed artist Dbongz, honours one of South Africa's most celebrated vocalists, whose extraordinary career helped shape the country's musical landscape throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

As part of the restoration programme, the artist recreated the mural, refreshing the artwork while introducing additional detail and depth that further celebrates Margaret Mcingana's remarkable legacy. The renewed mural once again stands as a vibrant tribute to one of South Africa's greatest musical icons and reinforces Newtown's identity as Johannesburg's cultural precinct.

Mahatma Gandhi Memorial – Fordsburg



The programme also restored the [Mahatma Gandhi Memorial](#) in Fordsburg, which commemorates the historic events of 16 August 1908, when Mohandas K. Gandhi led more than 3,000 Muslims, Hindus and Christians of Asian descent to the Hamidia Mosque, where they publicly burned their registration passes in protest against discriminatory legislation.

Created by artist Usha Seejarim, the sculpture features an 80-centimetre by 1.3-metre cast iron potjie, inspired by the cauldrons used during the protest.

Inside the cauldron is a unique zoetrope installation. When the sculpture is spun, viewers can see an animated image of the Indian registration certificate through carefully designed slits in the cast iron, creating a powerful interactive reminder of one of Johannesburg's defining moments in the struggle for human rights.

Kippie Moeketsi Sculpture – Newtown



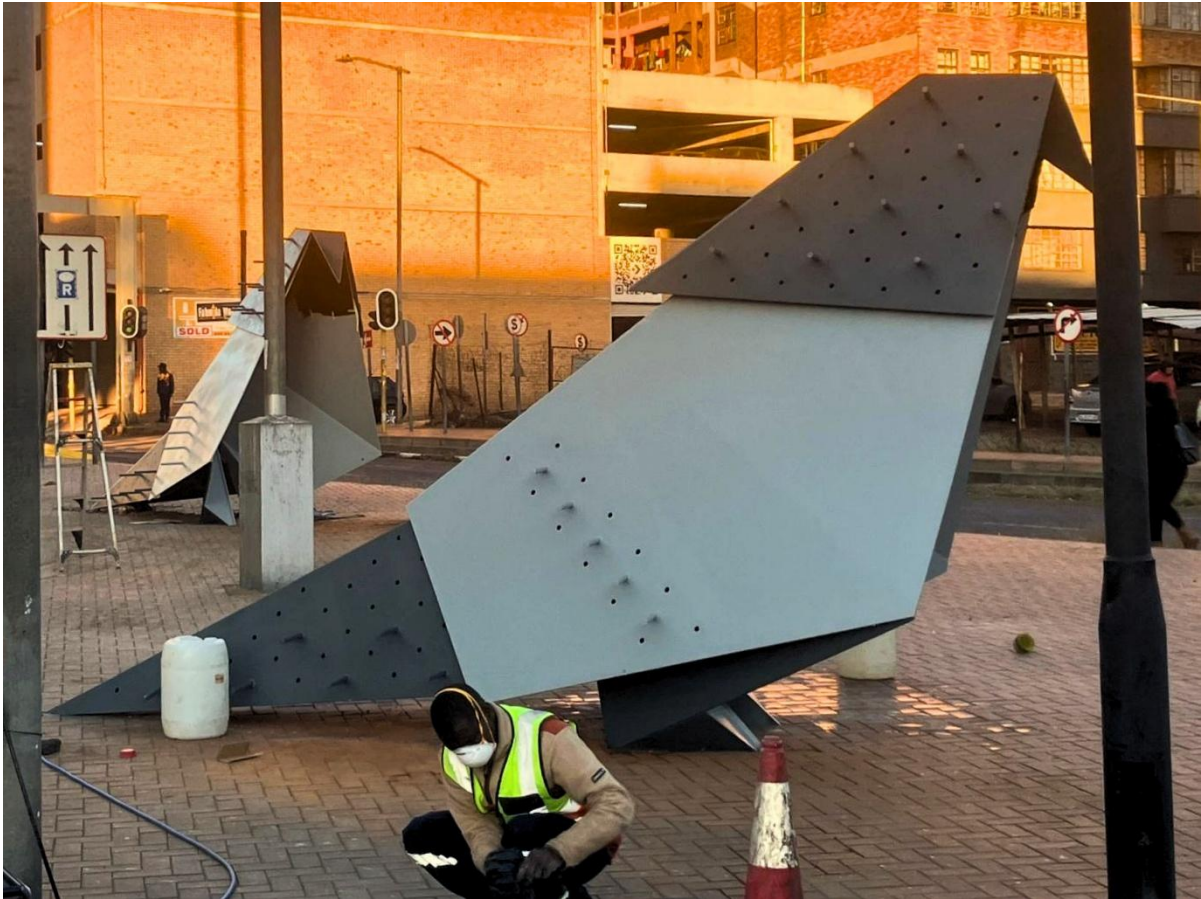
The bronze sculpture honouring legendary jazz musician [Kippie Moeketsi](#), created by Guy du Toit, also received comprehensive conservation treatment.

Positioned near the Brenda Fassie sculpture at the Market Theatre precinct, the two artworks appear to engage in a timeless conversation across the public square—Brenda seated beside an empty microphone and stool inviting visitors to participate, while Kippie waits with an empty chair beside him.

For years, visitors noticed a touching detail: although weathering had darkened the sculpture, one of Kippie's shoes remained polished, quietly maintained by an anonymous admirer. The restoration has now returned the entire sculpture to its original brilliance through a complete polish and conservation process.

To further enhance the visitor experience, a QR code has been installed, allowing residents and tourists to learn more about Kippie Moeketsi's extraordinary contribution to South African jazz.

Paper Pigeons Sculpture – Ferreirasdorp



The programme also restored the iconic [Paper Pigeons sculpture](#) by artists Gerhard Marx and Maja Marx, located at Pigeon Square in Ferreirasdorp.

The installation comprises three towering three-metre-tall origami-inspired steel pigeons that pay tribute to Johannesburg's Chinese and broader Asian communities, whose history is deeply connected to this part of the city.

Located just a block away from Johannesburg's first Chinatown, the artwork acknowledges an important chapter in the city's multicultural heritage.

Originally installed in 2009, the sculpture was intentionally designed so that real pigeons would become part of the artwork itself, creating an ever-changing public installation shaped by the everyday rhythms of city life.

The restoration ensures that this symbolic artwork continues to celebrate Johannesburg's diversity while contributing to the revitalisation of the Ferreirasdorp public realm.

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[Mural interrogates Joburg's ever-changing face](#)

[World Art Day Naledi Clinic mural humanises healthcare experience](#)