



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG  
METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY



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## Executive Mayor, Cllr Dada Morero, Address at the Opening of the “Homecoming” Exhibition at Standard Bank Art Gallery

Good morning.

It is my singular honour to welcome you to this special occasion—the preview launch of the Homecoming Exhibition, a celebration of Johannesburg’s artistic heritage and global cultural footprint.

### A Partnership Rooted in Cultural Excellence

Allow me to convey the City’s sincere appreciation to the Standard Bank Art Gallery for its unwavering dedication to the arts and its partnership with Johannesburg in promoting cultural development. I also formally acknowledge the diligent teams from the City and our institutions for their exceptional coordination of this event.

This exhibition is a compelling showcase of our city’s cultural richness. We pay tribute to the curatorial leadership of Mr Khwezi Gule, Chief Curator of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, and Dr Same Mdluli, Chief Curator of the Standard Bank Gallery. Their vision and commitment are evident in every aspect of this exhibition.

### A Global Journey Returns Home

The artworks we welcome back today have travelled across the world—from Hungary to South Korea—where nearly half a million people saw them. As these masterpieces crossed continents, they carried Johannesburg’s story: a city defined not only by economic vitality but also by artistic depth, cultural resilience, and creative excellence.

Their return enhances our cultural reputation and reaffirms the international importance of the Johannesburg Art Gallery’s heritage collections.

### Johannesburg: A City of Culture

Johannesburg is widely recognised as a hub of commerce, innovation, and enterprise. However, it is equally a city of culture—an epicentre of imagination, expression, and creative exchange. Through initiatives like Homecoming, we establish our position as a leading cultural capital on the global stage.

Art remains a powerful instrument for dialogue, understanding, and economic growth. By aligning this exhibition with the G20 Cultural Programme, we showcase Johannesburg’s artistic heritage to global delegates, asserting our leadership in the Cultural and Creative Industries and amplifying our city’s voice in worldwide cultural conversations.

## A Milestone for the Johannesburg Art Gallery

Today, we mark more than an exhibition. Homecoming signifies a significant cultural milestone for our city. It activates the Johannesburg Art Gallery during its refurbishment—keeping art visible, accessible, and vibrant within our communities.

Our partnership with Standard Bank guarantees the continued prominence of the Standard Bank Gallery as a premier cultural destination. Together, we sustain Johannesburg's artistic vibrancy during these essential renovations.

## A Catalyst for the Future

This exhibition catalyses many ways. It begins a renewed, long-term partnership between the City and Standard Bank and paves the way for future collaborations to expand Johannesburg's global cultural influence.

Our vision is clear:

- To cultivate spaces where creativity thrives.
- To preserve and honour our heritage.
- To ensure art continues to inspire and uplift generations.

## A Call to Experience and Celebrate

I urge everyone to immerse themselves fully in this extraordinary exhibition. Please participate in our curated walkabouts, engage deeply with the artworks, and appreciate the stories they tell.

Let us champion arts and heritage—not only as expressions of identity but as catalysts for social cohesion, economic opportunity, and civic pride.

Johannesburg is more than a city.

It is a cultural heartbeat.

Together, we will guarantee that this heartbeat resonates worldwide.

I now have the honour of officially declaring the “Homecoming” Exhibition open.

Thank you.