

International Public Art Festival 2022 to focus on connection and community

The 2022 edition of the International Public Art Festival (Ipaf) - hosted by urban art NGO Baz-Art - promises a wonderland of scintillating street art from some of the best professional artists. Centralised in Cape Town's vibrant Canterbury Street, the 2022 Ipaf is themed humanity, with the goal of focusing on connection and community. A core aspect of the event will be the immersive street art tours, which serve a dual purpose of getting the public closer to the artists and their works and supporting local tour guides. The event runs from 23-27 February 2022.

The festival will be hosted around the city hub, 'The Electric' in 48 Canterbury Street, District Six. As part of it, visitors are invited to join a celebration of creative flow through graffiti battles, running through the evening of 25 and 26 February.



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The former will be hosted by a local street art legend Tyler Murphy, and showcase some of the best graffiti talent Cape Town has to offer.

In between viewing the live street art, take a break at the Festival Hub and experience the pop-up VR activations, like the Museum of Plastic, which explores a future without plastic through immersive 3D, digitally painted murals.

The Ipaf 2022 will aid recovery of Cape Town's visitor economy

Dennis Molewa, host of Ipaf 2022 and communications manager at Baz-Art, says the festival intends to provide a boost to Cape Town's recovering tourism industry.

“This year, visitors will get a chance to experience three different street art tours within the centre of Cape Town – two guided tours and a self-guided tour, which can be enjoyed on foot or by bike and can be booked on our website. All profits generated from our street art tours go directly to the tour guides as well as tips.”

“This intervention is a welcomed entrepreneurial opportunity for Cape Town’s local tour guide community. At the same time, visitors are now also able to discover their city centre through an art lens.

There’ll be various additional events and workshops that build a closer connection between the artists and the public. Street art is a powerful means of expression. It’s important that people’s stories are heard as part of the experience.”



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Cape Town tour guide Sheldon Peinke says that the tours enable international visitors to speak to South African artists and discover the meaning behind the murals. This is intended to create a feeling of connection and community, encouraging more people to partake and invest in the city and country.

The move to Canterbury Street broadcasts loud and clear that Cape Town’s CBD is open for business.

“The City of Cape Town is proud to continue its partnership with Baz-Art for the sixth edition of the International Public Arts Festival. Over the last six years, the festival has played an important role in beautifying public spaces in our city with large-scale murals, while also providing a platform for local artists to express their talent. In this period, when the tourism industry is steadily recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, the Public Arts Festival is contributing to this revival by hosting tours with local tour guides. We are also thrilled that the festival will also extend to the CBD which forms part of the City’s broader economic recovery plan,” says JP Smith, City of Cape Town’s mayoral committee member for safety and security.

The Ipaf plays an important role in the city’s visitor economy, attracting footfall to the CBD, showcasing local creatives and bolstering tourism recovery efforts.

It’s a much-needed boost for small businesses, who benefit from the extra visitors in the city centre. It’s also a key source of income for local tour guides, many of whom are still finding business slow.

The global tourism bans in December caused many overseas visitors to cancel coming to the Cape.

This resulted in a loss of critical revenue for guides. The Ipaf – Africa’s largest street art festival – is determined to make a difference.



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Building connections in a disconnected time

The National Public Arts Conference 2022, which will be hosted in parallel to the Ipaf will offer a unique opportunity for professionals, the public and aspiring artists to connect and exchange future-orientated ideas, knowledge and skills.

It consists of six educational roundtable panels and open discussions, which will be open to the public. These roundtable discussions are designed for leaders in the creative sector to come together and reflect on opportunities that exist or can be created through public art.

Topics like art in the digital age, public art and urbanism, the state of the Aras: considering South Africa's Arts Institution, NFTs, cryptocurrency and marketing digital art and the link between arts and youth development will be discussed.

“In addition, Ipaf will host a hands-on practical talkshop series focused on entrepreneurial development for artists, tackling arts project management, financial management and reporting, and digital marketing techniques,” adds Carla Ferreira, Baz’Art’s policy consultant and project manager.

“Our goal is to have a positive impact and work with communities to find solutions to our shared challenges. The medium of street art is a powerful means of expression, which can truly bring people together and start critical conversations.

The Ipaf is also a joyful celebration of creative talent. Come and join us to be swept into a world of exciting art and fun,” concludes Molewa.

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