6 finalists selected for the 2020 Social Impact Arts Prize

Six art projects and their respective artists have been selected as finalists for the inaugural Social Impact Arts Prize. The selection was made after an assessment of the submissions by an international panel of judges.

"The finalists have developed strong interdisciplinary creative concepts that come to life through diverse and divergent projects aiming at making a social impact," says Roelof van Wyk, co-director of the Social Impact Arts Prize 2020.

Each of the finalists, in completely different ways, offers compelling and creative arts-based ideas to start a conversation and to address a particularly pressing social challenge that confronts the Karoo-based town of Graaff-Reinet.

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We are thrilled to announce the finalists for the Social Impact Arts Prize 2020! Congratulations to: studioMAS and Gustav Praekelt | Kim Lieberman and Paragon Architects | Kasthuri Naidoo and Ayesha Mukadam | Lorenzo Nassimbeni, Andrew Brose and Casper Lundie | David Brits and Raiven Hansmann | Studio August. Find out all about their exciting projects on our website, link in bio @turn_io @praekeltOrg @kimlieberman_ @paragongroupza, @dewalds_drawer @kassie.naidoo @ayeshamukadam @lampostluminaries @theimaginarians @lorenzo_nassimbeni @massdesigngroup @biru_architects @davidbrits_ @raivenhunter @aufoto

A post shared by [Social Impact Arts Prize](#) *(@socialimpactartsprizeza) on Jan 30, 2020 at 10:00pm PST*

In the words of one of the judges, Aliki Lampropoulos, head of international development – Museum of Cycladic Art in

Athens: "It's been an incredibly inspirational experience – creativity at its best! I learned so much about the history and geography of the area, as well as the current challenges."

"The finalists have carefully considered and researched ways in which creative thinking can influence, affect or simply make us more aware of societal conditions in our world today," adds Hanneli Rupert, co-director and chairperson of the Social Impact Arts Prize 2020.

The Rupert Art Foundation and the Rupert Museum in Stellenbosch launched the Social Impact Arts Prize 2020, calling for great creative ideas with the potential to make an impact on the communities within which they are created. From 123 entries, a third originated from Johannesburg, a third from Cape Town and the final third countrywide (including Stellenbosch, Graaff-Reinet, Bloemfontein and Durban), with additional submissions from Namibia, Ghana and Germany.

Meet the six 2020 finalists (in no particular order):

Hello Wolk!

Hello Wolk! by studioMAS and Gustav Praekelt, is a water-scarcity focused project that begins as an artwork, provides a certain amount of water, whilst also connecting to the community digitally. This artwork – created in the hieroglyphic style of the Khoi-Khoi and the San (makers of mankind's first artworks in the Karoo caves of Graaff-Reinet) – will be built in the image of a rain cloud that collects water from the atmosphere, which can be used to water a garden beneath the cloud structure.

The cloud will also operate as a symbol of the digital cloud, offering free community Wi-Fi and serving as a hub for community-based information. Young women living in the town will be taught to code, and update the cloud with health, education and literacy content, as well as any additional information that the community feels, is needed.

Revealing The City

Revealing The City by Kim Lieberman and Paragon Architects will use lace as a visual metaphor to reflect on the potential of an inclusive society where individual's lives are closely woven together, and also resemble the complexities of our histories, politics and people. The project will use visual markers like real-world physical 'pins' to signify important points within Graaff-Reinet and a mobile app that functions as a woven digital map will guide visitors through a unique real-world experience and allow them to engage as well as contribute their connections.

The Long Table Project

The Long Table Project, by Kasthuri Naidoo and Ayesha Mukadam, will look at sharing food as a means to rebuild connections across geographical and social boundaries.

The project will focus on Market Square – a common meeting point and trading area for all people before the Group Areas Act of the 1950s, which divided the town. Connecting three racially different areas of the town – central Graaff-Reinet, Umasizakhe and Kroonvale – the project will reinvigorate this area to create an open-air long table food experience.

All three communities will be invited to share in traditional food projects – as well as seeding the start of an indigenous food

garden, combined with localised food heritage education and the activity of wild foraging to create a long-lasting legacy for the project, and address sustainability.

PLANTed

PLANTed, by Lorenzo Nassimbeni, Andrew Brose and Casper Lundie, is a public project that gives visibility to the loss of local knowledge of medicinal plants and recognising the under-represented disciplines of craft, tech know-how, local food culture, architecture and indigenous languages.

This project will celebrate the plant life of Graaff-Reinet, whilst engaging local groups in the production and presentation of a central built structure for artists, designers and the local community to exhibit their plant knowledge and bring to light these overlooked aspects of culture and place that are often concealed.

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Tears Become Rain

Tears Become Rain, by David Brits & Raiven Hansmann, is a mass choir programme in response to the climate crisis.

The creation of this choir aims to instill hope and unite a diverse community by singing together for rain. Drawing on the rich choral history of the greater region, this project uses song as a tool to educate people about our precious water resources – whilst uniting people in their shared predicament.

The narrative of *Tears Become Rain* is a story that follows the journey of a young San boy in a time of great drought. Crying, his tears of grief turn into rain and restore abundance to the world. Connecting contemporary lives to a story from our shared pasts is intended as an inspirational act.

Mirage

Mirage, by Studio August, is a public-space, sculptural concept that will act as a meeting place for sharing and contemplations. It is an execution that will evoke an ancient landscape through the mediums of sculpture and artificial light. In stark contrast to the water-rich Karoo of millions of years ago, contemporary Graaff-Reinet is becoming more and more water-scarce as a result of desertification.

Placed in a public space, the artworks aim to conjure feelings of hope and renewal, allowing people to connect by vividly imagining ancient memories of water coming to tangible life. At night, it will be illuminated and become a sanctuary of light in the Karoo, reinstating Graaff-Reinet as an oasis.

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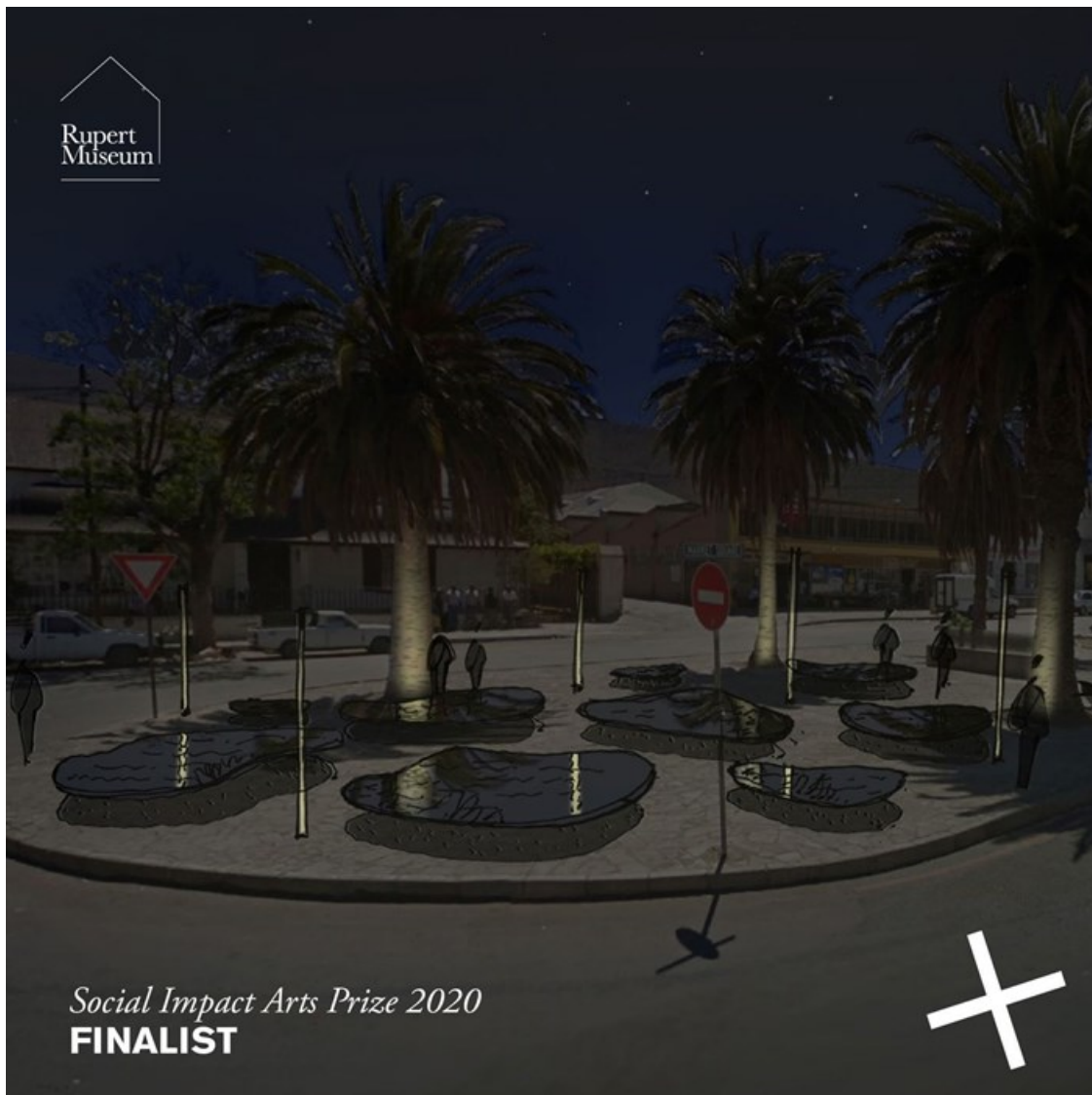
The six finalists' projects will be exhibited in the Rupert Museum from 7 March 2020, while the awarded project, or projects, will be announced at a gala event – to which everyone is invited – on Thursday, 12 March 2020.

The awarded project, or projects, will be installed in the town of Graaff-Reinet between April and July 2020. All the finalists' preparatory work will also be exhibited in Graaff-Reinet at the Jan Rupert Art Centre from April 2020.

Follow www.instagram.com/socialimpactartsprizeza for more details on each finalist's project supported by their visual images.

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