

## On Visual Activism Press Release

### Exhibition Details:

**Exhibition Opening:** 10 August 2017 | **Time:** 18:00-21:00h | **Venue:** Old Women's Jail, East wing Constitution Hill, 2 Kotze Street, Braamfontein, JOHANNESBURG. **Tel:** [011 403 7182](tel:0114037182) |

**Contact Person:** Lerato Dumse: **Tel:** 0604789798/ **email:** [inkanyiso2009@gmail.com](mailto:inkanyiso2009@gmail.com)

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**On Visual Activism** is a group exhibition initiated by Zanele Muholi, a world acclaimed and multiple award-winning photographer. The exhibition features the works of young South African visual activists, who have been working with Muholi under the banner of the XP Project. The XP Project, which is co-facilitated by Lindeka Qampi, a Cape Town based award winning photographer — is a project whose aims are to share and develop the art of photography amongst young women.

The works on exhibition in, **On Visual Activism** are the works of these young, up and coming visual artists, who are beneficiaries of the XP Project, and features works by **Boitumelo Nkopane, Collen Mfazwe, Kamo Petlele, Lebogang Mashifane, Lerato Dumse, Lindeka Qampi, Thembela Dick, and Velisa Jara**. The exhibition also features some works by Zanele Muholi herself.

Since 2013 the exhibiting activists/artists have spent time framing the articulation of the existence and resistance of Women's struggles in the main, with particular emphasis on the experiences of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) citizens of South Africa (SA), to create this body of work which is an expression of their visual activism and an act in claiming full citizenship.



*Lerato Tambai Moloi's funeral, Soweto, Johannesburg. © Collen Mfazwe 2017.*

In South Africa members of the LGBTI community, especially the black gay, lesbian and transgender people, have been beaten, sworn at, paralyzed, butchered, 'curatively raped' and even murdered due to lesbo and transphobia. **On Visual Activism** aims to open up a window into the lives of this marginalized community, and present an opportunity to begin a dialogue, and possibly initiate relationships that help bridge the chasm that exists between the LGBTI community and the broader community of South Africa.

Coinciding as it does with some of the country's memorable milestones, amongst them the commemoration of 61 years since the Women's march to Pretoria, 23 years since the making of South Africa's democracy, 11 years since the legalization of same sex marriage, 21 years since the adoption of

the South African Constitution with a Bill of Rights that enshrines equality for all, **On Visual Activism** forces the viewer to answer the question: **Are we as women, and the LGBTI community truly free?**

The photographs and videos on show, whose underlying themes are that of pride, loss and resistance, form part of South Africa's visual history, through which a whole gamut of the LGBTI community's are laid bare. Through its offerings the exhibition invites the viewer to witness the joys of this community, as seen through the documented pride parades from across the world. A window is open the loss and devastation suffered by this community, as seen through those images that document the funerals of its members, who often have succumbed to cruel and violent deaths. The spirit of resistance that seeks to claim those freedoms that are not yet a reality for many, and the vigilance to safeguard those that are already enjoyed is captured in the many marches and various other LGBTI events.

On the whole **On Activism** is an expression of a people who will not be silenced, or disappear quietly under the cloud of invisibility.

### **Exhibition details**

#### **Presentation**

The visual documentation will be installed on the walls, alongside video installations, and text containing 23 testimonies to mark 23 years of democracy. These are formulated to shed a light into the experiences of black LGBT members, and include the experiences of those that are connected to this community, amongst them their family members.

**Venue:** Women's Jail, Old Women's Jail, East wing Constitutional Hill, 2 Kotze Street, Braamfontein, JOHANNESBURG.

**Opening night:** 10 August 2017. **Time:** 18:00 – 21:00

**Exhibition period:** 10 – 31 August 2017 - Monday to Sunday

**For reservation and enquiries contact:** Lerato Dumse - **Tel:** 060 478 9798 /0739016005

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#### **Acknowledgements**

Our thanks go to **LightFarm, Stevenson Gallery (Johannesburg); Du Love Media** for their contribution to and support of this project.

This initiative was born out of discussions between members of the Inkanyiso collective and friends.