

Imbali Student Newsletter



imbali
visual literacy project

This newsletter is the result of a true team effort. Lungani and the editorial team begin meeting in the beginning of the year to plan and prepare who is going to write about what. This generates a lot of excitement and energy and provides students with useful life skills such as: team collaboration and decision making, understanding committees, target audiences, editing, interviewing, research and working to deadlines.

Who is Imbali?

Imbali is a professional training provider of art, craft and design skills and creative arts teacher education. With 29 years of experience, Imbali is a leader in its field. As a non-profit organisation (NPO) Imbali focusses on the disadvantaged in society.

Vision

To change people's lives through arts education and training.

Mission

Imbali is committed to achieving and maintaining a leadership role in the arts, crafts and design education and training sector through upholding high standards of training and professional teacher development, emphasising creativity and innovation in everything we do.

Imbali is characterised by the following key attributes:

- Helping individuals reach their full potential as artists, crafters, designers and teachers.
- Contributing to the development of a vibrant artistic and cultural economy in South Africa
- Excellence, innovation and mastery in the arts and crafts sectors
- Upliftment, sharing and co-operation between arts, crafts, design and other disciplines.

With this set of values, Imbali will continue to grow and set new standards in the fields of craft production and design and creative arts teacher education in South Africa.

Imbali is a non-profit organisation that relies on funding to run all its activities.

Editorial team:

Lungani Mogale
Sifiso Suntsa
Lebohang Tshweza
Vincent Duba
Lesego Siane
Nomaphelo Fumba
Tshepo Ledwaba
Nthabiseng Legwete
Nyameko Jozana

FRONT COVER: Themban
Maseko
LEFT: Nomaphelo Fumba with
screen printed fabric
BELOW: Embroidered flowers

BACK COVER: Bird
screen print from
the Keiskamma/
Imbali creative skills
exchange.



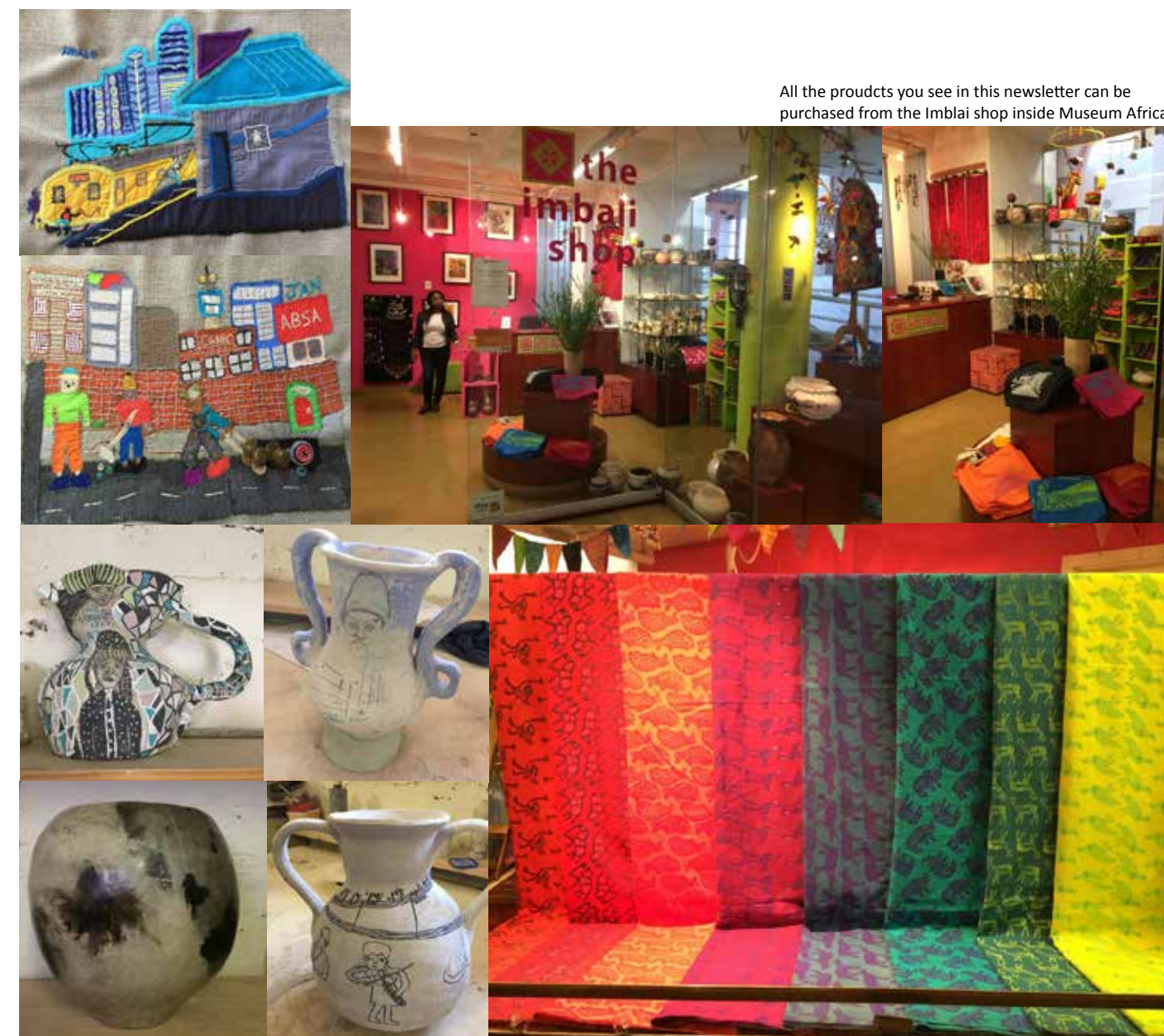
The Imbali Programme

Imbali is always evolving with the times. There is always something new that is introduced to the programme or some improvement made to the space in the studio. From as far back as the opening of the Imbali shop, I can remember that everyone, from the students and staff to board-members had something to contribute to Imbali and everyone helps to make positive changes.

In the Imbali programme many activities have changed and improved. Now, every year, each student receives a learner induction manual which is full of clearly packaged material starting with the project introducing itself, admission requirements, codes of conduct, the course duration and notes relevant to Cathseta Skills Programmes and Unit standards which can be attained.

Imbali tries to constantly introduce new skills and techniques. The methods of training have also grown through a sharing of ideas and the input of artists from all around the world. Imbali has built a great reputation for itself; the staff utilizes their connections and successful students become interns or expert artisans that are called upon to work on orders and special projects. It goes without saying that there has been a big improvement in the students' work over the years. The Imbali shop manager has reported a huge increase in the quality of end products which has led to growth in sales. Students look forward to looking at the notice board every month to see if they have sold products. It is so exciting for them to see the response they're getting to their work from the world out there. Imbali's Facebook Page has also helped enormously with showing the work of students to people from around the world. It is always wonderful to see people commenting and liking our latest products and designs.

All the products you see in this newsletter can be purchased from the Imbali shop inside Museum Africa



Visits to Galleries, Museums and the Theatre

By Tshepo Ledwaba

Imbali is a place of hard-working, dedicated and talented individuals. Excursions are given to the learners as another way of introducing them to different dimensions of art. This year was no different as Imbali organised visits to places like the Market Theatre to learn about the history of the theatre and to gain some in-depth knowledge about theatres.

On 9 February there was a visit to Play Africa, a children's museum at Constitution Hill where creative playing for kids was introduced to the students. In 2017, Play Africa asked Imbali to create soft toys for the simulation of farming and food production processes. Students created a range of wonderful, colourful fruits and vegetables. The visit this year was aimed at showing Imbali the full set-up of the museum, the utilization of the products created and to show how the aims of Play Africa are being achieved.

The first year students went to visit Standard bank gallery on 15 March. Our learners got to experience and learn the culture of art through other artists' work and the whole experience was mainly to learn the stories behind the art and the artists themselves. This was a very different learning experience for the new students.

Another visit was to the Johannesburg Art Gallery on 9 March. This whole experience was mainly about showing the gallery's incredible collection of artworks, some of which were created centuries ago and learning the histories of some of the artworks. The learners worked in groups and it was an interesting exercise for them to study and interpret the art pieces and then to present their findings to their facilitators.

Other field trips, exhibition and gallery visits in 2018:

- Kim Sacks Gallery
- Art Africa
- Moyo
- FADA Gallery at UJ for the Keiskamma Exhibition
- Irma Stern Exhibition at the Turbine Art Fair



Market Theatre visit



Play Africa visit



Kim Sacks Gallery visit



FADA Gallery, Keiskamma Exhibition



Standard Bank Gallery, Ubuntu Exhibition



Business with Portia

Business class for the second years on Tuesdays is facilitated by Portia Thenjwayo. Her mission is to help the crafters learn about the business side of this industry. This is an essential part of the annual Imbali Programme. Portia explains how it went this year:

"This year the class has been a real challenge. Last year I collated ideas on how to make the class more interactive so as to accommodate everyone from lesser to greater capacities of learning, writing & reading and theory. I try to tell inspiring stories at the beginning of the year. The class reads an article printed out from the net called 'Why costing and pricing?' The purpose of the article is to introduce the learner to the reality of costing and pricing their products to insure the growth of their businesses. An issue that often arises regarding Costing and Pricing is that crafters say they are just makers. They ask why they need to go through all these steps. I try to explain that the process is there to assist crafters to understand how much they are spending to produce a certain product. A market research field trip to Art Africa, Moyo and Kim Sacks gallery helps the students to see the reality of pricing. In our second module 'Function in a craft business environment', the learners enjoyed the classes because they were more about the things they see every day, like learning how to display products to attract customers and developing marketing materials like swing tags and price tags. The real challenge for these business courses is to help to turn crafters into real entrepreneurs".



Creativity workshops

By Justine Watterson

This year Imbali has taken our methodology beyond the Imbali studio through a series of creativity workshops with crafters in Limpopo, Free State and the Kingdom of Lesotho. The workshops in Limpopo and the Free State were commissioned by the Africa Craft Trust as part of their 'HANDS

TO MARKETS, Growing your Craft Business' Programme. The workshop in Lesotho was in collaboration with Creative Learning, Inc. a U.S based organisation and part of a larger project working with 15 craft enterprises and individuals to improve their marketability and business capacity.

The aim of these creativity workshops was to help crafters:

- Increase their knowledge of the art elements (line, shape, form, tone, texture, colour, pattern, balance, rhythm etc.) and how these apply to craft product design and development.
- Increase their understanding of colour and colour mixing and how to apply that knowledge to improve products and develop product ranges
- Provide some basic observational drawing skills leading to increased perception and improved visual communication.
- Increase confidence and the ability to identify new possibilities and directions for product design and development of new ranges.



Creativity workshop Madi a Thahva, Limpopo

Imbali 2018 Specialist Facilitators

By Nicole Leqheku

The first specialist facilitator we had the pleasure of working with this year was Nomusa Sitole. Imbali invited her due to her professional skills in appliqué and embroidery. Nomusa taught the first year students about embroidery, and how to create an image using a variety of stitches and applying other fabrics and materials to elaborate details (appliqué). Her aim was to pass on her skills to students and teach them perfection in appliqué and embroidery and how to use their own hands with skill.

Two other important visitors Imbali had the pleasure in welcoming this year were Kathrin Stalder from Switzerland and Harriet Riddell from England.

Kathrin is Imbali's oldest friend from Switzerland. She has been to Imbali many times in the past and we were thrilled to welcome her back this November again for what she says is going to be her last and final visit. Miss Kathrin Stalder has been working this past month with first year students, teaching them her fascinating professional methods and techniques of working with paper, marks and textures, book making and waxed art works. The whole experience has been fun and interesting to the students.

Kathrin also brought Harriet Riddell from England. Harriet is this great artist. She excels in free style stitching which uses the sewing machine to draw. She has been working with second and third year students teaching them her skills. She has taught them how to make portraits and still life with the free stitch technique. She is also a master hoola hooper and when she is not teaching sewing she is showing everyone how to hoola hoop with our own hand made hoops.

It has been a great honour and privilege for Imbali to have had Kathrin and Harriet with us these past few weeks. They have selflessly shared their skills and knowledge. For this we are truly grateful.

Kathrin also raised money from friends and acquaintances in Switzerland and around the world to buy Imbali 15 brand new Hasqvana sewing machines. These machines are of very high quality and are perfect for the free style stitching technique that Harriet has been sharing with us.

Harriet too ran a Facebook campaign and raised 600 pounds for Imbali, this money has been used to buy materials for these workshops.

Imbali is so lucky to have such support from people around the world. A big thank you to everyone!

RIGHT: Pictures from Kathrin and Harriet's workshops with Imbali Students



What are they doing now?

by Nthabiseng Legwete

When the school newsletter was introduced to the first years and we were asked if we would like to be involved in making this years issue happen, I thought it would be a good idea to find out from some graduates of Imbali what they are doing now. I thought this would be a valuable addition to the Newsletter, so I took it upon myself to compile questions to ask people who have successfully completed the Imbali 3 year crafts training programme.

Here are my questions:

Q 1. What career or profession have you followed after completing your course at Imbali?

Q 2. Can you tell me how Imbali helped you in your life career wise and in general?

Q 3. What was the most important thing Imbali taught you?

Q 4. From all the skills you learnt at Imbali, which was your favourite and are you still practicing it?

Q 5. What is your opinion on South Arica's Arts and Craft Industry?

Q 6. What are the highlights of your career ?

Q 7. When did you enrol at Imbali and when did you graduate?

Q 8. What challenges you have faced and accomplished?



Masetho Mohohlo

1. I have been working with an artist named Bronwyn Lace since I finished at Imbali.
2. Imbali helped me a lot and taught me many important skills. I learnt how to behave towards clients, how to start and finish products, Imbali even helped get the job that I still have today.
3. To always stand my ground.
4. Sewing to be honest. I'm also enjoying being an assistant to another artist and learning more.
5. It's alive.
6. I can say the highlights of my career have been working and being so creative and assisting a prominent woman who is a South African artist.
7. I started 2008, completing at the end of 2010.
8. As an artist and working for another artist I sometimes find people who say I am wasting time. They try change how I think, to make me forget how much I love what I am doing.

Katlego Chuene

1. I've always liked screen printing just like most hey! But I now do and teach screen printing, potato printing and designing.
2. Well I've always loved art but didn't really understand how it works or how can I make a living out of it and I was only drawing by then so that's when I came to Imbali. At Imbali, I learned how to price my products, how to sell, how to speak to my clients, how to be patient when making my products and do them with love and understanding. I never really liked using colours in my work, so Imbali also helped me to understand colours and how to mix them. Now I have opened my own NPO called (SANITY INK) inspired by Imbali and I teach kids and older people textile design and I sometimes go to schools to motivate about the power of art.
3. I've always felt at home and free when I'm at Imbali because we all loved or shared



- one dream. I did my fourth year plus incubated for 2 year, so if I could come back again I would.
4. I teach kids how to do screen printing and potato printing too.
7. I enrolled in 2009 and graduated in 2011.
8. Mixing colours, getting a perfect print from screen print and cutting a stencil.

Mxolisi Mkontho

1. I always wanted to be a facilitator so after I finished my third year at Imbali I come back for a short course (introduction to facilitating). This helped me a lot because at first I only knew about fine art but now I can



say I have skills in painting, working with wire, making jewellery and all sort of crafts.

3. Ok there's a lot I remember but most of all is that every day I got to learn something new at Imbali and we got to experience different kinds of art through other artist.

4. My favourite part is when I get to help disadvantage kids. While I was still a learner I also fell in love with making jewellery and making wire sculptures. I still practice these things today.

5. I think there is not enough being done for visual artists. I believe that visual artists need to be more recognised and if only visual art can be recognized as much as performing arts it would be much better.

7. I enrolled at Imbali in 2014 then graduated in 2016. I got to also do some workshops with my previous facilitator Justine and the whole experience it got me wanting to be facilitator too.

8. Challenges will always be there. It is only up to you how you handle things. What I can tell you is starting something from the beginning and following through to the end can be challenging. This is because you have to face things like financial difficulties and the high costs of materials. You find that your only solution is just to use your hands. Now I'm at the point where I'm taking on big projects.



Bonga Gamede

1. I'm not quite sure about my career yet. So far I've run workshops and created sculptures but I don't think I have completed my professionalism yet.
2. The skills I got from Imbali have helped me to expand my thinking.
3. Printing, but I do not have enough time to practice it now.
4. My favourite skills were silk screen printing, potato printing and sewing.
5. Art is not recognized enough in South Africa and most people tend to ignore it but what they don't realise is that we have successful artists in our country, most artists become wealthy when they are dead and through their legacy. There are many opportunities and sponsorships available for artists.
6. Right now I teach through workshops in Hillbrow and at Fashion

Capital and recently I have been engaged in creating a chandelier metallic sculpture.

8. I was never a patient person. I was in a rush for success and gave up quickly but now I can say I have conquered and faced my fears.



Itumeleng Raborifi

1. Creative Factor- building mixed media sculptures, puppets, floats with wire, steel, aluminium, etc. I work a lot with carnival in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town.
2. Imbali believed and trusted in me and gave me that confidence to express myself and always be creative. I learnt I could be what I wanted to be.
3. Pretty much everything, one experience I'll never forget- I felt at home, we were modellers.
4. I loved everything, but my favourite was silk screen printing. I now teach it at schools and tertiary institutions. I do t-shirts and caps. I let students take home what they have made after they have finished.
5. I am angry. The question is very confusing, it's a matter of who loves you, how many people target you, where do you display and how. We keep on going and growing through it but it's hard. Jobs are too scarce for artists. There are those who are making and climbing this ladder. We decided with a bunch of artists to made a co-operative group in 2006. We hook up our own gigs. A lot is up to the marketing, it is how you do it. There are opportunities out there...
6. I'm more skilled, I know what I want and I'm able to make better decisions, I'm confident.
8. There are not many jobs, clients often give you little time and expect proper production and well developed products and they want you to do everything as they want it. Accomplishment: not yet accomplished.

The Grads Programme

By Sifiso Suntsha

The 3rd year programme has two main components which are *Product Development* and *Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)*.

Product Development: When the final year students enrolled at Imbali for their 1st year they all had at least 1 artistic skill from their backgrounds. They subsequently learned more skills at Imbali based on craft production and craft enterprise. The 3rd year product development phase brings both these practices together. The students are required to focus on one or a few correlated techniques and they produce quality marketable products. They must then do the costing and pricing of their products. This serves as a precursor of the businesses they will be running- for those amongst them who choose to embark on the path of entrepreneurship.

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD): Imbali is not only about production. Imbali also has an agenda of training potential teachers. This is achieved by offering an 'Introduction to facilitation' module. Last year Imbali conducted the facilitators' programme for the first time. This year the facilitator course was made practical through the ABCD outreach programme. The students received a budget for buying materials; they each organised a group of people and some space and then they all facilitated 5 workshops by themselves. The Imbali facilitators visited some classes for a single lesson to ensure that the student's workshops were successful. The students gained practical experience as well as references and portfolio content for those who want to embark on the path of facilitating.

Facilitator Training

by Stacey Haahjem

In 2017, Imbali piloted an 'Introduction to facilitation' module in order to equip our third year students who have an interest in teaching, to pass on their skills to others. There were only four students participating in the pilot module. This year, nine third years successfully completed the module. The module is very challenging because it is short, intensive and all assessments and tasks have to be completed within twelve sessions. The module consists of practical and theoretical components and includes subjects like children's creative



Third year group with their products



Ndalo's group in the Eastern Cape



Ndalo teaching potato printing



Potato printing in the Eastern Cape



development, organization of spaces, working with diverse groups and materials, lesson planning and micro-teaching. This year, students were allocated a budget to go out into their communities and identify groups to teach. Justine, Portia and Stacey went to visit some of the groups to support and give feedback. Tshepo Ntuka taught potato printing to intellectually challenged children and women from Nkosi's haven; Thuli Maseko taught starch batik to adults; Ndalo Nantisi went to the Eastern Cape and created wonderful potato-printed bags with children from a local school; Sifundo Mbatha had an interesting experience teaching embroidery; Sizwe Eksteen's group made beautiful embroideries combined with fabric paint; Persy Mamba's students created original t-shirt designs; Jan Moloi did screen printing with local youth on the roof of a Jozi building; Thabang Tshabangu discovered that teaching pre-schoolers is not for sissies and Sifiso Mbatha taught in various schools and after care facilities, introducing children to incredible art projects.

It was extremely rewarding for us at Imbali to witness our students passing on their knowledge and skills. We hope that they will continue to spread a love of art and craft-design to all corners of the country and the world.



A member of Lwandile's group with her certificate and completed bag



Jan's screen printing group in the inner city of Johannesburg



Lwandile's community outreach project. Certificate presentation in the Eastern Cape

Expedition to the Eastern Cape

By Sifiso Suntsha

Hamburg is very far away and the bus ride was exhausting. The bus traveled at night so that made it impossible to see the landscape. At about 5am Monday morning it was sunrise & all the Imbali students awoke to behold the most beautiful sunrise I've ever witnessed behind a mountainous landscape that you will never witness in Johannesburg. We were all completely mesmerized. When we got there we continued exploring & appreciating the



rich environment Mother Nature had to offer at Hamburg. Working with the village women & the guys was such a humbling experience because I have gotten used to working with people from the township & people from the city. I know Yda by seeing her when she visits the office at Imbali but it was the first time that I had an opportunity to work with her and it was a wonderful experience. The Keiskamma River & the ocean are a view never to be forgotten. It was a blessing indeed to be accommodated in a place where you get a view of the ocean every morning when you wake up and you get to hear the ocean every night when you fall asleep.



Friday our last working day culminated with a braai at the ocean. It was my birthday and I was at the ocean for the first time, it was a perfect gift. I give thanks unto the universe for all the opportunities life has offered me.

ABOVE: Three hand-stitched pieces by the Keiskamma Art Project capturing the rural landscape around Hamburg.
LEFT and BELOW: Photos from the screen printing workshop conducted by Yda Walt.



Newtown Now Festival, The Turbine Art Fair and the Imbali Book Launch

July 2018 was an extremely busy and exciting month for Imbali. As part of the Newtown Now Festival we created a large and beautiful textile installation in Mary Fitzgerald Square comprising of hand-dyed flags, screen printed banners, tree-wrappings and stair painting. Mama Connie carefully co-ordinated the fabric dyeing of the flags to achieve rainbow colours; Sello created beautiful drawings of iconic Newtown buildings to be screen printed onto fabric banners, Lungani and his team acid-washed the stairs outside Museum Africa and expertly painted them in multi-hued colours and patterns; a forklift was hired to install the flags on the flagpoles around the square.



Mary Fitzgerald Square

In the meantime Stacey and a team of Imbali students painted large colourful murals for the Children's area at the Turbine Art Fair (TAF), whilst more students finished off their ceramic platters and sculptures that were entered into a Strauss & Co. Still Life exhibition to be exhibited at the TAF.

Students formed teams at the Children's area to guide the visiting kids through activities such as drawing, painting, jewelry-making and clay work. It was hard but rewarding work and everyone was very complimentary about Imbali, the space and the students. Our participants had the chance to walk around the art fair and to see the incredible variety of art on show. Second year, Lungelo Zungu and 2017 Imbali graduate Mahlatsi Mojapelo won prizes in the Strauss & Co. competition. Sculptures by Lwandile Nantisi, Sydney Tshabalala, Tshepo Ntuka, Mahlatsi Mojapelo and Persy Mamba sold at the exhibition.



Sizwe painting the stairs in front of Museum Africa

We had hardly recovered from the TAF when, on the 17th of July we held the Grand Imbali book launch at the Stop Sign Gallery in Newtown. Students welcomed guests, served food and drinks and networked with the large crowd. Ndalo Nantisi and his band as well as ex-student Yoliswa Mbobisi supplied the music. There was a fascinating discussion between artists Nandipha Mntambo and William Kentridge, with all sound and lighting on the night being supplied by Gearhouse Splitbeam (Pty) Ltd. Justine negotiated with City Lodge Newtown so that the working students could spend the night there which was a lovely adventure and a comfortable end to an exciting day.



William Kentridge and Nandipha Mntambo in conversation at the Imbali book launch.



Lungelo Zungu and Mahlatsi Mojapelo with their prize packs



Painting the TAF kids art area mural

Remembering Thembani

By Nomaphelo Fumba

At Imbali we learn a lot and meet new people from all around GP, and 3 years is a long time to get to know and be fond of one another, bonds like friendships are formed and we become like a family away from home.

This year we lost one of our sisters who was a part of us for 3 years, a sweet, pertinent and kind person who was determined to learn everything and share her knowledge with everyone. We all felt the loss- even the 1st years who had just become part of Imbali because of the person she was, not a loud person but her friendliness and welcoming personality spoke volumes without saying a word. We are asking members of Imbali how they remember her and how she touched their lives.

Thabang Tshabangu: Thembani and I shared a lot like the same interests in things we were learning at school. We also shared life in general because our personalities were kind of alike towards capturing what we were taught and observing life. She was a hard worker and showed dedication in everything and she was very helpful to me if I had difficulties in learning something.

Sibongile Ngobeni: Thembani was a quiet and sweet person. She was never angry and she never showed if she was upset. Even when she became ill, I never had any problems working with her as she gave her work all her heart.

Mama Connie: Thembani was a hard-working young lady, a creative soul, never running around causing problems. She did her work quietly and slowly for it to be perfect. She was such a caring, helpful and patient soul. She always took criticism in a positive way and tried to correct her mistakes.

Fundile Sithole: Thembani was an honest person and very kind too, she was helpful specially to me when I was going through personal stuff. She loved singing and was always very welcoming.

Nthabiseng Legwete: We had started this small choir practice after school and Thembani was very active in it. She had a song she loved and would lead it when we sang "African Rhythm". She will be dearly missed and the void she left cannot be filled up.



Book review

By Lesego Siane

ADVENTURING INTO ART is a set of 8 books written by Imbali and aimed at teaching young people about art in general as well as about different South African artists and their work. In these books individuals will be able to explore and discover different ways of how art can be created. Each book or chapter has its own theme and the included artworks relate to the topic but are made by many different artists in different styles and with a huge variety of materials.

Book 2: 'Faces' was the book I enjoyed reading the most because it contains so many self-portraits. I love self-portraits because they give you a reflection on how you could see yourself as a person.

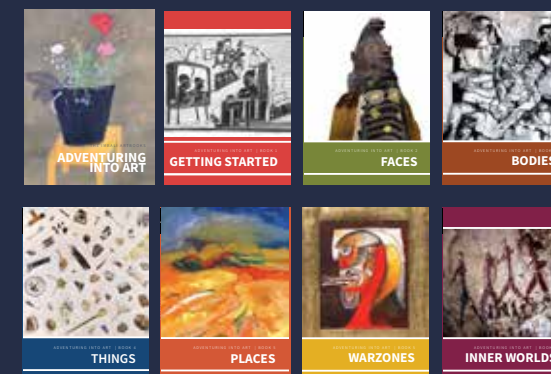
The books are made for young people, specially those who are interested in art. They inspire people to learn a whole lot of new and different topics and techniques such as drawing self-portraits, collage and painting to mention only a few.

THE IMBALI VISUAL LITERACY PROJECT

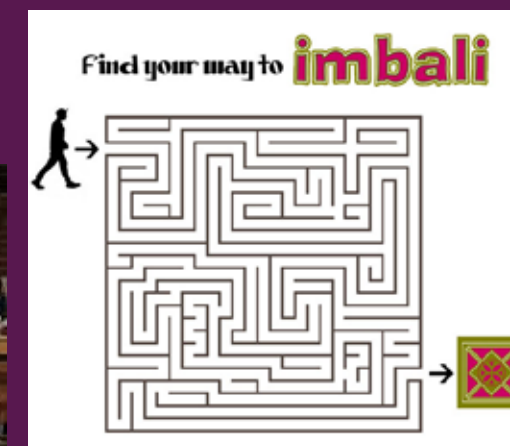
THE IMBALI ARTBOOKS
ADVENTURING INTO



A SERIES OF BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR TEACHERS, ON LOOKING AT ART AND MAKING ART.



Spot 5 differences between these two pictures



By Nyameko Jozana

All the products that you see here in our newsletter you can find for sale in the Imbali shop inside Museum Africa. We would like to thank all our facilitators for their help and guidance during the year.



**Special thanks to our funders and partners without whom
none of this would be possible:**

- National Lotteries Commission • Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation • National Arts Council • Department of Arts and Culture • R.B. Hagart Trust • NEA Foundation • One Step • Africa Craft Trust • Creative Learning Inc. • Caths SETA • BASA • Sticky Situations • City Lodge Newtown • Gearhouse Splitbeam (Pty) Ltd • Museum Africa • The Imbali Board • Friends of Imbali and all who so generously contributed to buying 15 new sewing machines as well as tools and materials for Kathrin and Harriet's workshops.

**Imbali can be contacted @ The Bus Factory,
3 Helen Joseph Steet, Newtown, Johannesburg.**

Tel: +27 11 492 3333

Email: info@imbali.za.org

Web site: imbali.za.org

Facebook: Imbali Visual Literacy Project

