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JOBURG'S LARGEST WALL MURAL BEGINS TAKING SHAPE



The largest wall mural in Johannesburg, the S-Bend Wall Mural, is expected to be completed by the end of August this year. The project, which lies on the Louis Botha Development Corridor, demonstrates the Johannesburg Development Agency's (JDA) commitment to the continued roll-out of its Public Art Programme.

The painting of the 3000 square metres wall surface, running east-west along the Louis Botha corridor, cross cutting the suburbs of Yeoville, Observatory and Upper Houghton, began in June this year.

The mural, which is commissioned by the City of Johannesburg Department of Transport and implemented by the JDA, forms part of the Art My Jozi campaign. Art My Jozi is a place-making through art initiative.

The approach to Art My Jozi focuses on collaborations with local creatives to create an identity for an area inspired by local stories. Art My Jozi has been rolled out in areas such as Noordgesig, Brixton, Orange Grove, and various points along the Empire Perth and Louis Botha Development Corridors.

Building a better city

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Painting the S-Bend Wall Mural offered a unique opportunity for telling Joburg's multiple histories through social politics, landscape, architecture and mobility.

The significant scale of the artwork warranted a collective approach to execution, cross pollinating and upcycling of styles and skills, as well as sharing of knowledge and building new networks for emerging artists and muralists.

One of the main themes of the Mural is modes of transport. Historically, Ndebele traders took cattle and agricultural produce to markets along the Great North Road in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Since the early 20th century Louis Botha has been one of Joburg's primary transport routes, with cars, buses and taxis moving tens of thousands of people daily between Alexandra and Johannesburg.

"The S-Bend Wall Mural is an opportunity to interrogate the ever-changing face of Johannesburg; while simultaneously celebrating its development, reimagining its future and reflecting on its past," Member of Mayoral Committee for Development Planning, Cllr Reuben Masango said.

Once completed, the S-Bend Mural will be handed over to the Department of Community Development (Directorate of Arts, Culture and Heritage) and will form part of the City's public art asset register.

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