

TBWA\South Africa art auction raises over R500k for Room 13

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Business and Arts South Africa member, TBWA\South Africa, has once again stepped up to the plate to support its CSI project, Room 13.



The fundraising came in the form of an art auction, hosted by the award-winning communications and brand solutions company and held at the prestigious CIRCA Gallery in Johannesburg.

Up for bidding were artworks by Sam Nhlengethwa, the world-renowned artist who collaborated with John Hunt on *The Art of the Idea* - a book celebrating the power of ideas. Nhlengethwa's beautiful illustrations for the book were donated by the artist to the auction, with eight on live auction and 11 on silent auction.

To up the stakes, TBWA\South Africa also hosted an online auction within the TBWA global network, adding a good dose of glitz and glamour to the event and increasing the numbers. The auction raised R510,000.00 for Room 13, which will be used to both raise the profile of the project and improve its studios.

Sonja Kruger, Group Brand Manager at TBWA\South Africa described Room 13 as being at "the heart of everyone in the company" - including other companies in the TBWA family like Integer, GRID and Magna Carta which all played a key role in the auction.

"We believe in Room 13 and this event would not have been possible if everyone didn't feel that way," comments Kruger. "We see the effect Room 13 has on the lives of our children and feel strongly that our role in the greater society is about empowering the leaders of tomorrow, our youth, to be the best they can be."

For the greater TBWA\South Africa family though, Room 13 is about far more than upliftment and entrepreneurship. "It's about giving these children a safe and secure space to express themselves and create an identity for themselves in a community of like-minded thinkers," Kruger adds.

Room 13 started at Caol Primary School in Scotland in 1994; with South Africa pioneering the first studio in 2004. With proven and consistent success Room 13 has grown to include various studios from all over the world such as in Nepal, India, USA, Canada, Mexico, Turkey, Austria, China, and Holland and is fast becoming a worldwide network of studios.

Room 13 seeks to unlock the children's imaginations by developing their artistic expression across various art forms, in particular visual arts and literature whilst teaching essential business skills. They run the studio as their own business, taking full responsibility for the sustainability of the project in this way Room 13 becomes a studio run by learners for learners, supported by an Artist-in-Residence, within a school environment and the learners manage the studio themselves, electing their own management team every year.

The learners are responsible for creating a business atmosphere within their studio concentrated on achieving self-sustainability and are ultimately responsible for its success or failure. This is how we, at TBWA, help build the leaders of

tomorrow and grow our youth to be the best they can be.

Room 13 piloted with two studios in SA; one in Sapebuso Primary School in Soweto, and one in Mmulakgoro Intermediary School in Botshabelo in 2004. At present there are 14 Room 13s all over the country.

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