

MEDIA RELEASE

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UNIQUE EXHIBITION FROM REMARKABLE ARTIST

Pretoria, 25 September 2012. A unique exhibition of sculptor and doll maker, Elize Johnsen, reflecting a historical review of styles through the Middle Ages until the 1990's, can be seen at Gallery 20/20 at the Voortrekker Monument from 1 October. Prominent women are part of the exhibition of porcelain dolls e.g. Maria van Riebeeck, Emily Hobhouse, Anna Neethling-Pohl, Marike de Klerk (dressed in the Voortrekker period), as well as diva Mimi Coertse.

Elize Johnsen's training as an art teacher and her classes in sculpting were the forerunner to a total other love – porcelain dolls. This exhibition honours her dexterity and her remarkable artistic legacy of doll making.

Elise was born on 13 March 1938. She took classes from master doll makers in England, Germany and the USA. Her dolls won the coveted Blue Ribbon at many of the international doll shows. Unfortunately she died in 2008 without ever having a complete one man exhibition of all her work.

When one looks at the technology involved in producing the clothes, jewellery, hair, faces etc. of each individual doll, one realises the complexity and comprehensiveness of the craft. Sometimes it took three months to complete one doll.

As well as the porcelain dolls, a few dolls from her collection dating from the Victoria era, will also be exhibited. A few of her sculptures will also be at the exhibition and they lead to the question: "Why are bronze sculptures (some of them small), viewed as art while doll making is seen as an inferior craft?"

The exhibition is open from Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 15:30 and the normal entrance fee is applicable. Enquiries may be directed to Christo Rabie at opvoed@voortrekkermon.org.za or on 012 326 6770.

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