

CARVING OUT A LIVING GALLERY

Hennie Boshoff and Rossetta Woolf have created a haven for artists and the visiting public in the Karoo hamlet of Prince Albert

DIANE DE BEER

PRINCE Albert in the Karoo is one of those charming rural towns that is quite hidden and not on any of the main routes. Many travellers have discovered it because of both its beauty and the fact that it has become quite a food destination in the sense of what can be sourced in the area.

Another attraction is the many famous writers and artists who have found their way to this tiny town. Among them is author Eben Venter, who spends six months of the year in Australia and six back home in the Karoo.

Before last year's Klein Karoo National Arts Festival, I was told about a sculpture garden and evening tours in the Karoo town but I couldn't find my way there.

A few months later I was privileged to visit Prince Albert on another assignment and was determined to find what must be one of the few sculpture gardens in the country.

Even with our amazing weather, which should encourage this kind of space, it's not happening – though we do have the exquisite Nirox Estate and the Anton Smit sculpture park in Bronkhorstspuit.

With more artists like Hennie Boshoff and his partner of more than 30 years, Rossetta Woolf, displaying their art and those of artists who have been part of their lives or collaborated with them in what seems the most obvious fashion at a place called Villa Kruger in Prince Albert, perhaps that will change.

Think of nature at its most magnificent as the backdrop and add the kind of artistic approach of these two creative souls and something extraordinary happens. The work, which is dominated by a series of astonishing sculptures, all telling stories of a mysterious nature, will take your mind travelling and exploring so much more than you will expect.

There is also a lifestyle that incorporates their art in every fashion.

From the way their garden is styled and grows in between the art, to the pictures that hang in the bathroom – everything has been placed in a specific way to capture who they are and how they want to present themselves to the world.

It's a growing gallery and museum which will change and expand as their lives do. That's what makes it so fascinating.

Not only will every experience be different depending on the time of year or day or night you view it, but as their space changes, even the way the garden grows will determine the experience.

They haven't been back in the country for all that long, having for the past couple of decades lived in Europe, where they were involved in especially art and design.

While some of the work might



have originated there, it's amazing how much a part of the African landscape they seem to be.

So if you are travelling that way these upcoming holidays or sometime in the future, contact Villa Kruger and its intriguing participants and take the time to have a glorious art tour in a place where you might least expect to lose your heart.

Villakruger@hennieboshoff.co.za; 079 133 1267 (SMS only); www.hennieboshoff.co.za; www.facebook.com/villakruger

Enquiries: SMS or e-mail only. Tours called Art after Dark at R100: beginning at dusk – time varies (available on Twitter/Facebook for each week) according to the season. Send them your preferred date/s and they will get back to you. Tours take place with a minimum total of four people (or, optionally, for a smaller group for R400.)

ASPIRATIONAL: Heaven and Hell created by Hennie Boshoff and Vulindlela, a group of Zulu artists he has worked with for over 10 years and whom he helped establish a BEE company.



GRACEFUL: Created by Rossetta Woolf, L'Etoile (the star) in the Tarot titled The Mermaid.



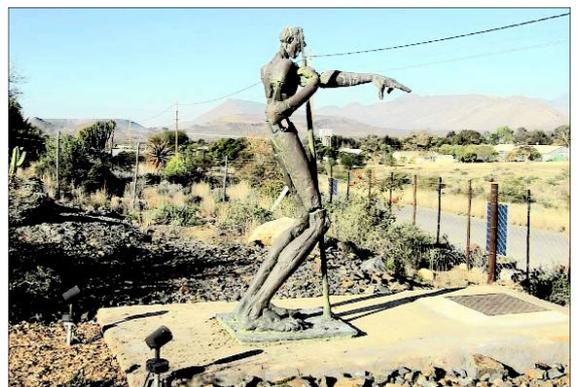
ARTIST'S LIFE: Hennie Boshoff
PICTURE: ILSE SCHUTTEN



GARDEN SCULPTURE: The juggler/magician and the artist.



RED POWER: La Force – Strength in the Tarot with creator Rossetta Woolf



POINTING THE WAY: Le Fou, the Fool, number 0 in the Tarot – The Joker in the common playing deck.