



## **PRESS RELEASE - 2023 FEMALE ARTIST STUDIO EXCHANGE**

The META foundation, in partnership with the End Street Studios is excited to announce the winner of the 2023 Female Artist Studio Exchange:

### **Tamia Saunders**



Tamia Saunders (b.1997) is a Johannesburg-based, multidisciplinary artist. Her work combines practices of painting, mixed media, and printmaking which she uses to explore her expressionistic portraits.

Her work, which is self-referential, explores her thoughts and emotions relative to her identity and the shifting world within which she exists. Each piece serves as an extension of her past and present self, the lessons she has learned and her subsequent growth. Her portraits feature exaggerated figures, melting eyes, and her use of sometimes unnatural colours, which embody her emotions at the time of creating each piece.

In 2022, she was selected for the Presidential Employment Stimulus programme (PESP3) by Artbank SA to create art for the National Museum. She has participated in local art competitions, such as the Culture Leader Arts Competition and has

worked on many commissioned projects. She is currently represented by Julie Miller African Contemporary Gallery.



“Still Lingers”, 2022, Acrylic on stretched fabric canvas,  
40cm x 50cm

### **Why is this award important?**

According to a 2010 national study on the visual arts, conducted by the Department of Arts and Culture, only 12% of women make a living from creating art in South Africa. Of which, 9% are White and 3% are Black, Coloured and Indians combined. The META foundation and End Street Studios are committed to supporting the practice of young, female artists. Not only by providing them with space to work from but supporting them with the freedom to explore their work and develop their

voices. Through this process, the hope is that they become self-sustaining, full-time practicing artists who in years to come, change the status quo.

The studio exchange provides the artist with the following for a period of 12 months:

- a studio space, at End Street Studios, which includes parking, electricity and water and uncapped internet
- the opportunities to participate in any group exhibitions curated by the META foundation
- the opportunity to participate in any August House activities
- featured (included in) August House/Meta foundation website and publicity materials

### **About the Partnership**

The META foundation and End Street Studios have come together to launch this award. End Street Studios was founded by Bronwen Lace in 2016 and when it moved into August House it quickly became a space for womxn artists to evolve their practice. The META foundation has instigated this award. Based at August House, the META foundation will oversee the day-to-day running of the residency programme. It is our hope that through such a programme more womxn artists will find their voices.

### **About the META foundation**

The META foundation was founded in February of 2020 in order to develop a set of strategically driven programmes that focus on artistic career development and support. The ethos of the organisation is one of inclusion and diversity, focused on fairness and democratization of art – how it is viewed and consumed. August House was established as an enclave for artists in 2006 and currently houses 56 practicing artists. It is the largest studio space in Johannesburg, if not in South Africa.

Everything that the META Foundation does is focused on three pillars that make up the visual arts eco-system. We define these pillars as Artists, Artwork and Art

Audiences / Lovers. The foundation's aim is to bring these three pillars together and to drive best practice to bolster the environment/context within which it operates.

### **About End Street Studios**

End Street Studios is located on the 2nd floor of August House. The space does not separate itself from August House but rather runs as a faction within August House, which just happens to have a name attached to it. It consists of a community of artists who work in a mixed-use space, collective space. Consisting of nine studio spaces, ranging in size, the space invites artists to work and create within it. End Street Studios was a collective studio initiated by Bronwyn Lace in 2016, out of the need for an artist community to work alongside one another, as well as be a solution to the sharing of costs of space and logistics of having a studio. While the initiative is no longer run by Lace, as she has moved onto new and exciting projects, it continues to operate with a new bevy of emerging and mid-career artists.

### **About August House**

In Johannesburg's inner city lies an exclusive art building, housing more than 40 independent, pan-African contemporary artists, in private art studios, known to the locals as 'The Artists' Playground'. To the outsider it's just a 1940s historic structure until one crosses the threshold and sees where the magic lives, in five storeys of private art studios.

August House gives artists a unique creative hub. With its high columns, authentic architecture, and large open plan floors, it's a wonderful blend of inspiration and stillness. August House was established as an enclave for artists in 2006 by Bie Venter and Maria Svane. Its notable tenants have included artists such as Mary Sibande, Dineo Seshee Bopape and Lawrence Lemaana, Mbongeni Richman Buthelezi, Gordon Froud and Joseph Gaylard, Nontobeko Ntombela, Gabi Ngcobo, Gonçalo Mabunda, Jacki McInnes, Nelson Makamo, Bie Venter, Kudzanai Chiurai and Nicholas Hlobo.

For further information on the award and related activities please contact:

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