

German photo-exhibit of poor Boers

Written by Adriana Stuijt

Monday, 15 November 2010 16:32 - Last Updated Monday, 15 November 2010 16:39

Two internationally-reknown German photographers – Suzanne Schleyer and Michael Stephan – together with local artist Stephan Erasmus are showing a stark array of 30 photographs of [destitute](#)

Afrikaner-Boers at the Jozi Art lab Gallery from 4 November 2010 to 31 January 2011. The exhibit is also scheduled to travel to international venues in Europe soon.

The [Bitter Fruit – Bittervrug](#) exhibit portrays an uncomfortable reality of current day South Africa – aching so-named ‘white’ poverty. Today more than 800,000 of the 3-million Afrikaans-speakers of [Boer](#) descent can no longer feed themselves and moreover are denied all benefits and food-aid from the ANC-regime, including being denied food-coupons, because they are ‘whites’. Last month the ANC-regime also embarked on a forced-removal campaign of these destitute Boers to black squatter camps where they will be even more unreachable to aid-workers.

Thus the Boer nation’s tragic 350-year history is repeating itself once more: many tens of thousands of Boer women and children also died of starvation and disease in the massive British internment camps for civilian Boers during the British Empire’s scorched-earth invasion of the two independent Boer Republics in 1899 - 1902.

This picture exhibit however only shows the faces of this suffering because its curator says she was ‘extremely interested in showing another side of South Africa’s social transformation’... However these exhibitors are deliberately omitting to mention some very important facts behind these suffering people in their ‘Sunday Best’ -- namely that the ANC –regime not only denies these Boers all means of survival but has also has recently started a programme of forced-removals from their relatively safe little squatter camps where they could still help each other to survive: they are being forced into black townships, where they and their children are in [great physical danger](#)

.

German photo-exhibit of poor Boers

Written by Adriana Stuijt

Monday, 15 November 2010 16:32 - Last Updated Monday, 15 November 2010 16:39

Protest march against forced removals of Afrikaner poor:

A protest march against these forced removals is being planned for December 15, 2010 by the [Freedom Front](#)

Plus in Church Street,

[Pretoria.](#)

Many South African sociologists agree that the long-term survival outlook for the Afrikaner-Boers in southern Africa is extremely grim under the ANC-regime.

The striking black and white portraits of the Afrikaans inhabitants – dressed in their “Sunday Best” - of two destitute communities on the outskirts of Pretoria, Maranata and Eagles Nest, confront the viewer with issues that we prefer to overlook- white poverty. Lately aid-workers also [report](#) that the ANC-regime is forcing these whites to move to [black](#) squatter-camps, where they are very unsafe and also out of reach of Afrikaans aid-workers from the

[Solidarity](#)

trade union movement’s

[Helpende Hand](#)

organisation which helps their people in their struggle to survive.

The official propaganda blurb for this photography exhibit says that it was ‘the outcome of a 2010 residency undertaken by a team of German artists -- Suzanne Schleyer and Michael Stephan – under the auspices of the [Sylt Foundation](#) and its sister organisation, the [Johannesburg](#) -based Jozi Art Lab. “ It can be seen at a venue referred to as “ Arts on Main,” in Doornfontein.

The German photographers were introduced to Johannesburg based artist Stephan Erasmus – and the three collaborated.

Indra Wussow – the curator – said she was ‘extremely interested in showing another side of South Africa’s social transformation. To bring the Afrikaans artist Stephan Erasmus and the German artists Susanne Schleyer and Michael Stephan together offers two completely different perspectives of the topic. One from the inside of the society and the other, an outsider.. “ The

German photo-exhibit of poor Boers

Written by Adriana Stuijt

Monday, 15 November 2010 16:32 - Last Updated Monday, 15 November 2010 16:39

blurb continues: “outsiders would find it hard to believe that in South Africa, white poverty can even exist.”

Indeed. Under the ANC-regime, Boers are becoming increasingly marginalised and living in the poorest land-sites imaginable, struggling to survive without any legal rights to government benefits or even government food-aid coupons. More than 12-million food-coupons a month are issued to blacks in SA including black refugee families – but desperately hungry Boers are denied these food-coupons despite many appeals by the [Helpende Hand charity](#) directly to pres.

[Jacob](#)

[Zuma](#)

The photography-exhibit’s publicity blurb claims that the “government was eager to ‘redress past imbalances’ so they created the [black-economic-empowerment laws](#) . Thus the mostly Afrikaans speaking, poorly educated and now unemployed White people were left with no social or economic place in the ‘new’ South Africa and they dropped out of sight.”

Schleyer was quoted as saying: “The process of engaging with the community was a very important and collaborative one. As photographers, and especially non South Africans, we could not merely walk into a community and decide how they should be represented. All the people depicted in our images, and represented in our interviews were involved with deciding how to present themselves to the world. Whilst they suffer from poverty, it is a circumstance of their lives and not a defining character trait. They wanted to show this.” They improvised a studio and invited the members of the two destitute Afrikaans communities to be photographed in front of a neutral white wall. Many of them dressed in their ‘Sunday best’ - their church clothes. The artists didn’t ask them to present themselves in a special pose or position. The sensitive and direct portrayal of various people from these two communities is the subject of the Bittervrug Bitter Fruit exhibition.”

Source: [Censorbugbear](#)

German photo-exhibit of poor Boers

Written by Adriana Stuijt

Monday, 15 November 2010 16:32 - Last Updated Monday, 15 November 2010 16:39
