

COME BACK TO TOWN

TALK OF THE TOWN

Laura Robinson directs the all-important work of the Cape Town Heritage Trust from an idyllic cottage on the edge of the Company's Garden in the heart of the Central City. Here she divulges her 10 favourite urban spaces and places, all must-visit CBD destinations.



Laura Robinson, Director of the Cape Town Heritage Trust

01 THE COMPANY'S GARDEN

I love the Company's Garden, especially the view of the lawns and the fishpond from the terrace of the Visitors' Centre, the headquarters of the Cape Town Heritage Trust, where I am based. It's a privilege to work in this green lung of downtown Cape Town, and to be able to enjoy this national treasure every day.

Company's Garden, Government Ave

03 DELUXE COFFEEWORKS

It's like a hole in the wall, and you'll walk right passed it quite easily, but Deluxe Coffeeworks is my favourite coffee shop in the Central City. It is the original Deluxe Coffeeworks. I love their flat whites, and I also go there for the retro music, which hits all the right notes.

Deluxe Coffeeworks, 25 Church St, 076 832 6208

04 THE DRINKERY

With its eclectic furniture and artworks, The Drinkery on the Mezzanine level at Heritage Square is one of my favourite places to go for an after-work drink. I love this atmospheric contemporary bar that is known for its splendid cocktails. I often meet friends here for a glass of champagne or a gin martini.

The Drinkery, 100 Shortmarket St, 071 191 5034

05 CAPE TOWN CITY HALL

The concert hall of the Cape Town City Hall, which was recently restored, is simply magnificent. I can't wait for it to open again, and to hear the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra in concert. I am a regular, I attend most of the orchestra's Thursday evening concerts. The City Hall, an iconic Edwardian building in Cape Town that was built in 1905, is very special.

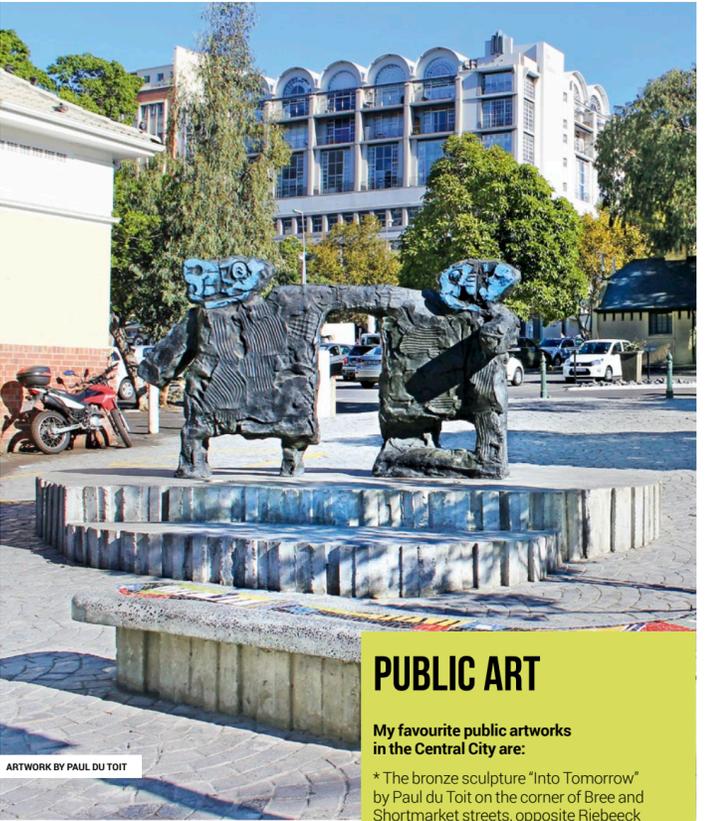
City Hall, Darling St



CAPE TOWN CITY HALL



THE COMPANY'S GARDEN



ARTWORK BY PAUL DU TOIT

PUBLIC ART

My favourite public artworks in the Central City are:

* The bronze sculpture "Into Tomorrow" by Paul du Toit on the corner of Bree and Shortmarket streets, opposite Riebeeck Square;

* The three enormous cut-out panels in the main foyer of the Cape Town International Convention Centre 1 building. They are called "Baobabs, Stormclouds, Animals and People" and are a collaboration by Brett Murray and TuiStefaansSamcuia;

* The ghost shark sculptures by Ralph Borland that swim three metres above the ground on Jetty Square on the Foreshore. The land was reclaimed from the sea. The Cape Town Heritage Trust has developed a new heritage route, The Original Shoreline, that traces the city's original shoreline from the Castle of Good Hope to the V&A Waterfront. We have uncovered stories about the people and places that shaped our history.

02 THE HERITAGE SHOP

The Heritage Shop in the Company's Garden is one of the Cape Town Heritage Trust's initiatives. We sell a range of ethically produced products all inspired by the Cape's cultural and natural heritage, including homeware, cards, prints and publications. Visitors can also experience the Cape's botanical heritage through the Cape Fynbos Tasting, where flavours of this ancient vegetation are explored in the form of tea, infusions, oils, vinegars, cordials, salts and digestives.

The Heritage Shop, Company's Garden, 021 426 2157

* The Cape Town Heritage Trust is an independent, private NPO set up to conserve the natural, cultural and architectural heritage of Cape Town and its environs. It welcomes donations to continue its work.



DISTRICT SIX MUSEUM

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Another special cultural institution, and a must for visitors to Cape Town and the Central City, is the District Six Museum. The stories told here are incredible, as are the displays. The current permanent exhibition, Digging Deeper, was launched 20 years ago and documents myriad aspects of the lives of the people of District Six. It is a rich and moving visual experience.

15 & 25A Buitenkant St, 021 466 7200

* Please consider supporting this Cape Town institution which is struggling financially due to previously enforced Lockdown restrictions. The museum covers its operational costs through income generated by visitors. You can help by donating R110 (the value of a guided visit) or making a monthly donation of R50 (the cost of an entrance fee). Once-off donations are also welcome.



07 KIRSTEN GOSS & MISSIBABA

I love the top end of Bree Street. It is very walkable and has a nice scale. These two retail venues, which celebrate local design and female entrepreneurship, are housed in one building. Close by is Skinny laMinx, which is a home décor shop cut from the same cloth. I love supporting women business owners and Kirsten Goss, Chloe Townsend (Missibaba) and Heather Moore (Skinny laMinx) certainly fit the bill.

Kirsten Goss (021 424 3453) & Missibaba (021 447 2045), 229 Bree St; Skinny laMinx, 201 Bree St, 021 424 6290

08 EARTH FAIR FOOD MARKET

Now called the St George's Food Market, it's lovely to see the food market in St George's Mall starting up again. I love the way owner Jacqui Simpson has turned this into a thriving concern, addressing people's need to eat ethically sourced culinary delights. There is such an interesting array of traders and it makes the mall come alive every Thursday.

St George's Food Market, every Thursday from 11h00 to 15h00

09 MUTUAL HEIGHTS

As an architect by training, I appreciate the Mutual Building with its extraordinary, renowned art deco features and design. It is quite glorious. When you look up and see the triangular windows and the bas-reliefs ... it is very impressive. It opened in 1940 as the offices of Old Mutual (then South African Mutual Life Assurance Society) but is now a residential building.

Mutual Heights, 14 Darling St

10 DORRANCE WINES

Owned by Christophe and Sabrina Durand, this urban winery is housed in Heritage Square, which is steeped in history. The Cape Town Heritage Trust restored Heritage Square in the 1990s. The Heritage Hotel is home to the oldest fruit-bearing vine in the country, which grows in the hotel's courtyard. It is therefore apt to have a winery here! Dorrance produces wines in the French tradition. The wine cellar and tasting room need to be experienced.

Dorrance Wines, 95 Hout St, 021 422 0695



EARTH FAIR FOOD MARKET