

Alliance Francaise to host Day By Day exhibition

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Alliance Francaise will host an exhibition of photographs, prints, and ceramics by ROBERT

SEMENIUK, PETRA ROHR RONENDAAL, RIKA FRANKEN, and WENDY KEORAPETSE PHATSIMA,

which opens November 20 until December 13. Themed Day by Day, the exhibition promises

to bring art enthusiasts the best works by the four exhibitors who in their

own right have made quite an impression with their artworks

About the exhibitors:
Ulrike Von Schwerin - Franken
Rika was born in 1960 in Hamburg, Germany. After high school she moved with her family to the Westerwald region where she trained as a ceramic designer in the potters' town of Hoehr-Grenzhausen from 1977 to 1980. She received her ceramic Diploma and travelled to Botswana to visit her relatives for three months, fell in love with the country, people and nature and decided to stay on. She met a local pottery woman of 82 years who taught her about traditional Tswana pottery and its difficult dung-firing technique. She worked for the National Museum and Art Gallery in Gaborone, designing showcases and taught Art and Ceramics for two years at the Gaborone Polytechnicon. She started "Pelegano Pottery", a pottery inspired by local and other African traditional designs in the village of Gabane, and trained six women in this specialised pottery work. This project was supported by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). After successfully localising the project (it is still running today), she travelled with her husband for two years through Africa on a motorbike and sidecar. On return they had their firstborn son Telian-Kabo in 1995 and acquired land just outside the capital Gaborone to build their artistic dream house. Twins Miran-Opele and Danyas-Leboko were born in 1998. With long-time friend and assistant Wendy Keorapetse Phatsima from Gabane, Rika established here their little home pottery called "Terra-Cotta".

The two women specialised in 'Raku', an ancient Asian firing technique, which they 'Africanised'. Pots are created as unique art pieces, designed with traditionally inspired or organic patterns and often have social or other messages. Botswana's nature remains the main inspiration, with seeds, leather, cloth, glass and even photos as part of the look or messages. "Terra-Cotta" Pottery has exhibited solo or with different artists at various venues over the past 15 years and won many national awards. The pottery was shown and sold successfully in Japan, Germany and the United Kingdom (UK). It is hoped and anticipated that this trend continues.

Wendy Keorapetse Phatshimo

Wendy was born in 1970 and completed her primary education in Gabane. Wendy, who is Rika's understudy, started working for her (Rika) in 1986 as a temporary employee to decorate Rika's home with a cow-dung cement mixture and local traditional patterns. After completing the project, she stayed on to learn pottery and later in her employment took throwing lessons. Her persistent interest in pottery and ceramic, including other literature helped her grow enormously, and over time she developed

her own style, leaning on traditional shapes, but with organic protrusions and fewer decorations and colours. She has exhibited alongside Rika on many exhibitions in the past two years, particularly at the Botswana National Museum, Botswana Craft, and Thapong Visual Art Centre.

Robert Semeniuk - International Photojournalist

Semeniuk, a native Canadian from Alberta, has been a full-time freelance Photojournalist, Author and Humanitarian / Environmental Rights Activist for nearly thirty years. He holds degrees in Environmental Studies (Culture) and Human Geology. Robert's graduate research introduced him to the Inuit, with whom he later lived for two years to complete an extensive assignment for National Geographic Magazine.

Since then his work has developed into intense but beautiful social statements and is used and published by numerous Governments and non-government organisations including the United Nations, the Red Cross (Geneva), the International Committee to ban Landmines, and the David Suzuki Foundation. "Landmines," particularly, and the plight of "War Affected Children" have

engaged him for much of his career. His extensive global experiences have brought him to the realisation that war, poverty, illiteracy, environmental degradation and health are intricately connected and the most obvious and appalling manifestation of failed capitalism. In 1989 he developed and coordinated an internationally acclaimed project that gave cameras to street children associated with 'the needle exchange' (drug abuse) in Vancouver, Canada. Semeniuk's work has earned over 40 award nominations including top honours from different National Magazine Awards, The Science Writers Association and The Canadian Association of Journalists.

He has been associated with the Black Star agency in New York for 25 years, and his photographic library contains 350,000 images from around 100 countries with much of his work in private and international collections, including the Canadian War Museum and the National Gallery of the Canadian Museum for Contemporary Photography. He lives with his wife and daughter on Bowen Island in western Canada. Semeniuk's work and current project "Personalizing the World Health Crisis" can be viewed online: www.robertsemeniuk.com.