

Art in the Gardens
24 August 2014
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Two months earlier, Alan Inngs, an artist from Johannesburg, came up with the idea of having an art in the gardens event where 10% of all the sales would go to SOAPkidz. I was very reluctant. I did not know anything about art but we were desperate to get funding. And this is how a whole new adventure started.

Firstly, I was once again fortunate to meet caring people

- Nana and the Pretoria National Botanical Garden assisted with all the venue arrangements.
- Helmutt and Alan promoted local artists. In turn, some of their artists offered to teach the children to paint – an activity they thoroughly enjoyed.
- Sharron Reynolds and her team offered to sell food.

For the first time, however, the public was involved – and I found myself forced to promote the event.

I was also responsible for the environmental activities, which should not have been a problem.

Unfortunately, things don't always turn out as expected.

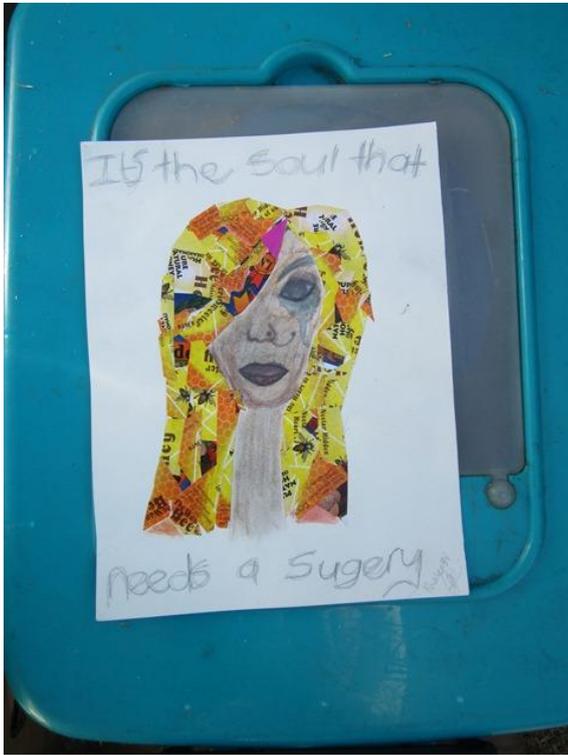
- Our posters were late so instead of advertising on the street poles for two weeks, we only had a week
- for some bizarre reason at least 600 people did not get my e-mails
- our environmental guys could not attend at the last moment
- our food sponsor didn't come through
- and a day before the event I was told that we were getting 20 more SOAPkidz.

Fortunately, we are crisis management experts.

- Arno Naude turned up with his snakes and changed everyone's opinion about snakes and other reptiles.
- Azalea and Mpho turned all the children into budding artists
- the 20 extra kids brought their own food
- 30 artists displayed their art
- Another artist taught the children how to transform a dustbin into a piece of art
- Tommi donated shoes to all the SOAPkidz
- Sharron and her team had fun cooking up a storm
- and I got to opportunity to show 12 teenage girls that it is possible to fit them all in my little Terrios. We laughed all the way to their home.

Although few paintings were sold, meaning that we did not get any funding this time – we discovered a winning recipe, where the different passion groups got together and really made a huge difference.

The kids, artists, SANBI and I trust the public loved the event. Our next one is soon, and this time, it will be an even bigger success – just because we will get the local children to become part of the SOAPkidz team.



A painting one of the children made



One of the team painting a dustbin



At first, 99% of the children were too scared to touch the snakes. But after the talk, they could not wait to have their picture taken with them. So yes, SOAPkidz makes a difference