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Community Arts starts photography courses

By DALE LAUTENBACH

THE Community Arts Project has been operating from its new home in Chapel Street, Cape Town for about 10 months now. The building has been fixed up and activities at the centre cover a wide spectrum.

Project director Derek Joubert has introduced photography as the newest addition to this spectrum. Although costs in this particular field are prohibitive the project has managed to secure a basic range of equipment on loan. The result is a nicely equipped darkroom but an insecure future and the more equipment that can be bought by the centre at reasonable prices the better.

There are two photography meetings each week — one on Wednesday nights for which enrolment remains open until the end of the week and one on Saturday mornings, mainly for school children and teenagers. Enrolment for the Saturday group is open for another two weeks.

The CAP works on a semester basis with the next semester beginning in May at which stage new enrolments will be accepted.

Photographers involved in the course as teachers are Paul Alberts, Pam Warne, Anthony Naidoo and Bee Berman.

"We want it to be an informal learning process with the students teaching themselves by getting out, taking photographs and then exploring the darkroom techniques themselves," said Bee. "We will always be on hand to help but not as formal lecturers."

The two groups will be working towards an exhibition to be held at the centre or in the

communities where they have worked.

"We want to encourage them to sell their pictures in their communities. Not for profit but to cover costs and gain a little for the next project," said Bee. "Everybody wants to own pictures of themselves and their children but they must support the project by buying these to keep the whole thing going."

"We also hope to show that photography can be important community work and not just happy snapping."

At the moment students must have their own 35 mm camera to work with but Derek Joubert is canvassing for support and hopes to build up a stock of cameras for students without their own equipment.

"We will always need equipment," he said. "We have a certain amount of money to buy used cameras, enlargers and other necessities but as we've said this is an expensive business and one can't forget about maintenance either. We feel that there must be professional photographers and companies who would sell us material and equipment at reasonable prices."

Membership for the course is R1 and the Wednesday group pays R5 per month to cover chemicals; the Saturday group for the youngsters R2.

Telephone the centre for further information or if you have unused equipment and materials to support the project — 45-3689.