

# SA artist gives the city of Rome a birthday present

*William Kentridge, one of South Africa's most accomplished and recognised artists, recently gave the city of Rome a birthday present in the form of a mural along the right-hand bank of the river Tiber.*

By **Caryn Edwards** - May 4, 2016



Image Credits: Getty Images

The 550m-long frieze entitled *Triumphs and Laments* depicts a procession of more than 80 figures from Roman mythology and is the artist's largest public work to date.

To celebrate the launch, Kentridge has devised a series of performances including live shadow play and musical performances from more than 40 musicians.



The figures, some of which are 12m high, do not tell a chronological history of Rome, instead, they represent “fragments [from which the public] can reconstruct a possible history,” says Kentridge.

To create the silhouettes, Kentridge used what is known as ‘reverse graffiti’ – a process which makes use of high-pressure water jets applied to giant stencils leaving behind a pattern created by the accumulated grime on the normally pale travertine embankment. The images will disappear after three to five years as pollution builds up and blackens the negative space.



To thank Kentridge for this work, which has been a long time coming, and which is supported by Marian Goodman Gallery, Galleria Lia Rumma and Goodman Gallery, more than 80 of his works will be on show at Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Roma (MACRO).

For Kentridge-enthusiasts in New York, some of Kentridge's works, represented by **David Krut Projects**, are on show at **1:54 NY** in Red Hook, Brooklyn this weekend – 6-8 May.

### **Caryn Edwards**

Mother. Tea drinker. Furniture re-arranger. Online shopper.