**Statement from the Studio of Nicola Green**

Nicola Green’s practice focuses on storytelling through portraiture. Nicola combines multiple techniques including painting, pattern making, textile, drawing and gilding. She is an artist and social historian, rooting her work in detailed research using the power of the visual image to tell important stories of our time. Her work over twenty-five years has focused on how we understand our differences, inspired by her mixed heritage children Her children have black and white South African heritage.

The Studio of Nicola Green was asked to create an exhibition for the 120th anniversary of the Rhodes Trust. Nicola did not take this decision lightly. The Studio agreed because we believe that in order to move forward we have to acknowledge our past together, participate in uncomfortable conversations, and actively work to dismantle structures of structural racism.

We have addressed the story of The Rhodes Trust, and the legacy of imperialism and white supremacy, by shining a light on the achievements of Rhodes scholars in their full global diversity. We have worked with the scholars to think about how their specific stories, across the diaspora, intersect with the past and the present of the Rhodes Trust, in order to reimagine our future.

The Studio of Nicola Green is committed to this process of imperfect and incremental change. We have collaborated with artists and researchers from communities that are under-represented within the creative industries and continue to engage in dialogue, developing a sustainable and intersectional practice.

**Statement from The Rhodes Trust**

Everyone at the Rhodes Trust recognises the difficult reality and legacy of our founding. It serves as a daily call to action for us to fulfill our role in the struggle for equity, equality and

inclusion of all peoples of diverse backgrounds and identities; to eradicate systemic racism and to confront the legacies of slavery, imperialism and white supremacy.

We cannot reconcile or heal if we do not acknowledge and see. In that spirit, we acknowledge that racism and other forms of exclusion have played a significant role in the history of the Rhodes Trust. While we have substantially changed to move beyond our past, we recognise much more work is required and we are committed to a proactive role in the realisation of racial justice.

We are still in the early stages of this transformation - and one of our first commitments is to become more open. The Rhodes Trust wants to engage the public and use the space it has to host the dialogue and learning that is the catalyst for action. We have invited The Studio of Nicola Green to collaborate with our community to create this exhibition, as it asks us to honestly and robustly consider our shared past and present, so we can take action to create a new future for racial equity together. It is a vision of the future to which we are firmly committed.