

# focus

## Artist captures a 'secret' village

AS PART of a national celebration of Women's Day this week, pamphlet blitzes are taking pace in most Peninsula squatter camps to focus attention yet again on the forced removals of people in the Western Cape from their homes. It's all part of the United Democratic Front's anti-election campaign.

But these pamphlets are unlikely to reach the squatters who live in the one-night shelters depicted in a series of five drawings by artist Louis

Jansen van Vuuren. The drawings are currently on show at the SA Association of Arts Gallery.

By day a few scattered beds, without bedding, and here and there a plastic bag, are all the visible signs of the plastic "village" which arises in an hour or so in the sand dunes, once the Administration Board's inspectors are safely on their way home. And every scrap of plastic and item of clothing is put safely away by the women, out of sight and usually under the ground, by dawn.



The frame work of Port Jackson branches



The skin is made of plastic sheeting

Louis first became aware of these ephemeral homes when he was doing voluntary work for the Red Cross during the big fire at Crossroads some months ago.

"I was handing out food parcels and on the way back we drove past this desolate area with iron single beds standing in the open and women doing bits of washing while the children played. It was such a strange sight on the landscape and I asked one of the social workers what was going on and

where were the houses? She told me

"You see nothing till 4pm and when you are safe from the officials the wonderful shelters over their heads dig out their plastic cloths, the branches and blankets and the entire village appears.

"And as the sun rises they take everything to be clear by 8.30 and on year in and year out."