

Savanna Comics' Choice Awards winners announced

The seventh annual South African Savanna Comics' Choice Awards (Savanna CCA) was held at the Lyric Theatre at Gold Reef City on 9 September 2017.

John Vlismas directed this year's show, which featured comedy sketches interwoven with standup routines as the 11 awards were handed out.

This annual variety show features Africa's top comedians and celebrities, journalists, and ministers join the entire comedy industry in honouring the best.



Themed 'The Freedom of Funny', the 2017 instalment celebrated the power that humour has to break down barriers and open borders between African countries and encourage the free flow of comedy talent.

It was the first year that the Savanna Pan-African Award was presented; the five nominees hail from Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Angola, and Lesotho. Comedians are involved in the selecting process, which means they rate their fellow comedians and decide which of them will receive the Waldo (the award's statuette).

The gist of the show was a hilarious parody of current affairs, with Hlaudi Motsoeneng (played by previous Savanna CCA award winner KG Mokgadi) interrupting the show to take over and 'save it' with a budget of R200m.

Former deputy finance minister Mcebisi Jonas was invited to present the Waldo to this year's Savanna Comic of the Year.

And the Waldo goes to

Loyiso Gola won the Breakthrough Award for selling out at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival along with his tour of Australia. Up-and-coming contender Thabiso Mhlongo won in the Savanna Newcomer of the Year category with previous newcomer winner Ebenhaezer Dibakwane receiving the Intermediate Award.

Funnyman Salesman (Collen Chepi) received the Non-English Comic Award for his vernacular routines. Mojak Lehoko received the Comic's Pen Award for his writing on several local television productions.



For a third time, the Nando's Best Friend of Comedy was awarded to Goliath & Goliath for their ongoing support and facilitation of South African comedy.

The Audience Choice Award is the only category where the public can vote, and this year's Audience Choice Waldo went to Elton Mduduzi Ntuli.

Skhumba Hlophe received two awards this year; The Flying Solo Award as well as the Savanna Comic of the Year award.

The inaugural Savanna Pan-African Comic of the Year Award went to Basketmouth (Bright Okpocha) from Nigeria.

The show's finale was a tribute to Cyril Green, who was announced as the Lifetime Achiever recipient shortly before he passed away in July.

A Savanna CCA special, featuring highlights from this year's awards show, will air on Vuzu Amp (DStv channel 103) in the coming weeks.

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