

# Artscape Theatre plans exciting lineup for Youth Month

Artscape Theatre is planning an exhilarating entertainment lineup for Youth Month, making it the biggest in the theatre complex's history.

The inaugural month-long youth festival, which runs from Saturday, 3 June to Saturday, 15 July this year, will feature a host of productions, showcasing the diverse talents of Cape Town's young people.

Speaking at the launch of the programme, Artscape CEO, Marlene le Roux said it's important to commemorate the sacrifices made by young people during the Soweto Youth Uprising on 16 June 1976. Their protest is especially relevant today when so many young South Africans are fighting for their right to a better life. Le Roux cited unemployment as the biggest issue facing the country's youth, pointing out that even those who complete tertiary education struggle to find employment due to lack of opportunities. To help address the situation, Artscape have joined forces with the Department of Education to give learners the opportunity to study subjects like drama, music and dance at school.



Artscape is dedicated to providing opportunities for Cape Town's young performers. Their Youth Jazz Festival, for example, is a stepping stone to the Cape Town International Jazz Festival. Behind the scenes, the theatre also offer an internship training course, teaching skills related to the arts such as stage management, lighting, sound, marketing and arts administration. Rising stars benefit from Artscape's Resource Centre which provides training, networking opportunities, internet services and industry information. "It's a privilege to have an organisation like Artscape where we can make an impact in young people's lives," Le Roux says.

## Magical start to the festival

The festival is set to begin on a magical note on Saturday, 3 June when the Cape Town College of Magic present their popular *Imagine! Family Magic Spectacular* for two shows only at 12:00 and 14:30. This annual production features South Africa's best children's entertainers whose illusions, comedic antics and unbelievable magic will have the whole family

enthralled.

Next up is the first of three community theatre productions on the programme: *Jing'elweni (hanging from a cliff)*, devised by its cast and director, Thando Baliso in partnership with Uprising Arts Project, tells the story of young Kwindla who clings to her education and books as an escape from the personal turmoil and poverty surrounding her. The play will be staged from Monday, 5 June to Thursday, 8 June at 19:30.

The city's finest hip-hop dancers will bring their explosive skills to the stage on Friday 9 and Saturday 10 June for *Cape Town's Most Wanted*, widely considered the biggest hip-hop show of the year.

Cape Town's most talented Isipantsula dancers will also be shining on Friday 9 and Saturday 10 June when they compete in the *Ayatshis'amateki Mapantsula*.

The community theatre musical, *Gomora* interrogates identity issues within the context of the new democratic South Africa and aims to address the frustration and anger that have become by-products of a society where values are demolished. With an age restriction of 16 due to strong language, it showcases from Tuesday 13 to Friday 16 June at 19:30.

A newbie to the Artscape youth month line up showcases Cape Town's best up and coming comedy acts on Friday 16 and Saturday 17 June when well-known comedian, dancer and actor Ambrose Uren hosts the Youth Comedy Festival.

Comedy aside, the theatre itself will be a hive of activity on Youth Day, Friday 16 June with the Desmond Tutu & Leah Foundation hosting health workshops in the Chandelier Foyer between 09:00 and 13:00, the ongoing exhibition by the Chrysalis Academy from 09:00 to 17:00 and entertainment by the Uitsig Rieldancers and the Buyelekhaya Dancers plus a live installation piece by Tatenda WekwaFazi and Sizo Mahlangu on the piazza.

Dumi & Betusile LIVE DVD Recording will offer a glamorous end to the day in the Artscape Theatre from 18:00. The award-winning gospel duo will be performing their newest releases alongside a full band for this evening of praise and worship.

## Community theatre and music

The final community theatre piece *Silent Cries* will be staged in the Artscape Arena from Monday 19 to Thursday 22 June at 19:30. The dance production, which also carries an age restriction of 16, is the retelling of a Durban incident where a group of African men were beaten and burnt to death, presumably on grounds of tribalism.

Two generations of music collide on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 June for *Smoortjies & Smoothies*, featuring Jitsvinger and Mervyn Africa. The inter-generational pair will explore how musical traditions are passed on like family recipes.

Cape Town's young budding jazz musicians will get a chance to show off their skills at the Artscape Youth Jazz Festival on Friday 30 June. Launched by Artscape in 2003, the project is aimed at skills development while the festival is the

culmination of a 10-week training programme where young jazz musicians get the chance to be mentored by some of the City's best, Amanda Tiffin (Musical Director), Camillo Lombard, Shaun Johannes, Marc de Kock and Frank Paco.

The popular Sekunjalo Edujazz concert is back on Saturday 1 July. This year the band will be joined by Dynamic Voices featuring Robin Pieters, Sasha-Lee Davids and Elwira Standili, as well as special guests Lana Crowster and Sammy Webber; for a two-and-a-half-hour musical extravaganza.

Artscape Youth Development's Borne Frees will end the Youth Month programme from Thursday 13 to Saturday 15 July with their dance production: *Hear Our Voices*. Artscape's Borne Frees project gives an opportunity to 100 young dancers from different schools across Cape Town to express their dreams and concerns through the art of dance.

Tickets for this year's Youth Month programme range from R40 to R300 and are available at Computicket or Artscape Dial-a-Seat on 021 421 7695. For more information about any of the productions, visit the [Artscape website](#).

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