

South African State Theatre presents 14th Youth Expressions Festival

The South African State Theatre is hosting the 14th annual Youth Expression Festival (YEF) set to feature young creatives whose works make vigorous commentary on affairs that impact contemporary youth.



Image supplied: The *Trash Gang* cast

Racism, corruption, mental health, cultural heritage, and xenophobia are some of the urgent themes ensuing from the works that will be presented at the festival from 15 June.

Festival curator, Thabiso Qwabe, says, “The voice of the youth will be given a platform on Africa’s biggest theatre stages and support will be given to our young creatives during another year affected by the pandemic. The festival presents a diverse selection of performances across all arts genres bringing to the forefront, topics faced in our communities.”



Artscape showcases young talent for #YouthMonth

7 Jun 2022



The YEF is aimed at empowering young people while remembering the essence of Youth Month in South Africa. Its 2021 edition will mark the 46th anniversary of the 16 June 1976 student uprising in Soweto, when young people protested the imposition of Afrikaans by the apartheid regime as a medium of instruction. The uprising ended tragically with hundreds of young people being brutally killed. This year’s Youth Month is being observed under the theme “Promoting sustainable livelihood and resilience of young people for a better tomorrow.”

Since its inception in 2008, the YEF has aimed to be an empowering platform of growth for many young artists that developed to be masters in their craft. It provides funding for productions and creates multiple employment for young artists using curated productions. The festival is inclusive of dramaturgy for artists' productions and workshops in partnership with the South African Revenue Services (Sars) and Dalro, which educate and empower young creatives on how to be tax compliant and on ways to legally protect their works.

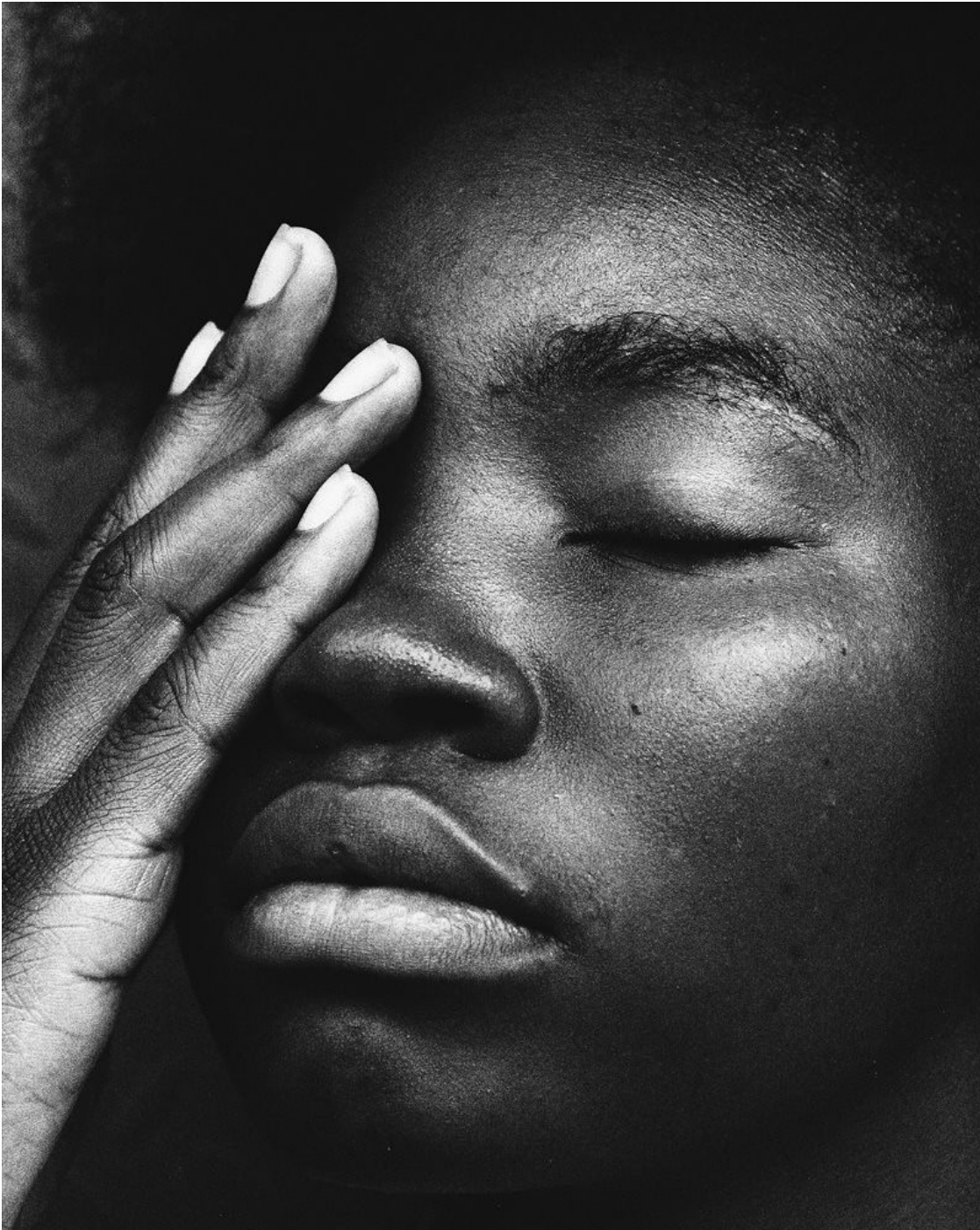


Image supplied: *Death of My Womb* will be presented at YEF

“To our stakeholders, we are looking forward to hosting you YEF 2022 and we always appreciate and value your support. As we work and play, as we build this industry come and join us for an entertaining and capturing festival with the future of our arts industry. Matla, aluta, express yourself!” concludes Qwabe.

Festival goers can anticipate a feast of exhilarating theatre, dance, visual arts, jazz, children’s theatre and fashion that is highly billed for this year’s instalment. Shows cost R80 at Webtickets, which is available at the theatre, [online](#) and Pick n Pay stores nationwide. Entrance to visual art and fashion exhibitions is free.

Youth Expressions Festival full programme

McGregor Must Die directed by Siphelo Mtshetsha | Drama | 15 – 17 June

Race relations test the burning love of a born-free black and white couple in this uncompromising drama. Sizwe’s grandparents view his love for Felicia as an ancestral insult and cultural abomination. When Sizwe gets a detailed narration from his grandfather of the incidences that took place during apartheid, he is caught in a dilemma.

Trash Gang directed by Azola Ntlantsana | Children’s Theatre | 15 – 17 June

Drama unfolds when the Office of The Premier at Bisho Head Offices announces a tender for the restoration of a rural school in the village of Qwebe Qwebe, Qhitsi in Cofimvaba. This is no ordinary tender, as the entire village and the school’s governing body have decided that they all want to be present at the judgement of who gets to be chosen for the project.

SAST Youth Choir| Choral Music | 18 June

Following the recently held auditions, the choir has new voices it cannot wait to unveil to its supporters and disciples of choral music at their upcoming concert this Youth Month. Founded in 2016, the choir has proved to be an instrumental platform where many emerging vocalists, composers and musical directors saw their craft blossom. The choir is currently being mentored and directed by Mandla Ntlaks and Teboho Kobedi.

Who’s Next? written and directed by Zukanye Sihlobo | Drama | 18 – 20 June

Who’s Next? is a play focusing on the mental health of a South African family and reveals how they handle issues surrounding depression and suicide. The diversity in thinking comes into play as we see how different generations handle situations.

Gqum Phantsi directed by Aqhama Ngozi | Children’s Theatre | 21 – 23 June

Gqum Phantsi is a folklore tale that speaks to every African child reminding them of self, encouraging individuality whilst teaching about the disadvantage of relying on gossip. The play’s aim is to work on the factors that lead to bullying such as hearsay, the feeling of being small or unseen and body shaming.

Death of My Womb directed and choreographed by Pieter Human | Drama | 22 and 24 June

24-year-old Zandile embarks on a journey from Kimberly to Johannesburg trying to find greener pastures, leaving behind her grandmother who, in trying to assist her to reach her goals refers her to an old friend, Gogo Phumzile. Upon Zandile’s arrival, Gogo Phumzile learns of her sexuality and resents her for it, she is determined to “change her”.

We Are Here directed by Kwena Peu | Music | 24 June

We Are Here is an extension of an annual offering by Poet Kwena Peu alongside his 13-piece band. The show is an experimental audio-visual experience that is led by poetry and live music. The pieces are accompanied by works from visual artists like photographer Andile Bhala, creative designers Mose Art (Danny Modiba) and AdaDwag (Anda Mncayi)

and contemporary dancer Nthabiseng Mokhali.

Bending Gender by Oarabile Sentle | Fashion Show | 25 June

Bending Gender is a gender fluid, non-binary fashion exhibition which makes the affirmation “fashion is a universal language.” Oracle Dynasty's “Genderless” clothing range is designed without a specific colour or texture in mind, it is simply designed to be able to fit a variety of body types and the fashion is fluid, not inherently masculine nor feminine.

Graveland directed by Bheki Ncube | Drama | 25 and 26 June

Graveland is a provocative artistic response to the turmoil of xenophobic attacks that have been taking place in South Africa. It tells the story of African families who have been affected by these injustices, who therefore seek to mend their wounds but the attempts seem to make the situation worse.

Bheki Mkhwane Quartet directed by Bheki Mkhwane | Music | 26 June

A brief history and narration of South African Jazz History through the medium of music. The quartet-style musical ensemble and narrations aim at educating young people about the authenticity of their heritage.

Izinkolelo directed by Sylvester Mathabatha | Dance | 27 – 29 June

Izinkolelo tells the story of young African men and women who have to deal with family members who constantly impose religious beliefs on them without considering their thoughts and feelings.

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