

Artfluence Human Rights Award winners announced

The Artfluence Human Rights Award winners have been announced. The Awards were launched in 2021 by the Centre for Creative Arts at the University of KwaZulu-Natal to honour and celebrate artists who are defenders of human rights.



Beverley Ditsie, Ifaan Mangera and Don Mattera are the winners of the Artfluence Human Rights Awards 2022.

Filmmaker, gender and gay rights activist Beverley Ditsie has been named the 2022 Artfluence Human Rights Champion.

In 1995, Ditsie marked an iconic moment in UN history when the UN, for the first time, addressed LGBTQ rights. Ditsie delivered an impassioned address at the UN International Women's Conference held in Beijing on the need to enshrine LGBTQ rights inequality laws.

"If the World Conference on Women is to address the concerns of all women, it must similarly recognise that discrimination based on sexual orientation is a violation of basic human rights", said Ditsie when she addressed delegates at the conference.



Artfluence Human Rights festival goes live

26 Apr 2022



Ditsie was also a cofounder of South Africa's inaugural Pride Parade held in Johannesburg in 1990. Since then, she has become a leading international figure in gay rights activism.

"We are honoured to present the 2nd annual Artfluence Human Rights Champion award to Beverly Ditsie because it was her activism, courage and leadership that played a vital role contributing, amongst other activists, to shaping equality rights in the South African Constitution", said Ismail Mahomed, the director of the Centre for Creative Arts at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Additional award winners

This year, the Centre for Creative Arts will introduce two additional awards. The Artfluence Lifetime Achievers Award will honour a veteran defender of human rights in South Africa. The inaugural Artfluence Human Rights Lifetime Achievement

award will be presented to poet, author, journalist and community activist Don Mattera.

Growing up in Sophiatown and harassed by the security police for his political activism, Mattera was banned from 1973 to 1982. He spent three years under house arrest. During the resistance to apartheid, he helped form the Union of Black Journalists and the Congress of South African Writers. He worked as a journalist for the *Sunday Times*, *The Sowetan* and the *Weekly Mail* (now known as the *Mail and Guardian*). His book *Memory is the Weapon* is a living testament of his early years which continues to inspire.



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The Artfluence Youth Activism Award is presented to a person under the age of 35 whose contributions to the struggle for social justice are both visionary, energetic and impactful. The inaugural Artfluence Youth Activism award will be presented to Irfaan Mangera, the youth programmes coordinator at the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation.

Speaking at the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training in September 2021, Mangera said that young people continued to be excluded from the economy and positions of power. He chose to become a human rights educator because it was the space and the platform in which he could create the most change and impact and influence the lives of young people. His work encouraged young people in South Africa to take charge, organise themselves, mobilise young people in their communities and develop consciousness.

“At a time in South Africa where political leadership in South Africa is at its lowest ebb, the Artfluence Human Rights Awards seeks to celebrate artists whose legacy as defenders of human rights is inspiring and which can revitalise a moral compass that is based on South Africa’s constitutional values”, said Mahomed.

The 2nd annual Artfluence Human Rights festival, supported by the uMngeni Municipality and uMngeni Tourism and presented by the Centre for Creative Arts, will take place from 3 – 8 May 2022 as both a live and online festival.

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