

Award-winning *Shaka Zulu* returns by popular demand

The six-time Naledi Theatre Award-winning musical *Shaka Zulu: The Gaping Wound* is returning to the South African State Theatre (SAST).



Image supplied: Director Meshack Mavuso Magabane

Its return follows the overwhelming public demand it garnered from enchanting spectators and critics alike and playing to full houses which warranted an extension when it premiered last year.

The exhilarating production retains its stellar cast led by Thembinkosi Chagwe as Shaka Zulu, Nkanyiso Bhengu, Mduduzi Mabaso and Zodwa Radebe.

“In the last seven years, we agreed with the CEO Dr Sibongiseni Mkhize that we would develop a new cadre of artists and develop South African musicals. Importantly, we agreed to give the musicals enough time to grow and develop thereby providing longer seasons especially if the audiences have an appetite for that work. *Shaka Zulu* is one such work. The overwhelming support from our audiences and its ability to draw family audiences deserves another season,” said the SAST’s artistic director Aubrey Sekhabi.

The production dominated the 17th Naledi Theatre Awards in May when it walked away with six awards from categories Best Choreography, Best Musical Director, Best Costume Design, Best Director of Musical Theatre Production, Best Supporting Performance, and Best Lead performance in a musical.

Its triumph prompted a visit to the Durban Playhouse, a month before the musical's stage-to-screen film screening at Sterkinekor Theatres in June this year.

Written by the late revered playwright Bongani Linda, *Shaka Zulu: The Gaping Wound* tells the story of the world-renowned warrior king, uShaka ka Senzangakhona who was a visionary, a diplomat, a military strategist, and a nation-builder who wanted to establish one strong and inclusive nation in Southern Africa.



His life and times are captured through the eyes of a praise singer, taking audiences on a journey of historical imagination to the glorious past and leading them back through exhilarating song, praise poetry and energetic Zulu dancing to a proudly and unapologetically pan-African future.

King Shaka Zulu is considered to have been an eminent shepherd of unity who was determined to establish one mighty African Nation. Before he could realise his vision, he was assassinated in a regicide spearheaded by his brothers Dingane and Mhlangana, assisted by the warrior king's trusted servant Mbopha ka Sithayi. Upon his death in September 1828, he is believed to have cursed his assassins by warning them that their rule shall be of bloodshed and mayhem.

Director Meshack Mavuso Magabane believes the curse Shaka Zulu made in the face of betrayal by those he trusted most, continues to haunt the country to this day.



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4 Nov 2022



“Shaka Zulu: The Gaping Wound is an emotional plea by present generations to the spirit of Shaka to forgive us and bring an end to bloodshed that has engulfed our daily lives despite the attainment of political emancipation. It is clear then that as a nation we need to seriously deliberate about the painful reality of our complicated past before we could confidently map the way forward into a brighter, peaceful and prosperous future,” said Magabane.

Shaka Zulu: The Gaping Wound will run from 8 to 27 November. Tickets can be purchased [here](#).

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