

All the Standard Bank Young Artist Award winners for 2023

The 2023 Standard Bank Young Artist (SBYA) Award winners have been announced: they collectively represent a celebration of talent, creativity, accomplishment, and human ingenuity.



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Now in its 39th year, the SBYA awards are the country's leading arts honour conferred by the National Arts Festival and Standard Bank on deserving South African artists.

This year the awards go to Lorin Sookool (Dance), Darren English (Jazz), Zoe Modiga (Music), Angel Ho (Performance Art), Kgomotso 'MoMo' Matsunyane (Theatre), and Stephané Conradie (Visual Art).

These artists join a prestigious pantheon of award-winning artists who've gone on to shape South Africa's creative economy and art history. They receive a cash incentive, as well as a commission to premier new works on the Main Programme of the 50th National Arts Festival, taking place in Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown) from 20 June to 30 June 2024.

The artists

These are six of the brightest young creative talents working and living in South Africa today.

Lorin Sookool (Dance)

A 30-year-old contemporary dance artist with an interdisciplinary practice encompassing performance, sound, photography, film and costuming. This year, she performed a solo offering for the Liverpool Biennial: *Woza Wenties* and is fast receiving international recognition.

Darren English (Jazz – Multi-instrumentalist)

Darren English (32) recently won his second Global Peace Song Award (GPSA) in Los Angeles for his song *Requiem* in

Peace. His star has risen in South Africa, Europe and the US, where he has spent an extended period studying, performing and recording with artists that reflect a wide range of music styles.

Zoe Modiga (Music)

Thirty-year-old Zoe Modiga is a singer, songwriter and performer with a background in classical and jazz training and who is equally comfortable in House, Indie and Pop. She has already generated a long list of achievements, from multiple selections for the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Band to winning the SAMRO Overseas Scholarship Competition, and reaching the Top 8 of The Voice SA.

Angel Ho (Performance Art)

Angel Ho (29) is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice extends across musical production and performance, DJ work, performance art, costuming, artistic direction and film. Being a feminine gender non-conforming queer African body, Ho combines performance, drag and the digital space to blur and deconstruct contemporary culture.

Kgomotso 'MoMo' Matsunyane (Theatre)

MoMo is a 35-year-old actor, playwright and director with a visionary outlook and ability to create opportunities for herself. She was head writer and performer in this year's big Naledi Award winner *Hlakanyana: The Musical* where she was also named best supporting actress.

Stephané Conradie (Visual Art)

While primarily trained as a printmaker, Stephané Conradie (32) is known for her bricolage assemblages. Her work sits in the permanent collections such as the Leridon Collection, France; Wits Art Museum Collection; UNISA Art Gallery; Spier Collection, South Africa and Gautreaux Collection, Kansas P.O.C Galila Barzilai-Hollander, Belgium.

Says Yolisa Koza, head of Brand Experience at Standard Bank: “– This year’s award winners show how their collective and individual boldness, ingenuity, and the human spirit can find and create solutions for understanding our transitioning world by fostering artistic growth. It is in this regard that for the past four decades, Standard Bank has built a sustainable legacy of nurturing and promoting young artistic talent through its significant investment into the arts and thereby changing the lives of hundreds of artists.

“We congratulate this year’s winners who have demonstrated exceptional ability in their chosen field. We look forward to seeing what they achieve in the years ahead, both in Africa and internationally. We will continue to support world-class local arts initiatives, inspire artists to strive for excellence, help their dreams come true and, through this, showcase our incredible South African talent on the international stage.”

Says Monica Newton, CEO of the National Arts Festival, “A primary role of all artists in society is to reflect on and give meaning to their individual and our collective experience. These artists have been selected because their voices stand out

and their work resonates with multiple audiences in a myriad of ways. Covering multiple disciplines, the 2023 SBYA Award winners once again provide stimulating, path-charting, and dynamic works equal to and above prevailing dilemmas and inspiring creative solutions and thinking in our times. We look forward to showcasing their works at the 2024 National Arts Festival.”

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