

Booking opening imminent for the National Arts Festival

Bookings for The 2016 National Arts Festival, to be held from 30 June to 10 July, 2016, will open on Monday, 9 May when the full programme will go live on its website.

Responding to user feedback and ongoing research, the website has been redesigned to make it simpler to find shows and book for them, said the festivals CEO, Tony Lankester. “The look of the site will largely be familiar, but we have carefully analysed our users’ experiences and made subtle tweaks to the process of registering and booking,” he said. Another online innovation is the introduction of print-at-home tickets to reduce box office queueing time, and the introduction of some new payment methods online, including the increasingly popular Snapscan app.

In terms of the programme, Sello Maake kaNcube will play Can Themba in The House of Truth, whilst Abrahamse and Meyer productions, Ruth First: 117 Days and The Day on Which a Man Dies are sure to draw a crowd. Perennial festival favourite Pieter-Dirk Uys returns with his autobiographical piece The Echo of a Noise, and Alan Committie brings his hilarious one-man comedy, Love Factually.



Hot theatre talents will add plenty of energy to the Solo Theatre programme, where Jemma Kahn will present In Bocca Al Lupo. Penny, starring Zethu Dhlomo, tells the story of a young woman’s struggles to make it in the arts; and Fiona Ramsay is a treacherous victim in Blonde Poison, a tale that questions the most difficult forms of forgiveness.

Diverse music genres

This year’s festival showcases a diverse number of music genres. Apart from the country’s favourite jazz offering, the Standard Bank Jazz Festival, other genres share the spotlight as Prime Circle and the African Prince of hip hop, AKA, are featured along with a host of other talents including Caiphus Semenya, Ringo Madlingozi, The Muffinz and Asanda Mqiki.

Keeping it in the family, the Standard Bank Young Artist Award winner for Music, Avigail Bushakevitz (violin) will be joined in concert by her brother, Ammiel Bushakevitz (piano). Uruguayan multi-instrumentalist Mateo Mera vies for the rhythm spotlight with Colombia's Vallenato King, Avaro Meza, in a focus on international music and Kathleen Tagg brings that focus right back home in a programme of piano pieces from African composers.

Performance artist Gavin Krastin will present Pig Headed, whilst an intriguing Visual Arts programme includes exhibits by Moses Thladi (Unearthed) and Standard Bank Young Artist Award winner, Mohau Modisakeng with his exhibition, Lefa La Ntate, a poignant moment of grieving and catharsis and a critical response to the historical legacy of exploitation and current living experience of many black South Africans.

Think!Fest – a series of panel discussions on topics ranging from the #fallist movement and the plight of refugees in migration to decriminalising marijuana and decolonising the arts – promises additional brain food for festival-goers.

The energy of the festival is as much on the streets as on the stages and this year promises plenty to fuel debate, discussion and celebration around the tables of Grahamstown's permanent and pop-up bars and restaurants.

For more, go to www.nationalartsfestival.co.za

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>