

# *The Unlikely Secret Agent* returns for Artscape Women Humanity Arts Festival

The Fleur du Cap Theatre Award-winning and multiple-nominated production *The Unlikely Secret Agent* will be performed at the Artscape Women Humanity Arts Festival.



Image by Jeremeo Le Cordeur: Erika Marais and Sanda Shandu

Presented by Unlikely Productions, the play was nominated for a total of eight Fleur du Cap Theatre Awards, with Paul du Toit winning Best Director.

Du Toit also adapted the story for the stage, based on Ronnie Kasrils' Alan Paton Award-winning novel *The Unlikely Secret Agent* which explores the brave journey of Eleanor, Kasrils' wife and a clandestine agent for the Underground ANC, as she navigates her escape from Apartheid South Africa.



## Live Theatre at Nouveau Cinemas

Daniel Derksen 15 Jul 2022



Erika Marais was nominated for Best Actress for her portrayal of Eleanor Kasrils, with fellow cast members Gideon Lombard, Ntlanhla Morgan Kutu and Sanda Shandu all nominated for Best Supporting Actor Awards. Paul du Toit was part of the original cast, performing the role of Ronnie Kasrils, for which he received a Best Actor award nomination.

Gold Standard Bank Ovation Award winner Wessel Pretorius joins the cast to take over this role for the run at Artscape.

“It is about a remarkable woman who fought against the evils of the Apartheid regime to gain freedom for herself and thousands of others....acted out on stage with belief, courage and passion by the players...This play should be seen by everyone who looks to overthrow evil dictatorships.....A must for school children to learn and grow from their own history,” said Richard Loring.

The story follows Eleanor, an unassuming, young single mother who is arrested at Griggs Bookstore where she works in Durban and taken for questioning. The police are on the hunt for her lover, the notorious “terrorist”, Red Ronnie Kasrils. She finds herself detained under the 90-day detention act and brutally interrogated. They will “break her or hang her”.



Image by Jereméo Le Cordeur: Gideon Lombard, Erika Marais, Sanda Shandu, Ntlanhla Kutu and Paul du Toit

It's 1963, South Africa. The country is on a knife edge. Political protest, sabotage and violence have engulfed the country. Government forces of the Apartheid regime, under Hendrik Verwoerd, brutally suppress resistance. Under the State of Emergency, the feared Special Branch of the police arrest anyone suspected of being involved in underground activities.

Ronnie is wanted for his involvement in a string of sabotage bombings of electricity pylons, the Durban post office and the offices of the Special Branch. There is no point in her resisting, the police “know everything”. But do they really? Eleanor is keeping a secret. She is a clandestine agent for the Underground ANC. But she must protect her comrades and Ronnie. She makes the daring decision to fake a nervous breakdown in order to be transferred to a psychiatric institution. From there, she begins to plot her escape.

*The Unlikely Secret Agent* will be performed at the Artscape in the Arena Theatre on 4, 5, 6 and 9 August at 6.30pm and 6,7 and 9 August at 2.30pm. Tickets are R190 and are available [here](#).