

Dance Umbrella 2017 releases programme

The Dance Umbrella festival programme is out and features over 50 new works, with a strong focus on young artists. Now in its 29th year running, the festival will take place at the Wits Theatre Complex, Braamfontein from 23 February to 5 March.

The programme at a glimpse

The full programme includes 13 commissioned works, 13 new works and six Johannesburg premieres. Read about some of the works below:

Nhlanhla Mahlangu's *The Workers CHANT* at the Workers Museum, Newtown Johannesburg on 23 and 24 February at 19.00. *The Workers CHANT* celebrates those unsung heroes who built the city of Johannesburg with their bare hands; the black migrant workers who lived in compounds - the Workers' Museum was a compound - and also the atrocities experienced by men, women and children during those times.

Moeketsi Koena and Gaby Saranouffi's *Corps* at the Wits Downstairs Theatre on 24 and 25 February at 19.00. *Corps* explores the transporting links that connect the real and the unreal through photography and dance and it creates a link between today's world and the past through the ancestral history of South Africa, Madagascar and France.



Jazzart Dance Theatre's new work *Space* by the artistic director Sifiso Kweyama, at The Wits Theatre on 24 and 25 February at 20.00. This work highlights the choreographer's connection to a space he once occupied. He longs for this unrestricted space... which allowed him to be free... to be himself.

Mamela Nyamza's *De-Apart-Hate* - a potent weapon to make the oppressor understand that he/she is human and not superior over other human beings; the work is a discourse that starts with the struggles of South Africa as a nation without dwelling on race and ideology, at the Wits Amphitheatre on 24 and 25 February at 21.00. *De-Apart-Hate* was created in residency at the University of Maryland at The Clarice Performing Arts Centre, Washington USA.

The Fringe Programme on Sunday 26 February at 10.00 at the Wits Theatre will feature nearly 30 new works from young choreographers. The programme includes Julia Burnham (Vuyani Dance Company), Thembinkosi Puwane (Eastern Cape), Qiniso Zungu and Teresa Mojela and promises to be a discovery of new and exciting contemporary dance and performance.

The South African born choreographer Rudi van der Merwe's installation work *Trophée*, on 25 and 26 February at 15.00 on the field at the National School of the Arts, is an outdoor performance with a strong affinity to visual and land art and with a reference to the submission of women (trophy wife), of nature (hunting trophy) and the other by means of war throughout history.

On Tuesday, 28 February and Wednesday, 1 March at the Wits Theatre at 19.00, a Triple bill will feature *Moving into Dance* Mophatong's Oscar Buthelezi and Sonny Boy Motau's new works: *Stuck Souls* (Buthelezi) reflects on the world today as it becomes lost in waste and asks "How do we stop this?" and *I am NoT...* (Motau) speaks to self-discovery and venturing into new and unknown spaces within ourselves: both body and mind, and Vuyani Dance Theatre's Lulu Mlangeni with the solo *Page 27*.

Also on 28 February at the Wits Downstairs Theatre at 20.00, Songezo Mclizeli will premiere *Perspective*. *Perspective* generates imagery framed within socio-political themes; it commits to exploring diverse culture and evolution and it investigates everyday life scenarios, constantly re-creating the imagery via the body.

Other works to look out for include Lucky Kele's *Dawn*; Fana Tshabalala and Constanza Macras/Dorky Park's *In The Heart of the Country*; Gaby Saranouffi, Desiré Davids and Edna Jaime's *LADY, LADY*; Kieron Jina and Marc Philipp Gabriel's *Down to Earth*; Alan Parker's *Detritus for One*; Kirvan Fortuin's *When they Leave*; and Tamara Osso's *Tutu*.

Closing the festival on Sunday, 5 March is the Young Artists Programme where six young choreographers will present new works. Go to www.danceforumsouthafrica.co.za for more information on the Dance Umbrella programme.

"In addition to the jam-packed programme the festival will also host, between February 27 and March 4, a series of Master Classes at the Hillbrow Theatre Dance Studio which will be facilitated by selected choreographers and there'll also be the popular Face to Face conversations with choreographers", says the artistic director, Georgina Thomson.

Dance Umbrella 2017 is funded by the Mzansi Golden Economy Fund, Department of Arts and Culture; the Gauteng Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture and the National Arts Council. Other partners include the French Institut South Africa; Goethe Institut Johannesburg; Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia; Splitbeam; Outreach Foundation; Wits Theatre and Creative Feel Magazine.

Booking options

Tickets from R20 to R120 are available from Computicket 083 915 8000 or www.computicket.com or call 011 492 2033 to reserve tickets.

For block booking discounts and programme updates, please call 011 492 2033 or email info@danceforum.co.za

To book a place for the Master Classes please call Lethabo at 011 492 2033. For updates on the Master Classes go to www.danceforumsouthafrica.co.za.

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