

## Social Media News

2013 Issue 2



### Launch of the Downstairs Theatre



A new and exciting collaboration between The National School of the Arts, Well Worn Theatre Company and ASSITEJ SA.

In a bold and inspired move that will see experienced, professional theatremakers rub shoulders daily with NSA Learners and emerging young artists, the Drama Department at the NSA has opened their doors to artist-in-residence **Kyla Davis (Drama 1998)** and her Well Worn Theatre Company. The Downstairs Theatre will grow to be a vibrant and bustling arts venue and a much-needed home in the heart of Jo'burg for original and experimental work, combined with Well Worn's trademark focus on devised theatre and Theatre for Youth.



"Standing on the stage and sparking conversations with visiting artists, teachers, learners and (not forgetting) the grounds staff, filled me with a vigorous and joyful determination to ensure that this exciting and forward-thinking collaboration is a huge success. I am certain that we are running full-tilt into a challenging, provocative, satisfying, boundlessly creative and inspiring time ahead. I can't wait. Come play with us! And more importantly, watch this space....."

Message from **Ismael Mahomed**, Festival Director of Grahamstown Arts Festival and member of the NSA Trust Foundation.

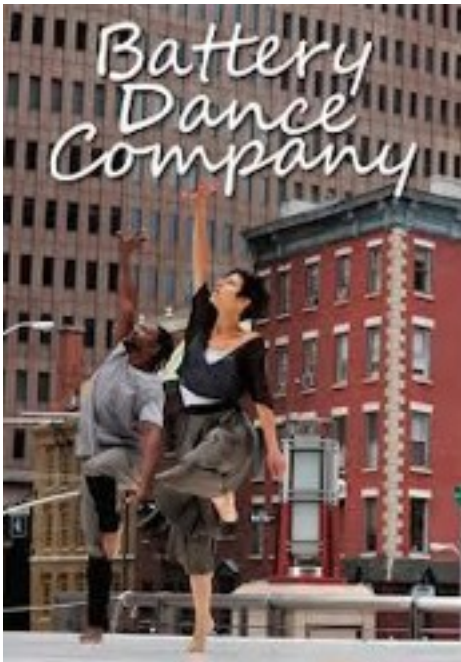
Just in case anyone didn't know. KYLA is an acronym for Kickstart Your Lovely Ambition. This is one kick-ass artist who puts her money where her mouth is.



From an industry point of view this year's FAME festival has certainly carved out exciting new directions:

1. Collaborations between professionals and school learners at a performance, promotional and organisational level.
2. Opportunities for learners to work backstage and thus get valuable behind the scene experiences.
3. A new exciting initiative headed by a dynamic alumnus of the school.
4. Arts sector celebrities showing stronger allegiance to the school's vision
5. Increased buy-in from the media
6. The development of the Downstairs Theatre as a "fringe" to the festival.
7. Arts managements watching the developments with increased interest.
8. Independent companies recognising the possibilities of year round collaboration through the Downstairs Theatre. This in turn will give learners increased opportunities to make smarter choices about career possibilities.

All the above are great steps ahead and a feather in the cap of everyone that led and participated in this year's festival. I was there for two nights and the energy was just spot on!



Robin Cantrell from the Battery Dance Company in New York taught a sequence of master classes and creative workshops for students at The National School of the Arts. The student population at the school was noteworthy for being inclusive of all ethnicities. The students were also of mixed backgrounds in terms of prior training – some had advanced ballet technique, speaking of years of prior training. Others were less schooled in classical technique but possessed obvious natural talent and were progressing swiftly, especially in the modern and creative arenas.

The **NSA Drama Department** will be entering into a mentor project with Alex High and their drama teacher. This will entail Ms Hocking lending plays/monologues/relevant notes etc to the school for a few weeks at a time for them to utilize.

The Alex Matric class will visit the NSA drama department every 4/6 weeks. They will largely be having foundation classes with Ms Hocking when she has a free period. They will also have the odd warm up/master class with the artist in residence - Kyla Davis.

On occasion the learners will observe a grade 12 drama class.

Tiffany Hocking: "I feel that this mentorship program is incredibly important and the resources that Alex have are dismal. They have very little, if any, help from the GDE and yet have shown great progress and enthusiasm, and we need to support this progress. This is our way to give back."



## Fully Committed

There were loads of light relief and laughter when **Pieter Bosch Botha (Drama 2003)** burst onto the Old Mutual Theatre on the Square stage, playing 36 characters in Becky Mode's Off Broadway hit comedy show,

Having received 5-star rave reviews in New York, including the NY Times, and listed as one of Time Magazine's Top 10 plays of 2000, this is a hilarious look behind the scenes of a fictional five star restaurant.

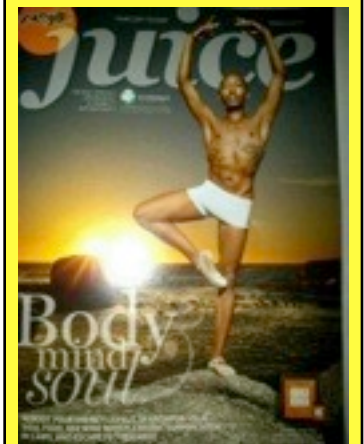
Full Article: <http://www.mysandton.co.za/social/fully-committed>



## Snippets



**Fly Chix**  
(Zeena Edwards - Dance 2006 and Joy Ragebult Dance 2008) is the title of the ten-part series that started on Vuzu. Fly Chix is an all-female, fabulous and fresh South African group made up of talented singers and dancers Denise, Joy, Zeena and Takkies. The show revolves around their introduction to the music industry. Viewers will be given an all access look into their lives and most importantly how their families deal with their career choice as well as the obstacles that are part and parcel of the cut-throat music industry.



**Keke Chele (Drama 2005)** on the front cover of Mango Juice.



## Management Today's 35 Women Under 35 2012: Migration Nation

Nadja Lossgott (Art 2000) was selected on MT's list of young, female, high achievers in the business world in the United Kingdom.

Nadja received the award as Top Creative Director in the advertising business in 2010. and was then headhunted by advertising group AMV.BBDO to become an art director in 2010.

Career highlight: 'The opportunity to work at one of the best ad agencies in the world, and being able to soak up knowledge from industry legends.'

Best piece of advice: 'The sum is usually greater than the parts, so let yourself be part of great teams. And there's no substitute for hard work.'

## Spanish dance with a twist

True or false: South African dancers and teachers have taken Spanish dance to Spain?

True! In 1989 the Spanish Dance Society, based in Joburg, took over a syllabus of iconic Spanish dances to be taught in universities and dance schools. In celebration of this extraordinary feat, Spain has honoured no fewer than four South Africans, who have nurtured and continue to preserve Spanish dance techniques and traditions worldwide, with a knighthood. The most recent was the bestowing, on February 1, of **Rhoda Rivkind** with the Encomienda de la Orden de Isabel la Católica (the Order of Isabella the Catholic) on behalf of the king of Spain and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation.



Rivkind, a principal dancer with the Mercedes Molina Spanish Dance Theatre, who in 1963, as Luisa Cortes, was invited to join flamenco master Luisillo's company in Spain, was honoured for her service as the founding executive administrator of the Spanish Dance Society.

Rivkind's legacy is also firmly rooted at The National School of the Arts where she taught Spanish dance as a matric subject from 1986 to 2008.



**Amanda Kay (Dance 1997)** was born in Johannesburg South Africa, and graduated at The National School of the Arts. Upon graduation, she moved to New York City to study at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center.

Amanda then went on to spend the next decade working as a professional dancer in New York City, as well as internationally. Amanda has performed extensively in the United States, Australia, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

Amanda used twenty years of classical training to move into a number of dance mediums i.e. film, television, theatre, industrial and corporate.

She has performed Off Broadway, in Broadway shows, in modern dance companies, in ballet companies and has performed as a touring soloist guest artist.

Amanda resides in London where she works as a dancer, actress, model and TV presenter. Amanda works between Europe and the United States throughout the year.



## A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY AT MONTECASINO THEATRE

*Without a Hitch* is a new farce written by exciting up and coming playwright **Jessica Richards (Drama 2006)** who makes her debut as writer and comedic actress in this performance piece, while the Godfather of farce himself, Tobie Cronje, brings over four decades of theatre experience to direct it.

Jessica's love for theatre began at The National School of the Arts where she matriculated with an FET Certificate in Performing Arts back in 2004. Then, in 2008 she completed her National Diploma in Drama at the Tshwane University of Technology.

While she may be debuting *Without a Hitch*, she has in fact garnered quite some theatrical experience. From directing the likes of educational theatre programme *Hooked On Books* to performing in *Wizard of Oz* and *The Pied Piper* at the National Children's Theatre, to name some, she was most recently seen in *Myth of Andrew and Jo* at the Con Cowan Theatre in the Reading Gay Festival in the UK, in 2011.

Jessica's career, although in its infancy has thus far enjoyed quite some variety, including stage managing, directing, voice-over work, short film script-writing, and tap dancing.

Performance times are: Wednesday to Saturday 20h15 with a 17h15 show every Saturday and a 15h15 show every Sunday.

## Eating, sleeping and living art

*From interior design to outdoor exhibitions, Nicholas Kerr (Art 1995) has found his niche in the creative world.*

With a love of art and street culture, a creative collective called *Fiftymillimeter* has been standing out in originality with conceptual art and design.

Artists Nicholas Kerr, Mike de Villiers and Ronell Botes work on projects ranging from interior and exterior customisations for office and studio spaces to events and functions.



Office spaces showcasing the interior design work of *Fiftymillimeter* are found at Dapper Streetwear, Munks Concepts Stores, Pizza Point franchises, Toxic Candy and Trans-Africa Media. The collective completed the interior design of a studio at 24 Carrots and has devised interior design for Multimedia Solutions and others.

Exterior designs are found at Standard Bank Big Bash at Johannesburg's Park Station, where they painted eight rooms.

Kerr says life is all about art — "art to me is live, eat, sleep". He studied fine art at The National School of the Arts in Johannesburg and has pretty much been into art his whole life. A variety of the group's work is available on the website [fiftymilli-meter.co.za](http://fiftymilli-meter.co.za).

Full article:  
<http://mg.co.za/article/2013-02-08-eating-sleeping-and-living-art>

## Snippets



Results of our **Oscars Night** held 31 January:  
**Grade 8:**  
Best Actor: Hopewell,  
Best Actress: Puleng and Thokozile.  
Most Improved: Bongani  
**Grade 9:**  
Best Actor: Jhervan  
Best Actress: Tshepo,  
Most Improved: Ephatia  
**Grade 10:**  
Best Actor: Matthew.  
Best Actress: Miche,  
Most Improved: Diana  
**Grade 11:** Best Actor:  
Azile,  
Best Actress: Simone,  
Most Improved: Lerato



At a recent awards ceremony held at UJ, **Michelle Longman (Dance 2009)** emerged as the overall winner in the BDO UJ Accounting Studies Thought Leadership Project.

## Frisky, colourful *Boylesque* at Foxwood



Three friends from The National School of the Arts have pooled their talents to conceive “Boylesque,” a frisky, colourful, burlesque show.

Diminutive **Sibu Radebe (Drama 1999)**, an award-winning TV and stage personality, whose year-end pantomime antics at Joburg Theatre endeared him to thousands, actor/dancer **Brett Anolik (Drama 1999)**, and **Stanimir Stoykov (Art 1996)**, of “Doo Bee Boobies” fame, needed to tackle something creative.

“We were inspired by the ‘30s and ‘40s American style burlesque and we were throwing around a few ideas when the concept hit us.”

**Karabo Ntshweng (Drama 2009)** is no stranger to South African audiences. She is a TV and radio presenter, MC and actress who started her career at the tender age of 11, on the popular Youth show *YOTV*. She then went on to present the long running multi-faith magazine show *Spirit Sundae*. She has done many voice overs on various shows in the 10 years of being a TV presenter.



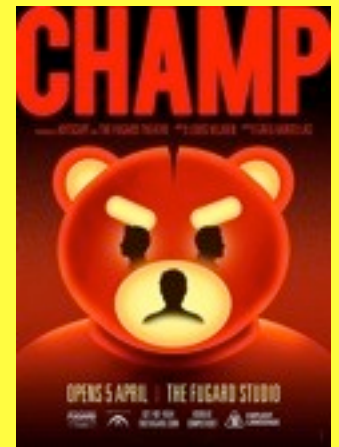
She received training for 5 years as a Dramatic Arts student at The National School of the Arts which makes her a multi-skilled and professional voice artist. She has done voice work for Standard Bank, McDonalds, Frisco, Apple, SABC sports, Disney Africa and also played a leading role on the award winning animation series *Magic Cellar*.

She is currently a radio DJ at Voice of Wits campus radio station. Her various skills, fun-loving and bubbly personality make her one of the finest voices on the station.

## Snippets

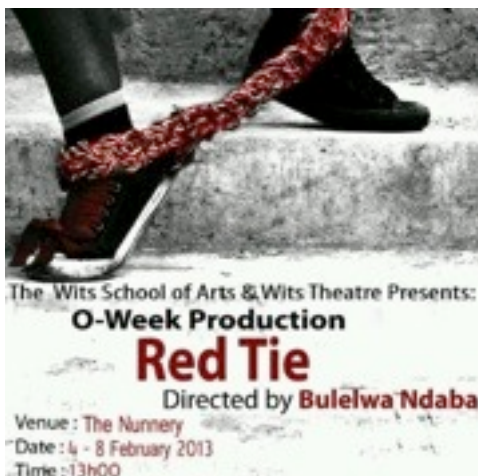


**Cindy Tshivhasa (Art 2012)** qualified for the VEGA bursary that was being offered to only one student by iSchoolsAfrica. She was just told last week that she has received that one and only bursary, and will be studying Creative Brand Communications at VEGA School of Brand Communications in Johannesburg.



## Fleur du Cap 2012 nominees:

**Louis Viljoen (Drama 2001)** has been nominated for BEST NEW SA SCRIPT for *Champ*. **Greg Karvellas (Drama 2000)** has been nominated for the ROSALIE VAN DER GUCHT PRIZE FOR NEW DIRECTORS for *Champ*.



**Bulelwa Ndaba (Drama 2008)**



2012 Royal Academy of Dance Solo Seal Awards: **Melissa Schafer, second from the right (Dance 2012)** and **Cathryn Swart, right (Dance 2010 and current NSA dance teacher)**

**Shirley McDaniel (Art 1970)** was born in Port Shepstone in 1951, the youngest of five children and developed an interest in art from an early age. When Shirley was seven years old, her family relocated to Pietermaritzburg where she attended Athlone Primary School, before moving on to Wykeham for her high schooling.



After moving to Johannesburg, Shirley matriculated at The Johannesburg School of Art, Ballet, Drama and Music, after which she worked at the University of the Witwatersrand as a layout artist on Wits Student and other student publications.

In 1973, Shirley married Barry Mc Daniel and their two children, Catherine and

**Matthew (Drama 1995)** were born in 1976 and 1978 respectively. During this period, she devoted her time to her family, whilst still managing to use her artistic talents, by creating her own unconventional bed-spreads, using recycled fabric. She also created ornate mirror frames (again using recycled materials), which one mirror is still hanging in Mrs Ross's office, along with other artistic endeavours.

In the late 1980's Shirley decided to engage in further studies and graduated, at the age of 38, with a Diploma in Fine Arts at the Witwatersrand Technikon, in 1989.

In 1990, Shirley teamed up with an artist friend and established Greenway Art Studio in Greenside, Johannesburg, where they taught art to students of all ages and also offered adult figure drawing classes on two evenings a week. The studio was successful and she ran it until the family moved to the KwaZulu-Natal south coast in 1996.

Since moving to Trafalgar, Shirley has had the opportunity to devote the majority of her time to painting, which has enabled her to build up a substantial body of work. Her paintings are mostly acrylic painted on cloth. Their subject matter frequently incorporates images of women, symbolising for Shirley, a larger sort of "human connectedness." Her themes are largely about "beings" interacting with each other and often include aspects and motifs of the natural surroundings in which she lives.



**Meren Reddy (Drama 1999)** is a South African actor and comedian best known for his starring role as Gary Moodley in the SABC1 sitcom *City Ses'la*, since 2005.

He reprised the role in the spin-off series *Ses'Top La*, in 2012.

He was nominated for his role in *City Ses'la* in the Best Comedy Actor category at the South

African Film and Television Awards (SAFTAs) for three years in a row (2006-2008), winning the award in 2008.

Having graduated from The National School of the Arts, he went on to study at AFDA.

Meren was also one of the starring cast members of the SABC3 satirical sketch comedy series *Sketch U Later*, in 2012.

## Snippets



**Zewande Bhengu (Drama 2009)**

Joani Turner: "Attended the gala evening of Festival of Fame on Saturday evening at the Mandela Theatre. It was a truly magnificent show and if I did not know these were scholars I would have thought they were professional. We have extremely talented young dancers, musicians and actors in our country. Well done NSA!!!!!!!"



**Heidi Joubert (Cont Music 2003)** Album Launch of Fernando's Kitchen in London.



**Thamsanqa Tshabalala (Dance 2009)** performed a lead role in 'Me and You', a classic South African work on 16th February at the Wits Theatre.



## Holistic approach

THE ARTS were once again the winners at The National School of the Arts' (NSA) annual Festival of Fame (FOF), which saw learners and professionals showcasing only the best of South African talent.

This year's festival was themed as The Expression of Heritage, highlighting the integral role that the arts played, and still play, continues to play, in South Africa.

What made the six-day programme memorable was seeing customised FOF versions of shows such as *Songs Of Migration* featuring the world-renowned Hugh Masekela and the sultry voice of Gloria Bosman.

Director James Ngcobo tweaked the storyline to ensure that most of the NSA learners – who, like him at one stage, dreamt of winning accolades and seeing his name in lights – not only felt like superstars, but also felt the pressure of performing in a world-class production.

This year's FOF also saw the inaugural Festival Finale Day take place on March 2 at the NSA field. This was a celebratory way of shutting down proceedings and included workshops, craft, music, dance and street theatre. Workshops such as the Lunatic Fridge's session on shadow puppetry saw young guests thrilled to learn how to create a shadow puppetry set using common household contents such as shoeboxes and cardboard.

Full Article: <http://www.citizen.co.za/citizen/content/en/citizen/lifestyle-features?oid=401050&sn=Detail&pid=334&Holistic-approach>

The National School of the Arts hosted their 13th Festival of Fame. This gets better and better each year and I was pleasantly surprised at the standard of the learner's work which I saw in *The Secret Garden* as well as those professional productions I did manage to catch. The Festival had its gala evening at The Mandela, Joburg Theatre Complex with Hugh Masekela and Gloria Bosman appearing in *Songs of Migration* and many of the shows were in their Space.Com and Fringe theatres. The most outstanding of these professional Festival of Fame productions was Sylvia Glasser's 1991 contemporary dance classic, *Tranceformations*.

<http://artscomments.wordpress.com/2013/03/01/i-spied-with-my-little-eyes-in-february-2013/>

**Bernard Jay** (CEO and Executive Director of Joburg Theatre) "It was wonderful seeing the kids again in the theatre. The place came alive and buzzing. Viva FESTIVAL OF FAME!"

