

Centre for Creative Arts



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12.1 Time of the Writer

The 24th edition of the *Time of the Writer* festival was presented from 15 – 21 March 2021 under the theme: *The Writer: Witness, Canary in the Mine or Whistleblower?* It featured a diverse gathering of 60 leading novelists, social commentators, activists, playwrights, short story writers and poets in conversation, panel discussions, a public participation programme, and exhibitions focused on many socially-relevant themes such as whistleblowing, migration, colonialism, gender-based violence and sexual identity. Fred Khumalo was the festival's Featured Author. Zukiswa Wanner delivered the keynote address. The festival was extended from its traditional 6 day event to include 21 March which marks both Human Rights Day in South Africa and UNESCO's International Poetry Day. For the first time since its inception and in accordance with advancing the UKZN's Language Policy, the festival included a daily series of webinars in isiZulu curated by Dr Phindile Dlamini.

12.2 JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience:

The 23rd JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience took place from 24 August – 5 September 2021. The festival programme looked at dance-makers, dance companies and performance-based artists who, in some articulated way resonate with the festival theme of ***Border Crossings*** – be these geographical, emotional, physical, spiritual and performative. Associate Professor and director of the Institute for Creative Arts at the University of Cape Town Jay Pather was featured as the 2021 JOMBA! Legacy Artist. Yaseen Manuel, the UKZN's School of the Arts/Mellon Foundation's Artist in Residence, worked in conjunction with JOMBA! and the Drama and Performance Studies Programme at UKZN to create two new screen dance films.

Due to the National Lockdowns imposed by the National Disasters Act to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, the Centre's festivals could not take place in an embodied form for the second consecutive year.

The Centre's long-established festivals – *Time of the Writer*, *Jomba!*, *Durban International Film Festival* and *Poetry Africa* – were thus all presented online as virtual festivals.

The digital platform enabled each of the festivals to reach a far wider national and international audience than usual. In addition to the four established festivals the Centre for Creative Arts (CCA) launched three new online festivals, viz., the *Jazz Freedom Day Festival*, the *Artfluence Human Rights Festival* and the *Cabaret and Beyond Festival*. All festival programmes are available online, at: <https://cca.ukzn.ac.za/>

The festival's *African Crossings* platform featured Marcel Gbeffa (Benin), Gaby Saranouffi (Madagascar), Robert Ssempijja (Uganda), and Bernardo Guiamba (aka Pak Ndjamena) from Mozambique. Other international acts included Limón Dance Company (USA), ACE (UK), Hannah Ma (Germany), Cullberg (Sweden), Aïda Colemenero Díaz (Spain), Pickle Factory Dance Foundation India). Its curated strands focused on developing new local talent, providing dance-makers with new opportunities to explore working on screen-dance, opportunities to engage in a series of arts-related and industry-related webinars. The daily *JOMBA! Khuluma Blog and Digital Newspaper* which involved a two-week residency of dance writing and dance criticism was published, to advance the UKZN's Language Policy, in both English and isiZulu. There is a total of 68 publications on the blog, <https://jomba.ukzn.ac.za/khuluma/>

JOMBA! was awarded the National Institute for Humanities & Social Sciences Award (NIHSS) for Best Digital Creations. It! was also awarded the Business Arts South Africa (BASA) Chairperson's Award for arts education and social advocacy. These awards opened up recognitions of the CCA JOMBA! team and the ever-present search for shifting modalities to deliver arts and dance-based festivals in South Africa (and Africa) – and at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic forced an almost shut down. The award has also given JOMBA! a greater public face that celebrates our impulse to connect practice and technology with a more academic interrogation of dance and physical theatre in Africa.

12.3 Durban International Film Festival (DIFF)

The 42nd Durban International Film Festival screened over 130 selected films, most of them premiere screenings in this region. The Festival culminated with its annual awards which are marked as the most significant accolade in the South African Film Industry. The exhibition of films is complimented by the festival's two principal development strands in the IsiPhethu Development Programme. The IsiPhethu Scriptwriting project is aimed at growing capacity in developing authentic narratives in the isiZulu language. This is supported by an industry-focused programme of seminars, workshops and networking opportunities for emerging film-makers.

In the spirit of positioning the DIFF to be a champion for democracy, human rights, social justice, creative education and access to the arts for all, the festival introduced three new awards categories: The inaugural DIFF Promoting Access to Cinema Award was won by the mobile cinema project Sunshine Cinema for their outstanding work that brings sustainable and free screenings in predominantly grassroots communities. The inaugural DIFF Film in Education award was won by non-profit media company *Steps* for producing over 100 documentaries for a diverse range of public education projects. The inaugural award, the DIFF Human Rights Award, went to filmmaker *Enver Samuels* for creating documentaries that played a vital role in documenting the lives of South African human rights legends and unearthing the need for a thorough investigation into the deaths of assassinated political leaders such as Dulcie September and Ahmed Timol.

12.4 Poetry Africa

The 25th edition of the *Poetry Africa* festival was presented under the theme, *Unmute: Power to the Poet*. The festival featured spoken word poets from 25 countries. The festival was curated by Siphindile Hlongwa. The winner of Poetry Africa's Slam Competition, Xabiso Vili, has been invited to participate in the International World Slam Poetry Competition in 2022. In addition to the Festival the Centre for Creative Arts also partnered with Quay Words (UK) through a British Council to host five free online networking, writer development and

showcase days, celebrating writing by women in the UK and South Africa. The Centre advanced opportunities for the following South African women writers :Nomakhwezi Becker, Emmah Mabye, Dr. Phindile Dlamini, Shashi Simelane, Siphokazi Jonas, Thando Fuze, Vuyelwa Maluleka & Luleka Mhlanzi. Siphindile Hlongwa also participated in the *"Alteration: Festival to Festival"*, the online program for Ukrainian and foreign literary managers held from 5 – 7 May 2022 with more than 20 Ukrainian and foreign managers and curators of notable literary, book and cross-disciplinary events from across the world. In December 2021, Poetry Africa hosted *Poetry Encounters*, a three day residency with 15 emerging local poets in Riebeeck Valley in the Western Cape along with established poets Diana Ferrus, Thando Fuze, Lebio Mashile and Xabisop Vili. Poetry Africa was a finalist for the NIHSS Digital Humanities Award.

12.5 Jazz Freedom Day Festival

The inaugural *Jazz Freedom Day Festival* was presented by the Centre for Creative Arts on 27 April 1994 and through a partnership with the Centre for Jazz & Contemporary Music (UKZN), the South African Jazz Educators Association (SAJE) and the University of Johannesburg Arts & Culture. Legendary South African composer Todd Matshikiza was spotlighted in two webinars during the festival. In *Milestones: The Todd Matshikiza Centenary*, veteran South African journalist Sam Mathe discussed the life and career of legendary composer Todd Matshikiza with Dr Lindelwa Dalamba (Wits), Dr Sazi Dlamini (UKZN), Ms Nomfundo Xaluva (UCT) and Dr Carol Muller (UPenn). In the webinar *King Kong: 60 Years Later*, Adam Glasser presented his popular lecture reflecting on Todd Matshikiza's musical 60 years after its staging. In the webinar, *Covid-19: Impacts on the Jazz Festival and Gig economy*, print and digital media journalist Atiyyah Khan probed the impact of Covid-19 on the Jazz Festival and Gig economy in a moderated discussion with Billy Domingo (Cape Town International Jazz Festival), Mantwa Chinoamadi (Joy of Jazz), Alan Webster (National Youth Jazz Festival) and independent promoters Marlyn Knol and Nikki Froneman. In *Dreaming and Believing: New South African Voices in Jazz*, Brenda Sisane presented an exciting program featuring six young South African Jazz musicians, their music and discussed with them their aspirations.

12.6 Artfluence Human Rights Festival

The inaugural *Artfluence Human Rights Festival* was launched with funding support from the Embassy of the Netherlands. Presented online from 5 – 8 May 2021, the festival critically engaged through a series of performances and webinars about the relationships between arts, constitution and democracy. Billed under the theme *Voices of Hope, Courage and Resilience*, the Festival marked the 25th anniversary of the Centre for Creative Arts as a vibrantly creative enabler and advocate for social justice and democracy, as well as the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the South African Constitution. The *Artfluence Human Rights Festival* aims to strengthen the link with the arts and civil society, active citizenship and politics through a series of arts events and arts-based webinars, featuring South African and international artists. by creating a dedicated virtual space to interact on the arts, and a culture of human rights.

12.7 Cabaret and Beyond Festival (CAB)

The inaugural *Cabaret And Beyond Festival* was launched in May 2022 by the Centre for Creative Arts in a partnership with the Nelson Mandela Bay Theatre Complex. Curated by Roland Perold, a Bath University Masters graduate and part-time lecturer at the UKZN, the CAB Festival aims to bring together musical theatre creatives from across South Africa to promote, develop, and commission new compositions and writing within the broad spectrum of musical theatre, cabaret, and music-related storytelling. Through an intensive series of

masterclasses two young musical theatre writers have been selected to develop full scale commissioned chamber musicals which will premiere at the Mandela Bay Theatre before enjoying a short season in Durban in March 2022.

12.8 Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF)

The Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF) is the key event boosting trade in Africa. In 2021, IATF's theme focused on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) – a single market for goods and services across 55 countries, aimed at boosting trade and investment. The Centre for Creative Arts was the official presenter of the cultural programme at the event presenting both performances, and participating in panels focused on extending trade in cultural markets on the continent. The Centre featured South African dancers Musa Hlatswayo and the Flatfoot Dance Company and poets Lebo Mashile and Gcina Mhlope.

12.9 NIHSS Catalytic Research Grant

In 2021, the Centre for Creative Arts received a catalytic Research Grant for Poetry Africa and JOMBA!

12.9.1 NIHSS Catalytic Research Grant: Poetry Africa

The scope of the project was to examine *The Rise and Development of Slam Poetry as an Artistic and Social Movement in South Africa Commenting on Events of the Day, Giving a Voice to the Pand having Agency in the #BlackLivesMatter, LGBTQ+, Gender, Sexuality, Anti-Racism and Decolonisation Movements within the Contexts of the last 24 Years of the Poetry Africa Festival at the University of Kwazulu-Natal*. The working group comprised Ismail Mahomed, Siphindile Hlongwa, Ongezwa Mbele, Nomcebisi Moyikwa and Tracey Saunders. The project delivered the following outputs:

- A documentary film titled, *The Poetics of Transformation*, researched and edited by Karen Ijeoma from the 25-year old archive contents of the Festival. The documentary can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fj7wS8wtdLc>
- An anthology of poems in *Hashtag Poetry* edited by Ismail Mahomed, Siphindile Hlongwa & Tracey Saunders and published by UKZN Press.
- A series of commissioned articles and papers published in *Imbiza Journal for African Writing* and edited by Siphiwo Mahala, Ongezwa Mbele and Nomcebisi Moyikwa
- A series of poetry workshops culminating in two online programmes events on National Youth Day (16 June) and National Women's Day (9 August).
- A series of events at the Poetry Africa festival but focused specifically on broadening voices representative of the five regions of the African continent – North Africa, West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and South Africa.

12.9.2 NIHSS Catalytic Research Grant: JOMBA!

The grant was awarded to host JOMBA!'s inaugural academic colloquium titled JOMBA! Masihambisane Dialogues #1 which took place from 2 – 4 June 2021 under the theme *The Choreographed Politics of Intimacies*. A curatorial committee comprised Clare Craighead (DUT), David Thatanelo April (UP), Gift Marovatsanga (UniZul), Dr. Lliane Loots (UKZN, chair and organiser), Dr. Sarahleigh Castelyn (University of East London, UK), Thobile Maphanga (UKZN appointed postgraduate student representative and colloquium administrator) and Prof. Yvette Hutchison (Warwick University, UK).

12.10 Mafika Gwala Memorial Lecture:

The Mafika Memorial Lecture, hosted annually by the UKZN in partnership with South African History Online, was incorporated into the Poetry Africa in 2020. The annual lecture takes place on 5 October at the Opening of the Festival and marks the birth anniversary of Mafika Gwala. Scholar and writer, Professor Imraan Coovadia delivered the 2021 Memorial Lecture, titled, *What the Left forgot about the Left since Mafika Gwala*. He has been director of the UCT's Centre for Creative Writing since 2011. The annual Mafika Gwala Memorial Lecture celebrates and highlights the extraordinary work of the literary legend, public intellectual and social justice defender, Mafika Gwala, whilst encouraging a contemporary engagement with Gwala's values and contemporary South African issues.

12.11 The Institute for Creative & Performing Arts

Headed by the Dean of the School of Arts, Professor Nobuhle Hlongwa, a series of engagements have taken place between the Centre for Creative Arts, Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre, Hexagon Theatre and Centre for Jazz & Contemporary Music to develop a re-alignment strategy between the four centres bringing them all under a single umbrella and re-positioning each of the centres to work with a more integrated approach between themselves and with the academic divisions within the university. A proposed model for the proposed Institute has been developed and has passed through the School of Arts Management Committee, School Board and presented to the College Management Committee.

12.12 General

The Centre for Creative Arts serves as the Community Engagement unit within the School of Arts. In 2021, the Centre hosted 6 interns funded by the YES Youth programme aimed at providing new graduates with work experiences and skills training. The Centre also hosted visual artist Nicolene Cole through the Artist Protect Fund and making the UKZN the first institution on the African continent to host a Fellow through the fund. During 2021, the Centre for Creative Arts brokered several local and international partnerships, generated over R6 million in third stream income and acquired more than R68 million in media coverage across radio, television & print media as tracked through the Centre's media tracking service.

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