

SATMag

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JOBURG THEATRE SCHOOLS FESTIVAL PRESENTS

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Editor's Note

SATheatre has kicked off with a great bang this year, the theatre scene is lively and plenty...Theatremakers are driven, innovative and on an ultimate high creating works that are already shaping to have a lasting appeal...SATheatre is Alive.

Artists are joining in the festival and award spirit celebrating each other's brilliance and aiding on the continued successes of these creations...SATheatre is Thriving...local talents are being taken abroad to share their expertise...SATheatre is World-class...local audiences are focusing their attention on what's being dished out on the SATheatre stages and are left craving more and theatres are filled with alluring works that enthrall...SATheatre is in demand...

Gone are the days of swooning over the epidemic of Theatre Finances, SA is realizing its value in the heart of supreme art and making sure that it remains in a league of its own - the world is looking and SA is putting on the show of a lifetime. This is the 2019 Spirit of SA Artists and it is infectious and artists of SA are allowing for it to spread!

This edition celebrates artists who are at the heart of this sentiment and salutes all the other artists who are at work; even the ones working in silence in the background allowing for the foreground to be an ultimate thrilling experience...Thank you SA artists for keeping alive the pulse of theatre for you are the heart that keeps South African Theatre Alive!

Love,

Vianney Henry Farmer
The Editor

STAGE DIRECTIONS

BLOCKING

Centre Stage 4

We get down to business with the beautiful Lynelle Kenned and pick her brain the the state of SATheatre.

Offstage 10

SATMag shares in great conversation with the multitalented Ilana Cilliers.

Upstage 14

SATMag zooms into one of the nation's most striking initiative: Centre for the Less Good Idea, as they celebrate SEASON 5 of spectacular theatricality.

Onstage 22

Does SATheatre inspire change? Pinto takes a deeper look into SATheatre as an instrument for change.

Fun On Stage 24

Cover Page: Ilana Cilliers in *Piekniek* by Mpande, née Dinga by Louis Roux and company, directed by Wolf Britz.

GENERAL INFO

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Kenned

Lynelle Kenned is a soprano opera singer at heart and she has wonderfully established herself not only in the opera world but she has imprinted her creative being in the heart of the SA Theatre industry as a whole and it is with utter glee that SATMag shares this interview with you...!

People often joke that theatre is the only industry that has been dying out for the past 2000 years. Jokes aside, it is becoming increasingly difficult to see being a theatre maker as a viable career. There are artists working at a loss on major productions for established producers, and exploitation is still rife. When this is your life, why is it so hard so to make a living? Art is the highest commodity to bid on - but why is there such a disconnect between theatre as art? This is the concern that lays heavy upon most SATheatre artists and Kenned's response to her questions posed by stating that; "What SA needs now is corporate collaboration that is artistically lucrative; investment and development on a national level, more funding for locally produced content, collective resources and credit facilities that accommodate the freelancing lifestyle. In essence, invest in theatre as an art!"

When one looks at the quality of locally produced works it truly is maddening to know that there seems little to no means of aiding the working environment of the



Lynelle Kenned

artist in order to provide the artist with a career that is able to care for its creator. In Kenned's view it's the energy of a live performance - unsettling, intoxicating, exhilarating that allows for it to stay one of the most satisfying work experiences she continues to have, as hard and unforgiving as it seems at times. But moreover it is a South African styled performance, particularly offered to both the performer and her audience that share in a connection of humans on a higher and intimate level that speaks in vivid pictures to the soul of the viewer, in Kenned's words: "The impact is immediate and the reaction is honest."



As a star graduate of the UCT Opera School and a member of the award-winning South African Sopranos, Kenned has been entertaining audiences for years from the local Baxter, Artscape and State theatre, to Brown University and even the British Parliament in various soprano roles ranging from Handel to Mozart, Puccini, Rossini and Janacek. She shares with SATMag that all of the productions she had been a part of have been highlights and continues to share: "I made my professional debut in the Mozart opera 'Le nozze di Figaro' at the State Theatre

in 2011." But it would be a few years till she returned to opera. Instead, musicals became part of her landscape; when she was spotted singing on Espresso and asked to audition for David Kramer's 'Blood Brothers'. "Talented, qualified but inexperienced, those were hard years - as an opera graduate, my acting experience was understandably limited and I had to fight to make ends meet, starting from the bottom to gain experience and demonstrate my hunger to learn."



All this paid off - 18 months and three runs of Blood Brothers saw her understudying and later becoming a principal character, and when Cape Town Opera's 'Show Boat' came along, she was casted as Julie. This was definitely the most profound career experience for Kenned; because the 2005 production of Show Boat at the Artscape Opera House was the first time she experienced music and storytelling together on that scale. "Seeing Show Boat changed the course of my life. An incredible moment, starring in the Show Boat revival tour in 2014 and realizing I had come full circle." After seeing that

Show Boat production at age 17, she changed her intended course of study to Opera on her singing teacher's recommendation. "I have a love affair with what the human voice is capable of, classically trained voices even more so." But the sweet spot for her, she exclaims with absolute joy is listening to great crossover artists and how versatile their instruments have been trained to tackle a variety of genres. "Good technique will give you longevity!"



It was during the 2014 Showboat tour in the UK that the Fugard Theatre first asked Kenned to submit a video audition for West Side Story. "Honestly, at this point I wanted to focus more on my budding career as a TV Presenter, but once I read for Maria opposite Jonathan Roxmouth who was already secured as Tony, I knew I wanted to be in the show." 2014 concluded with the operas Poskantoor and Le nozze di Figaro. Orpheus in Africa came next; "A treat to be working on original material!", she lets out, and West Side Story finally happened a year after her successful audition. This was followed by Heidi, La

Bohème, The Sound of Music (another Maria!) and most recently Calling Us Home.

Kenned's reason for selecting theatre is because in essence, she conveys theatre is another vehicle that fosters intimacy and empathy between human beings; "Great theatre creates space for reflection, it confronts and challenges in a constructive manner, it softens life's blows, it soothes, it brings joy." She also communicates that it is our diversity as a nation that allows for the increasing potential of so many different stories to bridge the divide. "People are taking risks, spinning new narratives." And yet, Kenned inserts - working with the classic repertoire is crucial for building your craft and gaining experience: "I wish there were more companies opening up to the possibility of colourblind casting, and venturing away from cultural stereotypes."



She also wishes for more adaptations of the classics which could justifiably reflect our demographic. Kenned admits that things are improving, but not at the rate it should be and ultimately urges that; "We have to do better!" On the other side of the coin Theatre finances are disastrous - more and more theatremakers enter

the game each year and compete for a slice of an ever-shrinking pie; expresses Kenned and continues sharing with SATMag some of her concerns. She spoke of how entertainment brings in money, but with art it is not always the case; she referenced Gauteng Opera that was disbanded last year and Kenned also pointed out that Cape Town Opera and the Cape Philharmonic are on the verge of financial collapse. With regards to new works being commissioned results in received funds do not cover the necessary costs to aid proper development and percolation as it is with shows produced on bigger scale. Kenned also spoke in her interview about how award-winners sometimes receive no remuneration for their meritorious work along with this artist rates decrease and people are necessitated to work like pack-horses to earn a living wage and this bring Kenned to question: "Can we really say it is a fair and viable industry?"



Apart from the ongoing struggle of getting script to stage is the constant fight to get audiences to the theatre. No one wants to leave the comfort of their homes to attend a live theatre

performance; yet South Africans flock in great troupes to see a live music acts and it is this perspective of the spectator that needs to be looked at and here the artist needs to play a bigger role in aiding the appeal of Theatre in South Africa.



The Department of Education is doing a great job by spurring on the regular visits to theatres of learners, Government runs a great initiative with mayor SA theatres to have set works being performed but there exists some grey areas with this programme; firstly it promotes performances of the same shows year after years, yes this is due to the syllabus in the Language Subjects, but the material covered in the Dramatic Arts Subjects are not looked at unless the selection is not similar to that of the Languages - divine intervention is long overdue in this regard! Let's face it Theatre is already in a constant combat with the ever evolving technologies, thus we need to get the people back to the theatre by making new stories



accessible to them by means of a live experience. Classics are not being tossed to the side, but give the viewer a breather and reasons to return to the theatre at regular intervals - but this issue needs to be tackled at the root and the origin of the flaws in theatre always

stems from the South African Government. Kenned embraces the idea of always striving to obtain regular theatre visits from the public: "Yes, if we can get people to be open to the initial experience of a live performance. Very often I've witnessed new audience members being won over by the logistics of theatre making and the sheer talent being showcased and experienced." She points out that technology is great, but it can never give you the sensuous experience of live theatre and the rituals that accompany it. "Those who know and love theatre keep coming back. Audience development is therefore crucial." And audience development starts with the artist. Artists are going out into the communities to bring theatre to the people - but the image being put out there is not always a very representable one - what it does do is the breakdown of the appeal that theatre has. Theatre Troupes going out to schools and communities are the ones that make theatre excellent or of low repute in the eyes of the public - artists take caution when taking theatre into the world it is your responsibility as the ambassadors of SATheatre to make sure that the image of theatre is a true reflection of what the art form stands for.

Along with the responsibility of a theatre ambassador is that of sharing in the multitude of theatre our country offers with such great enthusiasm; Kenned references productions done in a different language and calls for greater attendance of these types of shows, as this is mostly frowned upon amongst artists: "I feel it is even more important to attend these shows than something that resonates with you on a linguistic level

as it bridges the divide between different groups of people." Kenned continues to explain that many shows make use of subtitles or surtitles nowadays, or include substantial program notes that make it possible to have an experience without necessarily understanding what's being said at all times. She makes the example of Classical vocal music which is still mostly performed in languages other than our official languages, and stays hugely popular for its virtuosity.

One other matter Kenned touches on is that of the change of the influence of technological convenience - our attention spans are shorter, we're vying for audience attention against quality digital content. Procuring funding on a national level is increasingly difficult - artist programs are practically non-existent nowadays, audience attendance dwindles due to economic constraints. "Theatre etiquette is disregarded by the ignorant and inconsiderate, to the annoyance of regular patrons. And yet, technological advancement has opened up an entire world of possibilities for what's possible on stage - I remember the impact that shows like *Liewer* had on younger audiences from seeing their reality depicted in a live theatre show." And if there is a group of theatre makers embracing the advantage of technology it is the vibrant new theatre creators.

What Lynelle adores most about SA theatre is the fact that it is groundbreaking on a global level, despite not being able to compete with budgets and resources. "We're becoming fearless in showcasing complex and provocative narratives that reflect the realities of our society's

intricacies -We're venturing away from the colonialistic point of view, and audiences are responding to it!" Because of this fact she keeps aspiring youngsters close by allowing them to job-shadowing her work, but mostly she tries to be accessible and transparent to whoever seeks advice and she advocates for mental health in the industry. In the future, she shares with SATMag she would like to establish a scholarship program and a mental health support network for artists - something that would be of great value to the industry!

Lynelle finished off the interview with SATMag by commemorating the new era of SATheatre makers; by stating that they are fearless and their imaginations are without bounds: "This is reflected in the work being created. Under their influence, the art form is evolving in every way - technically, viscerally." They are more open to taking risks without being bound to conventions or expectations, conveys Lynele. And with these fierce young dynamic theatre artists at the forefront of boundary shifting work,. SATheatre will forever remain supremely spectacular! **SATMag.**



cilliers

There are no words to explain the brilliance that is Ilana, it can only be experienced, the richness with which she articulates her creativity knows no bounds and has pushed her to the front of the line and with plenty noteworthy accolades behind her name for both stage and screen there's no telling just how bright she still will shine; here's SATMag's Q&A with this intriguing star who always manages to bring forth flawless art!



Ilana Cilliers

1) For those who are not familiar with your work, give us a rundown of some of your career highlights thus far.

My first professional acting job was as a small character in *Die Storm*, directed by Marthinus Basson in 2007. After finishing my studies, I worked for many years for a wonderful theatre company in the Eastern Cape called Ubom! Eastern Cape Drama Company, under the artistic direction of Janet Buckland, where I was lucky enough to be part of several wonderful productions, including *Breed* (2010), *The Adventures of a Little Nobody* (2010), for which I won a Handspring Award for puppet manipulation and *Wreckage* (2011), starring alongside Andrew Buckland. On returning to the Western Cape, my first job and certainly a career highlight was playing in Willem Anker and Jaco Boucher's *Samsa-masjien* (2014/2015). I also shot my first feature film, Christiaan Olwagen's *Johnny Is Nie Dood Nie*, at the end of 2015, which went on to be released to great critical acclaim. While still acting, I have recently been working much more as a director, and have been particularly fortunate to have started a production company "Mount Maak" with my friend, Wolf Britz. Making and performing our debut work *GodgOdgoD*,

is one of the greatest achievements of my career.

2) What is your earliest memory of theatre?

Growing up in Stellenbosch, my mother always took me to the children's productions at the H.B. Thom theatre. I have vague memories of seeing *Liewe Heksie* and *The Magic Flute*. My first very vivid memory of seeing the magic and possibilities of the theatre was when my father took me to see the opera of *Hansel and Gretel* in the Artscape. I was seven years old and it was my birthday present. The flying witch and the gingerbread people coming to life blew my mind. My father took a poster down for me after the performance and I was very shocked that he was capable of stealing. To me the poster was so valuable. It hung above my bed for years.



Swan Song by Buhle Ngaba, directed by Ilana Cilliers

3) When did you realize that you wanted to be part of the theatre world?

I don't know. Theatre just keeps happening to a person. I chose it at some point, because it encompasses several art forms. In high school I thought I was going to be a violinist. I got involved in plays, through my cousins and uncle who directed plays at

the boys' school and things just escalated. I loved the option of being creative in so many areas, and doing that in a team. Classical music seemed lonely for a person like me who thrives off shared energy. Since I've been directing I have had to spend a lot more time working alone, but I mind it less now. Film holds the same excitement for me, but because the scale is so big, it's hard to be in control of everything, so I guess it's about finding collaborators you share a sensibility with.

4) After all your years in this field, what still excites you about SA theatre?

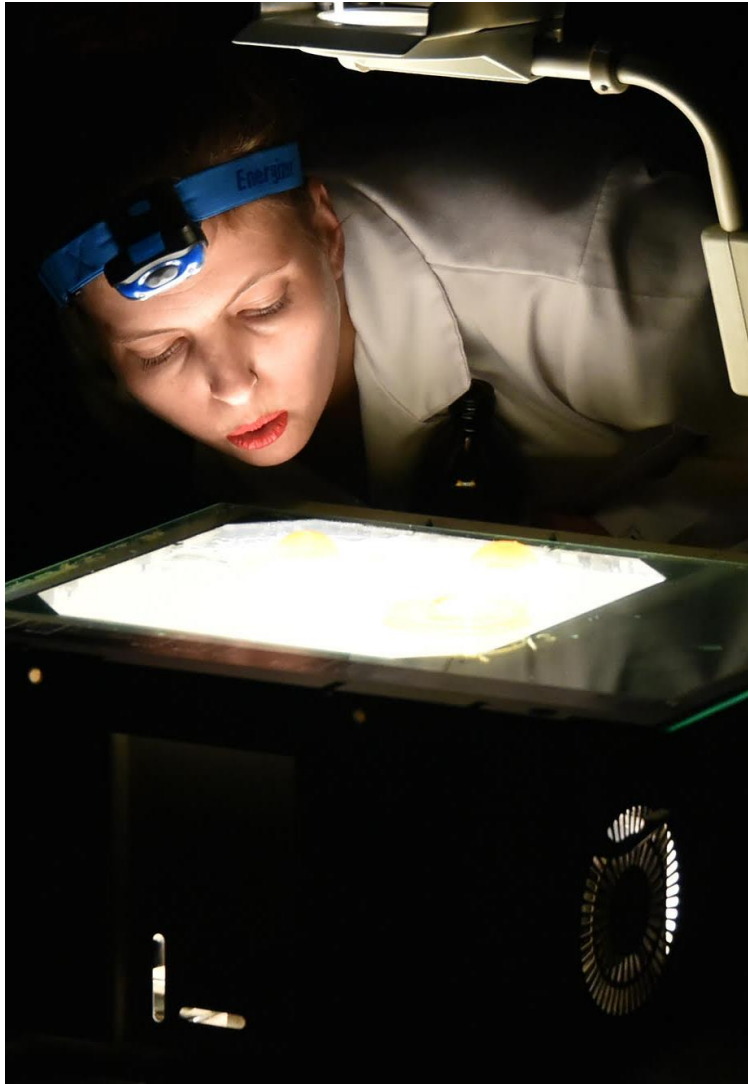
I don't really like separating art forms (both "low" and "high") in terms of how important they are, to me or in the world. They are all vehicles for feeling and expression. Moving someone or being moved (to laughter, to astonishment, to disbelief, to delight, to tears, to thought, to question, to action...), I believe, is most possible through art. Sharing experiences, building empathy, in as abstract or concrete a way as may be, opens up the possibility for understanding. I love being a part of that. Theatre happens to be the art form that I have spent the most time with.

5) The theatre of the modern age varies greatly from what it was, why do you think this is?

Theatre of the modern age is exactly the same as all theatre. It reflects and engages with the society which surrounds it. Modern theatre, like classical theatre, like post-modern theatre, like cyborg age theatre will use whatever media and content it has to its disposal, to tell stories, to ask questions

OFFSTAGE

or simply to compose experiences. We have a lot more options now and can reference the ages that have come before us, even try to imitate them, but they can never be experienced in the same way as in their original contexts.



GodgOdgoD by Rob de Graaf and company, directed by Wolf Britz and Ilana Cilliers

6) Which young theatre artist's (performer/director/choreographer/writer) work do you admire, that you don't know on a personal level, and why?

It is difficult to distinguish one, especially one which I do not know personally, but I have admiration for any

young person who is confident enough in their voice to fight to get their work made. It took me very many years to figure out what kind of work I really like and actually want to be making when I have the reins.

7) What role do you play, as an individual, in assisting up and coming artists?

I don't believe I am in any position to "assist" anyone, but I do enjoy working with and employing people who are younger than myself. This is for purely selfish reasons as it helps to keep the work relevant ;). I believe that a lot of skills and knowledge transfer happens organically when one is working creatively together.

8) What do you love about SA Theatre?

Usually what I love and hate about something is the same thing. I love to see the creative solutions that people are forced to come up with in South Africa, because of our restrictive budgets, but I also experience the frustration of not being able to realize a vision or not seeing a vision realized, because of financial limitations. It's a blessing and a curse.

9) What changes do you see in younger theatre makers today in terms of theatre as an art form?

I am happy to see that the content is shifting with the surge in especially female theatre makers of colour.

10) What would you say is the biggest challenge that South African theatre makers are facing today? What would your advice be to them?

Money is a challenge. Being able to make a living from theatre is really hard, especially if you are trying to make work

that pushes the envelope and might not necessarily have the biggest commercial appeal, especially if you don't have the privilege of a financial safety net. I am very lucky in that regard. My mother has always supported me when times are tough. The only advice I can give is to be flexible. Be willing to do other things as well. Broaden your skill set as far as possible. And don't be too hard on yourself if things don't work out the way you imagined. Almost everyone else is struggling too, even if it doesn't look that way from the outside.

11) What is your hopes for the future of SA theatre?

I feel like the segregation that we still see to a great extent in our society is often reflected in our theatre, the positive side of which is that there is a great diversity in the work that is being made, in terms of language and form, as well as the stories that are being told. It would, however, be nice to see all our diverse kinds of theatre enjoying equal platforms and to see more cross-pollination, especially with regards to language. I also hope that the institutions that allow for theatre to exist will keep on taking chances with progressive work. There is a chicken-egg situation when it comes to conservatism in South African theatre. Funders are afraid that audiences aren't ready for new things and thus won't get return on investment, and audiences are not being educated in anything more than what they are used to. This is all understandable. Nobody is in a financial position to be able to take a leap of faith. This is, of course, a generalisation, but I hope that this will improve. I think it could be possible if we can get young people into the theatre. Young people consume a lot of media. Theatre makers need to find a way to tap into that, which

will perhaps mean a big overhaul in the way that we see theatre and how it should be consumed.

12) What theatre project are you dreaming of and why?

Loose lips sink ships...

13) What has been your most outstanding theatre experience?

I am not a 'favourites' person. We are forced to make so many choices all the time. I love the privilege of not having to choose. The last show I saw that I would change absolutely nothing about was *Buite Blaf die Honde Swart*, directed by Jaco Bouwer.

SATMag.



Liewe Heksie en die Sirkus by Christine Truter, directed by Christine Truter

**ALL THE PHOTO'S IN THIS ARTICLE
WAS TAKEN BY NARDUS
ENGELBRECHT AND NEO BAEPI**



THE CENTRE FOR THE LESS

GOOD IDEA SEASON 5 IS HERE!

“The Centre for the Less Good Idea announces a spectacular Season of work co-curated by Phala O. Phala and David April.

The Centre for the Less Good Idea is excited to announce a collection of outstanding collaborative and interdisciplinary works for SEASON 5 scheduled to take place between 24 and 28 April 2019.

SEASON 5 is co-curated by Phala Ookeditse Phala and David Thatanelo April alongside founder William Kentridge and animator Bronwyn Lace, and brings together a wide range of practitioners in the form of visual artists, videographers, musicians, choreographers, dancers, theatre practitioners, writers, composers, beatboxers, and digital practitioners.

What does the shape of the epic look like when explored in the short form? How do we begin to run such great, far-reaching narratives and thematic queries through the constrictions of time and form? What happens to a work of art when it exists across the multiple realities of VR, and how can we effectively merge the endless reaches of the creative mind with the new horizons presented through technology?

Season 5 of The Centre for the Less Good Idea sees traditional forms of art and performance being re-imagined through free-spirited, transdisciplinary collaboration and the alternative realities made possible by technology.

UPSTAGE

Through a series of short-form 11-minute epics as well as 3-minute 360 VR films, Season 5 will attempt to make sense of embodied narratives and contemporary spiritualities. It will present performances that refuse to begin, and posit the outcomes of stories that have been lost to history. Internal monologues will be rendered tangible through virtual reality, and cityscapes will find grounding in an experimental opera. Above all else, vulnerability, imperfection, and a move towards the unknown will find resonance through a pursuit for the less good idea.

Together with The Mixed Reality Workshop (TMRW), The Centre for the Less Good Idea is also thrilled to announce the second iteration of the Invisible Exhibition – a collection of visual artists working in the realms of Alternative Reality made

possible by technology. The Invisible Exhibition will be running concurrently with Season 5's 11-minute epic and 360 VR Film programme, before being moved to the TMRW Gallery.

PROGRAM DETAILS:

Co-curated by Phala O. Phala and David Thatanelo April, Season 5 of The Centre for the Less Good Idea sees traditional forms of art and performance being re-imagined through free-spirited, transdisciplinary collaboration, and the resultant forms that emerge when the concept and structure of the epic is restricted and reworked through time and context.

In addition to its collection of experimental 360 VR Films and the second iteration of the Invisible Exhibition, Season 5 will feature two programmes an evening, with each programme comprising five 11-minute epics performed back-to-back. These performances will take the structure of a theatrical epic, condensing their narrative to 11 minutes. Each programme will traverse the realms of humour, music, text-based works, physicality, and more.

AT THE CENTRE | Programme 1

Tension, synchronicity, co-dependency and satire take centre stage for Programme 1 of the Season.

Opening the programme is *The Wannabe*, a satirical take on news broadcasting and children's TV shows, borrowing from the traditions of puppetry and stand-up comedy and locating them in the theatre space. The programme will also feature *King-Dom Crossroads*, a physical work that unpacks the ideas of tension, struggle, aspiration, and synchronicity in human relationships, while *Godot-logue in Gauteng* presents short, sharp takes on the well-known *Waiting for Godot*, located in the bustling reaches of the city through sonic and text-based means.



UPSTAGE

Brecht's *Mother Courage* gets stripped down and reimagined as a South African take on co-dependency, communication, and degrees of relation in *Carriage of Mother* before *Sybil* ends off the programme by refining and reworking the entire framework of an operatic epic into a physical, musical, and visually-imbued performance that brings an undeniable tangibility to the genre.

Unit 11, Arts on Main

Wednesday 24 April 2019 at 6:30pm

Friday 26 April 2019 at 6:30pm

R100/ticket

AT THE CENTRE | Programme 2

Programme 2 of the Season unpacks, amongst other things, the nature of performance, the language of trauma, and the power of the spoken word.

The programme leads with *Thabang* which, through the use of free-writing and strong theatrical performance, takes the shape of an internal monologue made visible. *Escape* then presents audiences with a tight and compelling thriller based on a man who, in the fight for justice, makes the ultimate sacrifice. Through a performance that refuses to comply with its own structure, audiences are asked to contemplate the very space they

occupy, and the inherent dynamics that emerge between audience member and performer in *To Sit...To Hold...O Itibetse*: - *Allow, Taba di Matlhong...Go Thata Banna; The Moment. Vuma – Nothingness...When All Else Fails...*

The complex relationships that exist between fathers and sons are explored through the musical and movement-centric work, *I See You!*, before the programme's final performance, *Crash Lament* – a work that is as much about raw physicality as it is about the complexity of language, perspective, trauma, and disparate journeys.

Unit 11, Arts on Main

Wednesday 24 April 2019 at 8pm

Friday 26 April 2019 at 8pm

R100/ticket

AT THE CENTRE | Programme 3

Programme 3 primarily explores time, water, and physicality – those ever-shifting elements of our daily lives.

The programme kicks off on a visceral note, exploring the yearnings, the persistent pangs, and the constant pulls towards something that is either lost or yet to be found in *Thirst*. Knowledge, heritage, and the heavy weight of time are rendered through a sharp and harrowing display of physical theatre in *Minute a Thought*, while a musical score delivered through the strictures of improvisation and haphazard





composition explore the possibilities of musical personality and instrumentation in *Process Score*.

Longing, togetherness, and an exploration of space are the conceptual drivers for the fourth performance of the night, *Nonqawuse*, which seeks to document the life of a prophetess whose story has not always been treated kindly throughout history. Water then returns as a key theme in the final performance, *Plunge Avatar*, which couples the written word with physical performance to explore the presence of gravity, the body, the avatar, and the boundless reaches of the mind.

Unit 11, Arts on Main
Thursday 25 April 2019 at 6:30pm
Saturday 27 April 2019 at 6:30pm
R100/ticket

AT THE CENTRE | Programme 4

Programme 4 traverses the landscapes of history, culture, politics, madness, and more.

11 Minutes Before Assassination, the first show of the programme, will lead audiences through the suspenseful, complicated moments building up to the imminent assassination of the Aristocrat. With *Cwaga* ancestry, culture, and contemporary spirituality are unpacked and explored through the use of hip-hop, theatrical performance, and parody in a piece that

begs the question 'Where are we at in terms of navigating our own spirituality?'

Through analysing the place and function of the theatrical clown throughout history, audiences will be presented with a solo work exploring the presence (or highlighting the absence) of the *Black Clown*, while the concept of madness, consciousness, and the binaries of body and mind are made tangible through a group dance performance entitled "*And in it goes to lose its sense and find its soul*". Ending off the 4th programme is *Comission Continua* which makes use of archival texts and recordings, the voice, the body, and more in a piece that traces the purpose, history, and landscape of South Africa's various commissions of inquiry.

Unit 11, Arts on Main
Thursday 25 April 2019 at 8pm
Saturday 27 April 2019 at 8pm
R100/ticket

AT THE CENTRE | Things Fall Together

Singer-songwriter and performing artist, Netsayi Chigwendere brings her own work to Season 5 of The Centre for the Less Good Idea.

Chigwendere uses music as a device to communicate and make sense of various histories



and lived experiences. For Season 5, Chigwendere and her long-time collaborators Ray Mupfumira and Collen Tom bringing a multi-media, music-based, and Zimbabwe-centric show to The Centre.

The piece will explore the deep, shared history that exists between Zimbabwe and South Africa while also positing new futures.

Unit 11, Arts on Main
Sunday 28 April 2019 at 1pm
R100/ticket

AT THE CENTRE | BAPA

BAPA is one of The Centre for The Less Good Idea's invited works for Season 5.

BAPA is the original collaborative work of musical composer and producer Ntsika 'Fana Mayiza' Ngxanga, choreographer and producer Teresa Phuti Mojela, and writer and actor Billy Edward Langa.

Under the guidance and direction of Season 5's co-curator Phala O. Phala, and featuring the collective talents of various musicians and performers, *BAPA* is a unique amalgamation of music, dance and theatrical performance that puts forward an inherently fragmented work, ultimately connected through its various employed genres and themes.

A work that can be seen as an amalgamation of our own existential queries, *BAPA* is a performance that's as much about contemporary connectivity, as it is about communication across time.

BAPA's performance at Season 5 of The Centre for the Less Good Idea lends a further element to the Season's thematic explorations of identity, ancestry, spirituality and more, through a performance that employs live music, text, and physicality.

Unit 11, Arts on Main
Sunday 28 April 2019 at 3pm
R100/ticket

AT THE 2ND SPACE | INVISIBLE EXHIBITION AND 360 VR FILMS (FREE EVENT)

Together with The Mixed Reality Workshop (TMRW), The Centre for the Less Good Idea is also thrilled to announce the second iteration of the Invisible Exhibition – a collection of visual artists working in the realms of Alternative Reality made possible by technology. The Invisible Exhibition will be running concurrently with Season 5's 11-minute epic and 360 VR Film programme, before being moved to the TMRW Gallery.

Season 5 of The Centre for the Less Good Idea sees a host of new, immersive 360 VR Films being brought to life through the collaborative efforts of various artists, performers, musicians, and production studios.

Through merging narrative-driven art and performance with new and experimental technologies, viewers will be presented with a series of works that enter the mind of the artist, turn installation works into moveable, interactive worlds, traverse time and reality, and highlight the tensions and navigations of the everyday.

Rather than attempting to enhance performance and art-making through technology, Season 5 sees art and performance being the conceptual drivers of the technology itself, harnessing the framework, the possibilities, and the limitations of experimental technology in order to play with form, structure, and meaning in new and engaging ways.

Anxiety

Anxiety sees digital artist Janus Fouché and theatre-maker Nhlanhla Mahlangu collaborating on an immersive work that invites the viewer into the very mind of an artist, traversing the many thoughts, concerns, compulsions, and personal histories that fuel their work. But there is no passive viewing here. Once inside the mind of the artist, they are aware of your presence as well as your inherent expectation of performance.

Through introducing the seemingly inexhaustible reaches of the mind to the experimental horizons of immersive technology, *Anxiety* plays on the very human elements of our reality – discomfort, perspective, curiosity, and the presence of time – and multiplies them across time and space to mesmeric ends.

Dinner Table

A collaboration between transdisciplinary artist Sue Pam-Grant and the various performing artists of Season 5 of The Centre for the Less Good Idea, *Dinner Table* is a frank and unadorned take on the everyday intimacies that exist between people engaging in a shared meal.

Constellations of sound, speech, and movement fill the space, surrounding the viewer from all sides and at all times. The shrill, sharp sounds of glass and cutlery, a raised eyebrow or an ill-cast look across the table seem all the more prevalent when seated at the centre of this dinner party. Through the merging of basic, often-overlooked human behaviours and the all-encompassing views of virtual reality technology, the *Dinner Table* drives home a sharp and compelling narrative to which the viewer is invited to pull up a seat and play witness to.





Sangoma

Led by musician and performing artist Siya Mthembu, *Sangoma* is the result of many of Season 5's actors, dancers, and musicians coming together to create a new and immersive 360 VR Film.

Placing the viewer in the centre of the narrative, *Sangoma* presents a scene in which a consultation with a healer is sought out, and is inspired by Mthembu's own visit to a sangoma years back. Over the course of the consultation, the healer brings all of the viewer's people – ancestors, family and friends – into the space with them. *Sangoma* explores contemporary understandings and engagements with spirituality and identity, while also harnessing the varying realms and realities that can exist in a single room through the medium of technology.

Sibyl

The work of long-time collaborators Dada Masilo and William Kentridge, *Sibyl* is a 360 VR Film in two parts which uses space and its resultant manipulations through technology as a conceptual basis.

Sound, the human presence, and choral and performance-led harmony give the work much of its structure while also playing with the landscape of virtual reality itself. What does it mean to be at the centre of a performance as an audience member?

How do we begin to make sense of what we are witnessing when falling in and out of time? By pushing the very boundaries of technology through performance, *Sibyl* serves as an excellent example of the varying realms and understandings of reality that emerge through Season 5's experimentation with the medium of 360 VR Film.

Bohlanya

Bohlanya, led by performer Khutjo Green in collaboration with various performing artists from Season 5, is a mediation on madness, confusion, and the restless mind.

Situating the audience in the centre of it all, *Bohlanya* harnesses the often overwhelming and disorientating experience that comes with entering the realms of virtual reality, to create an environment that simulates the delusional, the lost, and the absurd. Whispers, shouts and the movement of the body become perplexing and disorientating calls for attention. The viewer, then, can choose to remain a passive observer or a willing participant in the ensuing confusion.

Inhuman Theatre

An installation work made immersive and interactive through virtual reality, *Inhuman Theatre* is visual artist Jonah Sack's contribution to The Centre for the Less

In *Inhuman Theatre*, viewers are placed in a post-human world where only objects remain as witnesses to the surviving landscape. These witnesses – both human-made and natural – occupy the space of the work, surrounding the viewer and playing out varying scenes and themes. Dust, rain, burning, and falling are some of the central themes to the work – the last remaining actions and objects in a world that has been left all the more quiet for our absence from it. What results, then, is a glimpse into a time that we no longer occupy – a chance to see the world and all of its continued growth, collapse, energy, and stillness.

Unit 13, Arts on Main
24 – 28 April 12 – 8pm daily
FREE EVENT

The Centre For The Less Good Idea was founded by William Kentridge in November 2016, the name derives in part from a Twana proverb: 'If the good doctor can't cure you, find the less good doctor'. The Centre aims to nurture artists in finding the less good idea, and creates and supports experimental, collaborative and cross-disciplinary arts projects.

The Centre provides a physical and immaterial space to pursue incidental discoveries made in the process of producing work. "Often, you start with a good idea. It might seem crystal clear at first, but when you put it to work the cracks and

fissures emerge in its surface, and they cannot be ignored. It is often the secondary ideas, those *less good ideas* found in trying to address the cracks in the first idea, that become the core of the work...the intention is to provide a forum for these less good ideas - arguing that in the act of playing with an idea, you can recognise those things that you didn't know in advance, but knew were somewhere inside you", says Kentridge about the intentions of Centre.

The Centre is a space to follow impulses, connections and revelations. It's a physical space for artists to come together over two seasons every year and for the curators of these seasons to bring together text, performance, image, and dance because an ensemble sees the world differently to how an individual does. It's a safe space for failure, for projects to be tried and discarded because they do not work. It's a space for short form work that does not have a natural home in a theatre or gallery, work which can show the jumping from context to context you do in your need to make sense of the world.

All ticketed events are R 100. Booking is essential
Bookings : www.lessgoodidea.com
Photo's by Zivanai Matangi and Stella Olivier
SATMag.



Theatre that changes the world

By Pinto Ferreira



In South Africa theatre for change has, as an instrument of arts activism, principally engaged in political agendas by protesting oppression, scrutinising racially based social injustices and condemning racial discrimination.

Theatre for change has furthermore demonstrated an indisputable capacity to target and address various adversarial matters other than political issues. Matters that detrimentally impact individuals and their societies, such as gender inequalities, injustices relating to sexual orientation, segregation based on social class, violence towards women, the abuse of children, the exploitation of power, the crime mayhem we experience daily, and the appalling escalation of corruption.

In order to successfully bring about change, art activism is necessitated to be both educational and inspirational. It is compelled to not only raise concerns and create awareness. In its mission to instill hope for a better world and aid growth towards personal and social empowerment, theatre for change also aims to inspire involvement and instigate allegiance towards common goals.

Theatre has the power to brilliantly translate abstract concepts into concrete contexts. "Freedom", as an example of such an abstract concept, can be made meaningful within different contexts to refer to different things, and be very specific at this. Through shared symbolisms and collective experiences, theatre manages to use these specific contexts to confront conceptions head on.

Theatre addresses a diverse audience in which individual interpretations are made in uniquely personalized ways, based on individual contexts and mind sets. It is on this subjective level where change occurs. It is at the heart of people where good theatre changes lives.

Art doesn't change the world. It changes lives. Theatre doesn't change the world. Changed people change the world.

Theatre activism for political change has mainly been reactionary with productions in which trauma is relived, frustrations are expressed, wrongdoers are condemned, and anger is incited. These productions have been vital in voicing our society's concerns, distresses and frustrations. They are confrontational and often shock. They proficiently pinpoint our problems and effectively create cognizance of them. But do they inspire change?

We see our country spiraling out of control. With a government that has been failing its people we see poverty, poor health care, poor education, a poor economy, and crime that is endemic. We see increasingly hostile behaviour, intolerance, violence and vengeance. We see very little integrity, righteousness and morality. Deplorably we are known as the world capital of many an evil.

Will we be able to turn this around? Who exactly is going to turn it around for us? It is clearly not going to happen through politics. We will need to bring about change ourselves. Only by starting to change ourselves, our mind sets and our personal preconceptions, we can hope to collectively bring about social change that will benefit all.

These changes occur in the hearts of people. It is in speaking to the hearts of people where the power of theatre is unmatched. Art can become the nexus from which to turn our country around.

The future theatre for change has its work cut out like never before. This theatre, after years of expressing anguish, can now become an enlightened and prophetic theatre that can bring about ambitious and progressive change, vital in uniting our people, in professing compassion rather than hatred, and in fostering personal and social growth that has as its goals, peace and prosperity for all our people. Is this not what we all want? Are these not the changes we all desire? Is this not what we all deserve?

These are invaluable changes that theatre can bring about. These are changes that can ignite a change of heart among our people. This is where healing starts. It is where growth appears. It is where we get inspired to become better. It is where we plant our peace and prosperity.

DANCE UMBRELLA AFRICA

Dance Umbrella has through the years been a consistent platform for dance productions that endorse social change. This April, at the launch of the new Dance Umbrella Africa at the State Theatre, things are no different. One much anticipated work which addresses social change is Sunnyboy Motau's *We are still marching*. It is performed by Moving Into Dance, a dance company that has been spearheading theatre for change for forty years.

The work is a commemoration of the 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings and brings tribute to stalwarts of the movement such as Lillian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Rahima Moosa, Sophia Williams-de Bruyn, Motlalepula Chabaku, Bertha Gxowa and Albertina Sisulu.

As the title implies, the march is not over. The goalposts may have moved, but the march continues.

SATMag.

Below: *We Are Still Marching* by Sunnyboy Motau. Photo by Herman Verwey.



FUN ON STAGE

3 Questions to 3 Artists

1. What music/ artist / song do you listen to that you will not necessarily admit in public?

2. What's the biggest embarrassment that you've experienced on stage?

3. Which theatre play best describes your life and why?

Why Suzette Myburgh loves SOUTH AFRICAN THEATRE

"South African Theatre is rich with new raw talent that challenges the audience to think critically about their life choices and society we live in. It inspires our young South Africans about how big they need to dream and to think like there is no box."



Revano Singh, Actor

1. I would never admit to anyone how much I really love Adele! Her music, which might seem suicidal to some, really resonates with me as I sometimes feel her pain resonating straight from the sound system into my soul.
2. I was performing in Janice Honeyman's Pinocchio several years ago and in one of the scenes we were supposed to pretend to eat the candy and not literally do so. I decided one day to just enjoy the chomps and lollies that I chokes and spat out the chomp live on stage in front of the audience and my fellow performers on stage. I was so embarrassed that The Resident Director called me in after the show and asked me, "What in God's name is wrong with you?!". I told him I hadn't had lunch earlier and I was starving and that is why I ate the Chomp!
3. This is a tough one! I would have to say *Woza Albert!* It doesn't really describe my life but the style of performance describes me best. Extremely high paced energy with excellent all round abilities Climaxing with laughter at the end of each scene but also very ambiguous.



Ryan Flynn, Actor

1. I am an avid listener of video game sound tracks! I just LOVE the epic sound they create and often find myself doing grand hand gestures to the other drivers, especially while in the car while during peak traffic. These in car performances are usually seen by concerned drivers in other cars.
2. I will never forget doing Rocky Horror a few years back. I was playing Brad Majors in the production and Brendan Van Rhyn was Frankenfurter. The underwear that Brendan wore for his costume was a girl's pair of panties, which didn't exactly cater for his 'talents' down there as much as needed. So every now and then, a part would pop out during the show Brendan would always just nonchalantly pop whatever was out back in. One particular night however, while doing the number 'Sweet Transvestite', there was a part in the choreography where Brendan pushes me to my knees and does a pelvic thrust towards me. On this night though, the left part of his 'talent' decided to pop out the side of his underwear and proceeded to flick me in the nose as he did his nightly pelvic thrusts to my face. It was clear from the gasp in audience and on stage from the cast that everyone had seen this. We all barely got through the rest of the number with out bursting out laughing. It was my first and only facial experience with that part of a man's anatomy, and Brendan jokes about that to this day.
3. I would say that the play *La Cage Aux Folles* (The Bird Cage) is the closest representation of my childhood and my life so far.



Francesca Michel, Actress

1. Hmm... to be honest I like to think I have rather good taste buds for music, but I have no skaam in being cringe. So give me some Hailee Steinfeld "Love Myself" while singing loudly in my car or sprinting up Kloof Nek and I will enjoy that great dose of self-love girl power (yes, I can talk cringe too).
2. Ha! This is a good one. UCT 2nd Year Drama School, Comic Book Performance (physical theatre). I was acting as some kind of hydraulic ledge (in child's pose position) for a friend to do effortless pushups and my pants ripped from the top all the way through, butt facing the audience. Yes, I was wearing a g-string. Yes, my butt was on show. Yes, we were only 5 minutes in. And yes, I still had many more forward rolls and leg spreading to do. It was not until I had to do a spread eagle, upside down type of pose and my poor partner was met by my desperately clenched butt-cheeks and g-string, that he realised the severity of our situation. But did I stop? No. So I sucked it up, tightened those cheeks even more, adapted those forward rolls for the audience's sake and finished what looked to be a breezy performance.
3. Comedy of Errors. No need for an explanation.



5 Q's from the Editor to... **Godfrey Johnson**



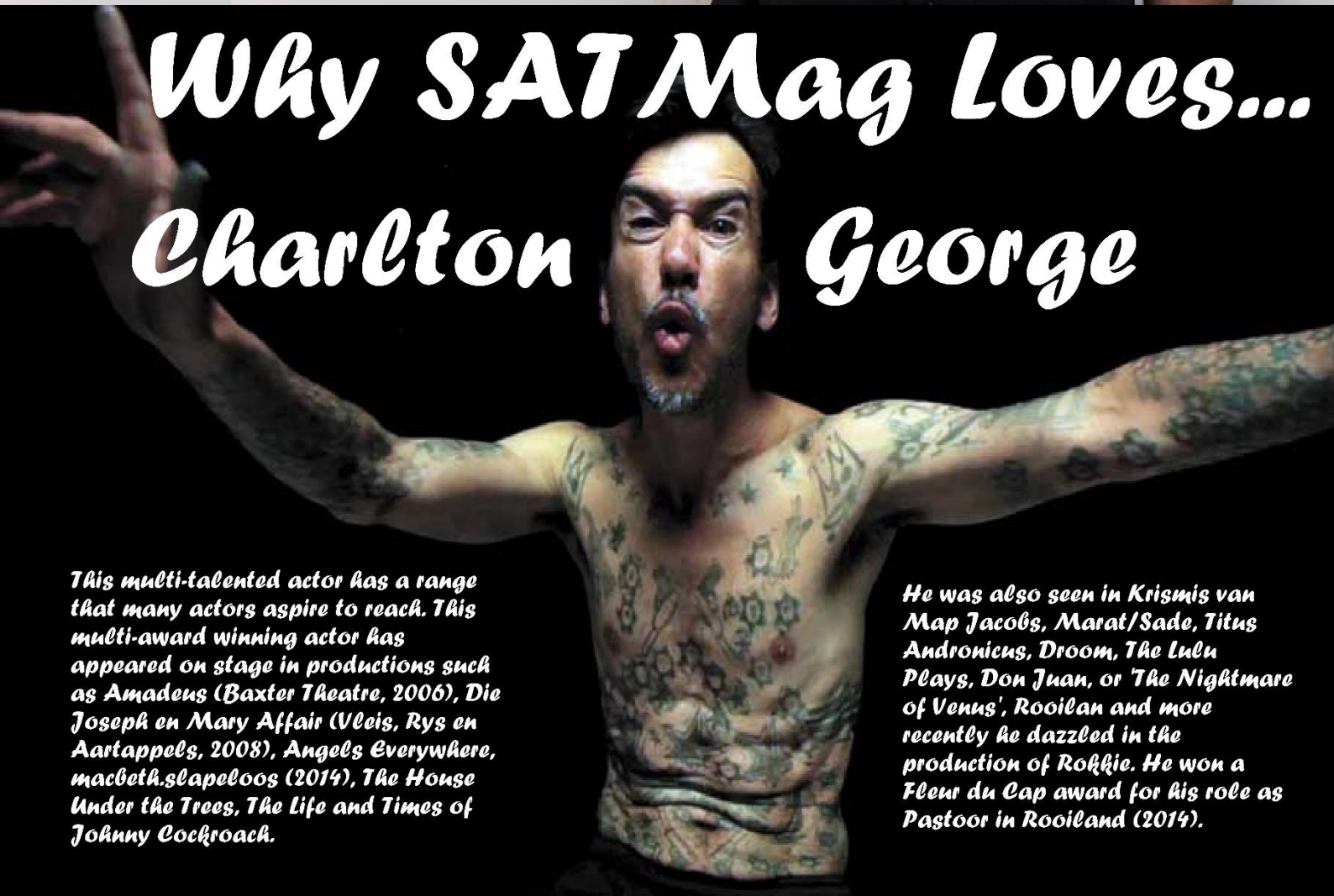
1) When did your dramatic "powers" first manifest itself?
I was four years old when I was made lead boy soprano in the school choir. When it came to my solo, I lit up like a very satisfied elf. Soon after that I made my theatrical debut playing a nameless horse in the annual school play, I gave my one line everything I could, the passion of a Brando and the subtlety of a Streep: parents wept, children sniggered and I felt like a star! About a week later I nearly drowned in the swimming gala, I realised that with blind enthusiasm, a tiny speedo and curly hair I could make people laugh and panic at the same time, even the nuns at the convent approved hysterically.

2) When was the most nervous you've ever been on a directing a production and why?
When I was 28 I directed a very serious play loaded with pathos and unnecessary symbolism, however, the lead actress enjoyed the occasional sherry before performance. This would and did lead to unintentional chaos and laughter. I was not brave enough to confront her and every night was a challenge. She did miraculously receive praise for her original and 'raw' performance. She played a drunk very successfully.

3) If you could be anything in the world for 24 hours, what would it be and why?
I would like to be the invisible cyber - troll who outs all the social media abusers in the world. They will include the predators, the narcissists, the fake critics, the fake influencers, the Trump family and all politicians everyday. Once outed, they will be forced to listen to Justin Bieber, "I Dreamed a Dream" and "Woodpeckers From Space" for eternity.

4) You've been reincarnated as a pizza, which toppings can we expect?
Spicy prawn, chilli, Italian tomato, Mediterranean onion, basil, grilled black mushroom, asparagus, artichoke, parmesan and black pepper.

5) If you were the opposite sex for one day, which role would you like to play in which show?
In a movie I would want to play Selma (played by Bjork) in Lars von Trier's masterpiece, "Dancer in The Dark". In a play it would be the psychotic yet sexy school teacher, Miss Margarida in Roberto Athayde's "Miss Margarida's Way".



Why SAT Mag Loves... **Charlton George**

This multi-talented actor has a range that many actors aspire to reach. This multi-award winning actor has appeared on stage in productions such as Amadeus (Baxter Theatre, 2006), Die Joseph en Mary Affair (Vleis, Rys en Aartappels, 2008), Angels Everywhere, macbeth.slapeboos (2014), The House Under the Trees, The Life and Times of Johnny Cockroach.

He was also seen in Krismis van Map Jacobs, Marat/Sade, Titus Andronicus, Droom, The Lulu Plays, Don Juan, or 'The Nightmare of Venus', Rooilan and more recently he dazzled in the production of Rokkie. He won a Fleur du Cap award for his role as Pastoor in Rooiland (2014).



Shakespeare

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