

Tip-ex wins Best of Zabalaza, comes to the Baxter

The Baxter's Best of the Zabalaza Theatre Festival production winner for 2016, Lauren Hannie's Tip-ex, will be staged at the Baxter Golden Arrow Studio, Cape Town from 12 to 23 April, 2016, at 7.30pm nightly.

This is the first time that a woman writer and director has won the Best of Zabalaza award since the festival's inception in 2011. Nominated in five categories, Tip-ex beat over 17 productions to take this year's top spot, also winning for Best Script. This is only Hannie's second year as a participant.

"Winning this award means more to me than I can express in words," said the 27-year-old. "Just thinking about my life so far and the challenges that I have had to deal with along the way, I can say with certainty that it has been worth it. It has restored my confidence so that I can push myself even harder to succeed.

"It was a big step for me to enter the Zabalaza Festival, having to allow myself the possibility to thrive and to stop being a behind-the-scenes small-town girl. After years of yearning for this opportunity I now feel that doors are starting to open for me."



Dynamic and powerful

Tip-ex is a dynamic and powerful three-hander that stars Hannie with Melissa Johannisen and Maxine Caesar. The central theme of the play focusses on gender issues and, in particular, corrective rape - still prevalent in some South African communities today. The narrative is about a woman, Katie (played by Hannie), who takes the audience back to her teenage years when she first started to realise that she was attracted to persons of the same sex. When she mentions this to her conservative family for the first time, outrage breaks out and everything changes. As still often happens today, she is sent to confirmation classes to 'fix' the problem.

Hannie was born in Mafikeng and moved to Cape Town with her family when she was 12 years old. She is a UCT graduate having attained her Bachelor of Social Science degree, majoring in psychology and drama, while developing her skill in scriptwriting.

She has performed in more than 10 productions that include Beyond the Footlights and Tapestry and directed Echoes2 as well as co-writing and directing her own play called Wo-Man. In 2015 she wrote the play The Wedding Dress, which was also showcased at the Baxter's Zabalaza Theatre Festival and was nominated for Best Actress and Best Script.

A very exciting talent

“Lauren Hannie is a very exciting talent to watch in the future,” said Thami Mbongo, Zabalaza’s artistic director. “This is a beautifully written play and as it has always been our mission to encourage women writers and directors all along, it was great news that this award was bestowed on our first female Best of Zabalaza winner. She has a lot to offer the arts and theatre industry and hers is a voice that needs to be heard.”

TIP-ex previews at the Baxter Golden Arrow Studio on 12 and 13 April, opens on 14 April and runs until 23 April at 7.30pm nightly with matinees on Saturdays 16 and 23 April at 2pm. Booking is through Computicket on 0861 915 8000, online at www.computicket.com or at any Shoprite Checkers outlet. There is an age restriction of 13.

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