

2016 Savanna Newcomer Award finalists

Five South Africans have been nominated for the 2016 Savanna Newcomer Award. The winner will be announced at the sixth Annual South African Comics' Choice Awards on 3 September at the Teatro at Montecasino in Johannesburg.

This year's finalists, Snooze Kambuwa, Farhan Esat, Ebenhaezer Dibakwane, Phil de Lange and Thabo "Summary" Kgaphola were chosen from amongst the contestants at the Savanna Newcomer Showcase, held at the Soweto Theatre in May.



Thabo Kgaphola, one of the five finalists

The annual Savanna Newcomer Showcase helps newbie comics gain exposure amongst new and larger audiences as a kick-start to their comedy careers. Previous Savanna Newcomers who have become well-known South African comedians include Deep Fried Man in 2011, Dillan Oliphant in 2012, Schalk Bezuidenhout in 2013, Loyiso Madinga in 2014 and Yaaseen Barnes in 2015.

This year's Savanna Newcomer nominees represent new, diverse stand-up acts. Thabo "Summary" Kgaphola is ready to take his act as class clown from the University of Johannesburg to stages around the country. He is also a nominee for the Savanna Audience Choice Comic Award, the only award open to public votes at this year's South African Savanna Comics' Choice Awards.

Another Johannesburg nominee, Farhan Esat, was a semi-finalist at last year's Swiss Montreux International Comedy

Competition and is a co-host of the weekly GAS Comedy Show on CliffCentral.

Apart from stand-up comedy, Ebenhaezer Dibakwane, also based in Johannesburg, is a sketch actor and writer, with TV-appearances on SABC2's Bantu Hour and ANN7 sports show, Game On.

Malawian born nominee Snooze Kambuwa, performed at Africa's first Comedy Central International Comedy Festival last year, another Savanna sponsored event.

Cape Town nominee, Phil de Lange, cracks jokes while playing the ukulele on stages across the Mother City including the Savanna-aligned Cape Town Comedy Club.

The Savanna Newcomer Showcase is directed by comedian and TV director, Rob van Vuuren, and comprises sketches, stand-up, impressionists, celebrity performances and witty one liners delivered by SA's top comedians.

The 10 award categories are:

The Savanna Newcomer Comic

The Intermediate Comic

The Comics' Pen Award

The Comic of the Year

The Lifetime Achiever Award

The Flying Solo Comic Award

The Non-English Comic Award

Best Friend of Comedy

The Breakthrough Award (new)

The Savanna Audience Choice Comic (only category open to public vote)

Voting for the Savanna Audience Choice Comic Award can be done via SMS to 37303 using the unique code available at www.comicschoice.com. SMS costs R1.50 per message and is limited up to 20 votes per mobile number.

For more information or tickets to the awards, visit www.comicschoice.com

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