

First edition of UJ's *Art Much?* mag, out soon

The University of Johannesburg's Arts & Culture Department is launching an all-new arts and culture magazine entitled *Art Much?*

The brainchild of Ashraf Johaardien, Head of UJ Arts & Culture, the eye-catching launch edition of *Art Much?* features articles by arts personalities Michelle Constant, Gerard Robinson and Renette Bouwer amongst others. There are also articles about recent Tunkie Dance Award recipient Gladys Aghulas and the tenth anniversary of the Artscape New Writing Programme in Cape Town; award-winning playwright Pieter Jacobs announces his latest play in an interview with Precious Mapulte and Moira de Swardt reviews the UJ Dance Production *Alice Who?*, directed and choreographed by Owen Lonzar.

Indicator of growing momentum

According to National Arts Festival Director Ismail Mahomed, who is also featured in the magazine, a publication like this is long overdue. Not only does the magazine place a marker in the ground, but it is also an indicator of the growing momentum of the arts at the UJ where the Arts & Culture Department under Johaardien's leadership will produce and present no less than ten visual arts exhibitions, as many classical and jazz concerts, as well as more than 15 full-scale productions during the coming year - an increase of nearly 300% in terms of output in performing arts at the UJ compared to previous years.

A forum for meaningful discussion

"I am keenly aware that we practice our craft within a very specific context and community," says Johaardien. "For me, the magazine format presents a compelling and engaging platform for articulating our planned arts programme at the UJ because it invites and allows for a range of voices in the arts to sketch the context both against which and within which we produce and present our work. I also hope that *Art Much?* will ultimately become a forum for the meaningful discussion of and reflection on arts and culture practise within South Africa," he says.

The launch edition of *Art Much?* will be available from 2 March in electronic format and from 14 March in print. Download the publication free of charge from the UJ Arts & Culture website at www.uj.ac.za/artscentre.