

Powerful plays open the Ikhwezi Theatre Festival

 By [Michael Britton](#)

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Since 1998, the Baxter Theatre Centre has been running Ikhwezi, a cultural outreach festival. This year, the festival presents 12 new plays, and if the two plays showcased on opening night are anything to go by, it promises to be well worth getting along to see a few shows. With a host of new acting talent on display, and featuring the work of new playwrights, it's hats off to the Baxter for their efforts in bringing community players to mainstream theatres.



Nelson Musonda - The Blind Man's Judgement

A Plague of Heroes

Directed by Maurice Podbrey, performed by Thami Mbongo, written by Vusi Mazibuko.

Thami Mbongo shines in a powerful story full of emotion and humour. Based on the experiences of writer Vusi Mazibuko, it tells the story of a bright teenage schoolboy dazzled by the glitz and bling of the local gangsters. The moneyed “heroes” of the township seem to have it all - cars, clothes, and women. After a brief and intoxicating life of crime, Vusi is left a paraplegic. His efforts to reform his life and redefine his view of heroism make for thought-provoking theatre and provide a witty and unsentimental South African parable.

The Blind Man's Judgement

Directed by Thami aka Mbongo and written by Nelson Musonda Chilishe. The cast of five, including writer Nelson Musonda Chilishe, plays eight different characters in this touching portrayal of an all-too-common problem in our schools.

Thabi is a young matric girl who lives with her blind grandfather. A bright student with lots of promise and potential has her dreams shattered when she becomes pregnant. Her school has been awarded a bursary to allow Thabi to further her studies, but the terms and conditions of the bursary specify that no pregnant students will be accepted. The school urges her to get an abortion, but her grandfather is outraged. Thabi's lonely attempts to balance the demands from all sides climax in some compelling theatre.

The Ikhwezi Festival runs until 20 March, 2010. Book online through Computicket. Price per show is R35.

Discounts available for block bookings

Block bookings of 10 or more and school groups (using own transport): R20

School groups using Baxter transport: R25

For block bookings please phone Sharon Alexander on +27 (0)21 680 3962 or email

ABOUT MICHAEL BRITTON

Comfortably curious writer and editor and project manager. Constantly creative thought processes and habitually questioning attitudes are my guide.

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