

## Ovation Awards winners announced

The winners of the Standard Bank Ovation Awards were announced on the closing day of the 2014 National Arts Festival in Grahamstown.



Convenor of the Awards Panel, Adrienne Sichel, described the work presented on the fringe at this year's festival as "refreshingly diverse". "I was impressed with the diversity, and aesthetics within the works," Sichel said, but warned artists to keep their honesty and to beware of self-censorship.

"The Standard Bank Ovation Awards provide a valuable incentive for artists on the festival's fringe programme to strive for excellence, experiment with innovation and to challenge and shift the boundaries of creativity," said Ismail Mahomed, the artistic director of the National Arts Festival.

This year, two Gold Ovation Awards were awarded. Wessel Pretorius' production Undone in the Theatre genre was described as "breathtakingly inventive". In the Music genre, Tumi Mogorosi was awarded a Gold Ovation Award for Project Elo. This 2014 SAMA award nominee performed his debut jazz album for the first time in Grahamstown.

Silver Ovation Awards for Theatre were presented to The Ballad of Dirk de Bruin, Whistle Stop, Miss Ever's Boys, What the Water Gave Me and Siembamba.

In the Music genre, Silver Ovations were awarded to Guy Buttery and Gareth Gale, and Trio with a Twist. Comedian Sne Dladla scooped a Silver Ovation for his show The Jokes on You.

### Performance Art

In the Performance Art genre, Gavin Krastin's provocative performance in #Omnomnom won him a Silver Ovation Award to add to his bouquet of Ovation Awards won in previous years. Rat Western and Wesley Deintje also received a Silver

Ovation for Machine for Living. Piet se Optelgoed received a Silver Ovation in the Physical Theatre genre. In the Family Fare genre, introduced for the first time at the festival, a Silver Ovation was awarded to A Man Called Rolex.

Standard Bank Ovation Encore Awards, which recognise merit and potential in works that can be developed, were presented to Robbie Collins for That Bushman's Crazy and to the Actors Unemployed Company for The Erl King.

A Standard Bank Special Merit Ovation Award was awarded to Emsini. The Standard Bank New Voices Ovation Award introduced this year to recognise sparks of gems on the fringe was awarded to Giving Birth to my Father.

The Adelaide Tambo Award (a new award) for celebrating human rights through the arts was awarded jointly to The Bram Fischer Waltz and Cold Case: Revisiting Dulcie September.

The Standard Bank Standing Ovation Award was presented to Thembi Mtshali-Jones for her illustrious career at the National Arts Festival and in recognition of a lifetime of creative energy in South Africa's cultural life spanning over four decades.

The festival's Short Sharp Stories competition has seen the publication of some of the best submissions in a book entitled Adults Only. The winner of this year's competition for the best story was awarded to Nick Mulgrew who won a Special Merit Award in the journalism awards that were announced earlier at the festival.

## **Post Office support**

The SA Post Office reaffirmed its investment in the development of a new generation of theatre professionals through its support of the Student Theatre Festival. The South African Post Office Student Theatre Awards will offer winners various levels of support to present productions at next year's festival. A panel of advisors comprising Gez Casey, Peter Terry, Warona Seane and Jacqueline Domisse recognised enormous potential amongst the 17 university productions that were presented at the festival this year. The Award for Best Student Theatre Writer was presented to Alex McCarthy and Callum Tillbury for the University of Cape Town script Uhm. The Best Student Theatre Director Award was won by Gopala Davies for the University of Pretoria production Barbe Bleue. The Award for Best Student Theatre Production was presented to Rhodes University for Solo. The Student Theatre Advisors' Award for the Best Poster was presented to University of Witwatersrand's Maid in Mzansi and the Festival's Marketing Team's Choice Award for Poster Design was awarded Oakfield College's poster for its production, Flesh.

The PANSA New Writer's Award, supported by Africalia, was introduced this year to stimulate new writing on the fringe. The three winners of the New Writer's Award are Wynne Bredenkamp for Salt, Ameera Patel for Whistle Stop and Wiseman Ncube for Giving Birth to my Father.

The Standard Bank Ovation Award panel comprised: Adrienne Sichel, Ismail Mahomed, Lynette Marais, Tammy Ballantyne, Moira de Swardt, Bridget van Oerle, Brooks Spector, Bruce Dennill, Kgomotso Moncho, Steve Kretzmann, Juanita Praeg, Christina Kennedy, Robyn Sassen and World Fringe Alliance representatives Anneke Jansen (Amsterdam Fringe) and Julian Caddy (Brighton Fringe). Specialist music advisors were Michelle Constant and Tony Lankester for contemporary music and Richard Cock for classical music.

The panel for the Adelaide Tambo Award were Ismail Mahomed, Adrienne Sichel, Phyllis Klotz, Mandie van der Spuy, Brett Bailey and Elinor Sisulu.

The panel for the South African Post Office Student Theatre Awards were Peter Terry, Jaqueline Domisse, Warona Seane and Gez Casey (Live Theatre: UK)

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