Artscape to celebrate its 50th birthday throughout the yea

The Artscape Theatre in Cape Town will mark 50 years since it was established with events tha will be held throughout the year. The celebrations will include traditional African music, acrobatic jazz, drama, dance, theatre entertainment and exhibitions depicting unforgettable moments (fron Nico to Artscape).

The festivities will kick off on 20 March 2021 with the opening concert, produced by Basil Appollis and featuring Artscape Theatre's associated companies, including Cape Town Opera, JazzArt, Unmute Dance Company, Cape Town City Ballet, the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra, Zip-Zap Circus, and iconic Cape Tov performers such as Dizu Plaatjies, Vicky Sampson, Hilton Schilder, Zinzi Nogavu, Sylvia Mdunyelwa, Dianr Ferrus, Nicola Hanekom and many others. The concert will be recorded at the Artscape Opera House in celebrating our Human Rights Day and be delivered to audiences through the Artscape YouTube channel, free of charge.

Taare Dance Troupe

Says Artscape CEO Marlene le Roux: "When I think of this building and the theme we have chosen to celebrate its golden jubilee, yesterday, today and tomorrow, I am reminded that the Nico Malan just five decades ago opened up excluding the largest section of the population, as if we just didn't exist, treating u like the second-class citizens the Apartheid regime believed us to be. And yet, here we are, in 2021, in all our glory, telling our stories on the very stages that alas were denied us when it first opened its doors. Tha what this building represents: the evolution of a species, the struggles of stalwarts, the wherewithal of thos that helped to bring us to this point in our history. And it is to them that we give thanks as the building turns 50."

From exclusion to inclusion

The theatre was named after the former National Party administrator of the Cape Province, Dr Johannes Nicholas Malan, who initiated the project. It was programmed and managed by Cape Performing Arts Boa (CAPAB) as a production house with four arts companies (orchestra, opera, ballet and drama) and initially

opened to Whites only.

This exclusionary Apartheid policy received a widespread objection from several quarters and after enormous pressure and, in 1975, it became the first South African theatre that the Apartheid government, through a permit system, allowed all races into its premises, while on the 11 March 1978 the then Nationali government abolished its legislation that barred mixed-race audiences in theatres and mixed-race casts in productions.

THEATRE

Cape Town City Ballet returns to the Artscape with *Serenade*, *Moon Behind The Clouds*

9 Mar 2021

By 1994, the South African government policy changed dramatically and transformed all performing arts boards into playhouses. The centre was renamed Artscape and replaced CAPAB on 27 March 2001 and opened up all other art genres to performers and patrons from all walks of life. It currently remains as an agency of the National Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, while the building itself is the property of the Western Cape government.

Celebrations will continue throughout the year with additional activities to be showcased such as Joyous Choirs (a mass choir presentation in celebration of choirs from the Western Cape Province) and an outdo community concert to be staged on the piazza in front of the building amongst many others. The journey from Nico to Artscape will be permanently documented with virtual (audio-visual) exhibitions and tours of th building to enable and inform audiences and patrons to experience the long history of the building, icons a employees that played a part through the highs and the lows of the past 50 years.

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