

My Body My Space takes to public spaces again

For several years, My Body My Space (MBMS), an innovative public arts festival hosted by the Forgotten Angle Theatre Collaborative (FATC), has taken place in public spaces across the Emakhazeni Local Municipality (ELM) in rural Mpumalanga.



Image supplied: Performers from MBMS 2018

The MBMS festival aims to contribute to the process of social cohesion in an area that is still palpably lacking in socio-political and socio-economic integration. It tries to bring the diverse rural citizenry of Emakhazeni together by piercing and disrupting the familiar ways in which people traverse shared social spaces.

In 2021, MBMS had to pivot to an online event – a global first, MBMS was delivered entirely via a dedicated WhatsApp line.

MBMS22 returns to a physical, in-person form with the tagline: “A Festival of Meetings and Greetings”. Calling out: “Dumelang”, “Sanibonani”, “Hello”, “Lotjhani, Le Kae?”, “How Are You? / Where Are You?”, this year’s festival weaves together the two themes of human rights and climate, cornerstones of FATC’s philosophy and values as a company.

Funded by The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture Mzansi Golden Economy (DSAC), The National Arts Council (NAC) and Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) MBMS22 will be focussed almost entirely on the Emakhazeni creative arts community where local artists will be at the centre of decision-making processes and opportunities for collaborations between national and international partners can occur.



Image supplied: Performers from MBMS 2018

In line with the idea of “Meetings and Greetings”, the festival will consist of a series of smaller creative encounters over a longer period of time. The core function is to do more things together locally.

#MBMS22’s thematic focus, “Where Art and Climate Meet”, invites exploration into how climate and arts-based practice meet in creative dialogue that holds, at its core, the human rights experience and relationship to the subject matter.

Tshego Kutsoane, FATC development manager, says, “Ensuring access and inclusion through the delivery of high-quality arts-based offerings is how FATC responds to our context’s exigencies. In these still quite strange times, we are choosing to respond to the widespread desires to gather in person and to do that carefully. We are opening up our doors to invited guests, and we are venturing out to knock on those of our neighbours in the immediate local, national, and further performance communities that we also call home.”



Not to be missed at Zeitz Mocaa in March

8 Mar 2022



“To visit, to host, to walk the streets of Emakhazeni together again, and catch up. To be in the safe and intimate company of one another again to ask How are you/we? Where are you/we now? To meet in acknowledgement of what has changed, and to more deliberately fashion How we move together now into the new shapes of our relationships, our communities and our creative expression,” Kutsoane continues.

What to expect

Beginning on 13 March with a gathering on the deck at FATC’s Ebhudlweni Arts Centre, Soraya Thomas from Reunion will run a workshop in the open air. From 14 - 17 March, Thomas will collaborate with the FATC company and *Cie ex Nihilo* in

a residency format culminating in a showcase on 18 and 19 March. This is the beginning of a new multi-year project called *Crossroads*.

Over 13 March 13 - 22 April, the MBMS festival organises to facilitate moments of creative residency, where changes in our climate can be contemplated, new ideas can be explored, and creative disciplines are stretched in gentle collaboration. Each meeting will culminate in a sharing moment that pops up in various spaces in the Emakhazeni local municipality. The moving festival showcases will pop up in old stomping grounds, in new sites and be offered as one of the Dullstroom-sho't left tourist attractions to book.



Image supplied: Performance from MBMS 2017

Other partners include Drama for Life (DFL); Musa Hlatshwayo's Mhayise Productions from KZN working with FATC from 21 - 27 March; Moving into Dance (MID) and Vuyani Dance Theatre (VDT), both from Joburg collaborating in a dance week from 4-10 April with Cape Town's Unmute Dance Company and FATC.

There will also be a two-week experiment where a total of 20 local community-based practitioners – 10 performance-based and 10 visual arts or craft-based will be invited to collaborate across disciplines. Visitors will be invited to witness the creative process.

The festival will culminate in a week of new work by FATC trainees and interns from 11-14 April.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>