

Artscape Women's Humanity Festival 2025 reveals lineup

As violence, war, and division continue to threaten communities across the globe, Artscape and Woman Zone are all set for the 2025 Artscape Women's Humanity Festival under the theme: Peace in Action – Working Together.



Source: www.artscape.co.za

Running throughout Women's Month in August, this year's festival calls on women and men alike to come together in the spirit of humanity, collaboration, and courageous compassion.

"In a world scarred by conflict and separation, we are choosing to listen, to care, and to work together," said Marlene Le Roux, CEO of Artscape Theatre Centre.

"Artscape, in partnership with Woman Zone, is fully committed to fostering peace through action — not only to honour women and their journeys but to unite all people in the struggle against violence in all its forms. Now, more than ever, peace must be intentional. It must begin with understanding 'the other' and be nurtured through kindness, storytelling, and acts of humanity."

The 2025 edition of the festival is a powerful tapestry of voices, arts, music, literature, and lived experience with programming that speaks directly to the pressing need for healing and hope. From feminist theatre and literary activism, to community exhibitions, story cafés, and inclusive interfaith ceremonies, every event is a step toward building bridges in our divided world.

This year, the festival honours six icons of Peace — individuals whose life work has embodied courage, dialogue, and healing:

- **Judge Albie Sachs** – South African lawyer, activist, writer, and former judge appointed to SA's first Constitutional Court by Nelson Mandela.
- **Virginia Davids** – Associate Professor of Singing at UCT, made her debut at CAPAB with the title role Verdi's AIDA.
- **Thembi Mtshali-Jones** - One of South Africa's most acclaimed actors, recognized for her roles in popular television serials as well as stage performances.
- **Sue Williamson** - South African creative whose five-decade journey started in the 1970s, producing art

that explores themes of memory and societal justice.

- **Fahruq Valley-Omar** – Hailing from Worcester during the apartheid era, he is a seasoned stage performer, accomplished director, and international film actor.
- **The late Professor Nomvula Mthethwa** – She is remembered as a symbol of resilience against apartheid, who set up community centres in areas where Black people had been forcibly displaced.

These icons will be celebrated through keynote events, performances, and conversations — anchoring the festival's values in the lived wisdom of changemakers.

What to expect

Festival highlights include:

- ***Journey Through Song*** – a powerful musical theatre piece inspired by Ernestine Nur Stuurman (25–2 July)
- ***This bra's a psycho*** – a provocative play exploring trauma, love, and queer identity (28 July–2 August)



THEATRE

this bra's a psycho to debut at Artscape Theatre

22 Jul 2025

- ***I Want To Call You Daddy*** – a one-woman performance that fuses poetry, storytelling, song, and movement to explore single motherhood in post-apartheid South Africa – written and performed by Marcé Underwood (6–9 August)
- **Discussion with Marlow Valentine of IAM** - Celebrating 30 years at the intersection of faith and queerness, Inclusive and Affirming Ministries (IAM) has grown from a lone voice to a leading force for que faith inclusion in Africa — now partnering with Artscape to honour queer women's stories of resilience, resistance, and truth. (8 August)
- **Short Film and Q&A** - Screening of *Sister Dinges* and *Mr Isaacs* preceded by a panel discussion with the film maker and directors. In *Sister Dinges*, a grieving queer man, Marshall, battles family opposition to fulfil his mother's cremation wish. A homophobic attack triggers a revenge quest, masking the pain of profound loss.

Mr Isaacs tells the story of a talented young soccer player, Tauriq Isaacs, who struggles with a family secret that leads him down a destructive path, threatening to destroy his promising future and the relationships he holds dear. (8 August)
- Woman Zone Woman's Day Programme on FMR 101.30 from 12 to 1pm (8 August)
- **1000 Women Event** – It's a powerful gathering celebrating women's progress in combating gender-based violence and uniting to shape future solutions.
- ***Please don't call me moffie*** – a thought-provoking and powerful one-man performance on toxic masculinity, mental health and homophobia showcasing. (8 – 9 August)

- **Women's Day, 9 August** – with a full-day programme including the opening address by Dr Marlene Le Roux and Judge Albie Sachs, Thandi Swartbooi and Women Unite marimba band, interfaith blessings by the Cape Town Interfaith Initiative, handing over of Step-Up For Peace scroll in front of Wire Woman dressed as Peace Messenger, and the iconic “Women Walking Artscape” procession around the complex.

There will be stalls and health screenings in the foyers, documentary screenings - featuring the work of Ubuntu Rural Women and Youth Movement and Persons with Disability and Lief n Leed - Ons is wat ons is documentary screening.

The full day of festivities will culminate with a Women in Jazz concert to honour Bush Radio's 30th anniversary, featuring Babalwa Mentjies, Lady Day Big Band, Auriol Hays to name a few.

- Voices in Unison choral performance (10 August)
- “Three Unique Generations, One Stage” Pass the Flame– a once-in-a-lifetime music event with Mabong Thusi featuring Thembi Mtshali-Jones accompanied by Bheki Khoza and KUJENGA (15–16 August)
- Woman Zone Book launch & book swap celebrating literary activism and 10 years of The Women's Library. Book launch, Together Apart: The story of Life in Apartheid, and talk hosted by co-author and literary activist Xolisa Guzula followed by panel discussion with activist/artist Sue Williamson (16 August)
- Radio Tygerberg Sis'ters Women's Conference – enjoy powerful messages and testimonies from Benescke Janse van Rensburg, Rouchelle Liedemann, Liomee Vosloo, Rosebud Tsobane, Karlien van Jaarsveld, Lynette Beer and the lovely Elwira Standili. (16 August)
- Story Café: Ode to Sara and Isidudla: Sara Baartman and Cultural Body Image – A discussion on body image and representation with filmmaker-performer Nomandla Vilakazi (23 August)

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