

BBC Africa Radio Awards winners

Talk Radio 702 won Station of the Year in the first-ever BBC Africa Radio Awards in Nairobi, Kenya, this past weekend. Ghana's Citi FM and Joy FM, Kenya's Capital FM and KBC, South Africa's Radio 786 and Uganda's Radio Pacis were also winners in a night of star-studded celebration.

The event was hosted by the BBC's popular presenter Komla Dumor and the entertainment included live performances from Nigerian rapper 2Face Idibia, South African vocalist Thandiswa Mazwai and Kenyan newcomer Valerie Kimani.

The categories and winners were:

New Radio Station of the Year:

Radio Pacis, Uganda

News Journalist of the Year:

Esther Mbondo, KBC, Kenya

Sports Journalist of the Year:

James Wokabi, Capital FM, Kenya

Local On-Air Campaign of the Year:

Matilda Asante, Joy FM, Ghana

Interactive/ Talk Show of the Year:

The Citi Breakfast Show hosted by Bernard Avle, Citi FM, Ghana

Young Broadcaster of the Year:

Qaanitaah Dramat, Radio 786, South Africa

BBC radio coverage of the Awards, which were held on Saturday, 26 May 2007 at the Safari Park Hotel, included live coverage on the BBC Swahili and BBC English language services, and highlights from the awards were broadcast on a wide range of programmes, including African Perspective, Africa Have Your Say, Focus on Africa, Weekend Network Africa, World Have Your Say, the international news and information channel BBC World and music channel MTV base (Africa). Full coverage was also available at <http://bbcworldservice.com/africaradioawards>.

The BBC launched its Africa-wide search for the very best radio talent in autumn 2006 in order to recognise and celebrate the exceptional broadcasting talents of those working in the continent's vibrant radio scene.

Expert judges from throughout Africa, including Ferial Haffajee, editor-in-chief of South Africa's *Mail & Guardian* newspaper, listened to hundreds of hours of radio to finalise the prize winners and reward excellence – including representatives of the audience who won their coveted places on the judging panels through a competition.

The judges praised 702 as “a confident and professional station which uses its immense resources to change people's lives through broadcasting and community activities.” They said that they were “especially impressed with the range of on-air initiatives including hosting a live debate with political parties before elections, hosting and organising the press conference.”

to quiz Vice President Jacob Zuma the day after his acquittal on rape charges, hosting a celebrity party for the Oscar-winning film, Tsotsi, and unveiling the FIFA World Cup at a special ceremony.”

Speaking from Nairobi, 702's station manager Pheladi Gwangwa, said: “We are thrilled... This is a great achievement for the station and the talented people who work for it. It's a team effort.

“We will continue to serve the community with dedication and passion. Our listeners always come first. Our listeners have told us all along that we are the best radio station on the continent and this award is confirmation of that. We wish to thank our listeners for their loyal support over the past 27 years.”

Since the station first started broadcasting on 28 June 1980, 702 has received a number of awards. “In this case we were competing against the best on the continent. I wish to also congratulate all the other category winners,” Gwangwa said.

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