

SA Post Office to sponsor Student Theatre Festival

The Student Theatre Festival at Grahamstown's National Arts Festival will this year be sponsored by the South African Post Office. Over the years the Student Theatre Festival has developed into an indispensable part of the National Arts Festival programme and has become renowned for showcasing South Africa's next generation of performing artists.

As part of the sponsorship the SA Post Office, in partnership with the Student Theatre Festival, will provide 16 tertiary institutions from across the country with the opportunity to take part in the festival, which runs from 28 June to 8 July. The sponsorship investment covers travel, meals, accommodation, miscellaneous items, and production expenses for the total of 160 students. The institutions have been invited to present a production in Grahamstown in any South African language and use a multiplicity of artistic expressions or genres in the creation of their work.

Best production will be awarded

On 6 July an awards ceremony will take place to recognise the most outstanding and exceptional of these productions. The institution that presents the most acclaimed production in the opinion of the Student Theatre Advisors will be awarded a budget to create a theatre-in-education production based on the theme of philately. The content for the production will be designed in conjunction with subject matter experts from the South African Post Office. The winning production will be invited to present their production on the Fringe programme at the 2013 National Arts Festival.

"We jumped at the opportunity to be part of the South Africa's largest and most diverse annual arts celebration," said van Johan van Wyk, senior manager of philatelic services for the SA Post Office.

The arts industry faces continued challenges when it comes to assisting emerging professionals to become productive in the arts economy. Through the sponsorship the SA Post Office aims to achieve a greater national prominence for the performing arts industry as a whole.

Workshop for pupils

"The SA Post Office is passionate about developing South African artists, especially the youth. We are pleased to afford these institutions the opportunity to showcase their skills at the festival under our banner," concluded Van Wyk.

At the National Schools Festival, which runs immediately after the National Arts Festival, SA Post Office will facilitate a workshop for high school pupils to learn the art behind stamp design. The workshop aims to encourage a heightened interest in stamp design among emerging designers. The SA Post Office will have various other activities and initiatives running at the National Arts Festival, including a mascot which will form part of various festival activities, free limited edition postcards, stamp sales, a festival date stamp, a full courier and postal service's and a 2015 stamp design idea giveaway.

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