



## PROGRAMME GUIDELINES AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2011

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### **Introduction: the purpose of this overview**

The Absa KKNK welcomes a wide range of proposals from artists, producers and other cultural practitioners in compiling its annual programme. In principle, there are no constraints on what we will consider; should a particular idea not have been explored at our festival before or not fall comfortably within the genre designations of our programme to date, the merit of the proposal will take precedence over our administrative categories. In practice, we try to align the recommendations of the teams evaluating proposals with our budget, venues, audience profile and strategic objectives. This applies somewhat differently across the various genres comprising our festival programme, and can shift from year to year in response to developments in our sector. The purpose of this document is to assist practitioners who are considering submitting work to us to identify areas of mutual interest. Again, it should be stressed that the guidelines presented below are open to discussion and intended to encourage and support creativity, not to constrain it. Should you have an idea that departs from, or is not addressed, in the guidelines provided below which in your view could add value to our programme, we would love to hear from you.

### **Broad mission, profile and objectives**

The Absa KKNK strives to be a trend-setting, affirmingly South African, get away arts festival that values innovation and speaks Afrikaans inclusively.

- Over the past 16 years we have provided the model for both the format and the programme content of what is now a national network of predominantly Afrikaans-speaking festivals.
- We play a leading role in supporting the production of, and/or providing a platform for, new work, especially in theatre, music and visual arts.
- Given our location in the enterprising town of Oudtshoorn in the beautiful Klein Karoo, most of our visitors stay for several days and combine their arts experience with a vacation.
- We remain committed to supporting South African work of the highest quality and fostering a non-racial, inclusive understanding of Afrikaans as a dynamic asset of a multilingual, democratic South Africa.

In compiling our programme for 2011, we aim to continue to support the production of a diverse range of innovative work, and to enter into partnerships with festivals, theatres and other organisations elsewhere, thereby extending the footprint of our programme and actively contributing to the national arts. With the increase in the number of festivals nationwide, particularly those catering to an Afrikaans-speaking audience, several of which specialise in certain genres, our programme has become more focused in recent years.

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Direkteure: Russel Botman (Voorsitter), Schalk Burger, Marietha Channell, Lorika Elliot, Louis Heyneman,  
André le Roux, John October, Ronnie Samaai, Wilmien van der Westhuizen en Laetitia van Dyk

Hoof Uitvoerende Beampte: Brett Pyper | Sekretaris: Rhodè Snyman  
Beskermhere: Patrice Motsepe, Franklin Sonn, Ton Vosloo, Christo Wiese  
en Raadsdame Diane de Jager, Uitvoerende Burgemeester van Oudtshoorn

In the medium term, the emphasis will fall on the quality and inclusivity, rather than the overall size, of our programme, and we will increasingly measure our success in terms of its distinctive Klein Karoo character and its depth of impact beyond our festival.

We are particularly eager to receive proposals that can help us achieve the following medium-term objectives:

1. To explore the natural and cultural landscapes of Oudtshoorn and the Klein Karoo, and of Greater Oudtshoorn, as a creative canvas. The Karoo is a resonant landscape in the South African literary and artistic imagination, and we encourage artists to conceive site-specific work that engages with the unique histories and landscapes of our region. The introduction of our so-called "Oudtshoorn Oraloor" programme of site-specific theatre, music and landscape art in 2009, strengthened by our partnership with the Oerol Festival in The Netherlands, was very well received and we will continue to build this aspect of our programming in 2011. Site-specific, award-winning productions such as *Betésda*, *Taraboemdery* and the dance production *Grond* were well received in 2010.
2. To continue to support the development of flagship South African theatre and music productions, exhibitions and related genres, which, through co-productions, have a life beyond our festival and can be seen at other festivals, theatres, galleries, etc., nation-wide and internationally.
3. To more closely integrate the creativity and diversity of our official arts programme with the conviviality for which our festival is also known in its street culture, tents, informal stages and public spaces. To this end, we propose to programme more street theatre and to find innovative ways of making aspects of our arts programme more visible in the streets.
4. To continually broaden our festival offering to reflect the full range of experience in and around Afrikaans, among mother-tongue as well as 2nd & 3rd language speakers. Recognising the wide currency of Afrikaans as the lingua franca of the Karoo, we aim to become the preeminent South African arts festival promoting a model of linguistic inclusivity in an indigenous South African language. We welcome proposals that profile the themes and diversity within Afrikaans-speaking communities (e.g., in regional or social dialects) as well as the Afrikaans inflections within broader South African culture (e.g., the way that Afrikaans has interacted with English and other indigenous languages).
5. To support projects that contribute to audience development and skills transfer. The cultivation of younger concert-going audiences from a range of backgrounds is a programming priority. We also welcome proposals for the presentation of innovative workshops, master classes and related opportunities for local and visiting emerging artists, which can be offered under the auspices of our newly established Klein Karoo Arts Academy. The success of our schools programme for Grade 10 & 11 learners (called Klap!) will be further developed in 2011.
6. To create opportunities for a broader pool of artistic decision makers who write, direct and produce for our festival. This includes positioning our predominantly Afrikaans-speaking audience as a support base for the best of the South African arts in general.

## Overview of programme opportunities by genre

### THEATRE

Theatre in Afrikaans, both drama and comedy, continues to comprise a major dimension of our programming. Our audiences have come to expect an impressive range of theatre offerings, both intimate and on a larger scale, featuring classics and new work, presented by the country's leading practitioners. Given the increase in the number of festivals in the country, we see a role for ourselves as a partner entering into co-productions with other festivals and theatres, especially in order to increase the audience for larger-scale productions while pooling resources to cover pre-production costs. We thus welcome initiatives from producers to forge partnerships that can enable innovative and substantial new productions.

While there is a niche audience for theatre in English at our festival, it is small, and though we aim to draw more English-speaking audiences, they are likely to be bilingual and have an interest in seeing work in Afrikaans. We would like to do the same for work that explores the dialogue between Afrikaans and Xhosa. Innovative ways of presenting work in translation (and not only out of English) will be welcomed.

Audience development is a major medium-term objective at our festival, and several distinct niches can be identified through which we would like to address younger, and more diverse, audiences. While our children's theatre offering is well established, we would like to offer productions that also look beyond the canon of Western European fairy tales to include (South) African characters and narratives. We would also like to address the interests of "tweens" who have outgrown children's theatre and are not yet in the teenage audience. Over the past few years, we have prioritised including cutting-edge theatrical offerings for teenagers, together with opportunities for workshops and exchanges with professionals under the rubric of our Arts Academy and Klap!

### MUSIC

The second major leg of our programming, our music offering at the festival incorporates a range of contemporary Afrikaans music in a variety of genres, music theatre, cabaret, and classical music. We would like the range of music heard at the festival to reflect the full stylistic variety of Afrikaans music, and we would like to hear more acoustic music and live musicianship (as opposed to backtracks, which can be explored in its own way as a creative medium) on our stages and in the newly established *Rivierbuurt*. Rock music in Afrikaans has a strong pedigree at our festival and will be extended in 2011. Jazz and gospel have not as yet been fully developed at our festival, and we would like to expand our programming and audiences in these genres. 'Roots'-oriented music of the Karoo and the interrelationships between boeremusiek, langarm, rieldansmusiek, brass bands and koortjies is an emerging niche within our programming. As in other aspects of our programme, we value original work and the highest standards of the craft of performance in our contemporary music programme.

With review of our festival terrain and the Rivierbuurt with all its music stages, we could create new platforms for artists in 2010. We now plan an even broader spectrum of Afrikaans music and genres, and invest in a soundtrack of music and artist that might not have had opportunities at previous festivals.

The classical music offering at our festival is primarily oriented towards chamber and choral music, though we welcome proposals that make it possible, within our limited budget, to present works for larger ensembles - depending on the cost of accommodation for larger ensembles. Given the language and literary interests of a section of our festival audience, the lieder repertoire in Afrikaans has been well represented in our programmes, and though we do not as yet have a significant audience for new music, we value being able to include judiciously compiled programmes that include the work of contemporary South African composers.

#### DANCE

Dance has, as a rule, attracted a relatively small audience at our festival in the past, and we are looking to various ways of developing our dance offering and audience. Given that we do have a substantial audience for theatre in Afrikaans, some productions that have featured dance at our festival have integrated choreographed movement within theatrical and literary productions. Nonetheless, given the capacity of dance to engage audiences of various age groups and cultural backgrounds, we are eager to develop a niche for dance in our programming that speaks to local audiences as well as festival visitors. We have thus decided to prioritise dance initiatives with a strong audience development and education dimension. We welcome dialogue with dance practitioners to advance this aspect of our programming.

#### STREET THEATRE & HERITAGE PERFORMANCE

We have identified these as areas with potential to grow in the coming years and welcome proposals that can help us to extend our arts offering into the streets as well as the Rivierbuurt; and to bridge the domains of the vernacular and the professionals arts. *Storiesambreel* was one of the successes of the 2010 programme. One aspect of this entails exploring the capacity of the performing and visual arts to engage critically and creatively with conceptions of heritage and identity. We have instituted a curatorship in these areas and would welcome dialogue in developing this aspect of our programming.

#### LITERARY ART (WOORDKUNS)

Offerings under this rubric have, over the years, ranged from intimate presentations in which authors read extracts from their work, to fully fledged theatrical productions in which literary material has been adapted for the stage. As a genre designation, "woordkuns" has become a specialisation at some festivals. We welcome proposals that engage creatively with literary work, but incline towards the theatrical in our programme choices, and value literary arts offerings that display the same production values as our professional theatre offering.

#### DISCUSSIONS

Various discussion series, some oriented towards topical news of the day and others to aspects of our arts programmes, are offered for the duration of our festival. The programme also includes discussions around newly released books and other publications. Our aim is to encourage critical discourse and debate and to bridge the gap between the critical and the popular. Suggestions for topics and speakers to be presented in this series will be welcomed, particularly insofar as they engage issues germane to our festival character, objectives and programming.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please feel free to contact our programme manager, Kobus Burger, by e-mail at [kburger@kknk.co.za](mailto:kburger@kknk.co.za) or by phone at 082 950 7327.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Pyper', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Brett Pyper

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER