



THE
KENYA
CULTURAL CENTRE
INCORPORATING THE KENYA NATIONAL THEATRE

MARCH NEWSLETTER



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📍 Harry Thuku Road, Nairobi

Theatre Digest

**THE KENYA CULTURAL CENTRE
INCORPORATING THE KENYA NATIONAL THEATRE
MONTHLY BULLETIN**


EDITORIAL


March is here and your favorite theatre publication "Theatre Digest" is out. Theatre Digest is a monthly newsletter produced by the Kenya National Theatre to provide you with a lineup of upcoming shows at the Kenya National Theatre. It also includes reviews on performing arts, theatre, and entertainment showcased here in February 2024. You will also get to be informed on KCC-NT engagements. We have much more for your reading pleasure.


We are grateful to all the production companies and other stakeholders who have put effort to provide exceptional performances and ensure that the industry is thriving. We would like to assure you of the Centre's support to keep the theatre scene vibrant.


Delight in the read and let us have your feedback.


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EDITORIAL

Kevin Kimani Kahuro - Principal Creative Production Officer

Lucy Muthaa Karaya - Communication Officer

Felix Hegneous Machio - Assistant ICT Officer

UPCOMING SHOWS



Embu Setup Poetry Presents

KORWA TI EMBU NI KU

March 9th, 2024 - 2:00PM

Venue: Talent Academy Embu

"KORO TI EMBU NI KU" is a poetry show that aims to educate the audience about Embu culture, social and economic background which has been forgotten and how we can use it in our life again. It will evoke strong emotions and celebrate the beauty and the power of language and inspire appreciation for poetry form.

Tickets:

Advance: Kshs 300

Gate: Kshs 500

VIP: Kshs 1000

Lipa na Mpesa

Pochi La Biashara:

0791336610



Poetry After Lunch Kilifi Presents

BAHATI A SPOKEN WORD PLAY

March 9th, 2024 - 4:30PM

Happy Hour 5:30PM - 7:30PM

Through the medium of poetry and free verses, Bahati becomes an empowering opportunity to amplify the voices of poets, storytellers, and orators within the disabled community in Kilifi County. By sharing their stories, these individuals aim to shed light on the struggles faced by people with disabilities and foster understanding, empathy, and advocacy within the community.

Paybill - 247247

A/C - 0725054295

TICKETS

Die Hard - Kshs 200

Advance - Kshs 500

Gate - Kshs 1,000





Vibes and Laughs Presents

A BROKE LUO IS NO LONGER A PRETENDER

March 16th, 2024 - 5PM - 11PM

Venue: Kenya Cultural Centre - Ukumbi Mdogo

Join us at the Kenya National Theatre on 16th March 2024 from 5-11PM for a standup comedy special show "A BROKE LUO IS NO LONGER A PETENDER" presented by Vibes and laughs. Prepare for a night of non-stop laughter at the comedy extravaganza.

Tickets:

VIP: Kshs 1000

Regular: Kshs 600

Group of 3: Kshs 1000



Ngeche Nam Poetry Presents

SI NI LIFE - HOMECOMING SHOW

March 16th, 2024 - 3PM - 4PM

Venue: Lake City Studios (Opposite K City)

"SI NI LIFE?" is a Poetry Theatre Concept Show that delves into the post-graduate journey of a close-knit yet diverse group of friends. It explores the themes of youth, optimism, disillusionment, and the absurdity of life. The show aims to create a thought-provoking and emotionally resonant experience that connects with audiences on a personal level, prompting reflection on the uncertainties and complexities of life after graduation.

MPESA - 0706825858

TICKETS

Advance - Kshs 300

Gate - Kshs 500



Poetry After Lunch Nakuru Presents

BULLETS FOR BREAKFAST

March 17th, 2024 - 3PM - 6PM

Venue: Nakuru Players Theatre

"Bullets for breakfast" is a Poetry Theatre Concept show that seeks to discuss the rise in crime and police brutality in Nakuru County. Consequently, it aims to provoke change in the community and bring the police and general public at a common point of view and help stop deaths among the youth.

Tickets:

Advance: Kshs 500

Gate: Kshs 1000



Marafiki wa Shaba Presents

SHABA EXPERIENCE 4

March 17th, 2024

Venue: Ukumbi Mdogo (Kenya National Theatre)

The play "SHABA" tells the captivating story of friendship. Join Marafiki Wa Shaba on a thrilling journey as they discover the unbreakable bond of friendship, on March 17th at Ukumbi Mdogo Hall in Kenya National Theatre. Come and have an incredible time watching the play

You don't want to miss this

TICKETS

Kshs 1,000



Kenyatta University Department of Music and Dance Presents Presents

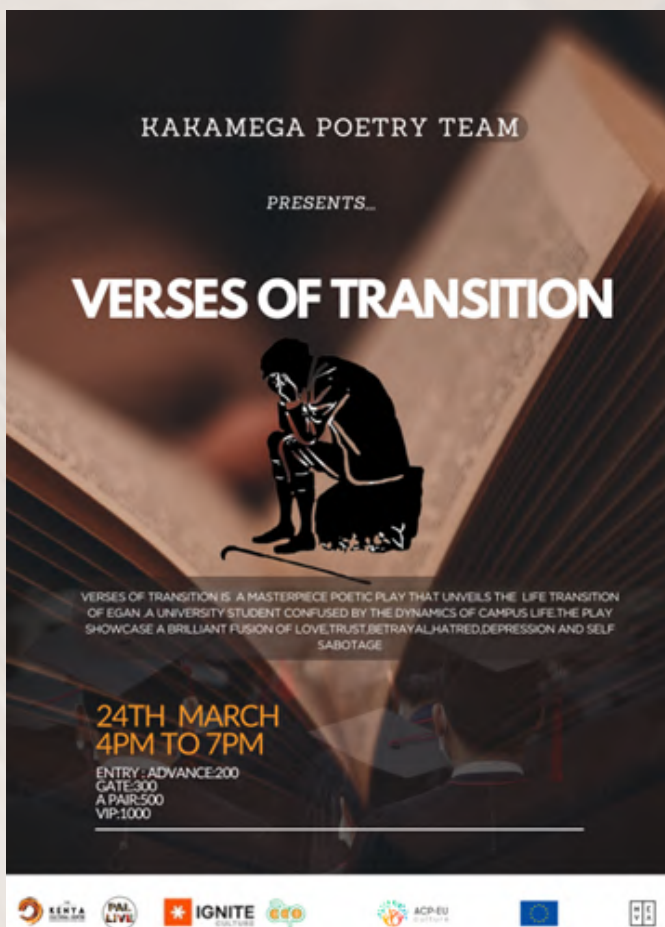
OF ETERNAL LOVE

March 23rd, 2024 at 3PM

Venue: Kenya Cultural Centre (Ukumbi Mdogo)

On 23 March, the internationally renowned soprano Friederike Meinel will present works of German, English and Polish Romanticism at the National Theatre in Nairobi. She will be accompanied on the piano by George Waihenya. She will perform songs by Franz Schubert, Johannes Brahms, Edward Elgar and Frédéric Chopin. The German-born soprano studied with the great master of Lieder-singing Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, among others, and

has sung at many important European opera houses such as the Bavarian State Opera in Munich and the Vienna State Opera. She has won prizes at international singing competitions and has appeared in numerous CD and film productions.



Kakamega Poetry Team Presents

VERSES OF TRANSITION

March 24th, 2024 at 4PM - 7PM

Venue: Nakuru Players Theatre

Verses of transition show is a Poetry Theatre Show that illustrates the life of a youth since he/she gets in to campus. It presents the life transitions of the youth and how they handle them. The show focuses on educating the public on the different high and lows a youth goes through, with mixture of emotions, we desire to give an ultimate experience to our audience.

Entry Tickets:

Advance: Kshs 200

Gate: Kshs 300

A pair: Kshs 500

VIP: Kshs 1000



Poetry Theatre Production Presents

ECHOES

March 28th, 2024 at 2PM - 5PM

Venue: Ukumbi Mdogo (Kenya National Theatre)

Echoes is a 90-minute innovative poetry endeavor that unites a group of 9 exceptionally talented poets. This conceptual experience draws inspiration from the unfortunate departure of two of their fellow poets in December 2023. Its primary objective is to delve into the different ways through which individuals navigate through grief and loss, with a particular emphasis on the intricate connection between mortality and mental well-being.

Free Entry



Eldoret Poets Presents

ROOTS & RHYMES

March 31st, 2024

Venue: Sirikwa Hotel

Roots & Rhymes is a Poetry Theatre Show that aims to showcase the roots and culture of the people from Uasin Gishu County. It will also highlight the talents from the county's artistic world.

Entry Tickets:

Students: Kshs 300

Advance: Kshs 500

Gate: Kshs 700

Contact Person: 0711984 068 (DOM)

SHOW REVIEW

IN SICKNESS AND HEALTH SWINGS BETWEEN JOY AND GRIEF

IN **SON OF MAN PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS** **Sickness** **AND IN** **Health** **FROM THE DIRECTOR OF 'PARAMOUR' & 'DRUMS OF WAR'**

WRITER, DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER **MAVIN KIBICHO**
PRODUCTION MANAGER **BERIL OONDO**

A PLAY BY **MAVIN KIBICHO**

FEBRUARY 10TH & 11TH
SHOWS AT 3PM & 6PM

KENYA NATIONAL THEATRE
UKUMBI MDOGO

STARRING
NAOMI WAIRIMU | PETER K. SAISI | SHARLENE NYAGA
LEILA WANGARE | MICHELLE TAYARS | DERRICK OMONDI

TICKETS

EARLY BIRD TICKETS		GATE TICKETS		GROUP TICKETS	
SINGLES	COUPLES	SINGLES	COUPLES	GROUP OF 5	5 COUPLES
KES 1,300	KES 2,400	KES 1,500	KES 2,500	KES 6,000	KES 11,000

TICKETS AVAILABLE ON **mookh.com**
FOR MORE DETAILS & TICKETS, CONTACT 0711756690 / 0711521690 / 0743726326

In 'Sickness and Health' took place last weekend but one at Kenya Cultural Centre's Ukumbi Mdogo. It gives a title to the major mood swings that dominate much of the play. The cause of those mercurial gyrations between the sweet and sour, the bitter and the bliss is the silent killer, cancer.

Cancer is not just the primary theme of the latest play that Mavin Kibicho wrote, directed, and produced. It is also the major preoccupation of two families who initially have nothing in common other than the bar that members of both families frequent regularly. It is also the cause of so much grief and emotional turmoil that they both are feeling after they each lose a loving parent to the deadly disease.

Fortunately, one of the sweetest things in the show is the voice, poise, and seductive performance of songstress Sharlene (Ivy Gidget). She is one of the three sisters who are mourning the passing of their beloved mum.

Yet in her case, she seems least affected by her mother's demise given she never took off a single day from her singing gig to grieve with her sisters. Sharlene seems to be over her family's loss, we cannot miss the depth of emotional turmoil felt by the second sister, Nancy (Naomi Wairimu) when Sharlene invites her to come up and sing along with her. Nancy's silent refusal to sing at all seems embittered for reasons we do not yet know. We later learn that her mum had adored Nancy's singing apparently more than her older sister's singing, and Sharlene knew it. Therefore, Nancy's refusal to sing was a sort of protest against the psychic 'powers that be' that stole her mother's life from her.

Despite her grief, Nancy agrees to doing an interview with a local journalist, Elphas (Peter Saisi) who is also about to lose his father to cancer. Elphas publishes her family's story as part of a series he is writing on cancer. Unfortunately, he had failed to request permission to use their names in his story. Consequently, Nancy storms into Sweet and Sour, and picks a fight with him. She slaps him hard in the heat of her rage. Shortly thereafter, he gets the sack from his newspaper, which in turn, gives Nancy the media equivalent of his job.

The play is filled with these sorts of tragic twists and turns. Apparently, Kibicho chose to write it this way specifically to rouse awareness of some of the central issues associated with this disease. He handled this challenging topic with sensitivity and style. For instance, his choice to have sweet live music provided by a cool jazz trio, (guitarist, percussionist, and singer) who blended in well with the story.

What's more, there is symmetry in the ways the two families cope with the crushing loss of their parent. Yet, we never find out why Elphas stayed away from his rural home for so many years. We gather there had been problems between the father and son but it was left like a loose end. We do learn that he had been deceived by his younger brother who sent the message he should come home urgently. Peter's brother had been well intentioned since he knew his mum would take her husband's death badly and the family would need to come together. Elphas still was not interested in going home until there was another turn of events.

Nancy arrived at the bar after she got Peter's job and showed remorse for her family pressuring the paper to get him sacked. He is a borderline suicidal case by then, but her tender attention to his mental wounds has a surprising effect on him. If she would accompany him home, he would go. Therefore, they agree and we get a chance to meet his marvelous mum before she gets the news that Dad had a relapse. This could only mean one thing. Now comes the excessive weeping and whaling, followed by a depressing funeral scene, and another depressing scene at the grave.

Fortunately, the play ended on a happier note, with the wedding of Nancy and Elphas, and the final message that love can heal every psychic wound in the book. We also get it that it is smart to get tested as it could save you from grief in future times.

About the Author



Margaretta wa Gacheru has been writing about the arts in Kenya for many decades, starting at Hilary Ng'weno's Weekly Review and Nairobi Times. Holding a PhD in Sociology from Loyola University Chicago in the US and master's degrees from University of Nairobi in Literature and Northwestern University in Journalism as well as from Loyola and National Louis University in Education, Chicago. Author of 'The Transformation of Contemporary Kenyan Art (1960-2010)', she has been writing for BD Life magazine since early 2012.



KCC-NT ENGAGEMENTS

Kenya Cultural Centre Refines its Strategic Course in an Annual Retreat



The Kenya Cultural Centre Governing Council and Management recently convened for a retreat from January 31st to February 3rd, 2024. The retreat served as a crucial platform for discussions and strategic planning for the Financial Year 2023/2024.

During the retreat, Board and Management discussed the proposed Review of the Kenya Cultural Centre Act. Experts from the Office of the Attorney General join the meeting to provide valuable guidance in the process of the Act review.

Another key focus was the Performance Contract, a guiding document between the Governing Council and the Parent Ministry, outlining institutional goals and commitments for the 2023/2024 financial year. The Board and the management had discussions on the performance target implementation, challenges faced, and plans for execution.



Strategic planning took centre stage during the retreat, with discussions revolving around the development of a Strategic Plan for 2024-2027. The retreat also encompassed a self-evaluation session for the Governing Council, highlighting the importance of periodic assessments to ensure effective oversight and governance.

A notable addition to the retreat agenda was a presentation by the National Productivity and Competitiveness Centre (NPCC) on integrating productivity into operations. The training aimed to address the observation that while Government institutions excelled in performance, they often overlooked corresponding productivity enhancements. The Governing Council and the Management explored strategies to measure, manage, and enhance productivity within the Centre.



Furthermore, the participants reviewed the proposed Governing Council Charter defining roles, responsibilities, functions, operations, and structures of the Council. The charter aims to support Board members in their strategic oversight function.

Overall, through the discussions, strategic planning sessions, and engagement with experts during the retreat, the Centre is in a good position to strengthen its institutional framework, regulatory compliance, and continuous improvement. The Centre strives to excel in pursuit of its mandate.

Kenya Cultural Centre Participates in a Public Lecture on the Power of Mindset Change



On February 9th, 2024, Mr. Michael Pundo, the CEO of Kenya Cultural Centre, joined the International Youth Fellowship at Nairobi Cinema in a discussion titled 'The Power of Mindset Change'. The event aimed to inspire young individuals to embrace a positive outlook towards life.

During his address, Mr. Pundo emphasized the significance of adopting a positive mindset, citing its crucial role in promoting growth and transformative change. He urged the youthful audience to believe in their potential for growth and success. "We have the power to unlock our potential to grow and succeed in life," Mr. Pundo stated. "A growth mindset is about believing that your abilities and qualities are not fixed, and that with effort and practice, you can improve and develop."

Additional speakers during the event included Madam Florence Omundi, EBS, Former Deputy Commissioner General of Prisons, and Reverend Yohan Kim, Chairman of the International Youth Fellowship. Madam Florence Omundi shared insights from her career, emphasizing the importance of resilience and determination in overcoming obstacles. Reverend Yohan Kim echoed these sentiments, encouraging attendees to embrace challenges as opportunities for personal and professional growth.



In an era marked by uncertainty and rapid change, the message conveyed by Mr. Michael Pundo and his fellow speakers served as a crucial guidance for young people navigating the complexities of the modern world. The event revealed the power of collective empowerment and the role of positive thinking in shaping one's future.

Kenya Cultural Centre Curates the Hustla Bazaar at the 56th Magical Kenya Open



The 56th edition of the Magical Kenya Open took place at the Muthaiga Golf Club from 22nd to 25th February 2024 attracting participants from all over the world. Darius Van Driel, a 34-year-old golfer, emerged as the champion, winning his first DP World Tour title and a prize of sh.61.8 million.



Sponsored by the Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy, and Sports, alongside several corporations, the event gathered 144 professional golfers representing 25 countries. Its magnetic appeal drew a diverse audience of both local and international fans, all eager to witness the pinnacle of golfing excellence

In conjunction with the tournament, the Ministry organized the 'Hustla Bazaar,' a showcase of Kenya's rich culture and a platform for entrepreneurial activities. Curated by the Kenya Cultural

Centre throughout the tournament, the Bazaar featured artists specializing in various creative expressions including painting, drawing, woodwork, sculptures, soapstone, fashion, leatherwork, basketry, weaving, antiques, and Jewelry. This initiative aligns with the government's visionary Talanta Hela Initiative, spearheaded by the Ministry, aimed at identifying, nurturing, and monetizing talents while fostering a dynamic ecosystem of creativity and entrepreneurship.



Hon. Ababu Namwamba EGH, the Cabinet Secretary for Youth Affairs, Sports, and Arts, graced the tournament on 24th February 2023. In his address, he reiterated the power of sports in providing a gateway for individuals of all ages and genders to broaden their horizons. He reaffirmed the government's devotion to expanding sports through the Talanta Hela initiative and supporting local businesses through activities such as the Hustlers' Bazaar. "Our stand has always been Sports, Business and Entertainment. It is a perfect blend where we promote sports, local business and give an opportunity to local artists to entertain people, and our international guest get a real feel of the Kenyan flavor; Kenyan food and music." Hon. Ababu Namwamba said.

The event had a vibrant atmosphere, rich with Kenyan traditions, which added an enchanting touch to the event, from the colorful displays of traditional attire to the crafts, the tournament truly celebrated the cultural heritage of Kenya. A remarkable experience displayed the beauty and diversity of this incredible nation.

Celebrating Excellence at the 3rd Edition of the Kenya Theatre Awards



The third edition of the Kenya Theatre Awards took place at Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi on February 29, 2024, featuring hosts Martin Githinji and Kerry Gagiri. Among the distinguished attendees were representatives of embassies, heads of various institutions, government officers, nominees of the Kenya Theatre Awards, and invited guests from the creative industry.

The event showcased performances from selected awards nominees and included remarks from organizers, partners, and the Guest of Honour. Most notably, it marked the awarding of winners of the 3rd edition of the Kenya Theatre Awards.

At the commencement of the event, participants paid tribute to the late Charles Ouda through a video clip and a moment of silence, capturing the essence of his artistry and profound impact. It was a powerful moment that touched the hearts of those present.

The nominations comprised 35 categories, open for public voting, while special categories such as the Jury's Special Award, World Impact Award, Lifetime Achievement Award (Living and posthumous), and Ushirika Award were not open for public voting. Recipients of these special awards included Tash Mitambo, Cooper Rust, Mumbi Kaigua and Wasambo Were, and Goethe Institute respectively.



Chairperson of the Jury, Peter Ndoria, highlighted the thorough review and evaluation process, acknowledging the increasing quality of productions, which made the 3rd edition highly competitive. New jury members Ian Mbugua, Sitawa Namwalie, and Steenie Njoroge were introduced, joining existing members Suki Wanza and Dr. Emmanuel Shikuku.

Among the event partners was the Nairobi County Government, represented by Dr. Anastasia Nyalita, CECM for Inclusivity, Public Participation, and Customer Service, who emphasized the county's commitment to supporting the creative economy and fostering partnerships within the creative and cultural sectors.



The Kenya Cultural Centre is proud to be a key partner of the Kenya Theatre Awards. It was an honour to have the CEO, Mr. Michael Pundo, grace the occasion. In his remarks, he appreciated the Kenya Theatre Awards for consistently honoring theatre practitioners and elevating the industry's contribution to society. He reaffirmed the Centre's commitment to supporting the awards, emphasizing its role in revitalizing the performing arts space. "The ongoing upgrade and modernization of the Kenya National Theatre reflects our commitments to meeting the evolving industry standards and needs. We have the vision of making the National Theatre conform to global standards but also ensure that artist reap the maximum benefit from it, he highlighted.



Hon. Ababu Namwamba, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, was the Guest of Honour of the ceremony. He lauded the rich diversity within Kenya's theatre industry and commended practitioners in the sector for embracing young talent and nurturing their abilities. He also appreciated the organizers and Jury of the Kenya Theatre Awards for their dedication, having reviewed 365 theatre shows. The CS emphasized the government's support to the theatre industry, highlighting government's initiatives such as the County Theatre Fiesta and Kenya International Theatre Festival that are being supported by the government. Moreover, he mentioned that the upgrade of the Kenya National Theatre is a proof of the government's commitment to supporting the industry. The CS pledged to collaborate with the CEO of Kenya cultural Centre to present an unprecedented show at the grand opening of the refurbished Kenya National Theatre.

The 3rd edition of the Kenya Theatre Awards delivered a memorable experience. The audience was cheerful and fully engaged as they witnessed their favorite practitioners being honored. Moreover, the decoration further enhanced the ambiance, creating an atmosphere of celebration and appreciation for the remarkable talent within Kenya's theatrical community. It was indeed a proof to the vibrancy and creativity that thrives within the country's theatrical landscape.





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