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THE OATH HAS BEEN TAKEN, PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA IS INAUGURATED

“In the presence of everyone assembled here, and in full realisation of the high calling I assume as President of the Republic of South Africa, I, Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, swear that I will be faithful to the Republic of South Africa and will obey, observe, uphold and maintain the Constitution and all other law of the Republic.

“And I solemnly and sincerely promise that I will always promote all that will advance the Republic and oppose all that may harm it, protect and promote the rights of all South Africans, discharge my duties with all my strength and talents to the best of my knowledge and ability and true to the dictates of my conscience, do justice to all and devote myself to the wellbeing of the Republic and all its people, so help me God.”



With that solemn oath, President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa has taken his place in the highest office in the land – The Presidency of South Africa.

This is his second term as President.

The President was inaugurated and took the Oath of Office – administered by Chief Justice Raymond Zondo – at the Union Buildings on Wednesday, 19 June 2024.

This signalled the official start of the seventh administration of democratic South Africa.

Following the Oath of Office, the President turned to First Lady, Dr Tshepo Motsepe and gave her a peck of acknowledgement.

President Ramaphosa then received a congratulatory praise song by award winning praise singer, Ntombi Ya Mutsonga.

He then acknowledged the National Salute, the national anthem and the 21-gun salute.

The inauguration was attended by current and former heads of state and governments, royalty, high level dignitaries and ordinary South Africans.
– Source: SAnews.gov.za

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GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY: A MOMENT OF PROFOUND SIGNIFICANCE



Wednesday, 19 June 2024 is by no means an ordinary day in the collective landscape of South Africa. With President Cyril Ramaphosa having taken his Oath of Office, marking the start of the seventh administration, the country is now firmly in the fold of the creation of a Government of National Unity.

The recently concluded 29 May National and Provincial Elections, while having been conducted in a manner that has been deemed free and fair by the South African Human Rights Commission, among others, demonstrated the maturity of South Africa's democracy since its early steps in 1994. Even though the outcomes of the first democratic election made clear the resounding message of the masses, who had long battled for the right of political and societal agency, a Government of National Unity was formed to help the fragile populace to navigate the treacherous waters of a nation that was new to inclusivity.

While this year's General Election results produced no outright majority winner, the requirement for leaders of different formations to work together is not too unsimilar to what the country had to do to find its way at the inception of democracy. Today, leaders are required to carve a new path, one where cooperation among parties with different views have come together, and continue to do so, united in the single purpose of providing citizens with services that are aimed at improving their quality of life and building a sense of national solidarity.

Addressing the public in his inaugural speech, and essentially the world at large who had been following developments in the country, President Ramaphosa on Wednesday said the formation of the Government of National Unity is a moment of profound significance.

“It is the beginning of a new era,” President Ramaphosa said at the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

He said the Government of National Unity requires a common mission, which is anchored in safeguarding national unity, peace, stability, inclusive economic growth, non-racialism and non-sexism.

“Through the ballots that they have cast, the people of South Africa have made plain their expectation that the leaders of our country should work together.”

President Ramaphosa said the people of South Africa have directed their representatives to put aside animosity and dissent, to abandon narrow interests and to pursue together only that which benefits the nation.

“As leaders, as political parties, we are called upon to work in partnership towards a growing economy, better jobs, safer communities and a government that works for its people.”

President Ramaphosa said from across the political spectrum, parties have answered that call.

“Understanding that no party can govern alone and make laws alone, these parties have agreed to work in partnership, to employ their talents for the good of the country and the progress of its people.

“Together, they have resolved to establish a government of national unity to pursue a common programme of fundamental and lasting change. “As the leaders of this country came together in a Government of National Unity 30 years ago to forge a common future and build a united nation, the parties in the government of national unity of today have agreed to work together to address the most pressing challenges before our nation,” President Ramaphosa said.

President Ramaphosa said the parties have adopted a Statement of Intent, in which they have committed to pursue rapid, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, to create a more just society by tackling poverty, to safeguard the rights of workers, to stabilise government and to build state capacity and to pursue a foreign policy based on human rights, solidarity and peace.

“As South Africans, we must each do what we can to achieve this mission. We will invite all parties, civil society, labour, business and other formations to a National Dialogue on the critical challenges facing the nation,” the President said.

President Ramaphosa said the parties have made a commitment to invest in South Africa’s people through quality education and health care, to address crime and corruption, to strengthen social cohesion and build a united nation and the will of the people shall be done without any doubt or question.

“The voters of South Africa did not give any single party the full mandate to govern our country alone.

“We will seek, as we have done at so many important moments in our history, to forge a social compact to realise the aspirations of our National Development Plan.

“As individuals, as families, as communities and in our many formations, let us draw on our every strength to turn our dream for a better South African into reality,” President Ramaphosa said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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YOUTH CHALLENGES TO REMAIN KEY UNDER GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY

Deputy President Paul Mashatile has thrown his weight behind President-elect Cyril Ramaphosa, saying he is confident that under his leadership in the government of national unity, South Africa will continue to address the challenges facing the youth.

“In this regard, we will in the next five years, focus on creating jobs and building an inclusive and growing economy. We will equally focus on implementing a programme focused on skilling youth with the skills of the future,” he said on Sunday, 16 June 2024.

Deputy President Mashatle was speaking at the 48th anniversary of Youth Day at the Old Peter Mokaba Stadium in Polokwane, Limpopo. The annual event recollected the sacrifices of South Africa's youth in the fight for democracy, an event immortalised by the Soweto Uprising of 16 June 1976.

"Our young people must have work opportunities," Deputy President Mashatle told the gathering.

The Deputy President believed that the recent general elections have once again demonstrated the country's dedication to the values and principles of democracy through free and fair elections.

He told the people who had filled the marquee that through their vote, they had spoken and given political parties a clear message after no party won an outright majority.

"You want us as political leaders to put our differences aside and work together to build our country and address the challenges affecting our people. We are determined to put our differences aside and use our collective strength, skills and experience to create the South Africa that the fallen heroes of the 1976 uprising fought for."

He stated that young people make up more than two-thirds of the population, making them the biggest community in South Africa. "Therefore, we cannot move forward without them, without the youth of our country."

He cited the National Development Plan, which places youth at the heart of the country's development. He said their participation was critical to meeting growth targets.

The Deputy President also highlighted the importance of involving young people in South Africa's developmental initiatives to address challenges such as poverty, social inequality, poor mental health and high levels of unemployment.

Youth programmes

He acknowledged the challenges facing the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and assured youngsters that they would ensure the scheme was administered efficiently.

He believes that NSFAS remains a critical vehicle that supports students from poor and working-class families, with over 70% of university and more than 90% of Technical Vocational Education and Training college students benefiting from the scheme.

"We must work together; the private sector, government and civil society, must work together to address these challenges."

The Deputy President also emphasised the need for a whole-of-society approach to provide young people with better access to quality education, basic skills and employment opportunities, especially those who live in rural areas.

Despite the country's challenging financial circumstances, he said the state continues to invest in youth human capital development, with more than R31.8 billion pumped into basic education in 2023 and R130.1 billion for post-secondary education training in 2022.

He touched on government's efforts to create opportunities for youth through programmes such as the National Youth Development Agency and Enterprise Development Programme.

"As the government, we want to see more young people actively involved in the economy and participating in decisions that affect their lives. "This time around, young people have a government that cares for, prioritises their needs and wants to see them succeed, unlike the government of 1976."

Government's comprehensive approach to reducing youth unemployment, he said, includes formal education, internships and assistance for youth entrepreneurship through the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention.

"Without the employment of young people, growth cannot occur. I am confident that the seventh administration will continue with efforts to position young people as essential drivers and beneficiaries of economic transformation."



The Deputy President also took the time to pay tribute to the fallen heroes and saluted the brave youth who fought for liberation.

“As we traverse the economic challenges, we urge the youth to adopt the same attitude as Hector Peterson, Mbuyisa Makhubo, Tsietshi Mashinini and all the youth of 1976, whose sacrifices gave birth to our political freedom. Their efforts have set us on the right path towards a South Africa that is non-racial, non-sexist and democratic.”

Newly elected Limpopo Premier, Dr Phophi Ramathuba, has urged the youth to tackle the social ills that they are facing and grab every opportunity that comes their way.

She highlighted the need for innovative approaches, such as technology integration and equal access to quality education for all. Premier Ramathuba stressed the importance of addressing the current education system's inequalities and limitations to ensure a brighter future for South Africa. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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SOUTH AFRICAN CHARITY NOMINATED FOR PRESTIGIOUS EARTHSHOT PRIZE

Litter4Tokens, a South African initiative transforming waste into community empowerment, has been nominated for the prestigious EarthShot Prize.

South Africa is renowned for its vibrant and dedicated charitable organisations, tirelessly working to make a positive impact. Among these inspiring groups is Litter4Tokens, a groundbreaking initiative dedicated to reducing ocean-bound waste and empowering communities through innovative recycling and waste management programmes.

Litter4Tokens celebrated a significant milestone, as it has received a nomination for the esteemed EarthShot Prize, shining a light on its remarkable contributions to environmental sustainability and community upliftment.

The EarthShot Prize, inspired by President John F. Kennedy’s “Moonshot” challenge and launched by Prince William in 2020, is a prestigious global award aiming to identify, highlight and amplify innovative solutions to the world’s most pressing environmental challenges.



With a focus on repairing and regenerating our planet through bold, creative solutions, the EarthShot Prize awards GBP£1 million (R23 800 000) to each winner of the five “Earthshots,” ambitious and universal goals set for 2030.

Litter4Tokens has been nominated in the Earthshot “Build a Waste-Free World” category, placing it among the world's leading environmental initiatives.

Since its inception in 2015, Litter4Tokens has made a profound impact by preventing over 2.2 million bags of waste from reaching the ocean. The initiative transforms waste into a valuable resource —tokens that can be redeemed for goods, helping to feed and clothe families without involving monetary transactions.

This innovative model has driven substantial environmental change and also fostered economic empowerment.

As a partner of Brownie Points and The Good Economy, Litter4Tokens has created over 1 800 jobs across South Africa, empowering communities and promoting sustainable waste management practices in regions such as KwaDukuza, eThekweni, Hillcrest, Port Elizabeth, East London, Richards Bay, Mpumalanga and Estcourt.

Brownie Points, a key collaborator in Litter4Tokens's success, has been instrumental in supporting the initiative through The Good Economy Campaign in partnership with the Social Employment Fund. This collaboration has enabled Litter4Tokens to expand its reach and amplify its impact, creating a positive ripple effect across communities.

Pascale Du Toit, CEO and Founder of Brownie Points expressed her excitement: "We are so thrilled that Litter4Tokens was nominated for the Earthshot Prize 2024! Litter4Tokens deserves to be recognised for their innovative model, empowering communities through circular waste economies. We are proud to be a partner and to have employed over 1 800 waste collectors since October 2022."

With such a significant nomination, Litter4Tokens is a shining example of the incredible impact South African charities can achieve, inspiring us all to support and celebrate their work towards a brighter, cleaner future. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

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WILDLIFE FILMMAKER AND LOCAL RESERVE CELEBRATE WINNING TWO FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS

Filmmaker Andrew Barratt, Hungry Bison Films and Shamwari Game Reserve won two categories at the International Tourism Film Festival Africa.

Filmmaker Andrew Barratt, Hungry Bison Films and Shamwari Game Reserve have won two categories at the annual International Tourism Film Festival Africa (ITFFA) for the reserve's promotional video and a short documentary on the largest vulture relocation in Africa.

The team took the top awards for Tourism Video and Documentary, and TV and Web Programme—Wildlife Conservation, respectively.

The ITFFA was founded in 2019 and honours all video content related to the tourism and travel industry. Thanks to its strong tourism industry, South Africa often features at this festival. The ITFFA aims to recognise and promote works with exceptional and innovative content and contribute to stimulating the development and growth of the national and African audiovisual industry.

Wildlife filmmaker Andrew Barratt has been a long-time collaborator with the reserve and was one of the producers of the 13-series Netflix hit, *Shamwari Untamed*, which follows wildlife vet, Johan Joubert, and ecologist John O'Brien around the 250km² reserve as they manage the day-to-day. There are even hints of a second series coming.

Like many local game reserves, Andrew Barratt teamed up with Shamwari head ranger Andrew Kearney during the pandemic to start Shamwari TV. Channels like this became a lifeline for people stuck in their homes. Now, there are nearly 300 episodes with almost 40 000 people around the world tuning in.

Now, Andrew and the Shamwari team have two awards to show for their hard work. Barratt's award-winning documentary on Africa's largest vulture relocation tells the story of the first phase of a project to secure the future of wild vulture populations in southern Africa, with the establishment of VulPro@Shamwari.

It documents the largest relocation of vultures ever undertaken, with 160 Cape and African White-backed vultures transported 1 042km from Hartbeespoort to bespoke enclosures at Shamwari.

Barratt says while he's grateful for the accolades and recognition of his work, awards are not why he makes wildlife films.

"For me it's more about sharing my passion for the bush and wildlife and hopefully in the process getting more people to realise how precious these are and why it's essential we conserve our natural heritage. I've been very lucky to have been able to work with Shamwari, which shares this ethos." – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

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THREE TOURIST SPOTS GET HONOURS FOR BEING SOUTH AFRICA'S TOP DESTINATIONS

Three top destinations in South Africa have been named spots "that have placed South Africa on the global map" by Brand Africa.



Brand Africa recently presented its 2024 Brand Africa: South Africa Rankings on 11 June and three top destinations in South Africa were named as special spots that have placed South Africa on the global map.

As per *Tourism Update*, the three top destinations —Cape Town, Kruger National Park (KNP) and Soweto —were all recognised for their role in positively shaping South Africa's identity and competitiveness.

Brand Africa, “a movement that aims to inspire a brand-led African renaissance to drive the continent’s competitiveness and create a positive image,” based these rankings on comprehensive research conducted in 31 African countries between January and March 2024.



“The South African rankings and the 30 brands, events, campaigns and people are an insightful lens into the country’s creativity, global African leadership, competitiveness and influence,” Thebe Ikalafeng, founder and chairman of Brand Africa, said in a release.

With Cape Town’s overall mix of beauty, culture and history, it’s no wonder why it was included.

“We are committed to continuing our efforts to enhance the visitor experience, support local businesses, and ensure the benefits of tourism are felt throughout our communities.” James Vos, the Cape Town MMC for Economic Growth said as per *Tourism Update*.



With its diverse range of fauna and flora offerings, the Kruger National Park was also named as a leading destination.

“SANParks is delighted to have one of the world’s best travel destinations in its stable of properties. At the core of the successful conservation management efforts across SANParks’ national parks are responsible tourism offerings and a deliberate socioeconomic transformation programme that is embedded in community beneficiation. This recognition is seen in many posts and writings from guests on various platforms declaring KNP as one of the best places on earth to visit.” the national parks said in a statement.

Soweto concluded the trio of top destinations, celebrated for its history and culture and for being host of the FIFA 2010 Soccer World Cup. – Source: [www. sapeople.com](http://www.sapeople.com)

SAA NAMED OFFICIAL CARRIER FOR SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL FOOTBALL TEAMS

South African Airways (SAA) has partnered with the South African Football Association (SAFA) to be the official carrier for South Africa’s national football teams, Bafana Bafana and Banyana Banyana.

According to *Travel News*, the new partnership took effect from 1 June and will see SAA transport the national teams to their upcoming destinations for their international matches.

Professor John Lamola, Interim CEO of SAA said that they looked to the new partnership.

“We welcome our national teams on board and we look forward to flying them around the world on national duty to represent our nation. We know the players and officials will be well taken care of and will enjoy our award-winning hospitality that SAA is renowned for,” Lamola said as per *Travel News*.

In other recent SAA news, the airlines successful launch of flights between São Paulo and both Cape Town and Johannesburg in



October and November last year saw arrivals from South America significantly increased since take off.

As per *Tourism Update*, South African Airways Spokesperson, Khaya Buthelezi said that around 16 800 passengers had made their way to and from Brazil during the first 90 days of the airline operating the new route.

“According to the tourism authorities in the Western Cape, for the first three months following the inaugural flight from Cape Town, there has been a 370% increase in two-way passenger traffic between Cape Town and Brazil. These numbers speak volumes regarding the latent demand between the two destinations,” Buthelezi said as per *Tourism Update*.

The current routes take off from both Cape Town and Johannesburg four times a week, with flights from Cape Town going out on Tuesdays and Saturdays, and Johannesburg flights scheduled for Mondays and Thursdays. – Source: www.sapeople.com

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TRAILBLAZING SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOL SHORTLISTED FOR WORLD’S BEST SCHOOL PRIZES 2024

An inspirational South African school has been named in the Top 10 shortlist for the World’s Best School Prizes 2024. The five World’s Best School Prizes, founded by T4 Education in collaboration with Accenture, American Express and the Lemann Foundation, are the world’s most prestigious education prizes and this year’s winners will share a US\$50 000 prize fund.



Christel House South Africa, an independent kindergarten through secondary school in Cape Town, South Africa, provides free character-based, career-focused education to children from severely under-resourced communities in Cape Town. It has been named in the Top 10 shortlist for the World’s Best School Prize for Overcoming Adversity.

The five World’s Best School Prize —for Community Collaboration, Environmental Action, Innovation, Overcoming Adversity and Supporting Healthy Lives— were established in the wake of COVID-19 in 2022 to give a platform to schools that are changing lives in their classrooms and far beyond their walls, sharing their best practices to help improve education everywhere.

The winners of the five prizes will be chosen by an expert judging academy based on rigorous criteria. In addition, all 50 shortlisted schools across the five prizes will also take part in a public vote, which opened today.

The school that receives the most public votes will receive the Community Choice Award and membership to T4 Education’s Best School to Work programme to help them support teacher wellbeing and solve the teacher recruitment and retention crisis.

Vikas Pota, Founder of T4 Education and the World’s Best School Prizes, said: “Unless we solve the urgent challenges global education faces — from learning gaps exacerbated by COVID-19 to chronic underfunding and the growing teacher wellbeing, recruitment and retention crisis —we will have failed the next generation.

“Trailblazing South African schools like Christel House South Africa, which have cultivated a strong culture and aren’t afraid to innovate and show the difference that can be made to so many lives. Schools everywhere can now learn from their solutions, and it’s time governments do so as well.”

The top three finalists for each of the five World’s Best School Prizes will be announced in September 2024, followed by the winners in November. The winner of each prize will be chosen based on rigorous criteria by a judging academy comprising distinguished leaders across the globe, including academics, educators, NGOs, social entrepreneurs, government, civil society and the private sector.

A prize of US\$50 000 will be equally shared among the winners of the five prizes, with each receiving an award of US\$10 000. Meanwhile, the winner of the Community Choice Award, as determined by the public vote, will receive membership to Best School to Work, which is an independent, evidence-based mechanism to certify schools for their culture and working environment. Membership comes with detailed feedback, actionable insights, benchmarking and data to help schools transform their culture to attract and retain the best teachers. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

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OPRAH BEAMS OVER BONGEKA’S STORY AS SHE BECOMES A DOCTOR



There are few things more inspiring than seeing a fellow South African grow from humble beginnings into someone who have reached the peaks of their wildest dreams. These stories remind us that life can change at any moment in our favour. That greatness often comes from forgotten places and that with enough hard work, dreams can become the lore of our lives. One such story is Bongeka’s—the recently celebrated Dr Zuma.

Bongeka Zuma’s story has seen her grow from chapter to chapter. From humble beginnings in a small community in KwaZulu-Natal to joining the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy’s (OWLAG) first class, to the esteemed halls of Oxford University and now as a graduate from Stanford University, Bongeka’s achievements deserve a stage all their own.

Recently, the new Doctor of Medicine was awarded the fruit of her academic labour at a graduation ceremony. Many present were in awe of what she has achieved, but one particular attendee was easily the proudest of all—Oprah Winfrey herself.

Not only was Oprah proud, but she also deemed her daughter-girl Bongeka’s recent feat an extra-special graduation and one of the joys of her life.

“I’ve been to 22 graduations for all my daughter-girls who came from the OWLAG in South Africa to colleges and universities across the United States. This one was extra special.

“Daughter-girl Bongeka first graduated *summa cum laude* at Spelman, then she got her master’s degree at Oxford and this weekend she received her hard-earned Doctor of Medicine from Stanford University,” Oprah beamed.

Oprah added: “One of the great joys of my life was to see her walk across that stage, knowing where she’s came from and how strongly she believed in becoming a doctor.

“She never gave up, and with a support team of good friends, fellow OWLAG sisters and professors, we all celebrated her achievement with great pride. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

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CAPE TOWN MAKE-UP ARTIST SCOOPS UP EMMY AWARD

A professional make-up artist and hair designer from Woodstock, Cape Town, won an Emmy Award for Hairstyling and Make-up at the recent ceremony on 7 June 2024.

Gale Shepherd (64) won the award for her work on the Netflix documentary series *African Queens: Njinga*, based on the story of an Angolan warrior queen.

She is not the only South African who shone bright at the ceremony, as production designer Warren Gray won an Emmy for Art Direction/Set Decoration/Scenic Design for the same show, as reported on www.iol.co.za.

Gale Shepherd, with 25 years of experience in the fashion industry, has worked on over 500 international television commercials and fashion shoots.



Her recent film credits include make-up design for Warner Brothers' *House Party 3* and South Africa's 2017 Academy Awards entry, *Noem My Skollie*.

Shepherd also received the South African Film and Television Awards (SAFTA) Golden Horn Award for Best Make-up and Hair Design in a Feature Film for her work on *Noem My Skollie*.

Ward Councillor Ian McMahon celebrated Shepherd's win, calling it "wonderful and inspiring news for the community." He added, "It's fantastic when a 'Woodie' shines on the world stage. Congratulations, Gale."

Rob Marshall, Woodstock secretary of the U Watch Forum, praised Shepherd as a role model for the youth. He remarked, "It is easy to get lost among the crime-fighting efforts and forget that Woodstock has a rich history of talented and creative residents making their mark in the world. A wonderful result." – Source: www.capetownetc.com

CAPE TOWN OPERA’S THANDO ZWANE WINS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Thando Zwane, a graduate of Cape Town Opera’s Judith Neilson Young Artists Programme (JNYAP), won the Audience Prize and an engagement with the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden at the prestigious 42nd International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition in Latvia.



The Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition is renowned as a pivotal launching pad for opera singers worldwide. With its impressive history and status, this competition attracts nearly a thousand young opera talents each year. Entrants undergo rigorous qualifying rounds in over 50 cities globally, judged by an esteemed panel from the world's top opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the Royal Opera House in London.

This grand stage has now celebrated the triumph of a rising star from Africa.

Thando Zwane, a 32-year-old baritone, has emerged victorious, capturing the Audience Prize at the 42nd International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition held in Jurmala, Latvia. A 2019 graduate of Cape Town Opera's JNYAP, Zwane not only won a €2 000 prize but also secured an engagement with the Hessisches Staatstheater Wiesbaden in Germany.

Hailing from Eswatini, Zwane's passion for opera was cultivated and refined through the comprehensive training he received at Cape Town Opera. JNYAP is renowned for its dedication to nurturing postgraduate singers, pianists and conductors, equipping them with the skills necessary for a professional career. Participants benefit from a blend of formal tuition, hands-on rehearsal experience and stage performances alongside seasoned artists. This holistic approach ensures that graduates are not only technically proficient but also artistically mature.

Reflecting on his victory, Zwane expressed his joy and gratitude, saying, "I feel so happy and honoured to have bowed out of the competition in such a memorable way. From my first performance here, I felt a sense of belonging and the audience seemed to love me throughout all the rounds. Winning the Audience Prize and the Wiesbaden contract was indeed the cherry on top. I am looking forward to many more exciting engagements in the future!"

Alex Gabriel, Managing Director of Cape Town Opera, expressed pride in Zwane's achievements, stating, "The singing talent in Africa and South Africa is incredible and Cape Town Opera is honoured to have played a part in Thando's journey to international acclaim. We wish him all the very best in this next chapter of his burgeoning career."

Two South Africans competed alongside Zwane, namely Lwazi Dlamini, who graduated in March 2024 from the JNYAP, and tenor Vuyisa Xipu from OperaUCT. Mezzo soprano Julia Portela Piñón who is currently based in Cape Town and in the JNYAP, competed for Spain.

Cape Town Opera continues to foster exceptional talent, and their impact on the global opera scene is undeniable. Their upcoming full-length opera, opening on Friday 14 June at Artscape, promises to be another showcase of the remarkable talent nurtured within their ranks. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

MICHELIN STAR CHEF OPENS DEBUT RESTAURANT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Michelin-starred Chef Phil Carmichael is opening a new restaurant in Stellenbosch. The eatery will combine French culinary techniques with South African ingredients for a unique and sustainable dining experience.

South Africa's culinary landscape is thriving, with a multitude of exceptional restaurants and eateries showcasing the nation's rich and diverse culinary heritage and the vibrant food scene is set to reach new heights with the arrival of Michelin-starred Chef Phil Carmichael, who is opening his debut South African restaurant, Mill St Bistro, in the heart of Stellenbosch this June.



This new establishment promises to elevate local dining experiences by combining French techniques with the finest South African ingredients. Chef Carmichael, a renowned chef with an illustrious career, has worked alongside international culinary legends such as Michel Roux Jr, Gordon Ramsay and Jason Atherton. With his extensive experience in prestigious kitchens around the world, Carmichael has now chosen to bring his expertise to the Cape Winelands.

His new venture in Stellenbosch marks a significant milestone in his career, as he embraces the unique qualities of South African produce and integrates them into his culinary creations.

Mill St Bistro, located at the corner of Mill and Church Streets in Stellenbosch's historic central quarter, embodies the concept of bistronomy — a delightful fusion of bistro-style dishes with gastronomic cooking methods. This approach ensures that guests can enjoy familiar and traditional dishes made with simple, seasonal ingredients, all elevated by high-level culinary techniques. The restaurant, set against the backdrop of the picturesque Mill Stream Monument, offers a perfect blend of bistro dining, contemporary design and a commitment to locally and sustainably sourced ingredients.

Chef Carmichael's dedication to quality and integrity shines through in his collaborations with local independent farmers, producers, and fishermen. These partnerships ensure that Mill St Bistro's kitchen is stocked with the freshest and most ethically sourced ingredients.

"We want our food to be authentic, not for the label it carries, but for the meaningful and sustainable values it represents," says Carmichael. "We're doing this because it's how we eat at home. We teach our kids the importance of the provenance of the ingredients and make sure it has as little environmental impact as possible, and ultimately you get a better product that tells a transparent story."

The menu at Mill St Bistro is a celebration of classical French cooking techniques, using purely South African ingredients. Diners can expect modern interpretations of traditional dishes, incorporating methods such as fermentation, pickling and preserving. For instance, Carmichael describes a dish of braised beef cheek served with fresh sauerkraut, where the rich, deeply-flavoured meat is complemented by the sharp acidity of the sauerkraut, creating a harmonious balance.

Wine enthusiasts will be delighted by the innovative wine service at Mill St Bistro, which utilises the Coravin system to offer an extensive selection of premium wines by the glass. This allows guests to enjoy unique wines, such as Luddite Shiraz, either on its own or paired with their meal. The wine list proudly features South African wines from renowned regions including Stellenbosch and the Swartland, showcasing the country's outstanding viticulture.

The 64-seater restaurant boasts an open-plan layout that extends onto an outdoor deck, creating a seamless connection between the indoor and outdoor spaces.

The wine bar serves as a welcoming meeting place, ideal for casual gatherings or pre-dinner drinks. The design of Mill St Bistro is characterised by its unfussy yet sophisticated aesthetic, with an open chefs' kitchen, bare oak tables, brass-edged lighting and warm tones contributing to an airy and refined atmosphere. A semi-secluded dining area offers patrons the option for private sittings without losing the vibrant ambience of the main floor.

"We've taken a long time to plan every aspect of Mill St Bistro to ensure we capture an experience that reflects the expertise that has gone into every element and the value it offers," says Carmichael.

His vision for Mill St Bistro is to create a dining experience that is both authentic and exceptional, grounded in a commitment to quality and sustainability.

With its prime location in the historic Winelands and Chef Carmichael's dedication to excellence, Mill St Bistro is set to become a cornerstone of Stellenbosch's dining scene. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

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BOTANICAL ARTIST WINS GOLD FOR SA FOR FLORAL WONDERS

Hot on the heels of South Africa's winning display at the Chelsea Flower Show, Daleen Roodt achieved another floral feat after she won the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) gold and Best Artwork on show at the RHS Botanical Art Show.



While floral artist Leon Kluge led South Africa's golden return to the world-famous floral stage after a lengthy hiatus, botanical artist Daleen Roodt (37) added another gold medal to South Africa's tally in addition to winning Best Artwork on Show at the RHS Botanical Art Show.

The show, held at the Saatchi Gallery in London, is the most prestigious exhibition of botanical art in the world.

There, artists must exhibit six top-class artworks under a theme. The artwork is then judged by an expert panel of seven professionals. But all this only comes after artists are approved to participate in the event in the first place—a highly selective process that's followed by a five-year period in which the artists are given to prepare the works they'll present.

The artworks are then judged based on criteria of botanical accuracy, technical skill and exact colour reproduction. Not to mention attention to detail and aesthetic appeal.

Of course, loads of work went into the South African botanical artist's blossoming moment. After being awarded the Dawn Jolliffe Botanical Art Bursary by the RHS Bursaries Committee in support of her project, over a period of three flowering seasons, Roodt studied indigenous orchids and their pollinators across South Africa, in their natural environments.

It took many days and hours of fieldwork across three different provinces on top of almost 1200 hours to complete her watercolour paintings. Her massive orchid painting took 360 hours to complete.

Taking all of this into account makes Roodt's success that much more impressive, in addition to the fact that she was the only South African artist who participated.

She received a RHS Gold Medal and was awarded Best Artwork on Show for her larger-than-life orchid painting at the RHS Botanical Art Show in London—a fantastic floral feat. Her exhibit (indigenous orchids and pollinators) hung proudly with world-class artwork by artists from Australia, Italy, Japan, Korea, the United States and the United Kingdom. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

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FIFTY YEARS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S NATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL

The National Arts Festival will launch this Thursday, 20 June and this year the festival will be celebrating 50 years.

It's been an incredible 50 years for the National Arts Festival, with 2024 marking five decades of creative freedom and definitive South African art. The festival will run from 20 to 30 June in the small town of Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown) in the Eastern Cape, which has become the annual destination for established artists, new and emerging talent and the network of producers, writers and creators who make and present works on South Africa's stages.



“It’s an honour to be staging this festival fifty years after its first curtain was raised. Despite an always changeable, and often precarious, environment for the arts, the National Arts Festival has prevailed and evolved.” National Arts Festival CEO, Monica Newton said in a statement.

“This is testament to those who have steered the ship and our steadfast partners over the decades, but also reflects the extraordinary tenacity artists have brought to this Festival and country. This year, 2024 is a significant year for our country in so many ways, and the National Arts Festival is pleased to be part of the celebrations of our 30 years of democracy, and to be contemplating what the next decade holds for us and the community we serve.” Newton added. – Source: www.sapeople.com

MUSEUM OF ILLUSIONS COMES TO SOUTH AFRICA

The world-famous Museum of Illusions is coming to South Africa and construction is currently underway in Rosebank, Gauteng.



One of the biggest private chain of museums in the world, the Museum of Illusions will be making its South African debut. The Museum of Illusions, which has more than 50 museums across the world, including New York, Paris, Dubai, Chicago and more, is under construction in Rosebank, Gauteng.

The first Museum of Illusions launched in Zagreb, Croatia in 2015 and quickly became a global phenomenon with over 12 million visits to the museums across the world. This year, the city of gold will get to add its name to this list, as Johannesburg will soon be home to its very own Museum of Illusions.

The museums feature a variety of extraordinary exhibits that use optical illusions, visual tricks, and hands-on interactive displays to create a playful environment.

Construction is currently underway at Museum of Illusions site in Rosebank. However, details surrounding the opening date, the exhibits on offer and the operating hours are yet to be revealed. Jordan Sacks, General Manager, Museum of Illusions Johannesburg, expressed that the Museum of Illusions in Rosebank cannot wait to welcome South African families to their new trendy spot.

“We’re thrilled to announce that the Museum of Illusions is expanding its presence onto the African continent, with our first opening in the beautiful country of South Africa! This exciting addition will provide an enchanting experience for visitors of all ages,” said Sacks exclusively to *The South African*.

“We can’t wait to welcome South African families and visitors alike to enjoy our global journey of wonder at the Museum of Illusions Johannesburg. Construction is currently under way for what is sure to be an unforgettable, enthralling and captivating experience,” Sacks continued. – Source: www.thesouthafrican.com

JOBURG SIBLING TRIO SHINES ON AMERICA’S GOT TALENT WITH ‘DON’T WORRY BE HAPPY’ PERFORMANCE

South Africa’s musical sibling trio from Johannesburg, Biko’s Manna, has wowed America’s Got Talent with a spirited performance of Don’t Worry Be Happy, earning a standing ovation and glowing praise from the judges.

Comprised of three remarkably gifted siblings—Biko, 16; Manna, 13; and Mfundo, eight— Biko’s Manna embodies the epitome of musical talent and familial harmony. Born to renowned singer and actress Ayanda Nhlangothi and Sebone Rangata, these young performers have been making waves not only in their hometown but across social media platforms like TikTok, where their soulful renditions have amassed over 16 million likes.

Recently, the trio took their musical prowess to the United States (US), embarking on a tour that has seen them grace esteemed stages such as the National Museum of African American Music in Nashville and the Festival of Nations in St. Louis, Missouri. However, it was their electrifying performance on *America’s Got Talent* that truly catapulted them into the international spotlight.



Biko’s Manna chose to delight the audience with a rendition of Bobby McFerrin’s timeless classic, *Don’t Worry Be Happy* and from the moment Biko’s soulful voice harmonised with Manna’s adept guitar playing and Mfundo’s infectious *Don’t worry, be happy*” line, the atmosphere in the auditorium was charged with energy.

The judges, known for their discerning tastes and critical acclaim, were visibly moved by the trio’s performance. “It was worth the trip, coming all the way from South Africa... I mean the sun just came up. I loved the three of you,” Heidi Klum expressed with excitement.

Howie believes the trio could win the ultimate prize of US\$ one million. Simon Cowell loved their natural chemistry and praised their talent: “Your vocals were spot on. Absolutely amazing”. Biko’s Manna is not just a musical act; they are ambassadors of hope and inspiration, spreading joy wherever their harmonies resonate. – Source: www.goodthingsguys.com



FROM CAPE TOWN TO HOLLYWOOD: GREG KRIEK SOARS IN GLOBAL FILMS

South Africans are renowned for their talent and determination and actor Greg Kriek is a shining example.

Originally hailing from Cape Town, Kriek has gone from humble beginnings to becoming a Hollywood star, proving that South Africans can indeed make a significant impact on the global stage.

Kriek, with over 90 international screen-acting credits to his name, is officially South Africa’s most internationally credited actor in his category. He is an award-winning actor and a member of the Television Academy of Arts and Sciences, as well as an Emmy judge based on his Hollywood achievements. His journey is a powerful story of hard work and resilience.

Kriek’s rise to fame is nothing short of inspirational. From starring in local South African films to making his mark in Hollywood, his career trajectory has been impressive. He is the leading man in the Emmy-winning *The Serengeti Rules* and stars in the Oscar-nominated *Incognito*. He won Best Actor in a Feature Film for *The Recce* at the



KIFF and was the 2022 Best Actor winner for the Holocaust drama *Trust*.

Currently, Kriek can be seen as “Marcus” in Zack Snyder’s epic global sci-fi franchise *Rebel Moon* on Netflix. He also shared the screen with Hollywood heavyweights like Anthony Hopkins, Morgan Freeman, Kevin Hart, Scarlett Johansson, Channing Tatum, Miley Cyrus and Billy Zane. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHER’S WEDDING PHOTO SELECTED FOR BEST DESTINATION PHOTOGRAPHY COLLECTION

Ruan Redelinghuys’ photo of a couple from the United Kingdom (UK) after their wedding at a reserve in Limpopo, has been selected for the 2024 Best of the Best Destination Photography Collection.



The 2024 Best of the Best Destination Photography Collection was released on 12 June 2024, showcasing some of the world’s most beautiful wedding photos. South African photographer Ruan Redelinghuys’ photo of UK couple Iain and Debra, was selected for the showcase. A total of 50 photos were selected for this year’s showcase. Redelinghuys joined the couple at the Monate Game Lodge in Limpopo and shared their story.

“The couple, Iain and Debra, live in the UK and had originally planned to get married during 2020, but the pandemic had other plans. They were forced to postpone their wedding a couple of times through lockdowns and travel restrictions.

“They never gave up hope on their dream of a wedding in South Africa and in the end, their patience and perseverance paid off. We were all able to celebrate their destination weekend wedding under the African sky in Limpopo, with a wedding ceremony under a tree in the bushveld, sundowners while watching the sun set and a traditional braai dinner to start of the evening festivities. The wedding was a truly magical event, and the amazing weather and incredible atmosphere made it a unique experience to photograph.” – Ruan Redelinghuys

Junebug Weddings hosts the 2024 Best of the Best Destination Photography Collection, which showcases the top 50 destination weddings, engagements and couples photos from the past year.

The collection celebrates the balance between the beauty of the destination and the love between a couple.

“Instead of focusing on how many miles the photographer and/or couple had to travel to take a photo, we look at each image’s ability to blend the destination and couple into a single piece of art.” – Junebug Weddings

This year’s instalment of the collection marks the 14th year running. There are so many beautiful submissions, but nothing beats the beauty of the bush, so it is no wonder Ruan’s photo made the selection. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

SOUTH AFRICAN ATHLETE SINGS CARL LEWIS’S PRAISES FOR RECORD-BREAKING SPRINT

South African track and field athlete Shaun Maswanganyi is reaching greater heights in his career after he cracked a new sprint record in the United States (US), something he largely attributes to his legendary mentor, the American Olympic champion, Carl Lewis.

Clocking in with a time of 20.41 at an indoor track and field meet in Texas, the young runner has shown that he has more than “potential” and a hunger to succeed.

When it comes down to it, though, good mentorship also forms an integral part of achievements like this and Maswanganyi has that, thanks to his coach and mentor. Winning nine Olympic gold medals in a career spanning from 1979 to 1996, Lewis made history and is generally regarded as one of the best athletes of all time.

The young athlete reflected on his recent record as a “work in progress” as he was not accustomed to running indoors in South Africa. “It’s not as easy as it may sound because there’s a lot of technicalities when it comes to indoor racing and you’ve got to run the race more to gain experience,” he reflected. But, with determination fuelling him, he ended up reaching his goal.



“We just tried to become more technical with the 200-metres indoors, and in doing so, I was able to go out there and execute. Overall, I am grateful for my coach and I’m grateful for the consistency, everything comes in due time.”- Shaun Maswanganyi.

On being coached by Lewis

Maswanganyi reflected on having Lewis as his guide and how much that has helped with his performance, sharing: “To have Carl Lewis as a coach is definitely special. I speak about it all the time, he’s more than just a coach to me. He’s more than a mentor. He’s a father figure in many aspects,” he told SportsBoom.com.

The athlete heaped loads of adoration for Lewis, showing appreciation for the fact that their relationship doesn’t end after practice sessions, but rather that he is someone Maswanganyi feels he can lean on, even outside of the sport.

“He’s always there for me and at the end of the day, he’s done everything that I probably aspire to do in athletics, so he’s the man for the job and I’m just grateful to have him in my life and I just pray that our relationship just keeps getting stronger and stronger and he keeps being my mentor on and off the track,” Maswanganyi adds.

On the upcoming 2024 Olympic Games

Maswanganyi is currently preparing for the 2024 Olympic Games next month, with hopes to improve from the Tokyo Games he participated in three years ago. Having elevated his game even more, he has even been named on the *Forbes 30 Under 30* list – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

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JOHANNESBURG TO HOST 2025 AFCON QUALIFYING DRAW

Johannesburg will host the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations qualifying draw on 4 July 2024, the Confederation of African Football (CAF) announced on Thursday, 13 June 2024.

Title-holders Ivory Coast and tournament hosts Morocco are among 48 countries to be divided into 12 groups of four, with the winners and runners-up in 11 advancing to the 24-team finals.

Morocco is guaranteed a finals-place as host but will take part to gain competitive match practice. This means just one of the other teams in their mini-league will qualify.

Double qualifying matchdays are scheduled for 2 to 10 September, 7 to 15 October and 11 to 19 November this year.



The nations ranked one to 44 automatically qualified for the draw. Chad, Eswatini, Liberia and South Sudan won play-offs.

Originally scheduled for June to July 2025, the Cup of Nations is expected to be played later as the dates clash with the inaugural Club World Cup in the United States.

"Discussions (regarding dates) are well advanced with the stakeholders," CAF secretary-general Veron Mosengo-Omba, adding that a decision would be announced "soon".

Shifting the tournament to the beginning of 2026 "is in the air, but there is nothing official", said a CAF source.

While other continental championships are held every four years, the Cup of Nations is a two-yearly event as it provides most of the CAF income through television rights and advertising.

Plans to stage it in mid-year to avoid a clash with the European club season began in 2019, when Egypt played host in searing heat.

Fears that torrential seasonal rain could disrupt subsequent editions in Cameroon and the Ivory Coast led to January to February tournaments. Stars like prolific Liverpool scorer Mohamed Salah had to leave European clubs in mid-season, and a hamstring injury during the group phase of the 2024 tournament lengthened his absence. – Source: www.iol.co.za

THE SOUTH AFRICAN HOCKEY MEN WON THE BRONZE MEDAL PLAYOFF IN POLAND

The South African Men's Hockey team earned the bronze medal at the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Nations Cup Tournament with a 4-3 against Pakistan.

The South African Hockey Men's team were in Poland to compete at the FIH Hockey Men's Nations Cup, which ran from the 31 May to 9 June 2024. They finished the tournament earning the bronze playoff against Pakistan.

With the tournament behind them, the Olympic-qualified team will be focusing on the next big event, which is the Paris Olympics.

As for the FIH Nations Cup, the team went up against Pakistan for the bronze playoff and won 4-3 with Mustapha Cassiem scoring two of the four goals and earning player of the match.

The team consisted of players from around South Africa, so tournaments like this are essential because it gives them the chance to play together.

Mustapha Cassiem was named the Player of the Match award and was interviewed after the game and shared that the team had a really good two weeks. Cassiem thanked all the supporters back home who have been behind the team, sharing words of encouragement. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com



REVVING UP JOHANNESBURG: DAVID COULTHARD IS BRINGING A LITTLE FORMULA 1 TO THE CITY OF GOLD!

Johannesburg is set to host an exhilarating Formula 1 “showrun” in October. David Coulthard will drive the championship-winning RB7, promising an unforgettable spectacle for fans.



South Africa has a rich history with Formula 1, having hosted races at the iconic Kyalami circuit. The last Grand Prix in the country was held in 1993, and since then, fans have eagerly awaited the return of the sport. Although Formula 1 is not returning (yet), the excitement is palpable as Oracle Red Bull Racing brings its phenomenal RB7 car to Johannesburg.

David Coulthard, a legend in the world of Formula 1, will be at the helm, ready to captivate the audience with an exhilarating “showrun” on Katherine Street in Sandton City. The RB7 is no ordinary car; it dominated the 2011 season with 18 pole positions and 12 victories, leading the team to both the Drivers’ and Constructors’ Championships.

Coulthard, who made a significant impact during his time with Red Bull Racing, is thrilled to be returning to South African shores.

“I haven’t been to South Africa since we were in Cape Town in 2019, so I’m delighted we’re bringing Formula 1 back to Johannesburg,” he shared. Known for his prowess on the track, Coulthard remains a beloved figure in the F1 community, and his presence promises to electrify the atmosphere.


“I’ll be driving a very special F1 car, demonstrating the power, energy, and excitement of what Grand Prix can bring,” Coulthard said.


The RB7, with its 750 horsepower engine capable of reaching up to 18 000 RPMs, is set to provide a sensory overload of sound and speed, thrilling spectators as it tears through the streets.


But the excitement doesn’t stop there. The event will also feature world-class performances by German drifter Elias Hountondji and motorbike stunt rider Arūnas ‘Aras’ Gibieža. Hountondji, part of the famous ‘Red Bull Driftbrothers’, and Gibieža will add their unique flair to the day’s proceedings, ensuring that there’s never a dull moment.


The Red Bull Showrun, scheduled for Sunday, 6 October, is designed to be a family-friendly event, providing fans with an up-close and personal experience of Formula 1. Partnered with Heineken and DHL, the event promises to be an unforgettable spectacle. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com


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