

UJ's UnFestival SA announced

UJ Arts and Culture, a division of the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (Fada) at the University of Johannesburg, has announced a partnership with Business and Arts South Africa NPC (Basa), for a provocative new project, UnFestival SA. A week of un-theatre, un-dance, non-exhibitions, non-workshops and a smorgasbord of nothing that may or may not take place during May (depending on how you look at it).

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According to Pieter Jacobs, head of UJ Arts and Culture: "We all know that festivals, arts centres, theatres, galleries and other cultural institutions have been



Pieter Jacobs, head of UJ Arts and Culture

forced into cancelling events and shutting their doors amid the chaos of the Covid-19 pandemic. UnFestival SA is a conceptual event inspired by the Czech Festival of Nothing, and was conceived as a means to help independent creatives and the most vulnerable in the arts sector. UJ has been a Basa member for several years now, and we saw the opportunity to partner around this symbolic concept for the benefit of students in the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture and, through our partnership with Basa and its artist relief efforts, for the sector as a whole."

Jacobs announced that arts lovers, supporters and stakeholders across a spectrum of creative disciplines will be able buy tickets to non-events at UJ: "A total of 50% of UnFestival SA's proceeds will be distributed to needy students via the UJ Faculty of Arts Dean's Bursary Fund, which provides support for academically-deserving students, and presents an opportunity for the public to give hope to the academic journey of the youth. The balance of 50% will be distributed via Basa's Supporting Grants programme, which now offers artists and creative practitioners once-off, short-term financial aid for Covid-19-related medical care or to offset the loss of income due to the cancellation of confirmed engagements (resulting from the nationwide lockdown or other emergency measures)."



ART

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The full UnFestival SA programme will be revealed at an exclusive Gala Opening on 15 May 2020 to which no one will go or indeed, be invited. Jacobs added that many people will have had access to free entertainment, to the point where few artists can say they have not been asked to perform for the exposure, and said that UnFestival SA is an opportunity to reciprocate and pay it forward.

Visit www.arts.uj.ac.za or www.basa.co.za for full programme details on 4 May 2020, and show your support by buying a ticket – but please don't come.

About UJ Arts and Culture

UJ Arts and Culture, a division of the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (Fada) produces and presents world-class student and professional arts programmes aligned to the UJ vision of an international university of choice, anchored in Africa, dynamically shaping the future. A robust range of arts platforms are offered on all four UJ campuses for students, staff, alumni and the general public to experience and engage with emerging and established pan-African and international artists drawn from the full spectrum of the arts. In addition to UJ Arts and Culture, Fada offers programmes in eight creative disciplines in art, design and architecture, as well as being home to the NRF SARCHI Chair in South African Art and Visual Culture, and the Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre.

For more information, please visit www.uj.ac.za/arts.

About Basa

Constituted in terms of the Companies Act, Basa is registered as a public benefit organisation (PBO) and is accountable to its stakeholders. The Basa Board of directors comprises chair Charmaine Soobramoney, with deputy chair Mandie van der Spuy, and Kojo Baffoe, Kathy Berman, Devi Sankaree Govender, Ashraf Johaardien (Basa CEO), Hilton Lawler, Andre L

Roux, Khanyi Mamba, Zingisa Motloba, Carel Nolte, Dr Yacoob Omar and Mirna Wessels.

For more information please visit www.basa.co.za; to become a Basa member, click on the 'join us' tab at the top of the home page.

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- **Q&A with Sinenhlanhla Mdiya on Basa's new corporate identity** 14 Apr 2025
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Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) is an internationally recognised South African development agency which integrates the Arts into, and contributes to, Corporate's commercial success. With a suite of integrated programmes BASA encourages mutually beneficial partnerships between business and the arts.

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