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KUNSTEFEEES • ARTS FESTIVAL • TSA-BOTJHABA

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VRYSTAAT LITERATURE FESTIVAL EXAMINES WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN

The Vrystaat Arts Festival, in cooperation with the University of the Free State, presents the fourth **Vrystaat Literature Festival** from 1-6 July. Comprising more than 70 events, involving a wide variety of themes and topics, there truly will be something for every taste.

During this year's festival, local, national, and international guests will participate in talks, panel discussions, readings, and workshops regarding themes as diverse as religion and spirituality, sexuality, humour, thrillers, short stories, and memoirs.

Numerous book discussions will examine what it means to be a human being, to become human. Through various conversations we will question who we are, where we come from, and where we are headed. Such central issues as the self and identity, love and connection, and sadness and grief will also be interrogated.

Exciting international guests attending this year's festival include Upile Chisala (Malawi), Samuel Osaze (Nigeria), Amory Kapufi and Jesse Nsofu (Zambia), Tinashe Tafirenyika and Philani Nyoni (Zimbabwe), Marco Calvani (Italy), Wytse Versteeg, Benno Barnard, Lot Vekemans, Mira Feticiu, and Dorine Holman (the Netherlands), Annelies Verbeke, Saskia de Coster and Yves T'Sjoen (Belgium), Jacob Boehme (Aus) and Kim Fu, Paige Cooper, Kayla Czaga and Klara du Plessis (Canada).

We continue the very popular *Hulde aan Helde*-series, presented in cooperation with the *Nasionale Afrikaanse Letterkundige Museum en Navorsingsentrum* (NALN). In a double bill, Johann Nel talks about the satirist M.M. Walters and Philip de Vos elaborates on his life in Cape Town as an opera singer, verse-monger, rhyme translator, photographer and writer.

We will find out more about the contemporary significance of Etienne Leroux, and we eagerly invite readers to bring along their personal favourite pieces from any Karel Schoeman text to share. Nico Luwes and Peter Taljaard will read from a selection of A.G. Visser's poetry and we will pay tribute to one of Sesotho's most prolific writers, Dr. Khotso Maphalla.

We are proud to announce that the 2019 Sol Plaatje Memorial Lecture will be presented by acclaimed writer, poet, and storyteller, Diana Ferrus. We will present exciting workshops including a fiction course, a scriptwriting course and two Sesotho courses, as well as a poetry workshop. We will also present seminars on how to be a literary agent and playwriting, facilitated by international presenters.

Acclaimed journalist, Ruda Landman, continues her uncompromising Discourse-series. Landman will be in conversation with Melusi Tshabalala and Jo Prins, known for the *Everyday Zulu*-book and Facebook page, and with Professors Francis Petersen and Adam Habib, as well as Wandile Ngcaweni, regarding the *#FeesMustFall* movement. Landman will interview transgender activist Landa Mabenge, about his memoir *Becoming Him*. Lastly, she will be in conversation with Mondli Makhanya, Pieter du Toit and Max du Preez about events after the 2019 national elections.

Other discourse discussion highlights to look forward to include a behind-the-headlines examination into Steinhoff and an in-depth discussion regarding state capture in the Free State based on Pieter-Louis Myburgh's *Gangster State: unravelling Ace Magashule's web of capture*.

This year a variety of interesting book discussions will be on offer: Maretha Maartens talks about her new Biblical novel, *Sara*, and Leon de Kock elaborates on his biography, *The love song of André P Brink*.



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Jens Friis celebrates a comprehensive chronicle of Philippolis's well-being in *Philippolis, die oudste nedersetting in die Vrystaat*. Seasoned and upcoming thriller writers, Bettina Wyngaard, Carina Diedericks-Hugo, Joubert Odendaal, and Rudie van Rensburg investigate the detective and criminal as two sides of the same coin, assisted by Hennie van Coller.

AJ Opperman participates in discussions with Pieter-Dirk Uys about his memoir, *Weerklank van 'n wanklank*, and with Herman Lategan about his book *Opstokers, fopdossers, en tweegatjakkalse*. In *Toe-val-lig*, Amore Bekker from RSG, selected just under 100 of the best stories brought together in a book that will make you laugh, cry, and wonder – she elaborates in conversation with Kabous Meiring. Francois Smith converses with three novelists, Jan van Tonder, Theo Kemp and Charl-Pierre Naude on human connection within these authors' imaginative worlds, as well as with Ingrid Winterbach on her latest novel, *Die troebel tyd*. Together with Jean Oosthuizen, we will investigate *Die Opkoms en ondergang van die NG Kerk*.

At the Poetry Café there are a variety of choices. The opening night of the festival we present a conversation with Diana Ferrus and Thuthukani Ndlovu about the power of poetry. International guests, Mira Feticu and Yves T'Sjoen, will pay tribute to acclaimed South African poets, Antjie Krog and Breyten Breytenbach, respectively. Three Afrikaans poets, Nini Bennett, Jolyn Philips, and Elzette Boucher, discuss the physical dimensions of languages as well as the articulation of the female body and self.

We will host an exciting performance poetry evening, the *Poetic Justice League*. South African and international participants include Amory Kapufi, Jesse Nsofu, Xabiso Vili, Talksick, Tessa Muller, Patience Labane, Busisiwe Mahlangu, Tshiamo Malatji, Hemelbesem, Lynthia Julius, Kayla Czaga, and Kim Fu. The week will be brought to a close with the always very popular, annual #FSLitfest Poetry Slam competition, with Hemelbesem as the master of ceremonies.

To conclude our expanded literary events, we will also host two exciting artistic projects: *LATROP: The People Who Were Too Much*, by Scott Eric Williams & Dr Julia Drouhin, which involves kid's workshops and Zine making, as well as *Tawdry Heartburn*, by James Berlyn. *Tawdry Heartburn* collects anonymous secrets, those things you want to get off your chest, into a locked box so that no one will know you are the author. All will be revealed on the wall of secrets.

Events take place at the ATKV-Boeke-oase, the Netwerk24 Feeskafee and NALN. The complete program is available at <http://bit.ly/VSKProgram2019> and tickets are available countrywide via Computicket.

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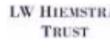
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Khoekhoegowab: Vrystaati di Dī//khasib IGāilgāisens ge #anlgās tsī IGōasiba Khoe-San Khoena ra mā. Nē khoen ge //in aboxan Ina /gaisa #goms tsī !hū//arede! kho/gara hā,nāu khoen !hūb din /khas khami

Afrikaans: Die Vrystaat Kunstefees erken en respekteer die Khoe-San van die Vrystaat en die diep geestelike verhoudings wat hulle met hul voorouers, hierdie land en sy mense het.

English: The Vrystaat Arts Festival acknowledges and respects the Khoe-San of the Free State and the deep spiritual attachment to their ancestors and relationships they have to this country and its people.

Sesotho: Mokete wa tsa Bonono Freistata o ananela le ho hlompha morabe wa Khoe-San wa Freistata, le kamano e tebileng ya semoya eo ba nang le yona le badimo ba bona hammoho le dikamano tseo ba nang le tsona le naha ena le baahi ba yona



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Lynthia Julius



Diana Ferrus



Theo Kemp



Landa Mabenge



Saskia de Coster, Amsterdam 2018 (2) ©Koos Breukel