

Big names for literary festival

METRO REPORTER

THE written word takes centre stage as 20 writers from nine countries arrive in Durban for a week of words, books, ideas, and talk at the 12th Time of the Writer International Writers Festival. The festival, from 9 to 14 March, is co-ordinated by the Centre for Creative Arts at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

It features a strong South African and African presence, with a diverse gathering of novelists, short story writers, journalists, cartoonists, and political commentators, presenting their ideas.

The line-up includes cartoonist Jonathan Shapiro, better known as Zapiro.

In conversation with Zapiro, on a panel entitled "I Write And Draw What I Like", will be journalist and political commentator Max du Preez.

Other South African voices include poet, short story writer and novelist Marlene van Niekerk who, with her celebrated novels *Agaat* and *Triomf* and poetry collections *Sprokkelster* and *Groenstaar*, has established herself as one of the country's finest writers.

Joining her in a session entitled "What Are The Imperatives of South African Fiction?", is literary luminary Mandla Langa, who recently completed the allegorical novel *The Lost Colours of the Chameleon*.

Also in attendance is Mtu-

tuzeli Matshoba, a writer, playwright and screenwriter who is responsible for authentic depictions of everyday life in South Africa.

Siphiwo Mahala, whose debut novel, *When A Man Cries*, showed a remarkably deft hand at balancing searing pain and black humour, shares the stage with Pietermaritzburg-born Futhi Ntshingila, whose debut *Shameless* is a feisty addition to local fiction.

Africans

The strong African presence this year includes Sade Adeniran (Nigeria), Mia Couto (Mozambique), Ugandan Moses Isegawa, Dinaw Mengestu (Ethiopia), and Fatou Diome, of Senegal. Diome's first novel, *Le Ventre de l'Atlantique*, was a bestseller in France and her vivid style is influenced by the traditional oral literature of Africa.

Fittingly, the winners of this year's Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Book and Best First Book Africa Region will be announced at the festival.

Crime fictions has a strong presence in this year's festival, including Deon Meyer, the undisputed king of South African crime and thriller writing.

The crime fiction contingent includes Mike Nicol, Angela Makholwa, and Margie Orford.

But crime comes in many forms and in a panel entitled "Crimes of History", Yvette Christiansë (South Africa) and Mourid Barghouti (Palestine) delve into their writing and into two very distinct injustices: slavery and the occupation of Palestine.

Christiansë's *Unconfessed* tells the epic story – inspired by court records – of Sila van den Kaap, a slave of 19th century South Africa.

Barghouti is an acclaimed poet with more than 12 collections. His celebrated autobiographical novel *Ra'aytu Ram Allah* (I Saw Ramallah) – written after 30 years of exile – was described by the late Edward Said as "one of the finest existential accounts of Palestinian displacement we now have".

Readings, discussions and book launches will take place nightly at the Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. During the day there will be workshops, school visits, a day-long forum on 11 March on publishing issues – including literary magazine publishing, self-publishing, book promotion, crime writing and the new explosion of graphic novels.

Tickets are R25 for the evening sessions, or R10 for students, through Computicket or at the door.

Workshops and seminars are free.

For details call 031 260 2506.

SHOCK FROCK



IT LOOKS like a ballgown fit for a swish affair. And so it is, but take a closer look. This glamorous garment is in fact made from hundreds of shocking-pink condoms. Talk about being prepared if someone makes you an irresistible offer! The rocking frock was created by Brazilian artist

Adriana Bertini, and is part of an

exhibition of thought-provoking pieces,

entitled *Make Art Stop Aids*, which

opens at the Durban Art Gallery on

25 February. Bertini, 35, who was

inspired by HIV-positive children

whom she met at an Aids

prevention group, has also crafted

sexy skirts and figure-hugging

suits, made entirely from condoms

rejected by quality testers. Her

message is: 'Condoms must be

basic, like a pair of jeans and so

necessary, like a great love.'

Another highlight is *Medicine Man*,

a sculpture by American artists

Daniel Goldstein and Daniel

Kapellas. It's a larger-than-life

figure of a man made from

hundreds of empty Aids medicine

bottles and syringes, used by the

two over the past 20 years since

they were diagnosed as being HIV

positive. Another standout is the

Keiskamma altarpiece by 120

Eastern Cape artists. Top Local

artists taking part in the exhibition

include William Kentridge, Pieter

Hugo, Gideon Mendel, Langa

Magwa, and Churchill Madikida.

More than 50 works are on show

and most of the international

artists are new to South African

audiences. The co-curators are David

Gere and former Durban Art Gallery curator,

Carol Brown. – Romita Hanuman

For details call 031 260 2506.

DURBAN DIARY:

Your guide to entertainment in the city

DANCE, THEATRE AND COMEDY

Bolshoi Ballet

Playhouse Opera Theatre
7 March
Time: 7pm
Tickets: R135 to R225
Call: 031 312 3187

Girls Behaving Badly

Rhumbelow Theatre
Until 15 February
Tickets: R80
Call: 031 205 7602

Southern Soul

Catalina Theatre
Until 1 March
Call: 031 305 6889

Big Band Magic

Barnyard Theatre
Until 22 February
Tickets: R70 to R105
Call: 031 566 3045

The Golfer

Heritage Theatre
Until 28 February
Tickets: R160 – R185,
includes a two-course meal
Call: 031 765 4197

Abba: The Legend Continues

Dockyard Theatre
Until late February
Tickets: R70 – R100
Call: 031 201 9147

Blondes on Deck

uShaka Marine World
Until 14 March



THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING: The Bolshoi Ballet will be performing at the Playhouse Opera theatre on 7 March

Tickets: R150, includes buffet
Call: 031 328 8068

Until 14 February
Call: 031 312 0793

22 February
Tickets: R218 to R294
Call: 011 794 9536

ART

Wakaba Mutheki and Friends

Kizo Art Gallery
Until 15 February
Call: 031 566 4324

Under my skin
artSPACE

SASOL Wax Art Award

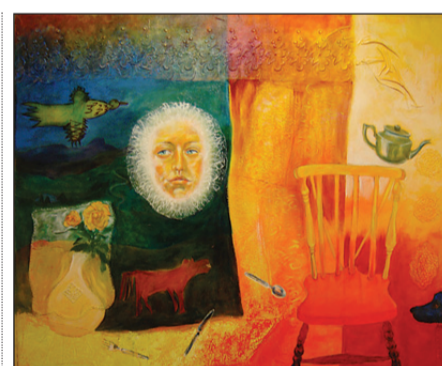
KZNSA Gallery
Opens 17 February
Call: 031 277 1705

MUSIC

Eddy Grant in concert
SunCoast

Guy Buttery
Phansi Museum
13 February, 7pm
Tickets: R60
Call: 031 206 2889

Watershed
Botanic Gardens
14 February



Tickets: R50 to R100
Call: 031 202 5819

Call: 083 776 7979

STUFF OF DREAMS:

Hermine Spies Coleman's *En Route With Messy Sentimental Things* is part of an exhibition entitled *Under My Skin* at artSpace

Andrew Zondo exhibition – "Why I did it"

KwaMuhle Local History Museum
Until end April
Call: 031 311 2222

Darwin Reluctant Revolutionary Exhibition

Natural Science Museum
Until December
Call: 031 311 2249

Educational workshops "Introduction to Human Evolution"

Natural Science Museum
26 March
9am – 14pm
Call: 031 311 2249

☐ Compiled by Themba Khumalo. To have your events included in the Durban Diary, fax 031 306 4603 or e-mail khumalotk@durban.gov.za.

EVENTS

Miss India Worldwide

Suncoast
14 February
Tickets: R3 500 to R10 000
Call: 031 309 4498

KZN Conservative Service guided walks

Krantzkloof Nature Reserve
First and third Sunday
Call: 031 764 3515

Dancing with the Stars Under the Bridge

Stable Theatre, Alice Street
14 February
From noon to midnight
Call: 031 309 2513

Barnyard Auditions

Barnyard Theatre
Thursday, 26 February, 10am