

## Virtual National Arts Fest extended to 16 July

The National Arts Festival has announced that its first-ever virtual edition will be extended until 16 July 2020. The virtual National Arts Festival will now be around for 11 days, which means that new audiences can also still buy tickets and passes and get to enjoy the festival along with the vFringe, which will be continuing until 31 July.



THLAGO by King Debs

The online space has its advantages, as artistic director Rucera Seethal points out:

“ *Creating a festival in the online space means we have a rich and exciting body of work gathered in one place and we can continue sharing that in a way that we would not otherwise be able to with a live festival.* ”

Some of the shows include the works of the Standard Bank Young Artists; Jefferson Tshabalala, Lulu Mlangeni, Sisonke Xonti, Nthato Mokgata and Blessing Ngobeni. Audiences have also flocked to *Swan Song*, a collaboration between Buhle Ngaba and Nicola Pilkington; *Pest Control* by Mamela Nyamza; and, of course, Standard Bank Jazz Festival performances from incredible acts like Thandiswa Mazwai, Mi Casa and Grammy-award winner Jacob Collier. Adam Donen chose the Virtual National Arts Festival for the world premiere of his radio play, *Nixon In Agony*, and Featured Artist, Madosini is celebrated in an 11-episode documentary series called *Songs Are Like The Grass*.



Norbulurko Mngexekeze as Lady Macbeth - © Nicky Newman

The vFringe continues to release more work; each show produced entirely by the artists and 90% of the ticket revenue going to artists directly. The Standard Bank Ovation Awards recognise excellence in vFringe shows and will start to be awarded this week, culminating in a live awards ceremony for the overall vFringe Standard Bank Ovation winners on 31 July 2020. Artists can continue to sign up to the vFringe with a cut-off date of 25 July for work to be considered for the Standard Bank Ovation Awards.



### Virtual National Arts Festival gives artists a platform to monetise their work with vFringe

18 May 2020



Speaking about the festival to date, National Arts Festival CEO, Monica Newton said that the reaction from the public had been very positive: "Since 25 June, visitors have joined us from all over Africa and the world and while the new platform was not without its teething problems, we have already presented hundreds of hours of entertainment to our audience. We are thrilled to see that the vFringe is doing well, with Fringe artists finding it a great platform to securely stage and market their work. Mounting the festival with just over 100 days to prepare has been an incredible challenge for the team but we have learnt that there is ongoing value in an online arts platform. With the arts community locally and abroad grappling with the devastation of the coronavirus pandemic, we do see significant opportunities in the digital space now and in future."



### "Never let a good crisis go to waste"- National Arts Festival CEO Monica Newton chats the new virtual format

Ruth Cooper 31 Mar 2020



Ticket- and pass-holders can return to the platform at any time until 16 July to watch on-demand shows and audiences can also still buy single tickets and passes for the curated programme up until 16 July. vFringe tickets, which are all single purchases can be bought up until 31 July.

*All the festival content can be found on [nationalartsfestival.co.za](http://nationalartsfestival.co.za)*

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>