

Magic happening at the 12th Baxter Dance Festival

 By [Terry Levin](#)

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If I were a politician who wanted to be favourably remembered forever, not like Cecil John Rhodes whose legacy has fallen, but rather a more contemporary one like Jacob or Cyril, I would dig deep into my travel budgets and open the biggest dance school in the Southern Hemisphere - one which would stand as a symbol of pride in the art form that arguably is South Africa's biggest and potentially most marketable resource.

A school with facilities which would be unique in the world and to which dancers from Africa and around the world would dream of applying - where traditional dance such as Pantsula, the Shamanic dances of the San, gumboot and hip hop could be mashed up with classic scores such as Ravel's Bolero or Pink Floyd co-founder Roger Waters' guitar arias.



Dustin Jannetjies, Adelaide Majoor, Byron Klassen - pic by Oscar O'Ryan

This is what the spellbound, verging on ecstatic audience witnessed last night at the double bill opening of the 12th Baxter Dance Festival.

I am rushing this review off to let you know that if you are a dance lover in Cape Town, you only have tonight to catch last night's programme consisting of the 25th anniversary of the mini-ballet, 'The Pros and Cons of Hitchhiking', set to Roger Water's epic score performed by the Garage Dance Company from Namaqualand, with choreography by John Linden - himself deserving of a statue outside a tertiary institution - AND... the 40-year revival of Alfred Hinkel's Bolero, set to everybody's favourite piece of classical by Ravel and demonstrating the glory years of Cape Town's Jazzart Dance Theatre.



Farroll Coetzee, Dustin Jannetjies - pic by Oscar O’Ryan

The Garage company, consisting of three girls and three guys, danced both pieces - each dancer bringing their unique personality and presence to the work. Special mention goes to Byron Klassen who is really a bit of a phenomenon. Danceophiles may nitpick about timing and what have you, but you have to be there to feel the privilege of such talent and joy being imparted at 110% energy for a whole hour. It’s like sport, only more flowing with fabulous music and lighting by Benever Arendse, which nails all the required ambience and evocative moods. It was worth going just for this I thought.



Byron Klassen, Adelaide Majoor - pic by Oscar O’Ryan

As someone commented during an aftershow chat on the stairs with Baxter marketing manager Fahiem Stellenboom, “Something happened in there tonight!”

Something did happen, part shamanism, alchemy and the manifestation of pure energy grown from the mother continent – truly powerful stuff that left the audience whooping, cheering and ovating spontaneously; not just jumping up at the end.

They may not yet have funded a dance school, but big thanks to The National Arts Council, Tsogo Sun and Stellar Wines for funding this event.

After tonight you will have just over a week to catch SA's young and seasoned dancers and choreographers doing what they love, to music that they love - celebrating the power and beauty of the human form in motion. #dance



Dustin Jannetjies, Byron Klassen, Clara Barron, Ferrell Coetzee, Adelaide Majoor, Levern Botha -pic by Oscar O'Ryan

Booking for the 2016 Baxter Dance Festival is through Computicket on 0861 915 8000, online at www.computicket.co.za or at any Shoprite Checkers outlet. For discounted school or group block bookings, fundraisers or charities contact Sharon Ward on 021 680 3962 or email sharon.ward@uct.ac.za or Carmen Kearns on 021 680 3993 or email her at carmen.kearns@uct.ac.za.

The full programme may be viewed online at www.baxter.co.za or on www.facebook.com/baxtertheatre.

ABOUT TERRY LEVIN

Brand and Culture Strategy consulting | Bizcommunity.com COO at large. Email terry@offtheshelf.co.za, Twitter @terrylevin, Instagram, LinkedIn.

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