

NEWSLETTER: VOLUME 23 ISSUE 1

JULY 2020

The onset of the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown, forced us all to completely adjust our way of thinking, living and working. For the Speech and Drama Association it meant postponing some of our festivals until later in the year and, in some cases, cancelling them for 2020. However, we have also swiftly adapted our service and are pleased to report that we are able to continue with the festivals through online or virtual adjudications, where schools are able.



Since our last issue of *The Platform* we have had The Bruce Piper Monologue Competition, the 2019 Bursary Awards and the Annual General Meeting, so be sure to read all about them in this issue.

Well known top South African theatre director and actor, Steven Stead, is offering online acting coaching. If you would like to take advantage of this amazing opportunity, contact Steven at kickstart@letni.co.za



In this issue we also pay tribute to the doyenne of the Adjudicator's Panel, long time member and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, Eleanor Stewart.

Vyvienne Ball



FESTIVAL 2020

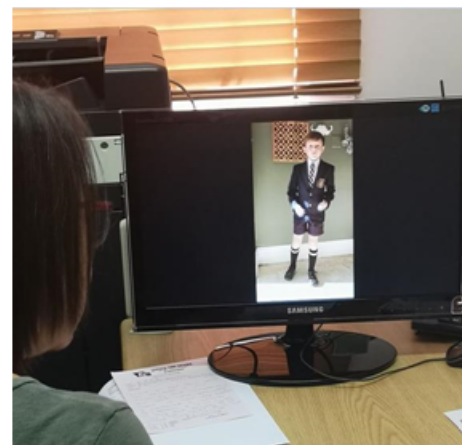
We are so pleased that we have been able to continue our festivals through virtual adjudications.

We applaud Durban Preparatory High School, Cowan House Preparatory School and The Amojee Academy for going ahead with their festivals during lockdown restrictions, and despite school closures. These were adjudicated virtually in the Speech and Drama Association office during May, June and July, and we are looking forward to more online festivals in August.

Thank you to the teachers and school management at these schools for organising them, and congratulations to the pupils for accepting the challenge of presenting their items this way - the lively, entertaining, creative and well-rehearsed presentations have been a pleasure to watch, and adjudicators have been pleased with the high standard of work.

If you are considering having an online adjudication please note the following adaptations to the categories:

- **Sight Reading** may be presented as a Prepared Reading
- **Story Telling** is a prepared category only
- **The News at Eight** is a prepared presentation - the entrants may choose the topics to present as news items
- **Advertisement** is a prepared item



Adjudicator Philippa Savage, adjudicates a pupil from DPHS.

As well as the option of an online festival, our usual live festivals will be going ahead as planned from September through to November and dates for these should be confirmed or booked with the office on 031 201 6356 as soon as possible.



2020 - 2022 SYLLABUS & CERTIFICATES

- Our new syllabus books, which include a compilation of poems for all grades, and are available in English, Afrikaans and isiZulu, may be ordered from the office.
- Our festival certificates have a new look: A **Gold Certificate with Distinction** will be awarded for every **A+** received, and a **Gold Certificate** will be awarded for every **A** received.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM took place on 16 March 2020, in the Board Room at MCO House, Glenwood, Durban.

The incoming members of the Executive Committee, who will serve for two years are:

Mervyn McMurtry (Chairman), Margie Marnewick (Vice-Chairman), Brett Beiles, Roz Boyle, Rosanne Hurly-Coyne, Mbali Nguse, Helana Olivier, Loshani Puymann, Philippa Savage, David Spiteri and Jean van Elden.



2019 BURSARY AWARDS

The Elizabeth Sneddon Bursary was awarded to Gabriella Nhlebela from Grosvenor Girls' High School.

The Jilian Hurst Bursary was awarded to Mihle Msomi from New Germany Primary School.

The Hazel Meyer Bursary was awarded to Zareem Ameer from Manor Gardens Primary School.

Donations to the Bursary Fund made it possible for the following ten pupils to receive bursaries donated by their schools:

- Mafa Shozi - Atholl Heights Primary
- Arianna John - Brighton Beach Senior Primary
- Lucas Peria - Durban Preparatory High School
- Lolwethu Sauka - Hillary Primary
- Dahlia Mahomed - Westville Junior Primary
- Thomas Hutchinson - Westville Junior Primary
- Jordan Salvesen - Westville Senior Primary
- Anamitra Sridhar - Westville Senior Primary
- Leah Cleland - Westville Senior Primary
- Mandisa Nzama - Westville Senior Primary

THANK YOU TO THESE SCHOOLS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND GENEROUS DONATIONS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO EACH ONE OF THESE BRIGHT STARS!



2019 BRUCE PIPER AWARD MONOLOGUE COMPETITION

The competition, which is held annually for high school students, took place on 26 October 2019 at Glenmore Primary School.

11 candidates qualified to participate by achieving outstanding results for their monologues during their festivals earlier in the year. They performed these monologues for adjudicators Mervyn McMurtry and Alison Cassells and an audience of supporters and Association members.

The participating schools were Eden College, Northlands Girls' High School, Port Shepstone High School and St Anne's Diocesan College.

The winner of the 2019 Monologue Competition was Caitlin Schwarer from Eden College, who is pictured here with the adjudicators.





2019 MONOLOGUE COMPETITION PARTICIPANTS



THANK YOU

During her 38 years as an adjudicator for the Association, Eleanor has travelled throughout the province to adjudicate thousands of pupils. She has chaired numerous adjudicators' workshops, where she has generously shared her expertise and wealth of experience with other adjudicators. She is a valued and much-loved member of our panel of adjudicators, with her positive approach and professional manner.

In addition to her loyal service as an adjudicator, Eleanor has served the Association in another role - as a staunch member of the Executive Committee since 2002, and Vice-Chairman since 2004. It was therefore with much regret that we accepted her resignation from the Executive Committee earlier this year.

In his tribute to Eleanor at the Annual General Meeting, the Chairman, Dr McMurtry, said that "her gentle strength, unflinching patience and calm wisdom will be sorely missed". She is indeed an ambassador to the Association.



Eleanor Stewart



DON'T MISS OUT!

ONLINE ACTING COACHING FROM TOP SOUTH AFRICAN THEATRE DIRECTOR STEVEN STEAD

Steven Stead is a multi-award winning, widely praised theatre director with over thirty years of experience in the professional industry, and a wealth of national and international experience directing plays, musicals and operas. He holds an Honours degree in Drama (cum laude) from the University of Natal, and for eight years was a Senior Staff Director at the English National Opera in London. Currently, he is the Executive Director of KickstArt Theatre, Durban's top theatre company.

Now that theatre all over the world has come to a stand-still due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Steven has the time to dedicate to teaching, and is offering one-on-one, private coaching sessions and masterclasses, online.

These sessions are aimed at improving acting, or public speaking, by giving young drama students and budding, young professionals the opportunity to work in detail on monologues or even songs, prepare for exams or auditions, or just flex acting muscles, with a highly experienced, dedicated, professional director.

Sessions will involve the preparation and performance of set pieces, and the discussion and teaching of acting techniques specifically for live theatre.

The sessions will not be syllabus oriented, nor is there any sort of qualification awarded. This is a process-based, personally tailored series of masterclasses with a professional director. The work will consist of practical work, acting theory, warm-ups, textual analysis, vocal technique, physicality, and character.

"When theatres re-open in the not so distant future," says Steven, "we will need fresh, exciting talent. And this is an ideal opportunity to hone your performance skills in a safe, professional way while we wait for that great day to arrive."

If you are interested in booking sessions with Steven, or finding out more about the procedure and pricing, please email him at: kickstart@letni.co.za.

For more information on KickstArt Theatre visit our website:
www.kickstarttheatre.co.za



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