

Faniswa Yisa appointed as curator of the Baxter Masambe Theatre

The award-winning theatre, film and television actor, Faniswa Yisa, has been appointed as the curator of the Baxter's Masambe Theatre, effective 1 March 2023.



Faniswa Yisa. Photo by Zinobulani Goduka

Regarded as one of South Africa's respected artists, Yisa has had a long relationship with The Baxter as actor, director, producer and mentor.

In 2015, she received the Baxter CEO artist of year award and has performed in several productions at the theatre over the years.

"The Baxter has been like a second home to me. I feel welcome here, so I'm super excited and nervous, of course, in this new role and joining this creative family," says the UCT Drama School graduate. "I am looking forward to learning, experimenting and sharing ideas to find innovative ways, of storytelling and having conversations with creatives, through their work."

At The Baxter over the years, she has performed in an impressive list of productions, which received great acclaim and

accolades. These include, most recently: *Magnet Theatre's Oedipus at Colonus #aftersophocles*; Lara Foot's *Life & Times of Michael K*; Magnet Theatre's multi-award winning, *Every Year, Every Day, I am Walking, Voices Made Night and Fire Raisers*; Reza de Wet's *Missing*; Barney Simon's *Born in the RSA*; Mandla Bothwe's *Inxeba Lomphilise*; Brett Bailey's *MedEia* and Janice Honeyman's *Madiba Magic*.

She was coproducer of Nwabisa Plaatjie's *When We Awake*, which was recently staged at The Baxter.

Faniswa won the Fleur du Cap Best Actress award for Nadia David's *What Remains*. She was also joint Best Actress winner for her performance in Magnet Theatre's *Every Year, Every Day, I am Walking* at the Aardkloop Festival. Her screen work includes *Skin*, *Knuckle City* and *Dam*.

She was part of *The Mothertongue Project*, where she co-created and performed in productions such as *Beading my Soul*, *Uhambo* and *The Space of Dreams* and, in 2003, she did a residency in India.

Faniswa toured internationally to Europe with *MedEia* and 19 countries with *Every Year, Every Day, I am Walking* (nominated for best foreign production in Argentina and Pick of the Fest at the National Arts Festival).

"I am excited and invigorated to create a vibrant cultural hub for artists in all genres", she explains, "It's an affordable and accessible space for them to experiment, play, share concepts and ideas and to collaborate. Whether through creative workshops, encouraging discussions and debates or, simply as a rehearsal space, we would like to invite artists to engage with me and let's make it magic happen."

The Baxter's Masambe Theatre is an intimate, fresh space with a seating capacity of 60 and perfect platform for up-and-coming and new theatre-makers to showcase their work. It is a space for creatives to play and do experimental work and wish to collaborate with other artists to try out new ways of storytelling.

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