

**To Whom It May Concern:****RE: Support for I'm 4 the Arts and arts activists' groups**

This letter serves to confirm the National Festival Forum's support for the artists occupying the offices of the National Arts Council.

The Festival Forum is a grouping of producing theatre and arts festivals (Aardklop, Innibos, Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees, Vrystaat Kunstefees, US Woordfees, Suidoosterfees). This Forum is chaired by the National Afrikaans Theatre Initiative (NATi). Although these festivals operate in a mainly Afrikaans dominated environment, they are also multilingual, multicultural entities that provide employment, training and performance opportunities for thousands of artists, technicians and collaborators throughout the year. They are also responsible for a financial injection into their local towns, cities and regions culminating in millions on an annual basis. They represent the interests and well-being of a significant portion of the South African performing arts and cultural landscapes.

We would like to throw our weight and voices behind the artists and co-workers who have been driving the movement to challenge the NAC and who have been occupying the offices of the NAC over the course of the last two weeks. The meeting that took place on Sunday 14 March was a clear indication that the NAC and the minister of Sports, Arts and Culture, Mr. Nathi Mthethwa, does not fully comprehend the seriousness of the allegations and the mismanagement of this sector that has been crippling the industry and artists for years.

We would like to unequivocally express our support and thanks to these artists who are putting their bodies, their careers, their livelihoods and their reputations on the line for the betterment of the industry. We would also like to pledge a cash contribution of R15 000 to the fund created to assist these activists and we also pledge our support in other ways as deemed necessary by the organizers.

We will no longer stand by in silence as our industry is murdered by the callousness and of an organization who does not understand how the arts (in all its disciplines) should function and what an asset it is to the well-being of our nation.

**Yours in the arts,**

Cornelia Faasen (CEO: NATi / Chairperson: Festival Forum)

Alexa Strachan (Aardklop)

Andy Lubbe (Innibos)

Hugo Theart (KKNK)

Jana Hattingh (Suidooster festival)

Ricardo Peach (Free State Arts Festival)

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