

Activities

Ghana Centre of ITI (Africa)

86



No Rules, an Afro contemporary dance piece based on Efo Kodjo Mawugbe's In the Chest of a Woman



Activities 2014–2016

The National Theatre of Ghana is an agency mandated by Government to develop and promote the performing Arts in Ghana through cost-effective production of classical and contemporary live stage and televised performances which project positive national values and the African personality. The Ghana ITI operates in the domain of The National Theatre, operating with existing programs and creating new projects.

World Theatre Day 2014

As part of activities marking World Theatre Day, the National Theatre used the opportunity to launch the 2014 'Comedy Series' in Accra. It is a program for young talented comedians to showcase their works on stage with a live audience on a monthly basis. (www.ghanaonlinenews.com/the-ghana-national-theatre-celebrates-world-theatre-daypress-release/)

Children's Theatre Programme

Funworld is a theatrical programme with performances created and performed by children for children. Funworld was initiated in the 1990's to entertain and educate children through drama, music, dance, rap music, poetry recitals and quizzes, amongst others. It is presented on the last Sunday of each month, with selected themes that are prompted by the United Nations Day's celebrations. The programme's target groups are pupils in Basic and Junior High School between 5 and 16 years. The goals of this programme are to:

- discover young talent and nurture them into modern-day arts professionals
- entertain, educate and inform audiences on social

issues through the arts

- grow an artistic pool for the entertainment industry
- teach young people to appreciate the arts industry.

Spoken Word Competition

TEEN SLAM GHANA is a spoken word competition for Junior and Senior High schools to encourage them to write and present insightful poetry, while inculcating a love of poetry and improving basic writing skills. The competition takes place during the schools' academic calendar.

Indigenous Theatre

CONCERT PARTY, our flagship programme for years, is a presentation of an indigenous theatre performance that employs music, dialogue, dance and comedy in a drama backed by live band music to educate, entertain and inform audiences. Local languages are employed with the Akan dialect as the major language used.

It was introduced as part of the Theatre's programming to:

- promote the good cultural traits of the Ghanaian personality
- discover, nurture and promote raw talents to create a talent pool for theatre and the local movie industry
- grow an audience base for all live stage performances in our various local dialects.

World Poetry Day

The National Theatre celebrated this day, March 21, 2015 by organizing the finals of the Teen Slam Ghana Series. Three schools from two areas in Ghana (Accra &

Activities

Ghana Centre of ITI (Africa)



Tema) were selected to participate in this finale on the theme for this year's world poetry day.

World Theatre Day

World Theatre Day 2015 was observed with students from New Horizon Special School, a school for children with autism. The idea behind this was to create the awareness that theatre can be used as therapy and to affirm the statement that "Disability is not Inability". The National Drama Company and the National Dance Company performed a sketch from R.A. Cantey's "Ghana Motion" which touches on patriotism and solidarity amongst the youth and it was chaired by the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts.

International Dance Day

The National Dance Company with support from the National Theatre of Ghana organized traditional dance performances at Accra Psychiatric Hospital on April 29, 2015. In fulfilment of our social responsibility, a workshop was also organized for patients, doctors, nurses and workers of the hospital on the rudiments of dance in addition to the donation of clothes, sanitary ware, etc from the staff of the National Theatre of Ghana.

Musical heritage

AGRO YE FRI TITI (HIGHLIFE TIME LIVE BAND MUSIC) is a live band programme that partners the National Security Services Band under the Ministry of Interior and a highlife musician to showcase a live band musical performance in an Amphitheatre (open bar theatre scene). The aim of this programme is to re-introduce our old melodic musical genre back onto the music market by giving the old and prominent highlife musicians a platform to give the audience a taste of a cultural heritage that has placed Ghana on the global stage for many years.

Local to Global

The Ghana Centre came up with a plan to add some level of international appeal to our local content in terms of our staged performances. This led to the development of works like:



- NO RULES, an Afro contemporary dance piece based on Efo Kodjo Mawugbe's "In the Chest of a Woman", which was a collaboration between the National Theatre of Ghana, the French Embassy in Ghana and Institut Francais. This dance piece was choreographed by Joseph Aka and was performed by dancers from Ghana and Ivory Coast. It was staged on April 30, 2015.
- MOTHER'S TEARS was a play written by the legendary Ghanaian writer Kwaw Ansah, directed by Vivian Agboe Boateng. This was a collaborative work between the National Theatre of Ghana, National Drama Company (Abibigromma) and the United Artistes to celebrate our mothers on Mother's Day. It was performed on May 9-10, 2015.
- DIEMA was a collaborative work between the National Theatre of Ghana, the National Dance Company, the National Symphony Orchestra with choreographers from the University of Ohio and Azaguno to produce three nights of explosive live staged Ghanaian contemporary dance performances and music. This was staged from June 18-20, 2015. Workshops were also organized for dance choreographers and dancers by artistes from the USA and China.
- FLAGSTAFF HOUSE: The National Theatre collaborated with the Hyfocal Multimedia and Nyansapor Productions to stage a satirical play that will give young comedians the opportunity to showcase their talent on a bigger and grander stage. This was staged on July 3, 2015.

Ghana Theatre Festival

Created by ITI Ghana, the 7-day festival (October 12-18, 2015) is supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts, with a three-fold programme:

- workshops for upcoming artistes to develop their skills in the Creative Arts
- to educate creative artistes on the importance of marketing works
- to showcase the best of works by professional artistes in the area and at the same time.



Left: DIEMA, a collaborative work between the National Theatre of Ghana, the National Dance Company, the National Symphony Orchestra with choreographers from the University of Ohio and Azaguno.

Right: Kiddafest (Accra International Kids Festival) 2015 in Ghana

Activities

Ghana Centre of ITI (Africa)

88



Above left and Above right: No Rules, an Afro contemporary dance piece based on Efo Kodjo Mawugbe's In the Chest of a Woman.

Below left: Concert Party, a presentation of indigenous theatre performances.

Below right: Kiddafest (Accra International Kids Festival) 2015 in Ghana



Kiddafest (Accra International Kids Festival)

This annual festival has been in existence for the past 20 years and is supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Creative Arts and Ghana Education Service (GES). The programme is organized annually to help unearth new talents, nurture, motivate young talented kids and to also develop a young audience base that appreciates the creative arts. The 2015 Festival (December 17-19) was themed "Creating Harmony through Cultural Diversity".

Dance addressing delinquency

BUKOM is a dance performance written and choreographed by the late Prof. Nii Yartey. This piece talks about a juvenile delinquent and the unfavourable environment in which he finds himself as well as the dramatic changes that spring after going through this period. This dance piece was performed on 14/15 March 2015.

Upcoming Events for 2016

- World Theatre Day: 'Baobab', a play on teen pregnancy with the emphasis on taking care of the baby post-delivery, will be performed by the resident drama company in a deprived community on Easter Sunday, March 27, 2016
- Nana Ampadu's 50th anniversary in show business: the legendary highlife maestro Nana Kwame Ampadu will collaborate with the Theatre in celebrating this milestone on May 21, 2016
- Ghana Theatre Festival 2016 is scheduled from September 26th to October 2nd. Auditions for participating groups are underway.

Board members

President: Akosua Abdallah (Deputy Executive Director, National Theatre of Ghana)
 Vice President: Amandzeba Nat Brew (Musician and President of Professional Musicians of Ghana)
 General Secretary: Abdul Karim Hakib (Theatre Practitioner and Executive Director: GADEC)
 Vice secretary: Elsie Esenam Atiase (Dancer and Dance Teacher)
 Counsellors: Dr Mohammed Ibn Abdallah (Playwright and cultural consultant)
 Hon. Dzifa Gomashie (Deputy Minister, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts, Ebo Whyte (Playwright /Theatre Producer)