

# 14 SA creatives join Cultural Producers Programme

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In an environment where the creative sector often navigates challenges related to career sustainability, the Cultural Producers Programme steps forward to empower young talent. This initiative, delivered by the British Council in partnership with Business and Arts South Africa NPC (BASA), Common Purpose South Africa, and the Pan-African Creative Exchange (PACE), aims to bridge the gap in leadership succession within the cultural sector.



The programme focuses on nurturing the potential of fourteen exceptional individuals under the age of 35. These diverse creatives hail from various disciplines including advertising, applied arts, arts management, gaming, and more. They represent all corners of South Africa, spanning the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, North West, Mpumalanga, and the Free State.

BASA CEO, Ashraf Johaardien, expressed his enthusiasm for the programme, stating: "The calibre of entries this year was exceptionally high, and the final cohort reflects an exciting mix of creative disciplines. We are thrilled to provide these young leaders with the opportunity to expand their networks, refine their skills, and propel their careers to the next level."

Through a series of workshops, mentorship sessions, and networking opportunities, the programme equips participants with the tools and knowledge they need to navigate the complexities of the cultural landscape, build sustainable careers, and become future leaders in their respective fields.

Says British Council's Head of Arts South Africa, Grace Meadows: "Empowering the next generation of creative leaders in Africa is not just a goal; it's a movement towards infinite possibilities. Here's to forging deeper connections, unlocking greater opportunities, and inspiring a wave of visionary change-makers within this accelerated cultural producers programme – indeed transformative."

The Cultural Producers Programme is a testament to the ongoing commitment to fostering a vibrant and sustainable creative sector in South Africa. By investing in the next generation of leaders, the programme paves the way for a brighter future for the cultural landscape.

## Meet the 2024 Cultural Producers Programme cohort:

**Alexia Stramrood**  
Gaming | generative AI | Cape Town

Born and raised in the vibrant city of Cape Town, South Africa, Stramrood is a dedicated video game and interactive media producer, embarking on this creative journey in 2016. Her fascination with video games blossomed during her psychology

studies at University of Cape Town, mobilised by her realisation of the stark access to mental healthcare in South Africa. Viewing video games as a potential solution, she delved into the industry by engaging in job shadowing at a local game development company. This transformative experience fuelled her commitment to leveraging interactive media for positive social impact.

### **Amogelang Pila Dithale**

**Visual artist | arts administrator | cultural producer | Pretoria**

Amogelang Pila Dithale was born on 10 May 1993 in Pretoria. She is a visual artist, crafter, arts administrator, programmes manager and cultural producer with a Diploma in Integrated Brand Communications with Vega – the School of Brand Leadership. She is also a Phakama Women's Academy graduate and founder of Healer of the World Arts (NPC) North and the Made 4 You Artist Residency. Dithale is skilled in using glass through a glass training workshop with Tshwane University of Technology (done at their Art campus).

### **Bongani Masela**

**Software engineer | Durban**

Bongani Masela is a software engineering student at the Independent Institute of Education Rosebank College, who is passionate about using technology to solve problems and create opportunities for African youth. An entrepreneur, he co-founded Pluto Africa, a digital networking platform that won the Intra-Africa Trade Fair (IATF) Youth Hackathon in 2022. He was also the chief technology officer at Gamers Territory, a township-based gaming facility that aims to bridge the digital divide and promote computer literacy. Masela's contributions to the tech ecosystem have earned him a place as a regional finalist in the Global Startup Awards Africa 2023 and a Top 15 Young Geek in South Africa in 2023. Recently, Masela's startup was selected as one of the winners of the African Union (AU) Youth Start-Up Competition and was awarded sponsorship from the African Export and Import Bank (Afreximbank) and the AU Commission, to participate at the AU Youth Start-Up Pavilion at the 2023 Intra-Africa Trade Fair (IATF2023) that took place at the Egypt International Exhibition Centre. Masela is driven by his vision of empowering and uplifting his community through technology and social impact.

### **Colleen Balchin**

**Cultural practitioner | DJ | Johannesburg**

Colleen Balchin is a cultural practitioner with 14 years' experience in the music and cultural spaces, focusing on queer and musically obscure, underground scenes. Based in Johannesburg, they work globally as a DJ and cultural practitioner. Passionate about how club culture brings people together, creating shared, euphoric experiences and prototyping social cohesion, Balchin believes cultural work can be a balm to social pains – in particular, addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and queerphobia. Through their work with P\_ssy Party, they mentor women and queer people, and are an advocate within their industry. With BANS, they create musically obscure havens for outliers, breaking the heteronormative cultural landscape with forward-thinking programming and safer space tools.

### **Fleur de Bondt**

**Creator | Gauteng**

Fleur de Bondt is an ever-evolving creator. She's showcased her personal work in spaces such as Constitution Hill, and FNB, Cape Town and Turbine Art Fairs, Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (KKNK), Lizamore and Associates, and Artist Proof Studio. Based in Johannesburg, she actively contributes to the art community, having programme managed Rand Merchant Bank (RMB) Talent Unlocked for six years, as well as initiating Fracture Sessions, a project uniting isolated artists through free weekly workshops. In 2022, De Bondt coordinated the Visual Arts Network of South Africa's (VANSA) Cultural Leadership Programme and managed Carling Black Label's #NOEXCUSE Art Against Abuse campaign in 2022. In 2023, she mentored for the Arts and Culture Trust's (ACT) Nyoloha Scholarship Programme. De Bondt is dedicated to cultivating environments that foster artists' growth and meaningful development as well as feeding her own curiosity in her practice.

### **Lana Combrinck**

**Visual Artist | Virginia**

Combrinck received her MA Fine Arts degree in 2017 and her BA Fine Arts degree in 2011 at the University of the Free State. Combrinck is the owner and founder of ArtC in Virginia in the Free State. ArtC is an artistic company specialising in modern artworks and artwork products, as well as art classes for people from children aged 2 up to adults. Through funding received from the Presidential Employment Stimulus Programme, Combrinck was able to appoint and mentor interns for a four-month period. She was also part of ACT's 'Building Blocks' programme and successfully completed the ACT Building Blocks Masterclasses and Mentorship Programme. Combrinck also completed a Business in the Arts Workshop presented by Gallery Noko and VANSA.

### **Menzi Mkhonza**

**Business designer | design researcher | platform creator | alchemist | Nelspruit**

Menzi Mkhonza was born and bred in Nelspruit/Mbombela where he is a business designer, design researcher and platform creator in the creative community. He also helps up-and-coming creatives to realise their value and true potential by sharing resources and giving them a platform to share ideas that shape and cultivate creativity. Mkhonza believes that learning requires an open mind and leads to an 'unlearning' or emptying oneself to understand. He is also an advocate for consistency and self-will.

### **Mogale Sedibe**

**Author | Northern Cape**

Mogale Sedibe is a spoken word artist and children's author from South Africa. 'His Thoughts' is his debut poetry chapbook, published by Ink Sword Publishers in collaboration with the Northern Cape Department of Arts and Culture. In 2019, he published his first picture book for children through the Puku Foundation in Johannesburg and a second children's literature picture storybook with Cadbury Dairy Milk SA and Nal'ibali in 2021. He is a 2023 National Heritage Council Golden Shield Awards finalist and Young Heritage Activist 2023. In 2020, he released a Poetry album via Songtradr.com, a United States-based distributor whose music is available on all major music stores worldwide. Sedibe was also shortlisted for the Business and Arts South Africa Debut Programme's Hlanganisa Phase. His masterclasses on digital marketing in the arts and asset-based community development earned him a certificate from the Arts and Culture Trust Building Blocks in 2020.

### **Mosa Rabannye**

**Actor | writer | director | Botshabelo**

Mosa Rabannye is a 25-year-old actor, writer, and director from Botshabelo, Free State. She is a qualified language scientist and media practitioner from the Central University of Technology. She is inspired by interrogating the human condition through various mediums of art. In 2024, she collaborated with Craft Bites International in association with the Playwrights Guild of Canada and Theatre Arts to present her play We Say Our Names When We Pray and she has written screenplays for Creative Careers South Africa. Her literary work has appeared in Isele Magazine, New Valley Zine, and in 2023 she became a writing fellow at the Johannesburg Institute for Advanced Studies (JIAS) where she worked on her debut novel, Don't Let the Blues Settle. Rabannye has graced audiences on stage as a clown with the Bloem Klown Troupe and as an actor at Vrystaat Kunstefees, Performing Arts Centre of the Free State, Civic Theatre and in various short films.

### **Ntsikelelo Ngaleka**

**Radio producer | facilitator | curator**

Ntsikelelo Ngaleka is a radio producer and presenter with Vow Fm (Voice of Wits), hosting The Science Wise Show, a talk hour about science, technology and innovation, airing Tuesdays from 6 to 7pm. He also hosts a variety show called Area Code (Thursdays and Fridays, from 9 to 12 midday). He is a conversationalist, debater, facilitator, moderator, speaker and art enthusiast. Ngaleka has moderated discussions for the MTNXUJ New Contemporary Awards in 2022, having been part of the mentorship program they ran for the Wits Art Museum. He also interned at the Turbine Art Fair, and consistently features artists and curators in his radio shows as a lover of the arts. He hopes to one day be a world-renowned art curator and radio presenter.

### **Odwa Bungu**

## **Author | Poet | Director | Mdantsane**

Odwa Bungu is an author and a poet, an artist, as well as the director of a publishing company. He hails from Mdantsane, Eastern Cape. In 2021, he published his first poetry book titled *Diluted* and in 2022 he published his second book, *Doubtless*. Most recently, in 2023, he published a book titled *Knots in my Wording*. Established by Bungu in 2018, Afroglyphics Publishers is a publishing company that aims to publish, market, and exhibit African art with a vision of narrating African stories through the view of African people.

## **Oratile Mothoagae Architect / Filmmaker / Johannesburg**

Oratile Mothoagae is a Pretoria-based architect and filmmaker. He studied architecture at the University of Johannesburg in 2017 (BTech Applied Design) and the Graduate School of Architecture in 2019 (MTech Prof). He is one of the directors of SSL Studios, a multidisciplinary practice that focuses on film and architecture founded in 2019. Mothoagae's research activities reveal the hidden stories of marginalised bodies in archives. This has led him and his colleague to establish an archive to preserve these stories at the Tshwane University of Technology's (TUT) Department of Architecture and Industrial design. Mothoagae has taught at his alma mater and TUT. He is currently the technical assistant at the Architectural Archives at the University of Pretoria, where he is working on developing research, films, and documentaries on South African and African architecture.

## **Rae Human Filmmaker | festival curator | Suurbraak**

Rae Human started her career in filmmaking having worked in the ranks of production in both the independent film and international studio space since 2012. Her screenwriting achievements include being invited to pitch at content markets such as Durban International Film Festival, International Film Festival Rotterdam, and Gotham Film Week. Recently, her editing accolades saw her working in post-production episodes of *Spinners* – a Showmax and Studio Canal+ co-production. Since being involved in the field of impact producing, Human has relished the opportunity to be the schools campaign facilitator on the *Murder in Paris* documentary. She founded the Roots Film Festival in 2023 through the support of the Encounters Film Festival and National Film and Video Foundation, which saw a revitalisation of community bioscope culture in both urban and rural spaces. With the success of the Festival's maiden run, Human hopes to build on the ethos of the event in the years to come.

## **Yusra Peters Writer | director | producer | activist | Cape Town**

Yusra Peters is a film writer, director, producer, and activist, born and raised in Hanover Park on the Cape Flats. She believes film has the power to bring awareness and encourage positive change in the world. Peters has worked in the film industry for five years, and some of her latest work was as Head of Communications, Digital Marketing, and Film Training for non-profit iKasi Creative Accounts on CBS and the film *Afrika Shaka Zulu*. She has also designed a 24-minute drama film based in Hanover Park tackling everyday challenges and inspiring the community to take on a different and more positive perspective about themselves. Her vision is that talent from the community will be trained to star in the film and youth from the community will be trained to work behind the scenes, with catering, locations and transportation services all coming from within the community, making this project a community-serving film.

- ° **SoCreative Summit returns to Johannesburg for a free exploration of creativity** 29 Apr 2024
- ° **450 emerging creatives shortlisted for the Debut Programme** 12 Apr 2024
- ° **14 SA creatives join Cultural Producers Programme** 12 Mar 2024
- ° **Cultural Producers called to become the creative leaders of tomorrow** 22 Jan 2024
- ° **Basa hosts 'My Debut Story' panel discussion: Celebrating the success of emerging creative entrepreneurs** 27 Oct 2023

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