

# Flame catches light in Hermanus

ELAINE DAVIE

**A**t this chilly time of year, from 28 July to 2 August, a new eisteddfod entitled 'Flame' promises to bring a spirit of joy to Hermanus.

With Curro School as the venue, children between the ages of five and 18 will have the opportunity to strut their stuff, demonstrating just how much young talent we have in our communities.

The Festival of Language, Art, Music and Entertainment (Flame) is the brainchild of Jaques van Jaarsveld, a Betty's Bay resident, who has been running the Helen O'Grady Academy of Drama franchise in the Overberg and Helderberg for the past 10 years.

"Exposure to the arts is critically important for children's overall development, and participating in an eisteddfod is another step in the process," Jaques says. "We know, not all children will become stars, but to get up on a stage, whether it's music, dance, or drama and be able to say, 'I did it' - one will always remember that sense of achievement for the rest of one's life."



It takes hours of commitment and practice to prepare for an eisteddfod, but it's worth it in the end.



There is nothing as thrilling as getting onto a stage and giving a well-rehearsed star performance. PHOTOS: Supplied

Jacques emphasises that an eisteddfod is not an exam; it must be fun, just as sport is. "It's great if you win, but that's not the point. Enjoyment, overcoming nerves, and being brave is. There's nothing like the thrill of getting up on a stage and feeling the communication

between you and the audience, or seeing someone admiring your painting on a wall," he adds.

"The judges are all specialists in their fields and their job is not only to award certificates of excellence, specially designed by Kleinmond

graphic artist and musician, Jakobie de Wet, but to offer encouragement to all the participants."

Jaques hopes the first event will spark a fire that will spread. "At this stage, it's a matter of testing the waters, but even with very little

marketing, we've attracted more than 700 entries in eight categories.

**Entry is free and events start at 12:00 each day. For more information, message Jaques on WhatsApp at 076 986 8471 or email flame-eisteddfod@gmail.com. ■**

# Local artist's creative journey takes flight

AYAKHA KAMANA

Zwelihle's Nolundi Nonono is making her mark in the creative world.

The Bridges for Music Talent Development Programme graduate is the first in her family to achieve a higher education qualification, a major milestone for both her and the community she calls home.

Her path into the arts began with the Spairo Art Foundation, founded by Sphiwo Mlanjana, where she found a platform to explore her talents. It was there that she first stepped into the world of performance and began building her confidence as a young artist.

Last year, she entered and won the

Overstrand Star Search competition, an achievement that brought her recognition and introduced her to the team at Creative Skills Factory.

Thanks to their support and mentorship, and that of philanthropist Anthony Krut, her passion for music and storytelling grew stronger, which helped her application to attend the Bridges for Music programme - a national initiative designed to equip young creatives with entrepreneurial and artistic skills.

Nolundi was selected and received a scholarship. Looking back at that experience, she describes it as a defining moment in her life.

"I learned how important it is to connect

with others, not just creatives, but people from all walks of life," she said. She also developed skills in branding and producing her own music, tools that have prepared her to navigate the creative industry with confidence.

Her return to Zwelihle with new knowledge and perspective has placed her in a leadership role of the newly formed Zwelihle Youth Choir. Her next chapter promises to be as inspiring as her journey - and her community is right behind her. ■

**A proud Nolundi Nonono celebrates her achievement with the founder of the Spairo Art Foundation, Sphiwo Mlanjana. PHOTO: Supplied**



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