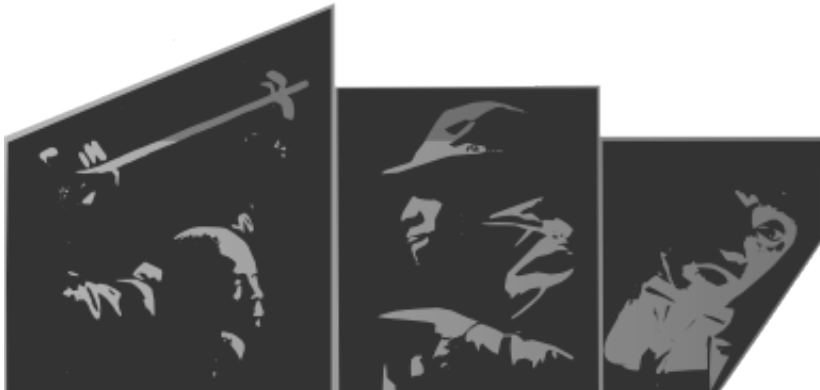




# KAKKA'S APE

performed by  
Tony B. Miyambo

adapted & directed by  
Phala Ookeditse Phala





## ABOUT THE PLAY

In Franz Kafka's A Report To An Academy of 1917, we encountered a short story with colonial innuendos housed in the tale of an Ape captured in Gold Coast, the now Ghana, by hunting expedition team from Europe. At the heart of Kafka's text was however, the complexity of otherness and identity.

This adaptation puts 'Red Peter the Ape' in a South African context compelling him to irradiate his survival in post-apartheid existence. The fundamental structure of the story remains the container while, Red Peter's journey presents us with an opportunity to explore, through the animal gaze, the tension between self and other. This borderland between human and animal presents the insatiable desire to become, a hope for process, for progress, for change, for a way out in the world laden with racism, sexism, chauvinism, tribalism, etc.

In theatrical crafting the tension between telling and re-enactment are explored, the fourth wall is broken, the audience's insider-outsider sensibilities are tested, the emotional landscape is charged, and the physicality is absurd and the story is virtually confessional. This becomes the currency through which Kafka's Ape explores otherness, in which traditional boundaries, categories, and norms are questioned; in which beauty, harmony, and symmetry are usurped by ugliness, dissonance, and irregularity.

Kafka's Ape opens up the reality that there exists something outside of and in addition to our "normal," "typical," "wholesome" world, and that is "other". For Red Peter a feeling of being trapped becomes determinative for existential truth. The play compels one to identify and to meditate their response to other, and otherness, to interrogate how external sociological constructs and internal psychological constructs define the existential condition of self and other. This is the critical proposition of Kafka's Ape which has won numerous awards and performed worldwide.



## SHORT BLURB

Kafka's Ape is a solo performance about a primate's struggle to overcome the confines of captivity. The play takes a metaphorical view on South African society. It highlights the complexities of identity in post-apartheid South Africa and in the human race in general. Red Peter, the ape, embarks on a journey ignited by finding a way out of a cage he was confined to after his capture; a journey in which he contests identity based on outward appearance. Through the journey of Red Peter the play provides a narrative that helps to question the understanding of otherness.

**Adapted & Directed by:** Phala O. Phala

**Adapted From:** Franz Kafka's 'A Report To An Academy

**Cast:** Tony Bonani Miyambo

**Stage Manager:** Lieketso Mohoto

**Duration:** 50 minutes

**Show Snippet Video Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5zcmSp-1c>

## AWARDS

- 2016** Silver Ovation Award at National Arts Festival Fringe, Makhanda
- 2018** Best Public Performance at HSS Awards by the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Johannesburg
- 2019** Outstanding Performance award at Prague Fringe festival
- 2019** Best Satire Award at The United Solo festival, New York
- 2020** Weekly Fringe theatre award at Fringe World Festival, Perth Australia



## LIST OF PERFORMANCES

- 2011** — Official WITS Production for the National Student Drama Festival  
— 969 Festival, Wits University Johannesburg, SA
- 2012** — Eskia Mphahlele Colloquium, Wits University Johannesburg, SA
- 2013** — JoBurg Theatre's Space.com, Johannesburg, SA
- 2014** — Maitisong Festival, Gaborone, Botswana
- 2015** — National Arts Festival Fringe, Grahamstown, SA (Silver Ovation Award)  
— 969 Festival, Wits University Johannesburg, SA
- 2016** — National Arts Festival Fringe, Grahamstown, SA  
— Amsterdam Fringe (Netherlands, Amsterdam) - nominated for Best Foreign Production
- 2017** — PopArt Theatre, Johannesburg, SA  
— William Kentridge's The Centre For The Less Good Idea, Johannesburg, SA  
— Alexander Bar Theatre, Cape Town.SA  
— Oakland Winter Live Festival, Berkley, California, USA
- 2018** — PopArt Theatre, Johannesburg, SA  
— North Western University Evanston Campus, Chicago, USA  
— Alexander Bar Theatre, Cape Town.SA
- 2019** — Prague Fringe festival, Czech Republic, Prague  
— The Junction theatre, United Arab Emirates, Dubai  
— Ubumuntu Festival, Rwanda Genocide memorial  
— Hilton Arts Festival, Kwa-Zulu Natal, SA
- 2020** — Fringe World festival, Australia, Perth



## REVIEWS

### **Cue Newspaper Quick Reviews of the National Arts Festival**

**Quick review: Kafka's Ape**

**Martin Laubscher**

Saturday, 04 July 2015 16:08

**OVATION AWARD**

<http://cue.ru.ac.za/category/quick-reviews/page/19/>

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### **My View: THE ARTS AT LARGE**

**BY ROBYN SASSEN**

**Humanity held to an ape's mirror, devastatingly!**

September 26, 2015

<https://robysassenmyview.wordpress.com/2015/09/26/humanity-held-to-an-apes-mirror-devastatingly/>

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### **REVIEW: 'KAFKA'S APE' IS SUPERB**

**REVIEW: Megan Furniss**

19 March 2017

<https://weekendspecial.co.za/review-kafkas-ape-superb/>

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### **Kafka's Ape Is A Window Into The Sunken Place**

**Review**

**By The Daily Vox Team**

Feb 8, 2018

<https://www.thedailyvox.co.za/coolest-ape-in-the-theatre-itumeleng-molefi/>

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### **FALLACY of freedom Kafka's Ape**

**Review**

**By Gutterculture**

Jan, 1, 2020

<https://www.gutterculture.com/articles/2020/1/20/the-fallacy-of-freedom-kafkas-ape>

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## **Never More Relevant**

**Review**

**By SeeSaw**

Jan, 15, 2020

<https://www.seesawmag.com.au/2020/01/never-more-relevant>

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## **Kafka's Ape**

**Review**

**By Fringefeed**

Jan, 19, 2020

<https://www.fringefeed.com.au/reviews/kafkas-ape>

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## **Kafka's Ape is king of the jungle**

**Review**

**By All about Solo**

Dec, 15, 2019

<https://allaboutsolo.com/kafkas-ape-is-king-of-the-jungle/>

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## **Kafka's Ape is intensely moving theatre**

**Review**

**By Isolated Nation**

Jan, 20, 2020

<http://isolatednation.com/articles/2020/1/20/fringe-review-kaftas-ape-is-intensely-moving-theatre>

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## **Kafka's Ape at the Blueroom**

**Review**

**By The Australian**

Jan, 22, 2020

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/stage/kafkas-ape-who-is-the-beast/news-story/9b1ec3ec3333f0863cb5322e1ada3d72>

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## BIOGRAPHIES

**Tony B. Miyambo** graduated with a BA Dramatic Arts in 2011. Tony was awarded Best Actor in a Dramatic Role at Setkani Encounters Festival in Prague in 2011 for his role in *Relativity: Township Stories* and was the recipient of the coveted Brett Goldin Award in 2014. Tony also performed in *Kafka's Ape* which won a Silver Ovation Award and HSS Award for Best Public Performance.

**Phala O. Phala** is a dramaturge, educator, theatre maker and director with 10 years professional experience. He is a Wits University graduate and DFL alumni with Masters in Dramatic Arts. He has directed and acted in numerous industrial theatre, radio drama and mainstream theatre works. Phala has taught at Wits University and examined theatre studies in top South African universities such as University of Pretoria, University of KwaZulu Natal and Tshwane University of Technology.