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SOUTH AFRICAN STATE THEATRE CELEBRATES FOUR CONSECUTIVE CLEAN AUDITS

Four years of clean governance affirm SAST's commitment to artistic excellence, accountability and responsible stewardship of public resources

Pretoria, South Africa, 15 September 2026

The South African State Theatre (SAST) is proud to announce another significant institutional milestone after receiving a clean audit opinion for the 2025/26 financial year, marking four consecutive clean audits from the Auditor General of South Africa.

The achievement means that SAST has maintained clean audit status across the 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years. Beyond the numbers, this record reflects an institution where artistic ambition is supported by sound financial management, good governance, operational discipline and a collective commitment to accountability.

For a public cultural institution, a clean audit is more than an administrative achievement. It represents public trust. It demonstrates that the resources entrusted to the Theatre are being managed responsibly while SAST continues to fulfil its cultural mandate, support artists, develop audiences and create a home for South African stories.

Chief Executive Officer Shane Maja said the 2025/26 performance affirms the relationship between SAST's cultural mandate, artistic excellence and responsible institutional management.

"The performance of SAST in the 2025/26 financial year confirms the relevance of our cultural mandate and demonstrates that artistic excellence must be anchored in prudent financial management, sound governance and operational discipline.

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“Compliments go to our CFO, Ms Santa Viljoen, and her team for their continued commitment to sound financial management. Equally, our business operations and artistic offering remain another important anchor of the institution, and I commend our Artistic Director, Mr Aubrey W. Sekhabi, and his team. These achievements are further supported by rigorous compliance, risk management and the strength of our human capital.

“As the Accounting Officer, I am elated by the affirmation of the Auditor General of South Africa and the determination of the entire SAST family in achieving this audit status. However, the real work starts now. We must maintain this achievement while continuously improving our internal processes and strengthening the institution.

“Our responsibility is to ensure that the South African State Theatre remains a home for all theatre practitioners, event organisers, exhibitors and social entrepreneurs who are determined to join hands with us in creating meaningful social impact. We are working towards a reimagined, technologically advanced smart theatre that remains accountable, sustainable and responsive to the future of the creative and cultural industries.”

Chief Financial Officer Santa Viljoen said the four consecutive clean audits demonstrate the value of consistency, strong systems and collective responsibility across the institution.

“Achieving a clean audit for four consecutive years reflects the South African State Theatre’s continued commitment to sound financial management, strong internal controls and good governance. This achievement is the result of a collective effort across the organisation, supported by management, staff and our governance structures.

“As the finance team, we remain committed to safeguarding public resources, strengthening accountability and ensuring that the Theatre continues to operate in a responsible and sustainable manner.”

Artistic Director Aubrey W. Sekhabi welcomed the achievement as a proud moment for the institution and its people.

“We are excited to have achieved a clean audit for four years in a row. Congratulations to our CFO, Ms Santa Viljoen, and her team, and to the entire SAST family. This is an example that the South African State Theatre is in good hands.”

The achievement reflects an important principle at the heart of SAST: artistic excellence and institutional excellence are not separate ambitions. A thriving theatre requires both creative courage on its stages and discipline behind them. Strong governance and responsible financial management create the foundation from which artists can create, audiences can gather and new generations of theatre practitioners can imagine what is possible.

The fourth consecutive clean audit is therefore a collective achievement. It recognises the contribution of the Theatre’s governance structures, executive management, finance, artistic, compliance, risk management, human capital, business operations and staff across the organisation.

Yet, as Maja emphasises, the milestone is not a destination. It places an even greater responsibility on SAST to protect the gains made, continuously strengthen its internal processes and ensure that good governance translates into greater cultural and social impact.

As SAST looks towards the future, its ambition is clear: to remain a trusted public cultural institution while evolving into a reimagined, technologically advanced smart theatre that is accessible to practitioners, event organisers, exhibitors, social entrepreneurs and audiences.

Four consecutive clean audits tell a story beyond financial statements. They tell a story of consistency, collective responsibility and public trust. Most importantly, they demonstrate that when artistic excellence is supported by sound governance, the South African State Theatre can continue to build a sustainable home for the arts and for the people it serves.

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