

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SOUTH AFRICAN STATE THEATRE AND LUTHANDO ARTS ACADEMY PRESENT MOTLHANA AND INKUNGU IN A POWERFUL DANCE DOUBLE BILL

PRETORIA – September 2026: The South African State Theatre (SAST), in association with Luthando Arts Academy, proudly presents Motlhana and Inkungu, a compelling dance double bill that journeys through loss, uncertainty, human connection and the deeply personal search for self.

Presented as part of the Kucheza Afrika Festival, the double bill takes to the Sibusiso Khwinana Theatre from 8–11 October 2026, bringing together two distinct choreographic voices: Katlego Dlamini, choreographer of Motlhana, and Sabata Mofokeng, choreographer of Inkungu.

While different in their artistic enquiries, the two works meet in an evocative landscape of vulnerability. One confronts what remains when a vital source of nurture and connection disappears; the other enters the uncomfortable mist of uncertainty, where the answers we desperately seek outside ourselves may ultimately lie within.

MOTLHANA: WHEN THE SOURCE OF LIFE IS NO LONGER THERE

In Setswana, “Motlhana” means placenta. The work draws its central metaphor from this unique organ that forms to sustain new life, nourishing, protecting, connecting and supporting it. The production extends this metaphor to women, particularly in their roles as mothers, mentors, leaders and builders of families and communities.

Motlhana then poses a difficult and deeply human question: what happens when hope, love, peace and happiness are lost through a tragic moment that changes everything forever?

Through a trio of men, the production embarks on a journey that unfolds the story of life without Motlhana, women. Through movement, the work explores absence and loss while reflecting on the significance of those who nurture, sustain and connect us.

The placenta therefore becomes more than the inspiration for the title. It becomes a theatrical metaphor through which the production considers life, connection and what remains when a source of support is suddenly absent.

INKUNGU: FINDING YOURSELF THROUGH THE FOG

Sabata Mofokeng's Inkungu turns towards another deeply personal human experience: the fear of the unknown.

Presented as a duet, the work is inspired by the "grey area" — a state of searching for something elusive, perhaps something that may never be found. It captures the experience of feeling lost while everything seems to happen at once and time continues to slip away.

Days become weeks, months and seasons, yet one can remain stagnant in this uncertain space, unsure of where to go, which direction to take or where to begin.

At the centre of Inkungu is what the work describes as a "thorn in your spirit" — fears and insecurities that keep an individual trapped in a state of inertia. Questions emerge about why part of one's life appears to have been lost and why something continues to feel missing.

The work also draws upon a spiritual reflection on being known before birth, asking whether the struggles and feelings experienced in the present were somehow already foreseen.

Ultimately, Inkungu turns the search inward with a striking proposition: "The person you are looking for is yourself. That which is internal cannot be found externally."

TWO WORKS. TWO JOURNEYS. ONE HUMAN ENCOUNTER.

Together, Motlhana and Inkungu create a double bill concerned with searching — searching for what has been lost, searching for direction and searching for the self.

The pairing creates an intimate dialogue between absence and uncertainty. Where Motlhana considers the loss of a nurturing and sustaining presence, Inkungu examines what happens when the individual becomes lost within the fog of their own fears and questions.

Through contemporary dance and embodied storytelling, the double bill invites audiences not merely to watch movement, but to encounter the questions carried through it: Who sustains us? What happens when that presence disappears? How do we navigate uncertainty? And what if the person we have been searching for has been within us all along?

The production features performers Timothy Mthimkhulu, Mandla Shange, Sabata Mofokeng, Nomasonto Radebe and Seipati Tswaela. The creative team includes Nebo Mafabatho as Music Designer and Nkosingiphile Dlamini as Lighting Designer.

As part of Kucheza Afrika Festival 2026, Motlhana and Inkungu offer audiences an opportunity to experience two choreographic voices brought together on one stage — an encounter with movement, vulnerability, spirituality and the complexities of being human.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Production: Motlhana / Inkungu – Double Bill

Presented by: The South African State Theatre in association with Luthando Arts Academy

Festival: Kucheza Afrika Festival 2026

Venue: Sibusiso Khwinana Theatre, South African State Theatre, Pretoria

Dates: 8–11 October 2026

Thursday, 8 October: 11:00

Friday, 9 October: 19:00

Saturday, 10 October: 15:00 & 19:00

Sunday, 11 October: 15:00

Tickets: R150

Bookings: Webtickets, available at Pick n Pay

Enquiries: 012 392 4000

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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