



#Im4theArts | #ArtistsLivesMatter | iam4theArts.org.za | action@iam4theArts.org.za

Artists take to the streets, first ever National #Im4theArts Call to Action.

In a groundbreaking development, a #Im4theArts #ArtistsLivesMatter Call to Action Document that lists, for the first time, the crux of what is crippling the local arts industry, in particular the longevity and prosperity of performing artists, is brought to the fore.

The bottom line is that funding is the wind in the sails of artists. Without proper funding the arts industry is going nowhere. But before funding is secured there has to be well defined policies put in place that has given due consideration to the opinions of the public and the artists. These policies need to be framed in a way that blocks out fraud and corruption and when it surfaces, it is dealt with decisively. Perhaps an office for a "Funding Ombudsman/Watchdog" could be created to handle key aspects, including monies owed to artists and other disputes. Another vital aspect that this document delves into is the area of promoting local artists and content. There should be no compromise when it comes to giving local priority. How else is the industry expected to flourish now and in the future if we were not proactive now.

While lamenting the desperate state of his "Homelessness", our humble hero Joseph Tshabalala sings about how 'strong winds' break the spirit of his brothers and sisters and the children. These words are probably the most poignant reminder that South Africans have faced too many strong winds for too long a time. As an artist, Joseph faced many difficult struggles in his life as do most of the artists in our country. Artists have now reached breaking point and on Martin Luther King Day this year, our



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indigenous jazz doyenne Sibongile Mngoma courageously stood up and said “NO MORE!” It was a clarion call to all artists in our country and signalled the birth of a powerful new assembly of artists, lovers of the arts, well-wishers and anyone else. What started as a shout out against wanton theft committed by the so called custodians of the arts, turned into a vibrant and irresistible force that has struck many raw nerves, most notably amongst the GUILTY!

Thousands of the true custodians of the arts have since stood up and said – “we are here now and we are staying here to breathe new life into the dying soul of arts in our country”. We will no longer accept that the ministry of arts continue to be the dumping ground for people that our government cannot find jobs for elsewhere! We want those who have been stealing money from arts and culture to be held to account. We want all our artists who are struggling presently to become the biggest beneficiaries of these funds so that they may feed the starving soul of our nation with their magic.

With our diversity, inspiration, critical discernment and passion, we are building a formidable movement to ensure that we can never fail. The stories that have been shared from every corner of our country have been breath-taking in their honesty, pain and intensity. It has become agonizingly clear that artists have been abused and neglected for too long now and have had enough. Every story has been woven into a new tapestry that we hope will form the new blueprint to resuscitate the arts in its entirety. We are mindful also that we are up against unscrupulous individuals but ... WE ARE READY!

We invite all media on March 15th to engage with our Artists who will be taking to the streets in what we call the "#Im4theArts #ArtistsLivesMatter



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Call To Action" expressing our frustrations in a creative non violent manner. Artists from all over SA will be participating.

For further info on the list of Provinces, Towns and Cities participating contact : action@iam4theArts.org.za

LINKS:

Website: <http://iam4thearts.org.za/call-to-action/>

Public facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Im4theArts/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/lam4theArts/>

@lam4theArts

Twitter profile: <https://twitter.com/im4thearts> @im4thearts

Media contact: action@iam4thearts.org.za

Document downloads:

- [#lam4theArts_15 March 2020_CALL-TO-ACTION_19-02-2020.pdf](#)
- [#lam4theArts_Points Raised for the DSAC_19-02-2020.pdf](#)

PRESS IMAGES & CAPTIONS:

- <https://bit.ly/38luajm>