



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA RELEASE

National Arts Council appoints CEO to drive new strategic vision

The National Arts Council of South Africa (NAC) announces the appointment of Ms Annabell Lebethe as the new Chief Executive Officer.

Ms Lebethe leaves her post as Director: Creative Industries at the Gauteng Provincial Government to take up office at the NAC headquarters in the Newtown Cultural Precinct on Wednesday 15, July, 2009.

The appointment comes at a time when funding for the South African arts sector has been negatively affected by the global economic slow-down. Artists who are mostly reliant on public and private sector funding are experiencing extreme difficulty in securing financial support for productions and development of their craft.

Prior to her appointment at the NAC, Annabell was instrumental in overseeing the development of sector strategies [craft, music and performing arts] within the Gauteng Department of Sport Arts, Culture and Recreation.

Among her achievements at the Department, her most notable is overseeing the inaugural Gauteng Creative Mapping Project – a first for South Africa – which provided economic indicators across 10 creative industries sub-sectors in Gauteng. She was also responsible for overseeing the establishment of the Craft and Design Centre Gauteng, a sector agency set up to ensure development of the Gauteng craft sector.

Commenting on her appointment, Ms Lebethe says: “I am thrilled and humbled at the task that has been entrusted to me. I’m committed to taking the NAC to the next level in its lifecycle, wherein we go beyond our role as funding agency to critically and strategically engage with the arts sector. Above all, the NAC will play a new role that begins to define the arts and culture landscape wherein arts and culture is part of the SA economic mainstream. In the short term, I look forward to ensuring that the NAC hosts a successful Arts and Culture World Summit.

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The NAC CEO appointment comes at an opportune time when a new administration at the National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) is in place. Additionally, the NAC board is currently engaged in a legislative review process which seeks to review and revise clauses within the NAC Act (1977) in order to better serve the South African artistic community.

Speaking from the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, NAC Chairperson: Adv. Brenda Madumise said: “April 2009 saw the NAC taking a new strategic direction which aims to intensify the impact of funding allocations in the arts. We’ll do this by devising innovative funding models which create long-term sustainability for the arts as a business and arts practitioners as creative entrepreneurs”.

“In order for the NAC to achieve its strategic vision, we are putting an increased focus on public and private sector partnerships, deeper engagement with artists and other stakeholders founded on rigorous governance and management. We believe Ms Lebethe’s career success and strategic acumen makes her the ideal candidate to deliver on the NAC’s mandate. We wish her well”, continued Adv. Madumise.

In September this year, the NAC will host the 4th World Summit on Arts & Culture which takes place in Johannesburg from 22-25 September, 2009.

Hosted on behalf of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), the Summit will bring arts policy makers, funding agencies and arts managers from across the globe to explore topics under the theme: Meeting of Cultures: Creating Meaning through the Arts.

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Notes to editors:

The 4th World Summit on Arts and Culture is hosted by the NAC in partnership with the Department of Arts and Culture, the Gauteng Provincial Government, the City of Joburg, Joburg Tourism and Business Arts South Africa. For more info: www.artsummit.org

ISSUED BY:

Dianne Regisford-Guèye
Talawa Communications
083 449 0256
Dianne@talawa.co.za

ON BEHALF OF:

The National Arts Council of South Africa
www.nac.org.za