



NEW MEDIA USED TO DELIVER THE WORLD ARTS SUMMIT

The 4th World Summit on Arts and Culture brings together arts practitioners, policy makers and funders from across the globe to engage in a discourse on the arts – its place in contemporary society and the contribution that the arts makes towards the growth of global culture.

This dialogue will shape the thinking and policies around the arts and culture and stimulate debate for many years to come. In keeping with its objective to create access to the arts, the Transnet Foundation has sponsored Transnet Summit Newshounds to report on the Summit. Using new media such as facebook, twitter and blogging, nine final year journalism students from the University of Johannesburg, led by established journalist Bongani Madondo (previously with the Sunday Times now arts critic and writer), are ensuring that the topics covered at the Summit reach a global audience. Susie Mabie, Senior Manager for Arts & Culture at Transnet Foundation says that “The Summit is not only a melting pot for a diverse range of people and consequently a diverse range of ideas on the arts, but it also challenges the arts fraternity to engage, in a critical way, with the arts in a changing world. This is of such significance that it must be shared with an audience broader than the delegates at the Summit, and this is what has motivated the Transnet Foundation to sponsor the coverage of the Summit.”

For the Summit Newshounds, reporting on the Summit is also an opportunity to develop their skills in arts reporting. This experience has the potential to grow the number of arts journalists in South Africa.

By offering reports and news bytes of issues raised at the Summit, the Summit Newshounds will ensure that those supporters and practitioners of the arts will have access to the content that is driving the Summit.

To ensure that the legacy of the Summit continues beyond its three days, the Foundation is also sponsoring an electronic coffee table book that will capture the proceedings at the Summit. Posted on the website of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), the electronic book will consist of the plenary presentations and round table discussions. Big Fish Digital Film School is an NPO training and development organisation that trains vulnerable students in digital media with a view to a professional career in the film industry. The film crew from Big Fish consists of six graduate students on their first professional film shoot and they are involved in all aspects of the planning, production, filming and direction of the digital book.

This record of the 4th Summit will continue until the next Summit is held in 2011. The 4th World Summit on Arts & Culture is hosted by the National Arts Council (NAC) on behalf of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies.

Says Anabell Lebethe, CEO of the National Arts Council: "It is with pride and gratitude that we welcome the Transnet Foundation to the family of partners and sponsors of the World Summit on Arts & Culture. The NAC is earnestly committed to the tangible development of editorial and technical media skills in the arts sector. As such, the World Summit presents an invaluable platform of opportunity for the young learners.

As South Africa's largest funding body for the arts, the National Arts Council is cognisant of the growing imperative to create innovative partnerships between the public and private sector. In this way, we will be able to broaden the impact of funding for the arts sector.

For the arts to make the economic and cultural impact, its footprint must go beyond a dialogue at the Summit, and must enter the conversations of ordinary artists and policy makers, involved in extraordinary cultural activism. This philosophy is so important to IFACCA, the National Arts Council and Transnet Foundation, that the investment in ensuring access to the Summit through the Summit Newshounds and electronic book is treated with as much urgency and importance as is the Summit itself.

ENDS.