

# UBUNTU

By Peter van Heerden  
Saturday, January 16, 2010  
The Xperimental Theatre

Ubuntu opens up one man's journey of being. A man is on route to his African renaissance, his new birth from adolescence into manhood. Through the eyes of the mythological creature the tokoloshe – a hairy, dwarf-like, mischievous figure in indigenous South African mythology with an enormous penis – the man is forced to wrestle with his demons as he passes through the complex phases of life: from youth through initiation to his coming of age.

Ubuntu is an African understanding of the connectedness of human beings. Archbishop Desmond Tutu described a person with ubuntu as, “open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed.”

Lighting & Sound: Alex Strnad  
House Manager: Cody Baldwin

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Cape Town, South Africa-based performance artist Peter Van Heerden completed his Masters Degree (Cum Laude) at the University of Cape Town Drama Department in 2004. He presented live art installations at various venues, including the controversial and acclaimed work titled *So is 'n os gemaak* [This is how an ox is made] at the 2004 National Arts Festival in Grahamstown.

This work was followed by *Bok* [Ram], commissioned by the KZNSA Gallery for YAP 2005-2006, which was also performed for the FNB Dance Umbrella in Johannesburg.

In 2007, he presented *6 minutes*, commissioned by the FNB Dance Umbrella and the performance work *Flowers for my flesh* which was selected as one of the winners of The Spier Contemporary Art Awards 2007.

In 2008, Van Heerden and his artistic collaborator, Andre Laubscher, were commissioned to perform *Totanderkuntuit* [Throughtheothercuntout] at the Klein Karoo Nationale Kunstefees in Oudtshoorn. 2009 saw two new works commissioned: *An Histrionic* for The SPIER “Infecting the City Festival” and *out of the eater came forth meat out of the strong came forth sweet* at the FNB Dance Umbrella. He has also presented video works at national and international Festivals.

Van Heerden is a lecturer in live performance at City Varsity in Cape Town and working in close collaboration with artist Andre Laubscher, presents work under the initiative erf [81] cultural collective.

**For more on Peter's work visit  
[www.erf81.co.za](http://www.erf81.co.za)**