



The giant Match meet my in-laws

A Franco-South-African project initiated by the
Gauteng Provincial Government, the French Institute of South Africa
and Les Grandes Personnes.

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The project in brief

The Giant Match is a bigger-than-life show played outdoor by more than thirty giant puppets, masks and objects complete with story tellers and musicians.

The drama is a South African allegory of *Romeo and Juliet*, which tells the story of two young lovers kept apart by the feud between their two families, culminating in an epic and comic football match, before the two parties are reconciled and the couple happily wed.

Involving South African actors, musicians, dancers, puppeteers, visual artists and craftsmen from various communities in Gauteng as well as international artists from the collective Les Grandes Personnes, this new and unique show was initiated in the context of the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

This international dynamic platform aimed at:

- creating a grand show bringing together visual arts and street theatre;
- gathering artists from different communities and countries to collaborate on a creative project;

- ensuring skills transfer and opportunities of revenues after the soccer world cup as a legacy to South African artists from disadvantaged communities;
- and finally creating channels for cultural exchange.

The original idea of this project was based on the successful collaboration between French company Les Grandes Personnes and the Gauteng-based collective SA G.U.R.U. which gave birth to four giant puppets and two characters. Since their creation in 2008, the giant puppets, masks and objects have been performing in South Africa and internationally where they have generated huge enthusiasm amongst crowds.

The Giant Match was initiated and supported by the French Institute of South Africa, the Gauteng Provincial Government and Les Grandes Personnes, with further backing from the Embassy of France in South Africa, the Ile-de-France Provincial Government, Culturesfrance, TV5 Monde, the Wits School of Arts and Danone.



**The giant
match**

creative residency and tour

Set up over a period of almost three months, this ambitious project gave birth to a unique and creative show which has reached thousands of people.

Phase 1

Creative residency involving local communities

28 April – 10 June 2010

More than one hundred artists and craftsmen from South Africa, France, Chile, Burkina Faso and Italy got together to make this project a success. For over five weeks, they worked on the creation of giant puppets, characters and objects which would fit in a show reflecting South Africa. The structure of this artistic workshop allowed artists and craftsmen from different backgrounds and nationalities to work together, facilitating skills transfer and cultural exchange. The creative process kick-started with a workshop focused on script-writing the show, thereby allowing each individual to contribute to the personality of each character and to enrich the plot. The astonishing result portrays protagonists as varied as their creators! This first session was followed by the making of the puppets which took approximately 40 days including very structured steps such as drawing, mapping and dummy-making of the giant puppets, then producing the structures, sculpting and painting of the heads and hands, and sewing the clothes and wigs. The performers chosen to take part in the tour worked on manipulating and staging the giant puppets during a three-week rehearsal period. Taking place in several venues at the Wits University Campus, the workshop was located in an ideal, central and unique place in Johannesburg making it possible to draw together various talents.

Phase 2

A month of shows

11 June – 11 July 2010

From 11 June, the giant puppets embarked on a road-trip in South Africa in the context of the 2010 Soccer World Cup. The giants took their first steps at Mofolo Park, Soweto, on 5 & 6 June, in the framework of the Pale Ya Rona Carnival for a special preview. The month-long tour officially started on a high note as the giant puppets welcomed soccer fans attending the opening match of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup at Soccer City on 11 June. They paraded and performed the show to enchant locals and foreigners, younger and elder, in neighbourhoods, festivals, public viewing areas and fan parks among others. Major highlights of the tour included performances at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, in Knysna, ending with a special appearance in the framework of the closing match of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup. The puppets and their crew have already been invited to play an extract of their show in Kigali, Rwanda. No doubt they will be back for more performances in the future.





The giant match



The writing workshop – a story which is simple yet as universal as football

It is a story of two star-crossed lovers, a young girl from the city, Thobile and a young boy from the township, Bogale, love each other passionately. Alas, their two families, the Mkhize and the Majakathata have been enemies for many years...

Kick-started with a general session in which everyone had the opportunity to have his say, including builders, sculptors or performers, the workshop then brought together a smaller group of trainees, more interested in writing, on the 20th floor of Wits Corner, with a spectacular view over Johannesburg. The South-African trainees' vivid imagination, their openness in discussing racial, social, religious or traditional questions, as well as life in the township, their storytelling skills, and most of all the respect they showed for each other propositions allowed a fast pace. We soon got to know who were our two families and why, like the Montagues and the Capulets of Romeo and Juliet, they would not agree with the wedding of our young heroes, Bogale and Thobile.

And fast it had to be, because all the others workshops were waiting for updates on names or parts for the 28 characters. Many a messenger came and went to bring copies of the story to distant parts of the building. We also got a permanent feedback about technical issues with the giant puppets, which could lead to modifications in the plot. That was quite challenging, but all showed up to it. Then the full play was written, with dialogues and songs in English, Zulu and Sesotho, typed and reworked several times. Sometimes, the writing workshop was a bit of Babel of tongues, with French as well coming in, but I think we all gained a lot from it. Anyway, the workshop did what Sifiso Zimba, one of the team, asked of it: "to paint a story that is owned by us, a story that involves a South African background".

Jean-Baptiste Evette, for Les Grandes Personnes.



**The giant
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The artistic team – a melting pot of talents

Hundreds of actors, musicians, dancers, puppeteers, visual artists and craftsmen from different walks of life collaborated together by sharing ideas and skills during the creative process of the project.

The versatile team who took part in the creative residency gathered enthusiastic South African artists and craftsmen ranging from sculptors, painters, visual artists, welders and fashion designers to actors, performers, puppeteers and play directors, with some of them involved in collectives and others working independently. Based in various communities namely, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg, Kliptown, Metsweding, Orange Farm, Pretoria, Sharpeville, Sedibeng, Vosloorus and West Rand, each individual brought its own special talent and background to the pot.

Part of the artists involved in the artistic workshop embarked in the tour with the lively musicians from the Field Band Foundation who added musical sparkles to this creative mix. Composed by trumpets, mellophones, baritones, snares, tri-toms and bass drums, the band welcomes eighteen artists hailing from Springs, Cape Town, Soweto, Alexandra, East London and Cullinan.

Internationally, the team was joined by sculptors and painters from Les Grandes Personnes de Boromo from Burkina Faso, costume designers from Chile, performers, visual artists, builders, puppeteers and play directors from France and Italy.

“It was such a new experience. During the workshop, I learnt new skills working in collaboration with the artistic team: we all learnt from each other. I want to bring back these techniques to my township and bring them to a higher level and go further in teaching other people.”

Peter Tobias from Mofolo Art Centre

“It is all about the experience. I realised that the project was all about art, inspiration and input of all the artists involved in the creative process. Everybody was determined to bring the best of them. This project has brought us the responsibility to inspire more people.”

Sbu Sithole from SA G.U.R.U.





**The giant
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the giants will come to you!

Ever wanted to see the giant puppets from close up and surprise your guests, invite the giant puppets to your event.

Performing in Gauteng

1. Complete Show

Featuring 33 giant characters + masks and accessories

Duration: 60 to 90 minutes

→ 79 persons on tour: 70 artists including 18 musicians, 5 members of the production team, and 4 drivers.

2. Show extracts

Featuring performances of two families, one family or the group of youngsters.

Duration: 60 to 90 minutes

- 26 giant characters + masks and accessories (Mkhize and Majakathata families)
59 persons on tour: 52 artists including 12 musicians, 4 members of the production team, and 3 drivers.
- 13 giant characters + masks and accessories (Mkhize or Majakathata family)
30 persons on tour: 26 artists including 6 musicians, 2 members of the production team, and 2 drivers.
- 8 giant characters + masks and accessories (the group of youngsters)
22 persons on tour: 18 artists including 6 musicians, 2 members of the production team, and 2 drivers.

3. Parades and public interactions

Duration: 90 minutes

4 giant puppets, objects and masks

12 persons on tour: 11 artists including 5 musicians and 1 driver

Performing outside Gauteng

The cost of road transport for the artists and puppets will be added to the costs for performances within Gauteng. If an overnight stay is required, accommodation for the artists and driver(s) is to be organised and paid for by the organisers.

Technical Rider, Space requirements

This show has been designed for outdoor performance on streets, sports grounds, car-free spaces, squares or parks. The best would be to have three to four different open spaces of at least 200m and 400m, (audience space not included), although we can adapt to less favourable surroundings and interact with the layout of the space. The audience can be quite large because the giant puppets remain visible even in a huge crowd.

Quotes, Bookings and Information

giantmatch@gmail.com | www.giantmatch.org.za



the partners

Production

Gauteng Provincial Government
IFAS (French Institute of South Africa)
Les Grandes Personnes

Artistic Direction

Les Grandes Personnes

Artistic Partners

SA G.U.R.U., The Field Band Foundation, Articulated Kasi Studios Primary Limited Corporative, Diepsloot Youth Arts & Culture Projects, Kliptown Youth Project, Mofolo Art Centre, Soweto Post 77 Media, Spyrak Teknik and all the artists, craftsmen and performers involved in the project.

Partners

Gauteng Provincial Government
Les Grandes Personnes
IFAS (French Institute of South Africa)
The French Department of Foreign Affairs
The Embassy of France in South Africa
Ile-de-France Provincial Government
Culturesfrance
TV5 Monde
Wits School of Arts
Danone

The Gauteng Provincial Government

A vibrant home of champions where sport, arts, culture and recreation promote nation building, social cohesion, economic growth and sustainable livelihoods through ensuring skilled, active and healthy communities.
www.srac.gpg.gov.za

The French Institute of South Africa

Food-for-thought provider “à la française”, the French Institute of South Africa (IFAS) was established in the Newtown Cultural Precinct in 1995. Since then, the organization which consists of IFAS-Culture, IFAS-Research and Dibuka, has been a key player on the Johannesburg and Southern African artistic, cultural, academic and literary scenes.
www.ifas.org.za

Les Grandes Personnes

Les Grandes Personnes is a collective that was formed in 1998 in Aubervilliers (France) and, later, in Boromo (Burkina Faso). Its mission was developed around a popular and intrusive practice of visual arts and around the desire to create sculptures that can perform and exist in the streets.
www.lesgrandespersonnes.org



Ile de France



DANONE

TV5MONDE



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Participants

Les Grandes Personnes

Christophe Evette
Claude Maurice Baille
Eric de Sarria
Evelyne Fagnen
Francois Venter
Flor Maria Fuentes Valdebenito
Inoussa (Tapson) Tapsoba
Jean-Baptiste Evette
Manuel Poulain
Martin Meppiel
Matisse Wessels
Maurizio Moretti
Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi
Olivier Hagenloch
Patricio Luengo
Sarah Letouzey
Stéphane Meppiel
Yabaco Konaté
Yoan Cottet



Visual Artists, Builders, Fashion Designers, Puppeteers, Musicians and Performers from South Africa:

Abraham Masela
Adam Thabo Kgang
Adrian Furstenburg
Alfred Frans Segauque
Anna Human
Anthony Kobane
Awiwe Mpokeli
Bafana Anderson Gumede
Bhekumbuso Nene
Bobo Shadrack Joshua Bosman
Bongani Nkwanyana
Bongile Funani Mkhize
Camilla Pontiggia
Christopher Mocuminyana
Elizabeth Thoni
Elodie Clavel
Eugene January
Eunice Motaung
Fundile Jabulile Dube
Hellery Baipidi Moloto
Ikageng Mafale
Isaac Ezaiah (Sbu) Sithole
Ivy January
James Mohanoe Ntsane

Jerry Makgoke
Johannes Bongani Goliath
Joseph Ketabile (Charlie) Modisane
Karabo Mohlala
Keamogetswe Toka
Klara Van Wyk
Lehlohonolo Lebatla
Lerato Tsatsane
Lesego Mokgoetsi Theodore
Lesego Padi
Lilford Dick
Lindiwe Masike
Luvuyo Mayekiso
MacDonald Mfolo
Magdeline Molubi
Malakia Mothapo
Malibongwe Radebe
Marlon Conrad Hendricks
Mathenjwa S.Kwebi
Matlhomola Digoamaje
Mbali Ndlozi
Mercy Manci
Mlungisi Mzingi
Motlatjo Ashley Mabeba
Mxolisi Hlatshwayo
Mxolisi Mthombeni
Mxolisi Ntsimbini
Mxolisi Mzamane

Nat Tardrew
Nathaniel Lethabo Mosele
Nkosinathi Mazibuko
Nkosinathi Richard Ndlovu
Nonhlanhla Mdaka
Norman Joel Molaudzi
Ntombizodwa Skosana
Oupa Bodibe
Owen Bee
Owen Tsoko
Pascaline Phale
Penelope Kuzwayo
Peter Tobias
Peter Wonci
Pule Humphry Tseke
Pumza Mlonyeni
Reboile Motswasele
Roberto Pambo
Roderick Smith
Sabelo Gxoyiya
Sandilisizwe Mahlangu
Sello Mashile
Selope Maaga
Senzeni Marasela
Sheekha Kalan
Sicelo Mthembu
Sidwell Rihlamvu
Sifiso Zimba

Sinomzi Sithuba
Sipho Methula
Sithuba Sinomzi
Sivenathi Stuurman
Siyanda Makatini
Sizwe Kubheka
Sizwe Sibanyoni
Skhumbuzo Hadebe
Sonny Arnold Mahlatsi
Terrence Shikwambana
Thabang Matlala
Thabang Tseke
Thabiso Gaedie
Thabo Mosime
Thabo Mphomeli
Thabo Nkala
Themba Martin
Thobekile Tshabalala
Tshepi Khuzwayo
Tshepo Mathe
Vincent Mkhabela
Virginia Nikiwe Mtana
Vusi Ngcongwane
Vuyani Mukandi
Zimasa Gxoyiya



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For more information and updates, please check out www.giantmatch.org.za

