

“No Voice No Choice”

A production of EDZAI ISU Theatre Arts Project and Zvido Zvevanhu Arts Ensemble

MEDIA REVIEWS

No Voice No Choice: Catharsis of Theatre – Wordpress.com 2 November 2011

No Voice No Choice reveals that theatre still has the power to transcend the limitations imposed by politics and can softly open up wounds which can allow communities to talk about difficult issues such as political violence...drew people into its universe, and created a sense of intimacy with the audience – something that is repeated throughout the play. The play arouses strong emotions especially in scenes where acts of political violence are played out but manages to build a sense of catharsis – the purging of emotions by their theatrical distillation and release...The story is told through fast paced, stage action with huge doses of humor that had the crowd perennially tittering throughout the one-hour performance.

Follow this link for more: <http://ziviso.wordpress.com/2011/11/02/no-voice-no-choice-catharsis-of-theatre/>

Fear Hampers Progress: Heal Zim – The Zimbabwean 3 November 2011

“A lack of political will is the major challenge thwarting progress in the process of national healing, according to the Director of Heal Zimbabwe Trust, Rashid Mahiya...Communities are still intimidated by the administrative personnel in various provinces making it even difficult for people to open up on issues of politically motivated violence... These issues of intimidation and fear have been portrayed onstage at the third edition of the International Protest Arts Festival organized by Savanna Trust where the play No Voice No Choice has been getting rave reviews... The play which stars excellent and experienced performers seeks to open dialogue around issues of transitional justice at a grassroots level”.

Follow this link for more: http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/news/zimbabwe/54277/fear-hampers-progress-heal-zim.html?utm_source=thezim&utm_medium=homepage&utm_campaign=listarticle&utm_content=headinglink

No Voice No Choice Hilarious, saddening – Daily News on Sunday 30 October 2011

“Left people in stitches while some scenes made others cry as it dwelt on the political violence that the rural communities faced... well cast with world class acting... a good play performed with the community in mind”

Follow this link for more: <http://www.dailynews.co.zw/index.php/entertainment/37-entertainment/5037-no-voice-no-choice-hilarious-saddening.html>

International Day of Peace: Make Your Voice Heard – The Sunday Mail 25 September 2011

“Artistic and energetic performance... full of activity, energy and movement... well executed and left audiences marveling the abundant talent in these community theatre artists”

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Summary

His name means Grievous Bodily Harm (*pictured below*). He has seen and done it all - terrorised and victimised his own community and now stigmatised and ostracised by his own when he sometimes gets insane haunted by his violent past... He has been used and even abused - to buy ballots with bullets and now left to deal with the after effects of his acts as an unfortunate victim of unscrupulous politicians. And when his life changes, will his political masters accept that he has changed? Will he be able to resist the pressure and the threats associated with defecting? What does it take for the victim to forgive and the perpetrator to forget? What guarantee is there that the violence will go away in favour of tolerance if a community lives with threats and mistreats in silence motivated by resilience?



Credits

This production, produced by EDZAI ISU Theatre Arts Project and Zvido Zvevanhu Arts Ensemble (two powerful community theatre groups that have vast international experience in community and commissioned theatre), is written, directed & produced by award-winning versatile theatre practitioner Tafadzwa Muzondo, choreographed by Gibson Sarari, and features the award winning community originated theatre foursome of Gibson Sarari, Everson Ndlovu, Tafadzwa Muzondo, Eunice Tava alongside the experienced internationally travelled community theatre trio of Livius Chitsungu, Charles Biniweri, Sandiseque Sandiseque, with energetic dancers-cum actresses, Charlotte Munyanyi and Beauty Majira completing the cast. The diverse experiences and backgrounds of the team will be relevant for both the intended national tour in grass roots communities and the international tour in targeted countries with an interest or influence on the Zimbabwean socio-political situation.

"No Voice No Choice" had its first (special) performance as part of the International Day of Peace (21 September 2011) Commemorations hosted by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum at Prince Edward School in Harare before having its world premiere at the Protest Arts International Festival on 27 October 2011 at Theatre in the Park in Harare. It is set to be performed at the SADC Best of the Best Community Theatre Festival (12 & 13 November 2011) in Johannesburg South Africa after which it will be taken on a national tour around Zimbabwe to reach grassroots communities.

Below - The opening or introduction which is scene 1 of the play is a powerful fusion of traditional Marimba, 3 drums, percussion, vocals and dances that will be an audience mobilization establishment of the growth point set up in the play which fits very well in the intended outreaches and ensures that we get a mixed and excited audience which will participate in the interactive process of the play.



Below - In scene 2 of the play, retrogressive youths prepare to disrupt peace building activities by civic society in conjunction with traditional leaders, religious leaders and the local arts group at a meeting called to re-engage the intimidation on the people but GBH announces that he is a changed man.



Below - A flashback of the violent election period where a man is asked to torch himself with real fire as reflected by the two former warring youths during a counseling session to deal with their violent past in scene 3 of the play



Below - Dehumanizing abuse of women in such times of conflict is reflected in the same scene where a youth leader vents all forms of physical abuse, sexual harassment included, to a local woman for wearing a wrong T-shirt.



Below - Institutional violence is also portrayed in the same scene when police beat and arrest activists of the other party after a clash of two parties, exposing the issue of the partiality of law enforcing agents in some if not most instances where members of a wrong party are victimized.



Below - Despite being tortured and intimidated into retracting their idea of a Youth Against Violence Ensemble the two former warring youths from two different political parties refuse to give up their desire to start a truth telling and peace building process in their community in Scene 4 of the play.



Below - The two former warring youths go ahead to lead a creative & interactive community peace building, truth telling, healing, reconciliation & transitional justice discussion where victims & perpetrators come face to face



Below - Retrogressive youths try to disrupt the activity but the community stands firm to defend their right to discuss issues that affect them thus portraying the need to counter the intimidation as a unified community. They unlock the hidden violent past of their community which got them fighting each other and maiming their own leading to different reactions from affected victims culminating into an open question on where to begin addressing our violent past in the same scene



The core objectives of this play are:

- To instigate the participation of all Zimbabweans, especially the young electorate, in the peaceful transformation and transition of Zimbabwe to a full scale democracy without fear of victimization, brutalization or criminalization.
- To encourage or instigate truth telling on political violence from both a victim and perpetrator points of view thereby promote a culture of non-violence and tolerance in our politics. In this regard, the play will stimulate discussion around transitional justice.

“No Voice No Choice” means:

- If you are intimidated not to use your voice in democratic processes like elections, then you have no choice but to be led by irresponsible and unaccountable politicians who have rooted violence in our politics.
- If you cannot associate with political ideas of your choice and do not add your voice against political violence then you will have no choice but to bear its rage whenever there are elections.
- If you cannot freely voice your concerns, grievances and aspirations in the healing and reconciliation process then you have no choice but to live with the trauma of what happened to you or what you did to others.
- If the youth cannot denounce political violence and shun being used as political weapons, they will have no choice but to continue being misgoverned, unemployed and used as political condoms.

Through this Creative & Interactive piece of art this project is targeted at stimulating, strengthening and enhancing of an open dialogue around issues of transitional justice at grassroots level; a community that commits itself to shun violence in whatever form, valuing the necessity and vitality of peace; an electorate that has confidence in their right to participate in the democratic governance of their country; and a youth that makes individual resolve to desist from being used in political violence and concentrate on personal development.

PREVIEWS

No Voice No Choice premieres at Theatre in the Park - Wordpress.com 27 October 2011

“A response to the problem of fear to tell the truth that characterized most of the outreach programs which the writer was involved in...”

Follow this link for more: <http://ziviso.wordpress.com/2011/10/27/no-voice-no-choice-premiers-at-theatre-in-the-park/>

No Voice No Choice premieres in Harare – Daily News 24 October 2011

“Dedicated to the resilient and innocent Zimbabweans who long for peace and freedom of choice... innovative result of a collaboration by two community theatre groups”

Follow this link for more: <http://dailynews.co.zw/index.php/entertainment/37-entertainment/4868-no-voice-no-choice-premieres-in-harare.html>

No Voice No Choice – www.zimbojam.com 22 October 2011

“People are encouraged or inspired to speak out truthfully when they see performers openly and freely saying things they are normally afraid of saying as a community”

Follow this link for more: http://www.zimbojam.com/component/content/article/3027.html?joscclean=1&comment_id=7668

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