



NICHOLAS ELLENBOGEN

NICHOLAS ELLENBOGEN is an internationally recognised playwright and director. With over 140 of his own works having been produced for the stage, he is certainly the most prolific African playwright. In addition to his stage work, he has directed film and television. He both created and directed the acclaimed feature film *THE ANGEL, THE BICYCLE AND THE CHINAMAN'S FINGER*. In partnership with Neill Solomon he has written many songs. The CD, *GATHERING OF THE BEASTS*, won awards for popular music, and some of their songs are on the sound track of *JOCK OF THE BUSHVELD*.

NICHOLAS created and ran the AMSTEL PLAYWRIGHT awards for eighteen years, which helped many new writers. He was also a committee member of the GRAHAMSTOWN FESTIVAL, helping to bring the festival from its Euro-centric focus, into a truly African event. He was the Artistic Director of Drama for NAPAC from 1984, and was the founder of the LOFT THEATRE COMPANY. This company was the first truly integrated performing arts group to create new repertoire for an ensemble. Nicholas founded the now internationally recognised THEATRE FOR AFRICA in September 1989. This company has performed all over the world, winning awards and fulfilling its promise to bring a new AFRICAN theatre to the world stage, while honouring its commitment to social change and the environment. This company has performed in many villages on its travels.

NICHOLAS had a highly successful career as an actor before becoming a director, training at UCT, ARTS EDUCATIONAL TRUST (London), and THE NATIONAL FILM SCHOOL. He won awards both as a Television and Stage Director. He has also won awards for prop design, theatre design and costume design. His interest in Economics at university, lead to his appointment on the Board of THE MARKET SOCIETY, which was an important part of South Africa's RDP programme. With aid from foreign donors, a highly successful cultural programme has been established in rural regions of South Africa.

THEATRE FOR AFRICA has performed for Her Majesty QUEEN ELIZABETH II and her family at Balmoral Castle in Scotland in August 1992. Nicholas was awarded a citation by the DUKE OF EDINBURGH, International President of the WWF, in recognition of his innovative approach to environmental education by founding many environmentally orientated theatre companies in central and southern Africa, combining the vitality of the theatre and dramatic art with the vital issues of conservation and the environment.

More recent achievements have been the election as chairman of the Southern African branch of SASUSG (Southern Africa Sustainable Use Specialist Group); World Bank President's nomination for Best Project in Africa; in August 2002 he toured ten countries around the world to source actors from fishing communities, resulting in the production of *GUARDIANS OF THE DEEP*, which was performed at the Earth Summit in Johannesburg. Nicholas won a FLEUR DU CAP for Best Supporting Actor for his portrayal of Sir Toby Belch in William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at Maynardville 2006/2007. In May 2008 he worked on tiger and rhino poaching in Nepal and performed the play, *THE SILENCE OF BARDYA* at the London Zoo in September, as well as the IUCN World Congress in Barcelona in October 2008. In February 2009 he won the Best Theatre Design and Props for *RAIDERS, THE DAILY LAMA*. He recently wrote the script, and the music with Dave Ornellas, for the new UShaka World dolphin show in Durban, South Africa, called *SHAKA'S TEARS*.

He is currently, July 2009, performing in David Kramer's musical, *THE BALLADE OF KOOS SAAS* at the Tricycle in London, performing and singing the part of Scotty Lennox. In September he directs the Alexander McCall-Smith operetta *OKAVANGO MACBETH* for the opera house in Gaborone