

Volcano's "ANOTHER AFRICA"

*Just who do they think they are?
Just who do we think they are?
Just who do we think we are?*



"A Substantial Achievement"

– *Toronto Star*, 13 June 2010

ANOTHER AFRICA

Another Africa is an international theatrical endeavour examining the relationship between Africa and the West from disparate points of view: enormously compelling, stylistically inventive, and often outrageously funny.

Our core creative team of writers, directors, designers and performers comes from 3 regions: Africa, Europe, and North America, and includes team members from Canada, Germany, Jamaica, Kenya, Nigeria, Poland, South Africa, the UK, the USA, and Zimbabwe. The majority of these artists now live in Toronto.

The current relationship between Africa and West is dominated by incomplete stories, hidden truths, hidden agendas, over-simplification. The predominant clichés of lions, elephants, disease, corruption and war are collectively defined in theoretical circles as Afro-pessimism, and they have pounded the reality of an entire continent of 54 countries and hundreds of languages into a single story of disaster. This project asks the question: what is *really* going on? Our task is to explore the human reality of a global relationship from a variety of viewpoints.

OVERALL PRESS RESPONSE:

FOUR STARS (out of four) – *Toronto Star*

FIVE STARS (out of five) - *Toronto Sun*

"BRILLIANT" – *The Globe & Mail, Canada*

"STUNNING" – *The Huffington Post*

"Run – don't walk, skip or even scurry... devastatingly funny... a strong contender for the best play to have its premiere in Toronto so far this decade... deliciously dark-humoured... whip-smart... stylistically inventive... brilliant This is, indeed, another Africa than the one you think you know."
– *The Globe & Mail, Canada*

"This... will be a huge hit — and deservedly so... beautifully written, deeply poetic... immaculate... top-notch Two plays, each offering a different window of experience on how the West and the African continent relate to each... Catch it this time around. And if you saw it before it's well worth another look."
– *Toronto Star*

"The hands down show stopper of Luminato... smart, irreverent, challenging and brilliantly directed and acted" – *The Huffington Post*



"Exhilarating... in turns compelling, funny and thought-provoking... phenomenal... What I like about Another Africa is the fact that it is high-minded theatre... but at the same time both plays are also immensely fun and compelling..."
– Mooney on Theatre

"I was emotionally ransacked and enchanted... This play should travel far and wide" – *Avril Benoit, Médecins Sans Frontières, Canada*

"Bold and insightful theatre" – *Toronto Star*

"Beautifully designed" – *Toronto Sun*

"Breath-taking in performance, structure and style" – *eye weekly*

"Stunning" – *The Huffington Post*

"Ross Manson's Toronto-based Volcano is one of those companies that every great theatre city needs — bold, experimental and bubbling with ideas." – *Toronto Star*

THE INTRODUCTION:



by Deborah Asiimwe (Uganda)
directed by Weyni Mengesha (Canada)

"Welcome to glass concrete sky-kissing giants..."

"Welcome to a mobile phone generation. Two per person is enough, for now..."

"Welcome to the unfamiliar familiarity..."

Ugandan writer Deborah Asiimwe crafts a compelling welcome to audiences from the entire acting company: an elegant common ground from which to depart on a remarkable journey...

THE PLAYS



SHINE YOUR EYE

by **Binyavanga Wainaina** (Kenya)
directed by **Ross Manson** (Canada)

Shine Your Eye, by **Binyavanga Wainaina** (winner of the Caine prize for African Literature): We now move to Lagos, Nigeria, and a group of all-black characters. *Shine Your Eye* is a high-tech show that brings a virtual world onstage with animation and projection, and avatar-design by acclaimed Kenyan visual artist **Wangechi Mutu**. The play explores the notion of territory – and what possible territory might exist for a new generation of Africans, now in their twenties. The main character, a young computer programmer in Lagos, is forced to choose between two possible futures: one Western, one African. In so doing, she is forced to look forward, into her own future, and to make a choice about where she will go, and what boundaries she may have to transgress to get there. “Shine Your Eye” is a Nigerian expression, meaning “wake up, look at what’s really happening”.

PRESS:

“The product of completely outside-the-box thinking” - *Globe & Mail*

“Tight, well-written and poetic, it is a play filled with heart” – *Toronto Star*

"Manson wonderfully integrates video, movement and hip-hop in an eye-opening tale about how the modern world has impacted Africa." – *eye weekly*

"A fine cast led by the luminous, vulnerable Dienye Waboso as Beka and with excellent work from Lucky Onyekachi Ejim and a delightful Muoi Nene." – *Toronto Star*

"Strong direction... muscular, musical staging" - *Toronto Sun*

"Binyavanga Wainaina's lyrical script moves forward with gusto, and is forcefully acted by its ensemble cast" - *The Torontoist*

"Wainaina is one of those rare playwrights who can give the colloquial language the sound of poetry." – *eye weekly*

PEGGY PICKIT SEES THE FACE OF GOD

by Roland Schimmelpfennig (Germany)

directed by Liesl Tommy (South Africa / USA)



Peggy Pickit Sees the Face of God, by Roland Schimmelpfennig (the most produced contemporary playwright in the German language): We begin with a play set in an unnamed Western city, with an all-white group of medical professionals talking about Africa at a dinner party. Two went to work in a crisis zone in an unnamed African country for six years. Two stayed at home in their unnamed Western city, made a lot of money, and had a child. Each couple envies the other. Their reunion is a disaster. In this play, the obsession is with the past – the decisions made, the mistakes that followed. It is harrowing, and bitterly funny – a sort of post-colonial *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*.

PRESS:

“Director Liesl Tommy gets incredible performances out of her cast, as her production masterfully lurches back and forth between hilarity and dread. The staging is full of brilliant touches.” - *Globe & Mail*

“Cleverly written and cleverly directed... beautifully cast... powerful” – *Toronto Star*

“A superbly rigorous production” – *The National Post*

“Resonates long after the curtain call” – *The Torontoist*

“Amazing” – *eye weekly*

“Director Liesl Tommy’s work with the four actors is razor sharp; the looping of word, physicality and emotion is a show in itself.” – *NOW Magazine*

“Life is tragedy seen in close-up, comedy in the long shot, Charlie Chaplin said; Peggy Pickit allows us to see both at once.” – *Globe and Mail*

ANOTHER AFRICA



Produced by Volcano Theatre; Co-commissioned by Luminato Festival of Arts and Creativity and the Stratford Shakespeare Festival; Presented by the Canadian Stage Company. Photos by John Lauener.

www.volcano.ca