



## **Report on the Soweto National Marimba Festival**

Morris Isaacson High School

7 September 2013

### **Introduction**

- The Gauteng Department of Sports Arts, Culture and Recreation is involved in implementing rollout of marimbas in schools in the Naledi area, in partnership with the Marimba Education Foundation
- The National Lottery is supporting the so-called Mooki Street Marimba Project involving ten schools in Orlando East, managed and run by The Marimba Education Foundation.
- For seven consecutive years The Marimba Education Foundation successfully hosted the National Marimba Festival in Boksburg.
- An attempt to move the festival to a different province failed owing to lack of support, particularly from schools which had voted in favour of this move. Soweto became the target of our focus for a National Marimba Festival.
- Morris Isaacson High School Governing body was approached to explore the possibility of hosting the festival in the beautiful spacious hall belonging to the school. After discussions, a MOA was signed and work could begin.
- The National Marimba Festival, rebranded as the Soweto National Marimba Festival was launched on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2013 when individualised notices together with the registration form and festival guide-lines were sent out nationally to 193 schools and bands. A mailer also went out that day to the entire MEF database of over 1000 recipients.
- Sponsorship from SAMRO Foundation, the Arts and Culture Trust, the National Arts Council, DRD Gold, BASA, UNISA and AARD Mining Equipment were/ had been procured.
- Partnerships were formed with MIAGI, The Johannesburg Arts Alive Festival, The Gauteng Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation as well as The Gauteng Department of Education.

## The Competition

### Adjudicators.

Mr. Michael Sibanda  
Dr Sello Galane  
Dr. Zoliswa Twani

### Names of participating Institutions

<i>AB Xuma</i>
<i>Daniels Primary</i>
<i>Ditawana</i>
<i>Ditau</i>
<i>Dominican Conv</i>
<i>Emsengeni Primary</i>
<i>Groot Marico</i>
<i>Hillbrw C C</i>
<i>JM Ntsime</i>
<i>JWCC</i>
<i>KwaKristo KwaMashu</i>
<i>Loyiso Sec</i>
<i>Lukholweni</i>
<i>Masibambane</i>
<i>Mmanare Sec</i>
<i>Morris Isaacson High</i>
<i>Mount Camb School</i>
<i>Mzomtsha Primary</i>
<i>Naledi High</i>

<i>Nkuthalo Primary</i>
<i>Ntyatyambo Primary</i>
<i>Parktown GHS</i>
<i>Prestige College</i>
<i>Sakhisizwe High</i>
<i>Samet</i>
<i>Selope Thema</i>
<i>Sithand Izingane</i>
<i>SMYLE</i>
<i>St Stithians</i>
<i>Stoneridge</i>
<i>Tambarimba</i>
<i>Tenteleni</i>
<i>Thembalihle</i>
<i>Zakheni</i>
<i>Zifuneleni</i>
<i>Zithathele</i>
<i>Zwide Marimba Band</i>

### Summary of participants

	2013	2012
Participating Institutions	37	30
Number of participating marimba players	558	538
Number of Primary Schools	16	8
Number of High Schools	12	10
Number of Community/Youth Centres	9	12
Number of non fee-paying participants	174	339
Provinces represented	Eastern Cape (8) NorthWest, (3) Limpopo, (2) Mpumulanga, (1) Gauteng, (21) KZN (1) International (1)	Eastern Cape, Western Cape, NorthWest, Limpopo, Mpumulanga, Gauteng, KZN

### Workshops

**Drumming:** The Drumming Workshops, run by Paul Boyter were very popular and in great demand. They commenced round 09h30 and ran back to back till after 16h00.

**Dance:** A variety of styles were demonstrated and taught in the dance workshops run by Thandi Swartbooi and Nthabiseng Bembe. Four workshops lasting an hour each were held in the course of the day.

**Massed items:** Once again owing to the full programme and last-minute additions, the decision was made to dispense with massed items, including the “Afrobix” warm up session.

### Competition Winners – First, Second and Third place

1	Primary School Set Piece Small Ensemble ( 1-10 players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Nkuthalo Primary</b> SMYLE Mzomtsha	<b>EC</b> Gauteng EC
2	Primary School Set Piece (Large Ensemble ( 11+ players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Daniels Primary</b> SMYLE (2nd) Marico Marimba Band (2nd) A.B Xuma	<b>EC</b> Gauteng Northwest Gauteng
3	High School Set Piece Small Ensemble ( 1-10 players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>J.M Ntsime</b> Loyiso Secondary SMYLE	<b>Northwest</b> EC Gauteng
4	High School Set Piece (Large Ensemble ( 11+ players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Morris Isaacson</b> Parktown Girls Prestige College	<b>Gauteng</b> Gauteng Northwest
5	Open Set Piece Small Ensemble ( 1-10 players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>J M Ntsime</b> Zakheni SMYLE	<b>Northwest</b> Gauteng Gauteng
6	Open Set Piece Large Ensemble ( 11+ players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Zwide Marimba Band</b> SMYLE	<b>EC</b> Gauteng
7	Open Mixed Ensemble Small Group ( 1-10 players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Hillbrow Community Centre</b> Tambarimba SMYLE	<b>Gauteng</b> Zimbabwe Gauteng
8	Open Mixed Ensemble Large Group ( 11+ players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Parktown Girls</b> SMYLE SAMET	<b>Gauteng</b> Gauteng Gauteng
9	Primary School Own Choice Small Ensemble ( 1-10 players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Stoneridge</b> SMYLE Daniels Primary	<b>Gauteng</b> Gauteng EC
10	Primary School Own Choice (Large Ensemble ( 11+ players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>St Stithians</b> SMYLE Stoneridge	<b>Gauteng</b> Gauteng Gauteng
11	High School Own Choice Small Ensemble ( 1-10 players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Marico Marimba Band</b> Masibambane Sakhisizwe	<b>Northwest</b> Gauteng EC
12	High School Own Choice (Large Ensemble ( 11+ players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>SMYLE</b> Prestige Zifuneleni	<b>Gauteng</b> Northwest Gauteng
13	Open Own Choice Small Ensemble ( 1-10 players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>SMYLE</b> Tambarimba Marico Marimba Band	<b>Gauteng</b> Zimbabwe Northwest
14	School Own Choice (Large Ensemble ( 11+ players)	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Zwide marimba Band</b> SMYLE Stoneridge	<b>EC</b> Gauteng Gauteng

## **The UNISA Prize for THE MOST DESERVING BAND in each Age Group:**

**Primary School:** Tenteleni Primary

**High School:** Sakhisizwe

**Open:** Hillbrow Community Centre

**Lucky Draw:** Full Set of Marimbas sponsored by The Marimba Education Foundation:

**Winner:** Parktown Girls (In order to qualify, only bands who are present at the prize-giving are eligible to receive this prize, should their name be drawn, as listed under the Festival Guidelines)

## **Crew**

40 learners from Morris Isaacson High School provided support to the festival organisers in performing various duties throughout the day. These included security, catering, competition assistants (runners)

## **Catering**

MEF catered for 240 people, including sponsored groups.

## **Challenges**

1. Registration and entry: This remains a hurdle in both the planning and running of the festival. Teachers and band leaders still seem unable to meet the dead-lines, which makes compilation of a reliable time-line for the programme very difficult. The simplified registration and entry forms seemed to be an improvement on past years and there were fewer errors with regard to the competitors.
2. The late start to the day was a blow to the schedule and contributed to the day ending much later than planned. Logistics were not perfect and the organisers take full responsibility.
3. The number of competing bands and the variety of sections in which many competed, meant a total of 108 individual performances. MEF will look seriously at a plan to cater for this demand so as to reduce the time pressure and the lengthy proceedings.
4. There has been criticism of the fact that certain bands were unable to attend the proceedings from the start of the day, and that their late arrival and setting up procedures interrupted the competition. The guidelines stated that bands could set up at lunch-time

and during breaks. Because the competition was not running according to schedule, confusion did arise. MEF will look into this aspect.

5. There was also the unhappiness expressed that not all bands stayed till the end of the festival. Once again the fact that we ran so badly over time made it necessary for many to leave ahead of the conclusion of the competition, and the prize-giving. As a result three bands missed out on the lucky draw which would have seen them leave with a brand new set of authentic African marimbas.
6. Certain logistical aspects needed better management and attention. These have been identified and will be refined going forward.

### **Successes**

1. The basis of a promising partnership between Morris Isaacson High and MEF has been forged, with educators and the governing body of the school managing many aspects of the festival.
2. The increase in the attendance of sponsored bands is a direct link to the core work of the foundation and indicates an increase in marimba playing in under-resourced schools and communities.
3. The generosity of sponsors indicates overwhelming support of MEF and our determination to bring the festival into the heart of Soweto.

The Marimba Education Foundation wishes to thank most sincerely, all participating bands, teachers, parents and supporters, for making the Soweto National Marimba Festival such an outstanding success. We congratulate not only the winners, but all who, through their participation, have once again raised the bar in terms of marimba playing standards. We extend heartfelt thanks to our sponsors for their generosity and to our partners for their support during the past months. We thank our esteemed adjudicators for their valuable input and constructive comments. We thank all those who work within and alongside MEF in facilitating and managing various projects throughout our country. We believe this festival will continue from strength to strength and we humbly thank you for your support, without which nothing would be possible.

Report Compiled by Hildé Gordon, Festival Co-ordinator

We invite your comments and suggestions. Please send to [hilde@mef.org.za](mailto:hilde@mef.org.za)

