

PORTRAIT OF A FAMOUS THESPIAN

John Kani completes the sentences



MY NEW PLAY IS... a political intrigue about a black South African man who has been in exile in Sweden for over 25 years.

HOME IS... the sense of belonging, not necessarily geographic location.

I WAS BORN IN... Port Elizabeth but I live in Johannesburg. And my children were born in Jo'burg. When I take them back to see my extended family in PE, I hear relatives saying things like, 'Oh, shame, they can't speak Xhosa!' So this idea of 'going home' and being away from home isn't only about living overseas. We go through this sort of cultural dislocation even by being born in Mthatha and then growing up in Jo'burg. And when you go back to where your parents come from it's a culture shock.

WHAT I MISS MOST WHEN I'M AWAY FROM SOUTH AFRICA IS... the way people look at you and see you. And the fact that our people say 'hello' – even if you're a complete stranger. There's this acknowledgement that says 'I see you'. The other thing I truly miss is the language. Just to hear Afrikaans, or a South African English accent, or Xhosa or Zulu or Sotho. Not hearing them always makes me feel like a foreigner.

MY FAMILY IS... my escape and refuge. I've survived in my profession by never taking John Kani the famous actor, the political and cultural activist, the Tony Award-winner home with me. That John Kani remains on set. I go home to my wife, Mandi, who married Bonisile, me. I have children who know me as 'Dada', not Dr Kani. And my neighbours know me by my clan name. The only way to keep your head from growing too big is to keep wearing the same cap.

I WILL NEVER BE... a celebrity. I'm just an old man who works hard and has had the opportunity to do incredible things in my life. I have an uncle who is still hoping I'll find a job one day. I'm 70 now and he still thinks I'm unemployed. He'll say: 'I see you're still doing this thing ... what is it called? This acting thing!' And when I got my first PhD, my mother asked me if I was going to work at the hospital. When I explained that I wasn't that kind of doctor, she responded as though I was crazy.

I WANT AUDIENCES TO... simply forget all the nonsense happening in the world for a while. And at the end of it, hopefully they'll say, 'That was a good evening. I was told a little lesson to learn, that's a cherry on top. Missing, written by Kani, is at the Baxter Theatre, Cape Town, 27 February–29 March; baxter.co.za



FROM TOP
South African designers from Southern Guild: Gregor Jenkin, Andile Dyalvane, Adriaan Hugo and Katy Taplin of Dokter and Misses; (right) 'Vine' by Jeff Zimmerman for R20th Century



Text: Keith Bain; Caroline Webb; Lin Murray; Photographs: Gallo/Getty Images; Sherry Griffin; supplied

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT David Wiseman's solo exhibition at R20th Century; Rossana Orlandi; 'Secretaria' cabinet by Nika Zupanc for Spazio Rossana Orlandi; 'Console' by Dylan Lewis for Southern Guild



COLLECTIONS

IT'S A DATE!

27 February. That's the day to mark on your calendar – it's the start of three significant exhibitions in Cape Town

GUILD
It's billed as the first international design fair in Africa, featuring 22 countries, ten global voices and four continents. If that doesn't sound impressive enough, consider this: works by South African greats such as William Kentridge, Gregor Jenkin and Dokter and Misses, as well as designs from the rest of the continent, will sit alongside pieces by global stars like Wendell Castle and the Haas Brothers (who've designed for Lady Gaga and Donatella Versace) at R20th Century, Milan's Rossana Orlandi and

London's V&A Museum. 'It's stratospheric; an opportunity to see real rock stars of design,' says co-curator Trevyn McGowan. 'We [Southern Guild] have always taken local design out into the world; this is the first time the world will be coming to Africa, and we'll be able to see how African design integrates on that level. It's going to be fascinating.'
Until 9 March at The Lookout at Granger Bay. southernguild.co.za
Read our interview with Trevyn and Julian McGowan of Southern Guild on page 25.

+ CAPE TOWN ART FAIR
More than 130 artists and 40 leading galleries took part in the inaugural Fair in October last year; this follow-up aims to build on its success with some of SA's best contemporary works available to buy under one roof.
Until 2 March at BMW Pavilion, V&A Waterfront. artfaircapetown.co.za

+ AFRICA IS NOW
A special addition to this year's Design Indaba Expo (see page 22), the exhibition will showcase emerging, established and unexpected talent from across Africa, with a key emphasis on innovation and ingenuity. Until 2 March at the CTICC. designindaba.com



TEXTBOOK TRIVIA

PUMP UP THE VOLUME

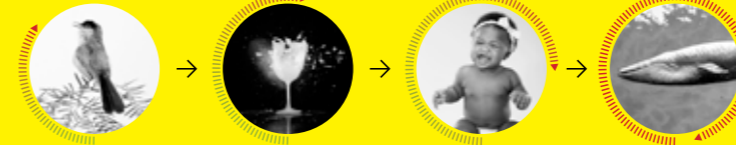
The average loudness of a rock concert is around 110dB, a little less for dance music pumping in a nightclub. To put that into context...

-9dB The world's quietest room, at Orfield Labs in Minneapolis, is so silent you can hear your internal organs. The longest a person may stay in the room is 45 minutes, as zero sound does strange things to the mind, causing hallucinations and schizophrenia.

44dB Birds singing.
70dB The average volume of an opera singer singing *fortissimo* (loudly). French tenor Avi Klemberg hit a reading of 109dB, his personal best, in 2010 on Scottish TV show *The Hour*.
80dB A chamber music concert.

95dB The limit imposed for Kirstenbosch's summer concerts (the gardens are in a residential area).
105dB How loud Jaime Vendera sang (at the right frequency, 556Hz) to shatter a wine glass – recorded and confirmed on *Mythbusters*.
110dB The noise inside a video

arcade. This is also the average for a symphony orchestra, though it can get louder.
113.1dB The loudest bark in the world, according to Guinness World Records, set by Charlie the golden retriever from Adelaide, Australia.
115dB A baby crying. A cinema clocks in at 118dB.



121dB The loudest voice in the world (says Guinness World Records), belonging to Annalisa Flanagan – who, incidentally, is an Irish primary school teacher.
127dB The volume, give or take a decibel or two, of a vuvuzela (if expertly blown). The referee's

whistle is 121 dB.
129.5dB The last officially recorded measurement for 'Loudest Band in the World' (metalheads Manowar) by Guinness World Records in 1984. It stopped including the category because of hearing damage caused by record seekers.
136.6dB Seattle

Seahawks fans breaking the world record for loudest crowd, during the third quarter of a football match against the San Francisco 49ers in September 2013.
137dB Measured at a Leftfield concert at London's Brixton Academy in 1996. It caused chunks of plaster to fall on

the audience from the roof.
150dB A jet taking off, if you're standing about 25 metres away from it.
172dB A shot from a 0.357-calibre revolver.
188dB Blue and fin whales emitting a sound that can kill other marine creatures.

NOISY EVENTS

LOUD
The third Cape Town Electronic Music Festival (7-9 February) welcomes six international acts this year, including US hip-hop pioneer The Original DJ Jazzy Jay, British dubstep star Benga and locals such as Dirty Paraffin, with their unique brand of *primustofu kwaito*. ctemf.com

LOUDER
It's been hosted in Brazil, Croatia, Korea and Ibiza. Ultra South Africa (14-15 February) is the latest incarnation of the massive Miami-based electro-dance fest, in Africa for the first time (Cape Town and Jo'burg). DJ Tiësto headlines, joined by 30-plus others from around the world. ultrasouthafrica.com

LOUDEST
The Real Alternative Music or RAMfest (6-9 March) celebrates rock in all its forms, with a bit of hardcore techno thrown in, too. Bands and DJs hail from the UK, US, Europe, Australia and SA. It takes place simultaneously over one weekend on farms near Cape Town and Jo'burg. ramfest.co.za