

Global skill, cultural exchange Toffie Pop Festival's aim



By Herman Manson: @marklives

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Starting on Friday 30 March and ending Sunday 1 April 2012, the annual [Toffie Pop Festival](#), a festival/conference hybrid that celebrates contemporary popular culture, publishing, design and art, is once again taking place at the Cape Town City Hall.



Speaker lineup

Speakers range from [Penny Martin](#), editor-in-chief of *The Gentlewoman* magazine from the UK, and [Omar Sosa](#), co-founder and art director of the indie design bible *Apartamento*. Dutch designer [Roel Wouters](#), who is active in the field of interaction and media design will be presenting, as will illustrators Juan and Alejandro Mingarro, of Brosmind Studio in Spain, who have done work for clients such as Nike, Microsoft, Virgin, Gillette, Honda, Land Rover and Volkswagen.

Internationally acclaimed South African performance artist [Athi-Patra Ruga](#) will be a speaker, as well as will fashion blogger Malibongwe Tyilo of [Skattie, what are you wearing](#) fame. Other locals include filmmaker [Christopher Bisset](#) and musician/DJ [Sibot](#).

The festival is being organised by [The President](#) - the design studio run by [Peet Pienaar](#) and [Hannerie Visser](#).

Platform for learning

Visser says the aim of the festival is a global exchange of skills and culture, and to create a platform for learning for both local and international designers that is accessible and affordable.

Apart from the main conference, delegates will also have access to Small Talks (15-minute talks), workshops and several parties on Saturday and Sunday. A designers' craft and food market with 50 stalls, as well as an exhibition by the speakers and a selection of local designers and artists, is also open to the public (500-1000 people are expected through the venue daily), and look out for the 'Occupy' movement inspired text exhibition, where 30 local designers will each have an exhibition

inside 30 tents.

The conference itself won't be a portfolio show-and-tell - each speaker has been briefed to share knowledge. The Small Talks have been moved to a quieter section of the building after last years' rather noisy start to proceedings. Long tables and more seating will be provided to create a more sociable environment, hopefully encouraging conversation between visitors.

Step off the beaten path

Delegates will be encouraged to explore City Hall, with a hidden ice cream machine and a secret room where they can participate in blind tastings encouraging them to step off the beaten path and outside the norm.

Six teams from six countries - including South Africa, Spain, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the UK and Argentina - will participate in a creative showdown that consists of a conference talk, workshops and Small Talks:

- Team Argentina consists of [Juan Frontini](#), head of the World Design Office for MTV; Ignacio Gil, an art director at the MTV Buenos Aires World Design Studio; [Javier Lourenco](#), the Buenos Aires-based creative director of visual studio Flamboyant Paradise and founder of TheUncoolHunter; and Marco Camacho.
- Team UK will consist of [Tomas Roope](#), technical and creative director at The Rumpus Room; installation-artist Emma Gibson; [Simon "Sanky" Sankarayya](#), creative partner and co-founder of interactive design consultancy AllofUs; and Will Hudson, founder of the website and magazine [It's Nice That](#).
- Team Spain will consist of graphic designer [Alex Trochut](#), graphic designer Michele Angelo, ceramicist Xavier Mañosa and Dvein Animation Studio.
- Team Switzerland is made up of artists and designers Bastien Aubry and Dimitri Broquard, designer Jonas Vogeli and Guy Meldem.
- The Dutch team is made up of Rob Schroder, Yuri Veerman and Ruben Pater of The Sandberg Design Dept.
- Team SA consists of graphic designer, dancer and rapper from Dirty Paraffin, [Smiso Zwane](#); art director and DJ at Dirty Paraffin, [Zamani Xolo](#); photographer Paul Shiakallis; and Manti Ribane.

Tickets

[Tickets](#) are on sale now for R750 for the full three days; students get in for R500; and 20-person workshops with conference speakers go for an extra R250. The festival can accommodate 900 people and tickets are 80% sold out.

In an innovative 'Pay as you go' system, you can still make a plan to quickly go see your design hero by buying a single-entry ticket for that one speaker. Some seats have been reserved for this purpose at a cost of R200.

For more:

- Bizcommunity Search: [Toffie Festival](#)
- Official site: www.toffie.co.za
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/toffiefestival
- Twitter: [@ToffiePopFest](#)
- Twitter: [toffiepop](#) OR ["toffie pop festival"](#)

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The inaugural Vodacom Social Media Journalist of the Year in 2011, Herman Manson (@marklives) is a business journalist and media commentator who edits industry news site www.marklives.com. His writing has appeared in newspapers and magazines locally and abroad, including Bizcommunity.com. He also co-founded *Brand* magazine.

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