

## SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUE COMPETITION - 2018

The third annual SACEE Shakespeare Monologue Competition took place on 16-17 May 2018 at the National Children's Theatre. There were entrants from six schools, including King David Linksfield Primary and High Schools, Willowmoore High, Ameerak Montessori, Poplar Academy and the African School of Excellence. Each actor was allowed to perform up to three different speeches to show their versatility.

Speeches from no less than eleven Shakespeare plays were performed, ranging from comedies like *As You Like It* to tragedies like *Othello*, from histories like *King John* to romances like *Cymbeline*, from well-known favourites like *Romeo and Juliet* to lesser known plays like *Titus Andronicus* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

The adjudicators were delighted by the enthusiasm of the performers and impressed by the dramatic impact of many of the speeches. Joshua Wilensky from King David Linksfield High received a Merit Award and was commended for the clarity of his performance of Sonnet 18 and the Epilogue from *As You Like It* and for the anguish he portrayed in Macbeth's "Tomorrow and tomorrow" meditation. A Merit Award was also awarded to Austin Sadie from Poplar Academy for his dramatic rendering of Lady Macbeth's "Unsex me" speech, then Macbeth's incredulous "Is this a dagger?" soliloquy and the manipulative King Claudius plotting with Leartes the murder of Hamlet.



A photo of the participants in the Shakespeare monologues from Willowmoore High

Runners-up included Jeremiah Rajgopaul from Willowmoore High, who convinced us, as Malcolm in *Macbeth*, that he really has no redeeming qualities, and as Cassius in *Julius Caesar*, arguing for the assassination of Mark Antony, and Nikhita Herman from Poplar Academy, who was persuasive in Mark Antony's funeral oration, imperious as Lord Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, threatening to disown his daughter, and wonderfully mad and touching in Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene.

The Winners were Janique Maduray and Zainaaz Hansa from Willowmoore High, Arthur Muwurami from the African School of Excellence and Samuel Hertz from King David Linksfield Primary School. Janique was a passionate and evil Tamora in *Titus Andronicus* and

a hapless Julia in *The Two Gentleman of Verona*. Zainaaz played the foolish love-struck Helena in *A midsummer Night's Dream* and a brooding Macbeth in his "If it were done" soliloquy. Arthur was an utterly convincing drunken Porter in *Macbeth*, haranguing the audience as he fixed us with his piercing gaze. Sam played a rather nasty Demetrius and then a hilariously grieving Thisbe in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as an innocent and plaintive Prince Arthur in *King John*.



Dr Rohan Quince with the two winners from Willowmoore - Janique Maduray and Zainaaz Hansa

The monologues were followed by the witches' scene from *Macbeth* performed by students of King David Linksfield. Then Rosalind confronted Phebe and Silvius in *As You Like It* performed by Willowmoore High. The National Children's Theatre Shakespeare Club performed the meeting of Octavius, Mark Antony and Lepidus in *Antony and Cleopatra* and then Bottom demanding to play all the *Pyramus and Thisbe* roles in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The evening closed with King Edward VII School Old Boys portraying the four foresworn-in-love nobles in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

Thank you to the South African Council for English Education and the National Children's Theatre for promoting Shakespeare!