

Learn more about the Namibian-German musical
theatre **People of Song** in cooperation with the
National Theatre of Namibia

PEOPLE OF SONG

Unpacking An Untold Story

 Windhoek
Berlin



Creative Team together with Lavinia Kapewasha on the Stage for NTN 2024

written by

Jason Kooper, Kim Mira Meyer, Marchell Linus, Osmond !Owoseb, Natasha Kitavi, Victor Ardelean, Marco Heise

with Music by

David Haoseb, Engelhardt #Unaeb, Erna Chimu, Eslon Hindundu, Kufamosha Cultural Group, Marco Heise, Michael Mutago Doeseb, Osmond !Owoseb, Victor Ardelean, Zikizee Hangero

musical architecture

Marco Heise

editing and assisting arrangement

Christian Nelz and Martin Lentz

vocal coach and music direction

Galilei Njembo

PEOPLE OF SONG

Namibian-German music theatre production

Premiere

Friday 17th October 2025, 18:30h
National Theatre of Namibia

conductors

Eslon Hindundu, Marco Heise,
Natasha Kitavi

directors

Kim Mira Meyer and Jason Kooper

dramaturgy

Jason Kooper

choir

Osmond !Owoseb

choreography

Marchell Linus

stage design

Jonathan Kitavi & Gretl Kautzsch

costume design

YAMWE & Marscha Kaffer

light design

Markus Wenk

Aniros

Natasha Kitavi

Ouma

Diolini/ Uiras

Tsaudago

Eslon Hindundu

Hermann

David Wehr

Ensemble

Jo-Anna Shapumba as Julia
Lyvodia Ouses as Magano
Angelina Akawa as Meudho
Donovan Welly Seibeb as Simasiku
Nythen Dien as Mitiri Herunga
Tove Jeomba Kangotue
as Tate Nyambe

Orchestras

Jugendsinfonieorchester Bremen
Namibia National Symphony
Orchestra
YONA





**Greetings from
Ndeshihafela Larandja
Governing Mayor of Windhoek**

It is a great honour for the City of Windhoek to host the world premiere as part of the celebrations marking 25 years of the town-twinning between Windhoek and Berlin. This remarkable production highlights the power of culture to bring people together and to deepen understanding between our cities.

People of Song is a unique musical theatre production, composed by a Namibian-German team. It brings together the richness of Namibian sounds with the depth of symphonic music, creating a fusion that reflects both our shared heritage and the creative power of cultural exchange.

This production stands as a symbol of our partnership, one that not only connects our cities, but also our peoples. Through the universal language of music, *People of Song* allows us to reflect on our shared past while looking with hope and confidence towards a future of mutual respect, collaboration and friendship.

On behalf of the City of Windhoek, I warmly welcome you to this performance and to our city and I wish you an inspiring and memorable experience.



**Greetings from
Kai Wegner
Governing Mayor of Berlin**

Music builds bridges between nations, cultures, and continents. The musical People of Song, which is celebrating its world premiere in Windhoek, is an excellent example of the bonds that music can create. It was conceived as part of the celebrations marking 25 years of the city partnership between Windhoek and Berlin. People of Song was composed by Namibian and German artists. Schoolchildren from Windhoek and Berlin collaborated on the stage design.

The result is an enchanting musical that shows the great creativity that people from Germany and Namibia can develop in a joint project working together. Traditional and modern music, Namibian and European instruments combine to form a new whole. In November, *People of Song* will be performed in Windhoek's partner city Berlin.

Music transcends borders and helps to deepen our relationships. All the artists involved in the musical got to know each other better. Over the past 25 years, close ties have developed between Berlin and Windhoek in many areas. I am very pleased that many young people from both cities are meeting each other. They are carrying our partnership into the future.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who contributes to the vibrant city partnership between Windhoek and Berlin, and I hope you enjoy the world premiere of *People of Song*!



**Greetings from
Bo Hutter
Embassy of Germany in Windhoek**

*Dear Guests, It is with great excitement that I welcome you to the premiere of *People of Song – Unpacking an Untold Story*. This music theatre promises remarkable performances that showcase the vibrant cultural collaboration between Namibia and Germany, as we celebrate 35 years of German-Namibian friendship.*

The concept for *People of Song* was developed by a Namibian-German artist collective during the course of 2023 and 2024. The group's aim is to explore new ways of artistic collaboration between our two countries and to use the platform of theatre to bring social issues to a wider audience.

During their journey, the collective immersed themselves in Namibian culture, engaging with local communities and meeting people from the cultures reflected in the story. Through these encounters, they were able to collect a variety of traditional musical works, many of which have been woven into the fabric of this performance. *People of Song* blends traditional Namibian music with newly composed works, combining choral music, orchestra, and drama to explore themes of memory, identity, and transformation.

Throughout this process, the team stayed in touch with the original performers and composers, building relationships and fostering a sense of shared creativity.
Please enjoy the show!



**Greetings from
Avril Coetzee
Embassy of Namibia in Berlin**

The musical theatre production *People of Song*, which premiered in Windhoek in October 2025, is the latest collaborative project of the core of the Namibian-German artist collective, which previously developed the opera *Chief Hijangua* – successfully performed in the two sister cities Windhoek and Berlin in 2023.

People of Song again celebrates Namibia's diverse cultural heritage, this time also making room for women composers and rural voices. It fuses story-telling, music in five different Namibian languages and visual art, focusing on Germany's colonial legacy in what was then Deutsch-Südwestafrika, and which still has an impact on people on all sides up until today. It is the creative outcome of a large team around Herold Osmond !Owoseb and Kim Mira Meyer whose friendship and artistic visions sparked a dialogue on how art can constructively assist in coming to terms with a loaded past resonating in the present.

If it is true that "roads were made for the journey and not the destination", to quote Confucius, then experiences we gather along the way and adjustments to wrong steps, make us grow together.

May we learn from the past to jointly shape a better future.
People of Song can help open doors.



People of Song, developed by a Namibian-German collective of artists, combines music, drama and choral singing to create a powerful total work of art. Created between 2023 and 2025, the piece is an expression of vibrant transnational collaboration.

The focus is on a shared vision of using artistic forms of expression to highlight socially relevant topics such as memory, identity and change. People of Song is not just a theatre project, but a cultural dialogue – polyphonic, emotional and highly topical.

In order to develop the piece in terms of both content and music, the collective travelled to northern Namibia in autumn 2024. There, the artists encountered various cultural groups, collected songs and stories, held discussions with local musicians and integrated these experiences directly into the work.

In close consultation with the original composers and performers, numerous traditional pieces were included in the production – supplemented by newly composed works from Namibian and German composers.



How it all began

A journey through time to the beginnings of this special collaboration

Our first collaborative project began in 2019 with a friendship at the Immling Opera Festival in Chiemgau, when Kim Mira Meyer and Eslon Hindundu – she then an assistant director, he a singer in the choir – met for the first time.

Together – he as composer and she as director – they wanted to work on the first Namibian-German opera.

After three years of preparation, the opera Chief Hijangua celebrated its world premiere in Windhoek in autumn 2022 with over 100 participants. All departments, from set design and direction to production, worked across borders in Namibian-German teams to create the creative concept.

Like the first joint project, Chief Hijangua, by and with Eslon Hindundu, People of Song also arose from the long-standing friendship between German director Kim Mira Meyer and Namibian choir director Osmond !Owoseb. After their successful collaboration, they wanted to continue the experience in an even more collective way – and that's how the idea for People of Song came about.



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Windhoek Berlin

25 years of town twinning **Windhoek – Berlin**

A place of cultural dialogue: Berlin and Windhoek will celebrate 25 years of town twinning with performances by *People of Song* in October and November 2025. At the same time, Momentbühne will look back on five years of creative collaboration between artists from Namibia and Germany.

The town twinning between Berlin and Windhoek has been in place since July 6, 2000, and is based on historical ties and Germany's special responsibility of Germany towards Namibia. It promotes exchange between city administrations and civil society actors and is guided by Agenda 2030 with its sustainability goals.

Joint projects take place in the fields of art, culture, energy, education, and sports, with decolonization playing a central role as a cross-cutting issue. Other topics such as economic cooperation, ICT, and urban gardening are to follow. In 2023, representatives from Windhoek traveled to Berlin, where the first Namibian opera, *Chief Hijangua*, premiered in Europe. An action plan is to be drawn up to define future projects. Committed actors in both cities contribute to the lively partnership.



Osmond !Owoseb and Victor Ardelean in front of the Brandenburger Tor, 2024.



Over the past two years, our Namibian-German team has collaborated closely with the Humboldt Forum and the Ethnological Museum in Berlin, engaging in several intensive phases of research and artistic development for the creation of People of Song.

Throughout this process, we were also guided by Vitjitua Ndjiharine, a visual artist from Windhoek, who advised the team on the complex and deeply important subject of the repatriation of cultural belongings. Together with her, the team found a sensitive and artistic way to bring this topic to the stage — transforming historical reflection into a shared space of dialogue, empathy, and creative expression.



Vitjitua Ndjiharine

Initial thoughts and feelings about People of Song:

People of Song is a stirring and deeply resonant new musical that weaves together the personal and the historical into an unforgettable theatrical production. Spanning across multiple generations with an evocative score and compelling storytelling, the production examines the weight of inherited trauma, the ache of memory, and the longing for a brighter and better future. At its heart lies a journey through grief and loss, set against a broader backdrop of historic injustice.

A sweeping score blends traditional Namibian and German folk tales and songs, with the invocation of cultural belongings – and the knowledge they carry – as they find their way home. With breathtaking performances and evocative staging, People of Song is both a moving elegy for what was lost and a moving meditation on history, identity, and the power of return.

Bio:

Vitjitua Ndjiharine is a multidisciplinary visual artist whose work draws inspiration from different academic disciplines including history, cultural anthropology, mass media and communication to explore topics such as construction of identity and knowledge production. Using various painting and collaging techniques her compositions are layered with historical and socio-po

the story

Synopsis

Aniros wants nothing more than to share her music with the whole world, but her father and grandmother's mistrust of strangers stands in her way. When a stranger travels to her village, long-hidden truths are revealed that shake the family and community. The encounter forces them to face the past and find new paths for the future.

1. Act

Aniros lives in a multicultural community in Namibia and participates passionately in the annual rain festival. She loves the songs and traditions of her culture, but also dreams of sharing her own music with the world. When she wants to travel to other communities to sing her songs, her family stands in the way. Grandmother Ouma worries too much about her and father Tsaudago sees Aniros' dreams of music and travel as a threat to family stability. A generational conflict arises, which Ouma tries to resolve by telling a story in front of the community.

2. Act

Meanwhile in Germany, Hermann inherits an artefact from his suddenly passed father. He remembers him as a distant, busy businessman, that now leaves him with this strange object. At first, Hermann plans to sell this unknown thing as soon as possible. But when he holds it in his hands, he feels an inexplicable connection and realizes the responsibility that comes with it. He decides to return the artefact himself and find out more about its origins and his father's history.

3. Act

Hermann travels to Namibia and is guided by Aniros through a lively market, where Ouma suddenly intervenes and pulls Aniros away. Later, Hermann meets Tsaudago in a bar, tells him about the artefact, and the two decide to investigate its origin together. They find out that the artefact belongs to Ouma and was once stolen by Hermann's father, which reopens old wounds. In the end, the community is reconciled through music, while Ouma slowly realizes that Hermann is not like his father, and Tsaudago and Aniros accept him as a friend and look for ways to come to terms with their family history.



characters of the story



ANIROS

Aniros is a young girl from Namibia who combines her dreams with a deep connection to her family and culture. She shows her compassion by lovingly caring for her sick grandmother. Aniros proudly embraces her cultural identity – she longs to preserve the songs of her homeland and make them known internationally.



OUMA

Ouma is a storyteller. Her stories are full of love and inspire her granddaughter and many in her community. But behind her smile lie sadness and secrets from a time she cannot quite leave behind.



TSAUDAGO

Tsaudago works in a mine. As a single father, he faces the challenging task of being both the breadwinner and the emotional anchor for his family. His commitment to his daughter Aniros is unwavering, and over time he has made many personal sacrifices to give her a better future.



HERMANN

As the son of a successful German businessman, he feels the pressure to follow in his father's footsteps, but at the same time lives with the feeling that something is missing in his life. This vague longing for an unfulfilled dream drives him, but he doesn't know how to resolve it. Everything gets even more complicated when he learns of his father's death.



the creators



Jason Kooper is a versatile Namibian artist with experience in film and theater. After graduating with a degree in television production from the College of the Arts (2019), he worked as a production designer and set designer on the award-winning feature film *Hairareb*. He wrote the screenplay for the short film *Uno & Hatago* (2024) and staged his play *The Encounter* at the National Theater of Namibia in 2017. He has also been involved in numerous film productions in various creative roles.



Kim Mira Meyer worked as a stage manager and assistant director at the Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz from 2019 to 2022, where she co-directed *Mozart muss sterben* in 2021, among other productions. She gained international experience at major opera houses such as the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, the Royal Opera in Copenhagen, and the Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam. As artistic director of Munich's Momentbühne, she initiated numerous musical theater productions, including the world premiere of Eslon Hindundu's opera *Chief Hijangua* at the National Theater of Namibia, which she directed herself.



Herold Osmond !Owoseb is a Namibian musician, composer, conductor, and music teacher. He began conducting at an early age and has since led numerous choirs, including his ensemble Vocal Reflections. His works have been performed by the National Symphony Orchestra of Namibia, among others, and he regularly participates in festivals such as the Swakopmund Music Week. He currently teaches at St. George's Diocesan Preparatory School and is working on new music and theater projects.



Natasha Kitavi is a versatile singer, songwriter, and artist from Windhoek, Namibia, who has performed in competitions and engagements in Sweden, South Africa, Latvia, and Germany, including the World Choir Games. She completed a diploma in classical music at the Free State University in South Africa and made her solo debut in Namibia's first opera premiere, *Chief Hijangua*, at the National Theater of Namibia. In 2023, she showcased her talent to an international audience at the Haus des Rundfunks Berlin. In addition to singing, she is involved in dance, acting, painting, and digital marketing, inspiring young people through art.



Linus Marchell So-Oabeb, known as Marchell Linus, began his dance career at the First Rain Dance Theatre under the direction of Haymich Olivier and Tuli Shituwuyete. For seven years in a row, he was one of the main performers at the Namibian Annual Music Awards. He worked at the Namibian National Theater and choreographed plays such as the Afrikaans adaptation of *Cinderella*, *Battered*, and *Boet en Sus*. In addition to his artistic work, he is involved as a community leader and youth activist and is currently completing his degree in journalism and media technology at the Namibian University of Science and Technology.



Marco Heise received his first piano lessons at the age of five and later studied conducting, composition, violin, and organ at the Berlin University of the Arts. Numerous workshops and master classes with international artists expanded his repertoire from early to contemporary music. He has performed in Europe, South Africa, Australia, Japan, and the USA, participated in the European premiere of *Chief Hijangua*, and works as a soloist and organist. He is currently studying for his master's degree at the Berlin University of the Arts, presents a monthly improvisation series at the Konzerthaus Berlin, and works on various opera productions.



Victor Ardelean, born in Madrid in 1997, is a composer, arranger, and music producer living in Munich. His works have been performed by the Munich Philharmonic and Munich Symphony Orchestra, among others, and he has also scored several award-winning film productions for ARD, ARTE, and Terra Mater. In 2024, he completed his studies in composition for film and media under Prof. Gerd Baumann. As a co-founder and board member of Momentbühne e.V., he is committed to international collaborative projects in theater, music, and dance.



Creative Team together with Queen Kamati in 2024



the music

During an intensive and deeply collaborative writing process, the People of Song writing team — Jason Kooper, Kim Mira Meyer, Natasha Kitavi, Victor Ardelean, Marchell Linus, and Marco Heise — decided to open the narrative space to include composers and artists they had met during their journey through Namibia.

Marco Heise, in collaboration with the Namibian-german creative team, developed an overarching musical concept that weaves together works by more than seven Namibian composers and traditional German folk songs, all interlaced within the storyline structure of People of Song.



Zikizee Hangero, Namibian composer and musician, contributes the stirring piece *Membo*. The song asks a profound question—whether one’s name is written in the book of life. Its second rendition turns toward hope, urging listeners to release the darkness and hold onto light. At its heart, *Membo* is a testament to resilience and faith.



David !Haoseb, Namibian choir conductor and composer, adds his voice through *Ma //aeb Gose*—a work whose title speaks of endurance and grounding in heritage. His music continues the choral tradition while opening space for reflection on collective identity.

Erna Chimu, Namibian Jazz, Rock, and Afro-Contemporary singer-songwriter, brings a bold and inspiring voice to the production. Her song *Hai-Serute* carries a powerful message: “You are the dreamer of your destiny — don’t give your paintbrush to someone else to paint your story.” In the piece, she reflects on the discouragement dreamers often face from those closest to them — whether spouses, siblings, or friends — and urges resilience in the face of doubt. To her, mistakes and failures are part of the journey: fall, crawl, learn, and rise again. Her mantra is clear — *Ti daba tio* — “Get out of your way, so that you can try again on your own”.

Engelhardt #Unaeb, composer and choral conductor, has been writing music since the age of 16. His compositional style fuses traditional Namibian musical forms with contemporary techniques.

Two of his works will be performed: *Mme O Ne Le Botho* (2017), which loosely translates as “Treat others the way you wish to be treated, from sunrise to sunset,” and *Odelela* (2016), an Owambo celebration song that calls, “Do you have your odelela on? Did you fasten your epaya? Let’s go and rejoice at the festival.” Together, his works celebrate both cultural rootedness and human connection.

During our research trip through northern Namibia, we met the Kufamosha Cultural Group in Omuthiya and a dance ensemble in Khorixas performing music composed by their grandfather, Michael Mutago Doeseb. What began as a brief artistic encounter soon turned into a meaningful exchange — one marked by curiosity, respect, and a shared passion for storytelling through music and movement.

After returning from the trip, we stayed in close contact with these talented artists, continuing conversations about their cultural heritage, creative practices, and the ways traditional music continues to evolve within younger generations. Their openness and generosity deeply inspired the development of People of Song, enriching its narrative with authentic voices and rhythms from Namibia.

We are therefore especially delighted to announce that two of their traditional songs will be featured in People of Song — a heartfelt tribute to the living traditions that continue to shape and connect communities across continents.



Kufamosha Cultural Group in Omuthiya.



ABAS //Khoab Cultural Group

First Act:

- *Overture* by Marco Heise
- *Aniros* by Osmond !Owoseb
- *Like a bird* by Marco Heise
- *Oumas Appeal* – quoted music *Hai Serute* by Erna Chima
- *Monologue Tsaudago* by Marco Heise
- *Storytelling* – quoted music *Carving a Drum* by Kufamosha Cultural Group, *Totsi* by Michael Mugao Doeseb,
- *Mme o Ne Le Botho* by Engelhardt #Unaeb

Second Act:

- *Hejo, spann den Wagen an* – German folk song
- *Mâ llaeb Gose?* by David !Haoseb
- *Interlude* by Victor Ardelean
- *Membo* by Zikii

Third act:

- *Omboroto* by Eslon Hindundu
- *Kalabash* by Kufamosha Cultural Group
- *Odelela* by Engelhardt
- *!Nosa !Oes Ge Nesa* Namibian Lullaby
- *Hambelela* by Osmond !Owoseb

Arranged by Marco Heise

Editing by Christian Nelz and Martin Lentz

our strong voices on stage

Diolini /Uiras is a Namibian neo-soul and R&B artist known for her soulful voice and stylistic versatility. She has been performing nationally and internationally since 2015 and established herself as a creative voice of the new generation with her debut EP *Relics of the Sun* (2021).

In 2023, she made music history as the first Namibian to release an album on vinyl: *Butterfly Echo*, about personal transformation and spiritual freedom. This was followed in 2024 by the EP *Dreamer's Paradise*, a tribute to artistic development and inner calling.



Natasha Kitavi is a versatile singer, songwriter, and artist from Windhoek, Namibia, who has performed in competitions and engagements in Sweden, South Africa, Latvia, and Germany, including the World Choir Games. She completed a diploma in classical music at the Free State University in South Africa and made her solo debut in Namibia's first opera premiere, *Chief Hijangua*, at the National Theater of Namibia.

In 2023, she showcased her talent to an international audience at the Haus des Rundfunks Berlin. In addition to singing, she is involved in dance, acting, painting, and digital marketing, inspiring young people through art.



Eslon Hindundu is a Namibian composer, conductor, and choir director who has gained international recognition. He began his career in the COTA Youth Choir, won several competitions, and later became active as a soloist and composer. His works have been performed worldwide, including at the World Choir Games and by German orchestras. In 2022, he composed the first Namibian opera, which premiered in Namibia and later in Berlin. Today, he conducts choirs and music productions in Namibia and promotes young talent.



David Wehr, born in Bremen, studied acting in Leipzig and has been working as an actor for many years. He has performed at the Schnürrschuhtheater and the Bremer Shakespeare Company, toured with children's and youth productions, and played the lead role in the German premiere of *Cantata*. He also appears on camera, for example in *Tatort* and in Spanish films. He works in German, Spanish, and English and is versatile on stage and screen.





Nythen Dien is a classically trained singer who began his musical career in a choir and now performs with ensembles such as Let's Sing. He is passionate about making music together, expressive singing, and telling stories through music.

In *People of Song*, he plays Mitiri Herunga, a 68-year-old village elder who uplifts his community with calmness, wisdom, and consistency. With his quiet resilience, he embodies trust and support — a strength that is greatest when shared.



Tove Jeomba Kangotue is a multidisciplinary artist from Namibia who combines singing, acting, and storytelling with social engagement. He sees his work as a performer, author, and choir singer as a creative platform for cultural renewal and collective reflection.

In *People of Song*, he plays Tate Nyambe, the 32-year-old heartbeat of his village: loud, full of life and energy. With dance, stories and unforgettable charisma, he embodies pride, culture and community.



Jo-Anna Shapumbe is a passionate singer who was encouraged by her father from an early age. Her love of choral singing and deep connection to music shape her work as a source of expression, joy, and community.

Her role in *People of Song*: Julia is a 16-year-old girl who is gentle, respectful, and caring. She is responsible for keeping the house in order and preserving valuable items—qualities that are reflected in the calabash artifact she embodies.



Angelina Akawa, known as Zingerwingz, is a Namibian artist whose multilingual music and performances are shaped by faith, identity, and social experience. Her art has taken her from Windhoek to Germany, including the Moers Jazz Festival.

Her role in *People of Song*:

Meudholyomwene (Meudho) is 29 years old, quiet and often inconspicuous, yet at the same time the reliable pillar of her community. She seems reserved, but is deeply rooted and always ready to help others — consistent, present, and without seeking recognition.



Donovan Welly Seibeb is a Namibian composer, choir singer, and conductor whose musical journey, from boy soprano to performances in the first Namibian opera in Germany, has been shaped by his passion for choral music.

In *People of Song*, he plays Simasiku, an 18-year-old boy from northeastern Namibia. Simasiku is full of life, curious about his origins, charismatic, and loves to sing, dance, and play the Kavango drums.



Lyvodia Ouses is a versatile Namibian singer with a great passion for choral music. As a soloist, she has performed with the Namibia Symphony Orchestra, at the World Choral Expo in Lisbon, and in the opera *Chief Hijangua* in Berlin, among others. Today, she also passes on her experience as a vocal coach.

In *People of Song*, she plays Magano, a 46-year-old widow who leads her community with elegance, dignity, and inner strength, serving as a symbol of resilience and inspiration.





Youth Symphony Orchestra of Bremen (JSO Bremen)

Founded in 1980, the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Bremen is home to around 80 young musicians. The ensemble thrives on the joy of making music together, characterized by mutual respect, tireless dedication, and a shared love for musical detail. This deep emotional connection creates the distinctive sound that defines the orchestra.

The JSO regularly performs across Europe and collaborates closely with the Bremen Philharmonic Orchestra, including an annual open-air concert for more than 20,000 visitors. Its “International Youth Symphony Orchestras” project was recently honored with the WÜRTH Prize of Jeunesses Musicales Germany (2024), and in 2025, the orchestra received third place in the German Youth Orchestra Award for its creative and participatory concert projects. The JSO Bremen has been led by Martin Lentz since 2012.



Namibian National Symphony Orchestra (NNSO)

The Namibian National Symphony Orchestra (NNSO) brings together musicians dedicated to performing classical music in Namibia. The orchestra unites both professional and passionate amateur players, working on a project basis – with each concert’s line-up shaped by the repertoire being performed.

Its main annual highlights include the Baroque Festival (March/April) and the Concerto Festival (July/August), complemented by additional concerts depending on available funding and opportunities.

All musical matters are overseen by our concertmaster, Mr. Jürgen Kriess, whose guidance and experience play a vital role in shaping the orchestra’s artistic profile.

Youth Orchestras of Namibia (YONA)

Youth Orchestras of Namibia is a non-profit organization registered under Section 21 of the Namibian Constitution. At YONA, children who might never have had the opportunity to play an instrument can learn to make music, join an orchestra, read sheet music, and become part of a nurturing and supportive community. Beyond music, they gain valuable skills and confidence that empower them to navigate life’s challenges with resilience and creativity.



integrating schools into our cooperation

For the stage and accessory design of *People of Song*, we involved two school classes with students around Aniros' age – one from Windhoek and one from Berlin.

In a creative exchange, the students collaborated with our professional stage designers Jonathan Kitavi (Namibia) and Gretl Kautzsch (Germany) to develop ideas, concepts, and visions for the stage design and props.

A particularly touching moment of this collaboration was their first virtual meeting: during the video call, the students chatted not only about the project but also about food, TikTok, and football, discovering many shared interests along the way. Some of them have even stayed in touch privately through Instagram.

Shortly before the world premiere of *People of Song*, we invited the students from our partner school in Windhoek to take part in a workshop supported by the Goethe-Institut Namibia. The visual artist Vitjitua Ndjiharine led the workshop, which focused on Namibia's colonial past and on ways of engaging with this history through art. The session brought together all the artists involved in the project – including members of the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Bremen – with the students from Windhoek.

Together, they also co-created elements of the stage design. This exchange was deeply enriching for everyone involved and greatly enhanced the quality and spirit of our collaborative work.



stage and costume

Jonathan Kitavi

is a Namibian artist and designer collaborating with Gretl Kautzsch on the stage design for People of Song. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture (Honours) from the Namibia University of Science and Technology (2014–2016). With a strong sense of creativity, teamwork, and leadership, he brings a positive and open approach to every project. People of Song marks his first experience in stage design, a field he is eager to explore and develop further through future artistic collaborations.

Marscha Kaffer

has a background in Media and Journalism (Level 5) as well as Advanced Media and Photography. Trained as a tailor with a focus on fashion design, she combines craftsmanship with a strong artistic vision. Alongside her design work, she is also a trained dancer and performer and has appeared in Eslon Hindundu's opera Chief Hijangua. Her multidisciplinary experience allows her to merge movement, style, and storytelling — bringing a unique creative energy to every project she joins.

Gretl Kautzsch

is a German stage and costume designer with over 25 years of experience in theatre, working across drama, opera, dance, and musical productions. Trained at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich under Karl-Ernst and Ursel Herrmann, she has designed for theatres across Germany and abroad. She currently works with the Theater der Altmark and the Staatstheater Braunschweig and is also active as a visual artist and initiator of independent art projects.

Naomi Nambinga – YAMWE Windhok

Our brand has traditionally focused on ready-to-wear and haute couture, but Momentbühne opened an entirely new creative path for us. Designing and producing costumes for the theatre was a true challenge — and one we quickly fell in love with. Every step of this project inspired us deeply, and we are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to bring our creativity to the stage. We look forward to exploring more costume design projects in the future.

Marcus Wenk

Experience in the concert industry since 2010. Bachelor of Arts in Event Technology since 2018. Technical Director at Mediatec Event GmbH since 2022. Lighting design and lighting technology for scenic concerts at the Haus des Rundfunks in Berlin and for symphony orchestras from Berlin and Germany since 2015.



Marscha Kaffer and Diolini /Uiras



MOMENTBÜHNE



In **2020**, Kim Mira Meyer and Nikolaus Frei founded the **theatre association "Momentbühne"** to realize international and cooperative cultural projects.

The basic principles of the Momentbühne are the collective approach, the development of new theatre and musical theatre material, the experimentation with new approaches in artistic representation and the finding of new target groups for musical theatre.

An important milestone was **Namibia's first opera, "Chief Hijangua," which premiered in Windhoek in September 2022.**

Conducted in cooperation with artists from Namibia, South Africa, and Germany, it served the purpose of jointly addressing and reappraising Germany's colonial past in Namibia. (Note: Namibia was a German colony from 1884 to 1915.) All artistic areas were staffed by teams from both countries.

Following its overwhelming success in Windhoek in September 2022 and thanks to the team's cohesion, composer Eslon Hindundu's opera was performed in Berlin in September 2023 as a collaborative project with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra.

The project was supervised by Dr. Hilde Roos, Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Stellenbosch University 2022.

In line with our fundamental understanding in all our projects, it is not only the final work or performance that is important, but above all the journey to get there:

The dialogue between the participating artists, the involvement of external specialist institutions, and the intensive exchange at all levels in teams from both countries are absolutely central to our work. The basic principle is based on the understanding that we cannot change what has happened, but we can shape our future together.

*Producers Anja Panitz and Kim Mira Meyer
Marketing Michael Panitz and Ronaldo Kandume
Dramaturgy and Website Tanja Milošević*

Performances

PEOPLE OF SONG

Further production dates

Saturday 18th October, 18:30h
National Theatre of Namibia

Friday 21st November, 19:00h
Humboldt Forum Berlin

Saturday 22nd November, 19:00h
Humboldt Forum Berlin

Sunday 23rd November, 19:00h
Humboldt Forum Berlin

Thursday, 27th November, 19:30h
Metropol Theater Bremen

Links

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Instagram



Blog

<https://www.momentbuehne.com/blog>

Press

<https://www.momentbuehne.com/service-4>

Sponsors and partners

Sponsors



Collaborative partners



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Register entry:

Entry in the register of associations.

Registercourt: München

Registernumber: VR208711

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Stephan Höderath

Volker Beinhorn

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Michael Nakapandi