

CAP clarifies its position

CAP was quoted in SOUTH (July 17-23) as having been approached by SOUTH journalists to express an opinion on the Grahamstown Festival and as "clarifying its position". We would like to correct that impression by saying that we were, in fact, not approached and that we consider any such misrepresentation as highly irresponsible. We would also like to make the following comment on the festival.

CAP recognises that regional and national arts festivals are a vital component of cultural growth and exchange; we consider that the task for all cultural workers is to work alongside the mass-based organisations in developing appropriate platforms and setting up organisational structures to

assist the growth of grassroots cultural work and in building on the achievements of, for example, the Arts Festival 86 and the Cosatu national cultural initiative.

The Grahamstown Festival bears little relation to these aims. Further, it typifies many of the inadequacies and hypocrisies of "free market" cultural work under apartheid rule — and "open" festival where:

- The majority of Grahamstown residents are excluded from attending through lack of transport and high entrance fees;

- The "white sector" of the town derives huge tourist benefits by temporarily relaxing its normally rigid apartheid practices, thereby giving credibility to the festival and the town.

(Once the show is over, the barriers are back in place);

- The cultural work of the oppressed classes is supposedly represented by a small number of groups on the festival "fringe".

We should not forget the background to this: all such work struggles for existence against conditions of poverty and repression and has virtually no financial or structural support. Without such support, and in the absence of township venues, artists and performers are driven to seek an audience "in town". This means that the work often remains unseen by the very people who give its inspiration.

**COMMUNITY ARTS
PROJECT (CAP)**

SOUTH: July 30 - Aug 5: 1987.