

SOUTHSIDE

ARTS & LIVING SUPPLEMENT OF SOUTH NEWSPAPER • MARCH 7 TO MARCH 13 1991

THE CAPE TOWN FESTIVAL has in the past had very little to do with the cosmopolitan culture and character of Cape Town. Largely a promotional event for the City's businesses, previous festivals were, in the words of the Mayor, Mr Gordon Oliver, "disasters".

Not only were the festivals financial disasters but they also attracted the wrath of Cape Town's progressive organisations who boycotted the event because it was seen to cater only for the interests of Cape Town's white business community.

No attempts were made to involve representatives of black communities in greater Cape Town. The banning of the Towards a People's Arts Festival in 1986 and the involvement of the South African Defence Force and the Police in festival programmes during the State of Emergency, only served to exacerbate the hostility.

This time around, after numerous consultations with community organisations like the Muslim Judicial Council, the Cultural Workers' Congress and the African National Congress, Cape Town's marching mayor Gordon Oliver, has managed to spearhead a festival with a difference.

"The aim of the festival is to involve all the people of the City, especially the people of the Cape flats and the townships," says Oliver.

According to Mr Omar Badsha of the Federation of South African Cultural Organisations (Fosaco), it was agreed as a direct result of consultations that Fosaco had observer status on the Festival Committee. At present the committee is run by business representatives and Captour. In addition it was agreed that the antique festival at the Castle would be withdrawn from the programme because it represented the SADF.

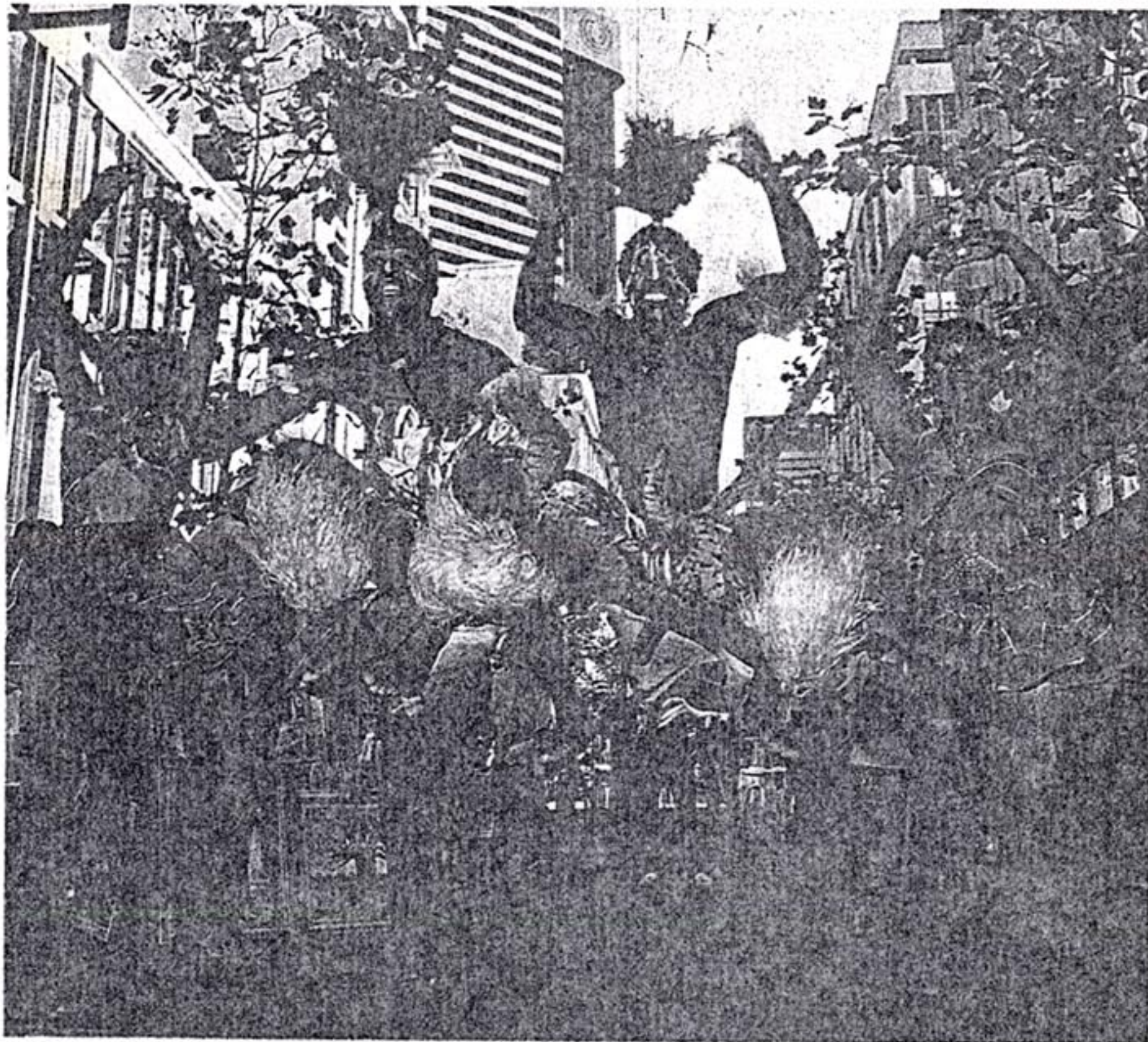
According to festival organiser Adele Lucas, the consultations have definitely paid off. "Groups like the MAPP musicians and CAP are taking part and we've managed to secure a programme at the Joseph Stone Theatre in Athlone," she said.

While Lucas admits that Badsha's observer status "practically speaking did not amount to much", it is hoped that from next year community organisations will be able to handle offshoots of the festival in the townships.

John Walter, coordinator of the Community Arts Project Theatre Company, said the festival gave CAP's new theatre company an opportunity to work in street theatre.

"The advantages on a company level is to get publicity and profile in Cape Town. Essentially we want to build a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



The Amabutho Zulu Dancers of Nyanga. PHOTOGRAPH: Sally Shorkand

FESTIVAL WITH A DIFFERENCE

For the first time, the Cape Town Festival planners have attempted to include all the communities of the City in the festival activities which start on Friday. **HEATHER ROBERTSON** investigates why the festival has been such a 'disaster' over the years.

SOUTH 11

SOUTH

March 7 - March 13

1991