***The CASA Award* Announces 2021 Winner**

**Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni**

***The CASA Award*** is pleased to announce that the winner of the 2021 playwriting award is playwright, theatre maker, educator and performer **Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni** of Cape Town, South Africa. This year’s jury was made up of South African theatre makers Philisiwe Twijnstra and Mari Borstlap, along with Canadian playwrights Marcia Johnson as the third jury member and Sally Stubbs as chair. The jury met over Zoom – bridging our two continents - on September 18th. The deliberations were passionate and generous. The judges had this to say about the winner:

*“We are very pleased to present the 2021 CASA award to* ***Tiisetso Mashifane wa Non****i. Tiisetso has been described as ‘a theatre prodigy’ and ‘as one of the most talented and dynamic theatre practitioners in Cape Town.’ Tiisetso’s application and writing sample reveal a disciplined, brave, and intelligent writer with a strong voice, which she is directing at critical issues.*

*Tiisetso’s play,* lamb v. slaughterhouse*, is the third in a trilogy in which she examines traditional power structures and presents them in what she calls an ‘absurd dramatic container.’ In the culminating script, Tiisetso is also exploring ‘…system disintegration as narrative… and as writing style,’ while still discovering and revealing humour and humanity in the world of the play. We’re excited to see where this fearless young writer takes* lamb v. slaughterhouse*, now in a second draft, with the help of the CASA mentorship. In Tiisetso’s own words, delivered in her* [*TEDX Youth Talk*](https://www.ted.com/talks/tiisetso_mashifane_wa_noni_another_conversation_for_the_dinner_table?utm_source=tedcomshare&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=tedspread) *Cape Town: ‘It always comes down to one question. What are you going to do about it?’”*

Tiisetso will receive financial support ($5000 CAD) to give her time to write. She will be partnered with two senior mentors (a Canadian dramaturge and a South African director), and will receive a collection of Canadian plays, generously donated by **Playwrights Canada Press** and **Scirocco Drama**.

The call for Tiisetso’s Canadian mentor/dramaturge is listed in today’s opportunities section.

Now in its fifth year, CASA is once again thrilled with the excellence of this year’s applications.

The Jury noted: *“Special recognition must be given to finalists* ***Iman Isaacs*** *and* ***Napo Masheane.*** *Their work stood out among submissions. We also wish to celebrate* ***Mercy Kannemeyer*** *and* ***Bongumusa Mnisi*** *whose applications received honourable mention. South African womxn playwrights continue to bravely engage with challenging and personal subject matter. Congratulations.”*

*CASA* is a **CA**nadian and **S**outh **A**frican partnership. In 2015, **Rebecca Burton**, **Beverley Cooper,** **Marcia Johnson,** **Sally Stubbs** and **Colleen Wagner** were part of the Canadian delegation that attended the Women Playwrights International (WPI) Conference in Cape Town, and during this time formed a partnership with **Amy Jephta**, then President of WPI, in order to find funding opportunities for South African women.

CASA is a partnership between **The Playwrights Guild of Canada’s Women’s Caucus** and **The African Women Playwrights Network**. The Canadian committee consists of **Beverley Cooper, Cheryl Foggo, Marcia Johnson, Natalie Meisner, Sally Stubbs** and **Colleen Wagner,** with PGC advisors **Rebecca Burton** (Membership Manager)and **Nancy Morgan** (Executive Director).

CASA wishes to thank all the individuals and organizations who have donated funds, space, or other support for CASA, particularly **Deborah Drakeford** and **ARC Theatre Company**. Because of the generous donation of two anonymous benefactors, the CASA award has been funded for a total of six years. Next year, we hope to announce some exciting changes for our final year of the CASA Award.

**CASA recipient Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni**

**Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni** is a South African playwright, theatre maker, educator and performer who has been described as a “theatre prodigy” in the *Cape Times* and a “brilliant young mind” by [*TEDxYouth*](https://www.ted.com/talks/tiisetso_mashifane_wa_noni_another_conversation_for_the_dinner_table?utm_source=tedcomshare&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=tedspread) *Cape Town* for her award-winning and critically-acclaimed debut play, *Sainthood*.She holds a BA in Politics and International Studies, Philosophy and Dramatic Arts from Rhodes University, and a BA (Hons) in Directing for Stage from the University of Cape Town. She is an Apolitical Academy for Public Leadership Fellow and a Salzburg Global Young Cultural Innovator*,*who strives to make provocative content focussed on themes of social politics, history, and violence in contemporary South Africa.

**The CASA Project** is a charitable arm of the Playwrights Guild of Canada, initiated by PGC's Women's Caucus. The goal of the project is to create meaningful connections between Canadian and African women playwrights.

**AWPN** is a virtual community, connected via social media, of African women creative practitioners living in Africa or in various diasporas who are involved in creating oral and/or physical performance and playwriting (either as individuals or groups). It was set up to facilitate practitioners comparing and sharing their creative practices with one another, researchers and other interested parties, including potential audiences, directors, funders and artistic managers and programmers in all parts of the world. AWPN is also a platform for dialogue regarding what informs and impacts these women’s’ creative processes. It has been financially supported by the UK Arts and Humanities Research fund and University of Warwick.