

## 2024 Savanna Comics' Choice Comedy Awards winners

The South African comedy industry's biggest stars gathered to celebrate the 11th Annual Savanna Comics' Choice Comedy Awards in partnership with Savanna Premium Cider, Mrs. Ball's, LIFT, Comedy Central, and One-eyed Jack. The night was a spectacular blend of humour, celebration, and pride, punctuated with stand-up, skits, music, and the undeniable vibe of the South African spirit.



The event kicked off with Mojak Lehoko, the writer of the Awards show, warming the crowd. This set the tone for an evening of non-stop entertainment centred around the theme of “Don’t You Just Love South Africa!”

Mpho ‘Popps’ Modikoane, the evening’s host, opened the show with infectious enthusiasm, highlighting South Africa’s recent triumphs on the global and local stages, with shout-outs to the likes of Tyla and Dricus du Plessis.

Mpho’s opening set included a perfect blend of quintessential Mpho ‘Popps’ comedy and appreciation for the country’s unique sense of humour, setting the stage for a night that was as patriotic as it was amusing.

Throughout the night, the awards honoured comedians across twelve categories across stand-up comedy, comedic writing, and content creation. Each winner received a beautifully designed and produced Waldo trophy as a symbol of their

outstanding achievement.

### **The 2024 winners are...**

- Breakthrough Act of the Year Award: Vafa Naraghi
- Savanna Newcomer Award: Callum Hitchcock
- Joe Mafela Award: Sifiso Nene
- Funny is Funny Award: King Price for Generating Gees
- Best Comedic Show/Festival Award: Bioscope Sundays
- Hall of Fame Award: Marc Lottering
- Best Comedic Writer Award: Kagiso Lediga
- upLiFTing Comedic Content Award: Costa Carastavakis
- Sauce of the Year Award, presented by Mrs. Ball's: Vafa Naraghi
- Best Solo Show Award: Sifiso Nene for Baby Mama Drama
- Headliner of the Year Award: Robby Collins
- Comedian of the Year Award: Mpho "Popps" Modikoane

Hilarious highpoints included a Gen Z-propelled dance skit by Khanyisa Bunu and the 250 Machine dance crew, a side-splitting sketch by Robby Collins and Dalin Oliver, and a stand-up set by Celeste Ntuli, the queen of Zulu comedy.

One of the highlights of the evening was the Joe Mafela Award, recognising Sifiso Nene and the linguistic diversity and rich culture of South Africa. The Funny is Funny Award, won by King Price for Generating Gees, spotlighted the role of comedy in advertising, emphasising the close relationship between humour and marketing. Another memorable moment was marking the 20th anniversary of "Blacks Only" with David Kau at the helm.

The Headliner of the Year Award winner, Robby Collins, is a testament to a comedian who consistently shines in the spotlight, and the announcement of Mpho 'Popps' Modikoane as winner of the Comedian of the Year Award culminated the celebration, recognising a comedian who has made and continues to make a significant impact on the industry.

It was a special moment when Alfred Adriaan went on stage to recognise this year's Hall of Fame Award recipient, Marc Lottering. From Cape Town to the global stage, Marc Lottering is South Africa comedic treasure and genius. His career began with his first stand-up routine in 1997. He has written over 20 one-man shows and created three critically acclaimed musicals. Lottering is the recipient of two Fleur de Cap Awards and a Naledi Award, and he can add Savanna Comics' Choice Comedy Awards Hall of Fame Award to his long list of achievements.

A notable aspect of the awards was the emphasis on industry respect and comedian recognition, with industry votes deciding most of the awards. This appreciation underscores the tight-knit community of South African comedians.

Wrapping up the night, Mpho Popps extended heartfelt thanks to the show's writer, Mojak, the cast, the team at One-eyed Jack, and Savanna for their unwavering support of the comedy industry.

The Awards' sponsors and partners played a significant role. Savanna Premium Cider is the Awards' longest-standing sponsor and advocate for local comedians. "Savanna Cider has long been a proud supporter of South African comedy, recognising its power to unite, provoke thought, and bring joy to our lives," says Kayla Hendricks, Senior Brand Manager for Savanna Premium Cider. "Eleven years strong, this partnership reaffirms our commitment to empowering talented Comics and uplifting the local comedy industry."

This year, Savanna enhanced the winners' experience with cash prizes of R10,000 each. This is the second year Mrs. Ball's has brought its flavour to the comedy table and keeps things saucy. The Awards also thanks Newsclip and Amasocial for their ongoing support.

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