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[Looking at = arts, culture=20 and entertainment in Gauteng](#)

Moira de Swardt's ramblings through the = arts.

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[Goggas!, the Naledi Award Winning = Children=E2=80=99s Play](#)

Posted=20 on March 31, = 2013by [moirads](#)

I took the same group of children to see both *Sleeping = Beauty*=20 (People=E2=80=99s Theatre) and *Goggas* (National = Childen=E2=80=99s Theatre). Opinion=20 was divided, more or less equally, as to which one was best. The Naledi = judges=20 who saw *Goggas* last September awarded it the best = children=E2=80=99s play of=20 2012. The creative team and cast is to be congratulated on what was = really a=20 lovely South African production. I do have my doubts about the = nominations for=20 that category as *The Purr Factory* (State Theatre) did not even = receive=20 a nomination and I am reliably informed that as few as one Naledi judge = saw some=20 of the children=E2=80=99s productions. A shake up of the judging panel = for the Naledis=20 is long overdue, and one of these changes should be a dedicated panel of = judges=20 for children=E2=80=99s theatre =E2=80=93 people who actually attend = children=E2=80=99s theatre, children=20 in tow.

Francois Theron (Artistic Director) and = Moira Katz=20 (CEO) at the Naledi Awards.

The problems with lack of attendance of the Naledi judges at various=20 productions does not negate in any way the wonder of *Goggas*, = however.=20 Written by Gillian Katz, *Goggas* has been put together by a = superb=20 creative team. Directed by Francois Theron, set design by Stan Knight, = musical=20 supervision by Rowan Bakker, choreography by Shelley Adriaanzen, costume = design=20 by Sarah Roberts, lighting by Jane Gosnell and stage managed by Willie = van=20 Staden.

The butterfly and the ladybird

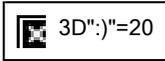
It is a delightful South African musical about an alien species, a = British=20 Monarch Butterfly, Lady Caroline, who arrives in South Africa on the hat = of the=20 South African Ambassador=E2=80=99s wife. She meets our local insect = life, tastes our=20 local delicacies and lives with the locals as she learns our languages = and=20 culture.

Lady Caroline and Antic

The set and costumes are fabulous and the singing is excellent. The = songs=20 are well known to parents, and often to the children who sang along = quite=20 cheerfully. It began with a version of *Big Rock Candy Mountain* = and=20 then a variety of songs including *Mango Groove*=E2=80=99s *Special Star*, = Johnny Clegg=E2=80=99s=20 *Scatterlings of Africa* give a South African flavour and the=20 international content is boosted by John Denver=E2=80=99s *Leaving on = a jet=20 plane*, Neil Diamond=E2=80=99s *Sweet Caroline* and = Abba=E2=80=99s *Honey Honey*. =20

Antic, the ant. His real name is = Antonie.

The children loved it and so did I. A light-hearted story which = should help=20 children to overcome xenophobia even if it doesn=E2=80=99t do much for = the understanding=20 of the importance of not introducing alien species.



The ensemble were fabulous, playing characters such as Lady Caroline, = a=20 Monarch butterfly, the Queen Bee, Antic the Ant, Conrad the Chameleon, = Stinky=20 the Stinkbug, Lolah the Ladybird, Beaula the Black Widow Spider, Bafana, = the=20 Bumble Bee and Twiggy, the Stick Insect. The cast features Abby Bryson, = Dannie=20 Putter, Devon Flemmer, Zolani Shangase, Dolly Louw, Pulane Palmer, = Nomonde=20 Matiwane and Marike Smith.

The cast of Goggas

The next production at the National Children=E2=80=99s Theatre will = be *Honk!*=20 in the winter school holidays.

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About moirads

Multi-skilled, trained theologian = (Christian),=20 administrator and journalist, I conduct weddings, funerals and = facilitate=20 spiritual growth workshops. Theatre, music, dance and visual arts are my = passions. I have been making my musical musings, theatre talks and = dance=20 dialogues public since February 1999 when I acquired access to the = internet. Books are another passion, and I have a particular interest in South = African=20 ecology and history. =09

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