

FINE MUSIC
RADIO



OPUS
NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER
2 0 2 6

101.3 FM
GREATER CAPE TOWN

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BOOSTERS

The paraphernalia needed for an outing with a small human is endless, from snacks to hydration to wet wipes. I would invariably forget something (save the kid), but the one organised detail of my parenting life was that I always brought a booster seat to the theatre.

My daughter was five when, sitting on her booster, she saw her first musical. She watched, her little fingers pulling her eyes open so as not to fall asleep. Theatre awakens something special within all of us.

It's a particular joy when Fine Music Radio can bring the excitement of a production to listeners before they even enter the theatre, as we did with our pre-concert programme for *Mamma Mia!* hosted by Diane Jane (see *Opuscast*).

During the interview, *Mamma Mia!* director Janice Honeyman spoke about watching audience members arrive at the theatre looking tired, then leave smiling and sparkling. (Listen to the interview here: <https://iono.fm/e/1715096>)

It was equally encouraging to see *The Rocky Horror Show* return to Theatre on the Bay by popular demand. (This isn't just advertising speak – it's true.) Presented by Pieter Toerien with LAMTA, the production stars industry stalwarts and musical theatre students – the perfect way to train up the next generation of actors.

Likewise, the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra (CPO) sharing the stage with its Youth Orchestra for Brahms' *Hungarian Dances* was a wonderful way to inspire the next generation of musicians. The performance was conducted by the brilliant Bernhard Gueller, who skilfully brought it all together, as the Maestro he is.

Thanks to Gerlinde Moser of Re/MAX Living for sponsoring the live broadcasts of the CPO's Spring Season, as well as *Inside the Score* with Adriaan Fuchs.

The October edition of *Opus* is dedicated to Gerlinde Moser in honour of her 80th birthday.

In September, our celebration of Rodney's fifty years in broadcasting culminated in *A Wagner Spectacular* at the City Hall, where he was honoured for his role in classical music. Each day, during September, Rodney shared two to three of his favourite fifty pieces of music.

We usually release *Opus* before the end of the month, but we didn't want spoilers, so we're publishing it today, right after Rodney's broadcast, on which he shared his number one choice. (Full list below.)

May listening to FMR be your booster – in all ways!



Vanessa Levenstein
Opus Editor

RODNEY TRUDGEON'S FAVOURITE FIFTY
The final ten are ranked in order of preference

No	Work	Composer	Orchestra / Ensemble	Soloist	Conductor
50	Violin Concerto	Tchaikovsky	BPO	Bell	Tilson-Thomas
49	Symphony No 9	Mahler	BPO		Karajan
48	Piano Concerto 2	Brahms	VPO / Zimerman		Bernstein
47	Symphony No 6	Beethoven	Philharmonia		Klemperer
46	Symphony No 4	Schumann	BPO		Furtwängler
45	Symphony No 7	Sibelius	Philharmonia		Ashkenazy
44	Symphony No 3	Beethoven	Philharmonia		Klemperer
43	Piano Sonata 21	Beethoven		Wilhelm Kempff	
42	St Matthew Passion	Bach	Philharmonia		Klemperer
41	War Requiem	Britten	LSO		Britten
40	Death and Transfiguration	R Strauss	BPO		Karajan
39	Yeoman of the Guard	G&S	ASMITF		Marriner
38	Tosca – Te Deum	Puccini	Covent Garden		Pappano
37	Winterreise	Schubert		Hotter / Moore	
36	Symphony No 102	Haydn	Royal Concertgebouw		Davis
35	Serenade to Music	Vaughan Williams	LPO		Boult
34	Sea Symphony	Vaughan Williams	LSO		Haitink
33	London Symphony	Vaughan Williams	LPO		Boult
32	Cello Concerto	Elgar	Philharmonia	Du Pré	John Barbirolli
31	Symphony No 1	Elgar	Staatskapelle Berlin		Barenboim
30	Piano Concerto No 1	Tchaikovsky	Minnesota	Hough	Vänskä
29	Rigoletto	Verdi	Rome Opera		Solti
28	Symphony No 6	Mahler	VPO		Bernstein
27	Symphony No 1	Brahms	Philharmonia		Klemperer
26	La Bohème	Puccini	BPO		Karajan
25	Tristan und Isolde	Wagner	Philharmonia		Furtwängler
24	Violin Concerto	Sibelius	Oslo	Jansen	Mäkelä
23	Piano Quintet	Brahms	Hagen Qt	Gulda	
22	Four Last Songs	R Strauss	Leipzig Gewandhaus	Norman / Masur	Kurt Masur

No	Work	Composer	Orchestra / Ensemble	Soloist	Conductor
21	Aida	Verdi	VPO		Karajan
20	Magic Flute	Mozart	Philharmonia		Klemperer
19	Violin Concerto	Beethoven	Salzburg	Joshua Bell	Norrington
18	Symphony No 8	Bruckner	BPO		Wand
17	Parsifal	Wagner	Met Orchestra		Levine
16	Symphony No 5	Beethoven	VPO		Kleiber
15	Symphony No 3	Mendelssohn	LSO		Abbado
14	Requiem	Brahms	Philharmonia		Klemperer
13	Symphony No 2	Mahler	Philharmonia		Klemperer
12	Symphony No 9	Schubert	BPO		Furtwängler
11	Symphony No 4	Brahms	VPO		Kleiber
10	Piano Concerto	Grieg	BPO	Leif Ove Andsnes	Mariss Jansons
9	Requiem	Verdi	BPO		Abbado
8	Clarinet Quintet	Mozart	Gabrieli Quartet	Thea King	
7	Piano Concerto No 5	Beethoven	BPO	Kempff	Ferdinand Leitner
6	Ring Cycle	Wagner	VPO		Solti
5	Piano Concerto No 1	Brahms	BPO	Zimerman	Rattle
4	Symphony No 7	Dvořák	Royal Concertgebouw		Davis
3	Symphony No 2	Rachmaninov	LSO		Rozhdestvensky
2	Symphony No 5	Tchaikovsky	Leningrad PHIL		Mravinsky
1	Symphony No 9	Beethoven	Bayreuth Festival Orchestra		Furtwängler

BEHIND THE MUSIC WITH RODNEY TRUDGEON

In celebration of Rodney Trudgeon's fifty years in broadcasting, FMR hosted a series of three talks, in which Rodney shared his musical and broadcasting journey.

You can listen to these on FMR's YouTube channel as well as Rodney's CPO pre-concert talk: *A Wagner Spectacular*.

<https://www.youtube.com/@FineMusicRadio1013>



STATION NOTES

THE 55TH ARTSCAPE YOUTH CLASSICAL CONCERT

The 55th Artscape Youth Classical Concert brought together twelve outstanding young musicians, aged between 12 and 22, who performed as soloists with the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Brandon Phillips.

You can listen to the concert on **Sunday, 4 October, from 3 to 5 pm**, with Otto van der Walt, on Fine Music Radio.

With thanks to Artscape and the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra, with the support of the City of Cape Town.

ANNA'S BAROQUE BON BONS

Flute-Cane by Anna Stoddard

In the 18th century, the walking stick became a popular accessory for men. A gentleman might have several, and, if he had a taste for novelty, perhaps even a flute-cane. This was a transverse flute with an extension at the end that made it the length of a walking stick. In more elaborate examples, what looked like an ordinary walking stick had a screw-top which, when unscrewed, revealed a flute or, in the remarkable example pictured here, a combination of flute and oboe.

Portability was a great advantage to the amateur musician. Music was published in small volumes, the shape of a chequebook, designed to slip easily into a gentleman's pocket. And even without acquiring a flute-cane, a recorder could be carried conveniently in a pocket for an impromptu musical performance.

In England, arrangements of popular music for flute and recorder were widely published, with flute sometimes being used for both instruments. Handel's opera arias were arranged for these instruments, allowing fashionable amateurs to take the latest music from the theatre into their own homes.

Flute-canes are the subject of *Anna's Baroque Bon Bons* on **20 October**, followed on **27 October** by a look at music published specifically for women, who were often at home making music on their harpsichords or spinets.

Anna's Baroque Bon Bons is on **Tuesdays at 7.15 am** and available as a podcast at www.fmr.co.za/podcasts/annas-baroque-bon-bons



Flute and oboe stick by Georg Heinrich Scherer (1703-1778) The Met – New York.

OPUSCAST WITH DIANE JANE – HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERVIEW

Vanessa: Diane Jane presents Fine Music Radio's *Light Lunch* on Saturdays from 1 pm to 4 pm. When Diane isn't at the station, she isn't quite down a mineshaft, but she does work in that field and is managing director within the DDT Mechanised Mining Group.

You've built a career across both business and broadcasting, and earlier you were telling me that you actually started out in design. How do you combine and balance all your passions and different careers?

Diane: This is very much a thing of wearing different hats and taking one off, putting it solidly down before you put the next one on. Radio is my creative side. It's the side that I consider true to the innermost Diane, and that is the personable side. It's the human side of me, the side that really enjoys the arts, the creative side, music, people, anything that is cultural. And mining is the obvious income generator at this stage.

Mining is something that I started off years ago with my father who is an engineer. I studied to be a designer and that meandered into education, and then I built myself up in a marketing field until I was head of marketing for a group. And at that stage I met a radio personality. He brought me in, wanted me to go on air, and eventually, before I knew it, I had my own show at a station called *Mix FM* in Johannesburg. And so the two careers kind of merged. They took off and just flowed simultaneously.

Vanessa: Like the Atlantic and Indian Ocean.

Diane: Something like that. But the paths don't ever really cross.

Vanessa: As you said, you take the one hat off, and then you put the other hat on. What do you love most about being behind the microphone when the door is shut, it's just you, the music, and the listener?

Diane: It's exactly that. It's the opportunity to shut the door and really get into a space where I enjoy engaging with a listener one-on-one. It's never a group of people. It's about connecting with each listener personally and relating the music or the content to them, whatever it is, in such a way that it becomes personal to them, that they share in the excitement that I have for what I'm presenting, or experiencing, in the music that I'm listening to as well. So that's what thrills me. That's what gives me my excitement about radio.

Vanessa: Tell us about the *Light Lunch*.

Diane: I always joke, I say we start off with a light lunch and then we kind of meander into this lazy late lunch. You start off with an entree. Then you have something on the main. I'm a real South African girl. I eat. So I'm not the kind of girl who eats two peas and says I can't any further. And then something on the sweet side, because most of us have a little bit of a sweet tooth, even if we deny it.

Vanessa: I was watching you present the pre-show programme for *Mamma Mia*!. You weren't a second out when it came to timing. What goes into putting together an hour broadcast like that?

Diane: Research and a really good team backing you. That's what it comes down to. I had Jordan here helping me behind the scenes. He was flagging me to say, "OK, five minutes, you need to get it done." And then the same thing in the studio when I had Otto driving the desk there. It's about the team. And then you just have to make sure that you prep sufficiently and make sure you practise it. It comes with experience and practice, but it is literally just research and team work.

Vanessa: You said there wasn't an overlap, but I think that meticulous attention to detail, which is evident when you do a show like that, surely comes from your corporate and your design background.

Diane: Possibly, yes, and interview background as well. A lot of interview experience.

Vanessa: A hundred?

Diane: Literally that. I've interviewed people from all over the world, including quite big rock names.

Vanessa: If you could interview someone, if you could just take a name from the sky now and interview them, who would it be?

Diane: Can they be dead?

Vanessa: Yes, they can.

Diane: Can they be no more?

Vanessa: They can be no more. And you can bring them back to life.

Diane: I would have loved to interview Elvis. I think he would have been a fascinating person to interview just because of the life that he lived, the things that he saw, the good that he did, and the mistakes that he made. I would have loved to relate that to a younger audience; to help them grow from that and also not make the same mistakes.



To listen to the full interview visit <https://iono.fm/e/1721032>

EVENTS




New World, YOUNG VOICES

University of Cape Town
Symphony Orchestra (UCTSO)

WITH THE
Cape Town Philharmonic
Youth Orchestra (CPYO)

CONDUCTOR Brandon Phillips
PIANIST Isaac van der Merwe

Tuesday, 13 October 2026
7.30pm | CAPE TOWN CITY HALL

Kyle Benade "Chaos in Disguise, Part 1" *WORLD PREMIERE
Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 2
Dvorák Symphony No. 9, "From the New World"

PETER TOERIEN with CAPE TOWN OPERA
by special arrangement with
CAMERON MACKINTOSH
presents



11 DEC - 17 JAN ARTSCAPE OPERA HOUSE
29 JAN - 7 MAR TEATRO, MONTECASINO

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CAPE TOWN
CITY BALLET

David Nixon CBE's
DRACULA



28 OCT - 01 NOV 2026
ARTSCAPE
WEBTICKETS

 THE CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

SANDT
SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DANCE TRUST

PRESENTS
**THE LEGACY OF
DANCE GALA** 2026

PRINCIPAL GUESTS
ANNA OL AND JAN SPUNDA FROM
DUTCH NATIONAL BALLET



ACCOMPANIED
BY THE CAPE TOWN
PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
ARTSCAPE OPERA HOUSE

Saturday 24 October: 7.30pm
Sunday 25 October: 2.30pm

VOICES OF THE AGES



ARTSCAPE

8 OCT	9 OCT	10 OCT
LOUIS MHLANGA	INTERNET ATHI	ZOLANI MAHOLA

**DUMZA MASWANA
UMNGQUNGQO**
ORCHESTRAL EXPERIENCE



EARLY BIRD
PHASE 2
PHASE 3
PHASE 4

R250
R350
R350
R400

SAT 19:00

ARTSCAPE
OPERA HOUSE, CAPE TOWN
31 OCT 2026

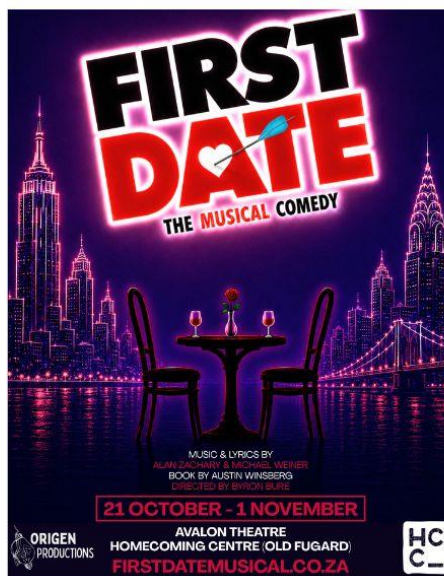
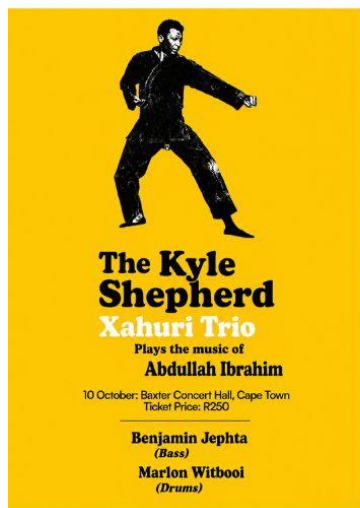
PIETER TOERIEN with LAMTA presents

RICHARD O'BRIEN'S ROCKY HORROR Show



RETURN SEASON
28 AUG - 18 OCT
THEATRE
ON THE BAY

RETURN SEASON
23 OCT - 20 DEC
PIETER TOERIEN'S
MONTECASINO
THEATRE
and Studio



ART 2 HEART

COMBRINK'S CORNER

Look at Me, by Albert Combrink – pianist, agent, vocal coach and concert promoter

We celebrate the centenary of Miles Davis (26 May 1926–28 September 1991), one of the most influential jazz musicians of the previous century. Some don't like his tone, some don't like his technique, and some don't even like his music, but he was undoubtedly one of the most influential jazz trumpeters of his time. He constructed ensembles with some of the greatest players in the world: John Coltrane, Bill Evans, Cannonball Adderley, Ron Carter, Chick Corea, Keith Jarrett, Wayne Shorter, Tony Williams, Jack DeJohnette, John McLaughlin, John Scofield and Kenny Garrett.

Once, in 1965, he was in the studio recording his album *E.S.P.* with a young and green Herbie Hancock, a quick-fingered, quick-brained whiz kid who was somehow crumbling under the pressure of making a record with his idol. Davis put down his trumpet and left the studio, letting the band carry on playing while the tape kept running. He sensed that his presence was making it hard for the pianist not to be self-conscious. Alone with the band, Hancock relaxed and delivered material so good that he became a permanent fixture on Davis's gigs, and was soon launched into his own stardom.

One of my "jobs" as a vocal coach is fielding requests from singers to quickly note-bash a song or aria, as a guide track to help them learn something. They send me a PDF on WhatsApp, I open it on my phone and send back a quick, unedited voice note, usually rather basic but practically helpful. I sight-read well; I actually earn part of my living from reading music I have literally never laid eyes on. But somehow, knowing that someone is going to be listening jiggles my grey matter, and I could mess up even the simplest line.

Give me an audience of 5 000 at Kirstenbosch, and I kick into adrenaline-fuelled performer mode. But hand me that silly cellphone voice note, and I could mess it up, royally.

I also make little practice recordings for my piano pupils. The pressure to give them a good and accurate track easily escalates into a fumble: I am the teacher, after all, and I should be able to do this!

This reminds me of the double-slit experiment, first performed with light by Thomas Young in 1801, later refined through experiments involving single quantum particles and detectors. The electrons appear to behave differently when they are being observed than when they are not. The same must be true for musicians. There is an undeniable energy in a concert that is not quite there in rehearsal. The best musicians, however, train themselves to access that higher-energy workplace by rehearsing as if it is a concert: not allowing themselves the mentality of "It's only a rehearsal, so I can hold back."

Violinist Renaud Capuçon once described meeting Martha Argerich as the making of him as an artist. Every concert is recorded – either for YouTube, CD release or documentary purposes – and every rehearsal as well. Capuçon described having to arrive at the first rehearsal so well-prepared that he might have to release that rehearsal on a CD. It was a trial by fire which made his career: 100% technical accuracy became a minimum requirement for attending even the practice session.

Accidents do happen; we are human, after all. On a 1963 tour with Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock played a wrong chord during a live concert. Hancock froze in panic and visibly reacted to his own error, stopping playing for nearly a minute. In a split second, Davis recomposed the tune, live on stage, to incorporate Hancock's "wrong notes", creating an entirely new version of the piece. Greatness of spirit and greatness of musicianship, summarised in one moment.

October is also a bumper month of jazz centenaries: Jimmy Heath, Oscar Brown Jr., Ray Brown and Melba Liston, hot on the heels of John Coltrane in September.



WORDSMITHS: NIC'S DOODLE OF THE MONTH

Wordsmiths is an insert on *Nic's Classic Drive* weekdays just after **5.15 pm**. Nic Ciro chooses weird and wonderfully obscure words and Hadley Tituss has to guess their meaning. Nic's doodles are created to give Hadley clues.

tahr – a wild goat of the Himalayas and other parts of Asia, usually with a reddish-brown coat

taj – a crown or headdress, especially one worn by a ruler or dignitary

talar – an ankle-length coat or robe, particularly a traditional Persian-style garment



PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION, BY SAAN MAHOMED

MILT JACKSON – SUNFLOWER “A DIALOGUE IN SOUND”

You know, *Sunflower* is one of those albums that feels like a conversation in itself – between the musicians, the arrangements and the listener. Released in 1973 on CTI Records, *Sunflower* brought Milt Jackson's vibraphone into a lush, all-star setting that doesn't shout – it speaks with this calm, glowing authority, and the rest of the band, Freddie Hubbard, Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Billy Cobham, respond in kind. It's less about showing off chops and more about creating a mood that you can sink into.

Take the title track – it opens slowly, almost like someone easing into a story. Milt sets the tone, Freddie Hubbard adds bursts of colour, Herbie Hancock fills in the spaces, and that rhythm section just knows how to keep everything grounded! Listening to it feels like being drawn into a dialogue where everyone has something meaningful to say, but no one's rushing to get their words out.

Then there's "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?". Now here's a tune that could easily tip into sentimentality, but Jackson keeps it dignified. His phrasing



makes the melody feel tender without being overly sweet. The strings around it give the piece a cinematic kind of glow, like the soundtrack to a quiet reflection! It's the kind of track that makes you pause, not because it demands attention, but because it invites it.

Then there's "People Make the World Go Round", bringing in a funkier groove. The rhythm section locks in, and suddenly the conversation shifts – more grounded, more socially aware. It's a reminder that jazz, especially in the early '70s, wasn't just about improvisation; it was about capturing the pulse of the times. Even now, the track feels relevant, like it's still speaking to the world we live in.

What ties the whole album together is the production. Creed Taylor and Don Sebesky frame the quintet with strings and orchestrations, but they never drown out the core. Instead, they give the music a wider canvas. It's polished, yes, but not sterile. Listening on vinyl, the warmth of the analogue sound makes that polish feel organic, almost as if the musicians are in the room with you.

And that's the essence of *Sunflower* – it's sophisticated without being distant, accessible without losing depth. Each track feels like part of a larger conversation – sometimes meditative, sometimes grooving, always cohesive. Milt's vibraphone is the guiding voice, but the beauty lies in how the members of the ensemble listen to each other, shaping something that's both timeless and inviting.

So, when I think about *Sunflower*, I don't just hear a jazz record – I hear a dialogue between artistry and accessibility, between individual brilliance and collective harmony. It's the kind of album that doesn't just play in the background; it speaks, and if you're willing to listen, it has plenty to say.

Peace and blessings till next time.



PEOPLE OF NOTE

Discover previous *People of Note* guests and listen to their full conversations at

www.fmr.co.za/podcasts/people-of-note/

People of Note is brought to you by Pieter Toerien Productions.

Joining Rodney Trudgeon and our audio engineer, Jordan Jones, in the studio are (clockwise from top left): Richard Loring, Lord Peter Hain, Erik Dippenaar, with Mike Mills interviewing Rodney Trudgeon.



FMR'S COMMUNITY

SAVE KMA BENEFIT CONCERT

After unexpectedly losing a major donor, Kronendal Music Academy (KMA) suspended its activities in July 2026. In partnership with UCT's South African College of Music, the Save KMA Benefit Concert is a chance for the community to help KMA rebuild and reopen. Featuring KMA's acclaimed jazz band, African Instruments Ensemble and Mass Choir, the concert takes place on **Thursday, 8 October at 7 pm** at the **Baxter Concert Hall**. Tickets are R150 / R50 for students. Book through Webtickets.

Editor's note: If you are in the position to support this phenomenal organisation, please do. Over the years I have witnessed their incredible work and it's heart-breaking to think that they may have to close their doors forever. (The poster for this concert is under *Events*.)

HOOKED ON BOOKS

Thanks to Exclusive Books for sponsoring Fine Music Radio's *Book Choice*. It's broadcast twice a month on a Monday at noon. It's also available as a podcast, as is *Book Choice: Shorts*, with individual interviews and reviews. Visit www.fmr.co.za/podcasts/book-choice



THE DOGS OF VIVO, BY SVEN AXELRAD

There aren't many authors my colleagues on *Book Choice* will battle it out to review, but Sven Axelrad is certainly one of them. Happily, this time, I won the bid.

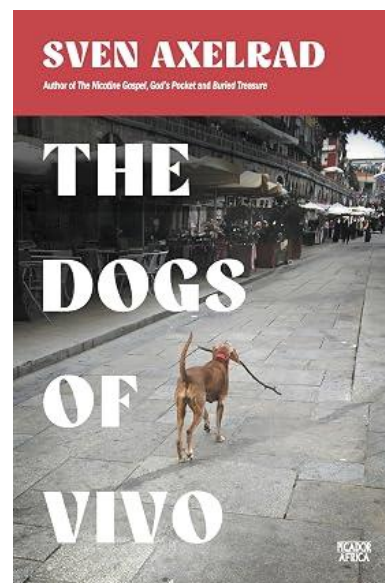
Axelrad's latest novel, *The Dogs of Vivo*, follows three friends in their early twenties: Art, a writer; Felix, a painter; and Maggie, a musician. Their lives take a strange turn when a mysterious stranger, Mr Pijo, arrives in town and begins frequenting *The Mean Monsoon*, the bar where they spend their evenings. He offers the three friends everything they could possibly want. Naturally, there's a catch. Nothing comes without a price.

When I talk about the book, I jokingly offer up an alternative title: *A Writer, an Artist, and a Musician Walk into a Bar. And Then the Devil Comes to Town*.

The novel is set in Axelrad's fictional town of Vivo, which readers of his earlier work might recognise from his previous books, *Buried Treasure* and *God's Pocket*. Axelrad has a vivid imagination, that you can sense in his sepia-coloured prose. You can feel the eerie streets at night, and the lurking presence behind every corner. But it isn't all doom and gloom. Vivo presents us with moments of levity and lightness. It allows us our joy and indulges our fantasies for our young characters. Then, very gently, Axelrad takes it back and shows you what the world is truly capable of.

Axelrad's characters are his greatest strength. At the centre of *The Dogs of Vivo* are Arturo, or Art for short, a writer who works in a bookshop alongside a dog who happens to share his name; Maggie, a musician whose ambitions leave little room for much else; and Felix, a painter who has recently become homeless and avoids sleeping on the streets by finding a different woman to sleep with each night. His slippers beneath their bed are, quite literally, his way of securing a roof over his head.

They are an odd, complicated, deeply affectionate trio. They are inseparable and madly in love with one another, though the nature of that love shifts between the platonic and the romantic. And then, of course, there are the dogs. But the title's *Dogs of Vivo* ultimately belongs just as much to these three friends: fiercely loyal, occasionally ridiculous and willing to do almost anything for one another.



That devotion is what makes them so easy to love. Before anything else happens to them, before Mr Pijo arrives and their lives begin to unravel, they are simply three young people who have found one another and built their own little world together.

Axelrad's novels – that's four in as many years now – are a highlight of the South African publishing calendar, and something I look forward to every year. I cannot wait to see where he takes us next.

Thanks to *Book Choice* reviewer Riley Herbert-Henry

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