

# Teen Nation

## Channel O presenters on HIV

By NJOKI KARUOYA

South African Channel O presenters Tonderayi Katsande, 25, who is better known as Teekay, and Grace, 17, are in town.

If you've been watching late night KTN programmes or are connected to MNet's DSTV channel, then you must be aware of this 24-hour music channel with a funky image whose target are African youths aged between 16-24. Channel O covers a wide spectrum of musical genres including hip-hop, jazz, rap, soul, gospel, reggae and soul. This channel is unique because of its wide range of international music, but particularly for its forum of pre-

senting African music from all over the continent, including Nigerian Juju, Ghanaian Highlife, Zairian Soukous and Lingala and South African Kwaito. Teekay presents three shows - Nasty (that shows the latest in rap and hip-hop), Wicked (showing the best reggae music from roots, culture and ragga) and Shout It Out, a request programme that is interactive between the presenters and the viewers through their letters.

Grace, on the other hand, presents four shows, namely Sistas or Divas Divine that pays tribute to top female musicians, a weekly gospel show Shine On, Fuse which presents a world-beat countdown of Afro-centric music and Shout It Out with Teekay.

During this week, to commemorate the World Aids Day on December 1, the Channel O presenters had a special message for the youth. They urged their viewers to wear the red ribbon, an AIDS campaign initiative that seeks to bring awareness about the AIDS scourge and its victims.

"Wearing the red ribbon is supposed to make the wearer have a more positive attitude towards AIDS patients. In spite of the publicity, many people still view AIDS patients with distrust. They still fear to greet or hug them, thinking that they will get AIDS if they do, which is untrue. The red ribbon signifies that you understand the disease and are willing to help in any way possible," Grace explained.

Grace and Teekay say that they occasionally talk about safer sex on their shows.

"We have learnt, through experi-



Teekay presents three shows

ence and letters from our viewers that young people find it more comfortable hearing about sex from their peers, not from older people, because they feel uncomfortable," said Teekay.

In this respect, the duo always manage to inject cautionary advice about safe sex, abstaining until marriage and pursuing dreams and career choices.

"Dream big," advises Teekay. "The sky is the limit. Never give up on your dreams. Instead, work very hard at trying to achieve them. Don't just sit there and dream, go out there and start working towards the fulfilment of your dreams."

Grace agrees, "No matter what difficulties you come across, try again and again. Never give up."



Grace: 'No matter what difficulties you come across, try again and again. Never give up.'

## National youth drama world Aids day held

By AGHAN DANIEL

It was young talent at work last week at the Kenya National Theatre during the Kenya National Youth World Aids Day Drama Festival.

During the two days, the youth expressed their feelings about Aids through drama, dance, chorals and oral narrations. Notable were Nakuru Playmakers' Oluoch Madiang and Coast's Andrew Msakhale and Nairobi's Joel Otuko. The message the youth kept coming up with, was that they wanted to demystify the Aids scourge through the performing arts.

Coast province emerged the winners, with the best female dancer trophy going to Maureen Atieno of Mombasa Polytechnic and the best actor trophy went to young Mohammed Ali. Best actress was also Coast's Salome Nyoike of St. Luke's. Joel Otuko with his oral narrative 'O Mundu Khu Mundu' about a womaniser won in his category. Oluoch Madiang who moved the crowd with his solo verse - "Just Go and Ask from Under" took the second runnerup with his oral narrative - "I ran away."

Overall the standards were very high and the message about Aids was well presented.

Ngara Girls were exceptional in their solo verse and in chorals while Kivaa Primary School from Machakos sent the audience wild with cheers when they declared that "Maisha si nguo, utaomba mtu."

The festival which is sponsored by USAID and organised by Artnet Waves, an NGO based in Nairobi's Kawangware Estates is held annually.



Participants from Rift Valley telling it through a dance

## How I contracted AIDS

I am a young man aged 22, who is living with Aids. I was infected by my former employers wife. It all started after my father's death in 1993 which was also the year I sat for my 'O' levels. I had no alternative but to look for minor jobs so as to be able to sustain myself and my younger brothers, as our father left us with nothing.

Then I met this woman who had a small hardware shop and she offered me a kibarua.

While working there, she became very friendly and even promised to help me get a permanent job. She would ask me to wait for her in the late hours of the evening. I soon found myself in her trap because she wanted sex and I was too scared to say no. After sometime, I started experiencing unusual things in my body. I became very weak, and my left thigh bone became very painful as if something was eating it from inside. A rash then appeared on my face and the texture of my hair even changed.

I consulted a doctor who ran some tests and told me that I had contracted Aids. He gave me an injection and some medication worth shs1,200. I had no money as I was unable to go to work due to illness.

During that crying period, I could not sleep

at night. I was so confused I didn't know what to do. I had no money, no one to ask for help and so I decided to suffer in silence. People who knew me thought that I had gone mad. I lost contact with my friends as I spent most of my time in the house. Some malicious people started spreading rumours about my illness in the neighbourhood.

I have written to some NGO's and some medical assistance organisations but no letter has ever been replied. I continue to feel the same pain in my body with persistent headaches in the early hours of the morning, some noises in my left ear with persistent diarrhoea. I am a young man fighting hunger, poverty and a deadly disease. The little money I get usually goes to food so I cannot afford any medication as sometimes I would also go without food. I have tried to get some employment but all my efforts have been fruitless. My wish is to attend the World Aids day conference, as I am a young man who has seen, experienced and also known what AIDS is all about.

Aids sufferer

## Open your heart to HIV sufferers

By C. Mandi

Do you know anyone who is HIV positive? What is your natural reaction? Do you shun them and talk behind their back? Well such behaviour only alienates HIV sufferers. Think about how you would feel if you knew someone

were going to die soon and that people were avoiding you because of it. Sounds ridiculous, doesn't it? Well that's what an Aids sufferer goes through. It's a sort of double punishment. Not only do they have this incurable disease to live with, they are ostracised by their friends and relatives.

Any person suffering from Aids is still a human being. They still need love, affection and friendship. They don't want to be alone. They want other people to still share a smile, a chat or a hug with them. They want to know that they can still contribute meaningfully to the society in which they live. They want to be a part of us.

You can't get Aids by shaking hands with someone who is infected, let alone hugging them and certainly not by talking to them. Remember that of all the things we can do for someone, the greatest of these is to let them know they are appreciated.



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