

TPD

The final curtain



End of an era

As Ticketpro Dome prepares to close



It is with a heavy heart with that RX Venue Management announced the sale of The Ticketpro Dome by its owners, Sasol Pension Fund, to a third party with no ties to the event space.

This is another devastating blow for the exhibitions, events and entertainment industry from Covid-19 and its ban on public gatherings, and must now walk away from 20 years of being the management company of South Africa's largest multipurpose indoor arena.

"The sale of The Ticketpro Dome is heartbreaking for our industry," says Carol Weaving, MD of Reed Exhibitions (RX) Africa. "It has been home to a multitude of international concerts and events in South Africa, and this development will undoubtedly leave a huge void.

"Unfortunately, as we are only the managing company, we were unable to change the outcome of Sasol Pension Fund selling the venue due to force majeure."

continue pg2...



TPD

The final curtain

...continued

End of an era

As Ticketpro Dome prepares to close



A tribute to memories...

Cynthia Penprase, Portfolio Director, Ticketpro Dome, notes how devastating a blow this is for her and the team: "I have been part of the dome through its various naming iterations - Dome @ Northgate, MTN Sundome, The Coca-Cola dome and The Ticketpro Dome.

"The dome was my home from home. I have built relationships with sponsors, clients, suppliers and partners, all of which became solid friendships. We supported each other through the years and during a very trying 2020.

"Sadly," says Penprase, "with the lack of government support through the pandemic and the delay in the vaccination program along with uncertainty and constant lockdowns, the Sasol Pension Fund decided to sell."

The Ticketpro Dome leaves a legacy of phenomenal international and local events, she says. "My personal favourites were Lord of the Dance, rAge, Clarkson, Hammond & May, Savage Garden, Katy Perry, Andrea Bocelli and so many other concerts. So many fond memories will live on and I thank everyone who has been our anchor and support over the last 23 years."

The Ticketpro Dome solidified global recognition with international and local companies and promoters throughout several industries and will be remembered as an iconic venue across the events, exhibitions, and entertainment sectors in South Africa.

The popularity of the venue is evident by the 14 consecutive "Best Concert Venue" wins as hosted by Leisure Option – Best of Joburg awards and the 3 PMR Africa's – "Best venue in events and exhibitions" category wins and has seen millions of people through the doors over the last two decades.

The Dome opened on 8 April 1998 with a concert by Diana Ross, which was attended by over 15 000 people with a special guest appearance by the late former President Nelson Mandela.

Over the years, the venue played host to top international music stars such as Pink, Katy Perry, Lionel Richie, Lauren Hill, Pharrell Williams, Celine Dion and Michael Buble. On the local front, artists like Prime Circle, The Parlotones, Lira, Tonya De Lazy, Black Coffee, and Soweto Gospel Choir have all graced the stage. South African rapper Cassper Nyovest become the first local artist to sell out the Dome when some 20 000 tickets were sold before the event, suitably billed "Fill Up The Dome".

On the exhibition front, The Dome has been home to a variety of well-loved consumer and trade shows such as Homemakers Fair, rAge, Mama Magic Baby Show, Fire and Feast Food Festival, Mediatech Africa and Africa Automation Technology Fair.

In 2017, the NBA Africa Games were held at the venue, and WWE International and Disney on Ice has also thrilled audiences there.

In 2020, the Ticketpro Dome launched the successful Hybrid Studio in response to the global pandemic. "Our sector has been extraordinarily innovative in transforming our offerings to accommodate online participation," says Projeni Pather, Chairperson of the Association of African Exhibition Organisers.

Sadly, while the hybrid model began to show great promise, there was not enough time for the initiative to really prove its worth.

continue pg3...



End of an era

As Ticketpro Dome prepares to close



The economic impact of events

According to recent News 24 article noted that cultural and creative services sector contribute more than R74.4 billion a year to the South African economy. They also have a multiplier impact as they generate tourism and increase retail spending in host city economies.

Furthermore, they contribute towards the production of goods and services for consumption at events and in host cities and create employment for unskilled and semi-skilled workers and low-income households. Taking all this into account, the cultural economy accounted for R241.8 billion or an equivalence of 5.6% of GDP.

Ismail Mahomed, Director of the Centre for Creative Arts at University of KwaZulu-Natal, said recently: "Government has failed miserably in serving the arts, cultural and entertainment sector right through the lockdown period by not establishing an Advisory Committee of industry specialists that could work together with the Department of Sports, Arts & Culture to develop and implement a relief, rehabilitation and recuperation strategy for the sector."

"The Department of Arts & Culture can no longer continue to operate with its head in the sand and ignore the economic challenges of the sector and the important contribution of the sector to South Africa's economy and to the country's wellbeing."

The Ticketpro Dome is the latest casualty of blanket-restrictions on gatherings, and the consequence of its closure is sure to have ripple effect on the South African economy.

While it is too late for The Ticketpro Dome, RXAfrica hopes its final curtain call be a sober reminder that there needs to be drastic rethink around how the South African government views this culturally and financially rich industry.

The official handover of the venue will be on 7 September 2021.

