

tion, 70% of the work was sold — small (300 mm x 300 mm) pieces beginning at R16 500 each, large canvases going for R175 000, and those in between commanding prices of R48 000, R85 000 and R132 000.

The exhibition — magnificently illuminated by a galaxy of metal halide lights freshly imported from Germany — includes 26 oil and acrylic paintings on canvas and four life-size painted cast aluminium sculptures, who are members of what the artist calls the “hominid gang”.

Having previously created sculptures from found metal objects, oil and acrylic paste on polymer wood, steel, resin, fibreglass and bronze, Du Toit was keen to try his hand at something new for the 2010 exhibition. Then again, the process he chose to create the ungainly looking gang — casting metal in sand, which he undertook in the Bronze Age Art Foundry in Simon’s Town — is more than 4 000 years old.

“It was an exciting process,” says the artist, who is due to head off to London shortly to create “art on a plate” with Justin Saunders, head chef of Stellenbosch winemakers, Gary and Cathy Jordan’s increasingly acclaimed High Timber restaurant on the banks of the Thames. “I learnt all that I could about casting aluminium alloy in the sand, experimented as much as I could before I began — you have to understand the steps so that you can break the rules — and then had the time of my life creating the sculptures.”

The “Key Elements” exhibition will be followed by a collaborative exhibition that will include the work of heavyweights Willie Bester, Robert Slingsby and Norman Catherine. This will be followed later in the year by solo exhibitions by Bester in July and, in September, Slingsby.

“The idea is to make the gallery into a destination that attracts serious art collectors because they know they will have access to the work of some of SA’s most collectible artists,” says Barnard. “The way to achieve this is to build relationships with the country’s most sought after artists. It’s an exciting endeavour.”

And there’s no doubting it, it is an endeavour he’s putting as much heart into as one would expect of a Barnard.

Penny Haw

THEATRE

Plane hilarious

Boeing Boeing is a fast-paced, stylised farce set in the 1960s — in a time of changing social and sexual norms.

Bernhard (Robert Fridjhon), an architect living in Paris, enjoys the love of three fiancées who are all air hostesses with different airlines — American Gloria (Jo Galloway), Italian Gabriella (Bronwyn Leigh Gottwald) and German Gretchen (Nina Lucy Wylde).

Using their conflicting schedules to ensure they never meet, Bernhard is

The play passes in a flurry of slamming doors, *Allo allo*-style accents and increasingly convoluted scheming. But skilful direction and execution mean that it never enters the realm of the ridiculous. *Boeing Boeing* is naughty but never smutty, and the audience roars with laughter throughout.

Committie, with his background in one-man comedy shows, shines as the harried and harassed Robert. But it is an ensemble cast, the success of which rests



BOEING BOEING

Directed by: Alan Swerdlow
At: Pieter Toerien Theatre, Montecasino, Fourways, Sandton, until May 2. Theatre on the Bay, Cape Town, from May 5 to June 5

Ensemble Clockwise from left: Robert Fridjhon, Nina Lucy Wylde, Louise Saint-Claire, Jo Galloway, Bronwyn Leigh Gottwald, and Alan Committie

comfortable with his unique situation. But when a faster Boeing is introduced, the perfect plan falls apart and predictable hilarity ensues.

Playboy Bernhard gets an unexpected visitor in the form of his innocent and clumsy cousin, Robert (Alan Committie), who is awed by Bernhard’s domestic arrangements. But when Robert agrees to stay as Bernhard’s guest, he, together with Bernhard’s grumpy and oh-so-French maid, Bertha (Louise Saint-Claire), must juggle the comings and goings of the three oblivious, love-struck fiancées.

on the interplay of six strong actors who bounce off each other with practised ease.

Eye candy abounds — from the rich styling of Bernhard’s pad to the uniformed hostesses, complete with bouffant beehives. The women show off stunning looks, well-honed performances and good comic timing.

Producer Pieter Toerien and director Alan Swerdlow have a hit on their hands. The set and costuming are perfect for the swinging ’60s, and solid performances all round carry the plot forward at a terrific pace.

Kate Thompson