

THE MARKET BUZZ



THE CEO'S STALL

This month was quite a busy one for us at the MTF. Generally, August puts most of us in a tailspin as we try to navigate the various women's celebration programmes. I had the privilege to represent the MTF at two important events. Firstly, I formed part of the GIBS Women Meet Arts conference, which was aimed at empowering women in the arts with strategic, managerial and operational tools to thrive in their space. Being invited at such an incredible occasion not only reaffirmed the positive brand of the MTF as a one-stop shop for arts and culture, but also provided us with a rich opportunity to benchmark ourselves against other corporate organisations.

Another humbling invitation came from the Duma Ndlovu Actors Academy, requesting me to deliver a speech at their annual Lifetime Achievement Awards, which were also held here at the MTF. Being linked with the Academy presented us with a great brand value exchange, which I hope will be maintained in the coming years. I would like to thank the amazing people at the MTF for dedicating themselves to making this organisation an attractive partner, and to all our stakeholders for supporting our initiatives.

At this point, I'd like to share just two take-aways from the past financial year's objectives, which we continue to pursue in the fourth year of our Medium- Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) period ending in 2025.

In general, I am proud to report that we are on track to achieve, and in some cases, surpass, our targets. Our diverse and dynamic programming has drawn attention and appreciation from a wide range of audiences. The increased



engagement is a clear indication that our efforts to create accessible, relevant, and high-quality productions are resonating well with the public. However, there is still work to be done to reach our ambitious audience targets fully.

Unfortunately, the economic climate in South Africa continues to pose significant challenges for our fundraising efforts. Despite this, we remain determined to secure the necessary resources to sustain our operations and programs. Our team has been proactive in seeking alternative income sources, resulting in self-generated income totalling R7.9 million this year, up from R5.3 million in the previous year. This is a commendable achievement and a step towards greater financial sustainability.

As we continue creating an integrated network of artistic expressions, and cultivating an art-conscious marketplace that enables creatives to make a living, your loyal support, partnership and influence remain instrumental to our success.

Tshiamo Mokgadi
CEO: The Market Theatre Foundation



Featured: Legendary Andrew Buckland dazzling audiences during the successful run of his iconic one-hander, *The Ugly Noo Noo*, at the Market Theatre.

The Ugly Noo Noo opens to critical acclaim



Andrew Buckland has enjoyed a successful season for his timeless piece, *The Ugly Noo Noo*.

The opening night of Andrew Buckland's *The Ugly Noo Noo* was one for the books. The night was filled with nostalgic vibrations for the older generation, and a fresh introduction to this iconic piece of theatre for the younger ones. The incisive and funny Buckland performed to a very diverse audience in the packed Mannie Manim Theatre, scoring critical acclaim from all genders, races and age groups. *The Ugly Noo Noo* tells the story of a man's encounter with an insect. Not just any insect but the notorious Parktown Prawn which inhabited the suburbs of Johannesburg particularly during the 80's and 90's. Using sharp satirical commentary, an explosive performance style and Buckland's unique stage presence, this play takes the audience on an unforgettable journey

through the compost heaps and dark underbelly of suburban life in the big city. It examines in splitting comic detail the relationship between fear and power in our everyday lives. The MTF's Artistic Director, Greg Homann, described the return of *The Ugly Noo Noo* to the Market Theatre as a privilege, owing to Buckland's timeless genius. "This season provides an opportunity for an audience who know the work to relive its brilliance, while giving a new audience a chance to witness the unique skills and stage presence of this elder of South African Theatre," he stated. For the duration of its run, which started on the 15th of August and closed on the 1st of September 2024, the show continued to attract good numbers, a testament to its endurance.

Joburg's bright young minds battle it out at Spelling Bee Competition



The Windybrow Arts Centre's second annual spelling bee was a life-changing experience.

On 24 August 2024, the Windybrow Arts Centre hosted its second annual Spelling Bee Competition, in partnership with Nando's and the I Am Camp. The Spelling Bee forms part of the Windybrow Arts Centre's Homework Support Programme, which is aimed at promoting a culture of reading and writing among students in and around the inner-city of Johannesburg. Kai Crooks-Chissano, Executive Director of Camp I Am, mentored the Windybrow Arts Centre and other participating organisations, and also came up with the word list, taken from the CAPS curriculum.

A total of 32 learners, including Princess Chakanyuka who was the inaugural winner in 2023, participated in the competition. Ontlholetse Dimema from Enda's Secondary School was crowned champion, while Berea Primary School's Mbongeni Tshabalala and Watershed Technical School's Refiloe Hlophe came second and third position respectively. Winners walked away with prizes

that included meal vouchers from Nando's and East Gate Mall shopping vouchers.

The competition attracted interest from the media and public at large, featuring in publications such as The Star, City Press and The Citizen, as well as 702 talk radio and television show, Playroom.

According to Gerard Bester, head of the Windybrow Arts Centre, this year's competition focused on more than just getting the spelling right. "We've introduced teacher and facilitator training workshops in collaboration with Camp I Am, inspiring schools and organisations to not only participate in our Spelling Bee but also to host their own events. Additionally, we conducted a confidence-building workshop for all finalists, equipping them with the psychological skills to participate in the competition," Bester shared, adding that the Centre continues to act as a hub for connection and curiosity, cultivating the hidden creativity of the city's children.

An adapted review of Amaxelegu by Xolani Tembu



Nambitha Mpumlwana plays Mama Priscilla in Amaxelegu. Photo: Thandile Zwelibanzi.

It is the 2020s in unfriendly and disengaged Philipi, one of Cape Town's youngest townships with no more than forty years of history. A visibly tired and sluggish Mama Priscilla (Nambitha Mpumlwana) who doubles as the show's narrator and a domestic helper with over forty years of experience, opens up her house and life to the audience. She relays her life story and mentions how she now longs for home, the Eastern Cape, more than she ever has before. She introduces one of her offspring, Azola (Luxolo Ndabeni), a Gen Z that lays half naked on an unmade bed, putting in screen-time on his cellphone. His room is littered with pieces of clothing that his mother ever so often walks in to gather and bin for laundry day. He is seemingly the sort of person whose mother cleans after. Elsewhere in the city enters Thabisa (Shalima Mkongi) an accented Gen Z with an equally cluttered room carpeted by her own dirty pieces of clothing. She is mightily opinionated though some might say, within reason. She is also lying on an unmade bed casually swiping left on her cellphone screen. The audience quickly

learns she is on a dating app as she eventually swipes right on Azola's profile. What follows is a rollercoaster of lives half-lived, burdened by the pressures of Gen Z life, love, sex, shattered dreams and hearts in the age of polyamory. Under the incredible direction of celebrated author and director Qondisa James, the cast moves in mesmerizing fashion as it delivers this showcase. A combination of well-timed transitions and apposite lighting effortlessly place and immerse the agreeable audience in the lives of these characters, perhaps with a sense of familiarity too, for those who can relate to the complexities of present-day relationships. Congratulations must go out to the team for carrying out this beautiful show in the manner that they do, particularly with the many difficult subjects it addresses. With the many successes that South Africa has borne witness to over the past few months, it would truly be un-South African to miss this beautifully put together short run.

Source: Culture Review

Inside the dramatic world of Cheraé



Cheraé Halley is the Head of The Market Theatre Laboratory.

Student-centredness, experimentation, continuous development and encouragement of emerging artists to take risks are some of the values that make The Market Theatre Foundation an exciting space for Cheraé Halley, Head: The Market Theatre Laboratory. "This is the kind of educational institution I am interested in being a part of, one that warrants success first and one that puts students at the centre of the work," says Cheraé, who has worked as a lecturer and coordinator of post-graduate courses at the University of the Witwatersrand in practices such as Drama in Education, Theatre as Activism, Theatre of the Oppressed and Playback Theatre. According to the actor, theatre-maker and applied theatre facilitator, a good day as Head of the Lab includes discussing her artists' dreams and visions, having her team enthusiastically engaging in their work and tearing up at the soothing voices of students in the singing classes. Outside of The Lab, Cheraé co-directs Drama for Life Playback Theatre, Africa's only accredited school of Playback Theatre, which uses storytelling as a tool to build empathy and restore communities. She

has also collaborated with Dailey Innovations Inc. in the U.S, using Playback Theatre to foster diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace. Again, Cheraé sits on the board of the International Playback Theatre Network (IPTN) as the only representative from Africa, and chaired the steering committee that organised the IPTN Conference that took place in South Africa, in December 2023. But Cheraé is not all about work, even though it's hard to tell a fun activity and work apart for someone who lives and breathes their work. "I read whenever I get a moment to, and no – not scripts. I read mostly for fun and for personal development of my craft and interests, but my greatest joy is found in the kitchen with the intention of breaking bread with friends in my home," reveals the proud mom of 15 plants. As an expert in the field of Applied Drama and Theatre, coupled with a Masters in Dramatic Arts from the University of the Witwatersrand, Cheraé has been working as an independent contractor across communities in South Africa building awareness and creating dialogue using different types of theatre in addressing issues such as education, HIV/AIDS, disability, LGBTQIA+ rights and more.

Market Photo Workshop hosts photographers from different African countries



A total of eight photojournalists took part in the photojournalism workshop. Photo: Matsedisio Dichaba.

The Market Photo Workshop welcomed 10 photographers from different regions of Africa for a six-day Documentary Practice and Visual Journalism Workshop, held in Johannesburg, from 21 – 26 August 2024. The workshop was a result of the World Press Photo Foundation's groundbreaking partnership with the Market Theatre Foundation. It was aimed at empowering photojournalists and documentary photographers in Africa to succeed in the industry, understand the ever-changing social and digital dynamics, and conduct themselves ethically. The workshop focused on building skills for long and sustainable careers in photojournalism and documentary photography through practical assignments and personal projects. Participants

will also had the opportunity to be involved in the development of a newspaper, including the publishing of one's own work in its pages. Some of the topics covered were photojournalism work focused on social justice identity and human rights development, ethical storytelling in Africa, visual communication for social change, changing practices of photojournalists in the digital age, the importance of investigative journalism in the age of disinformation, as well as photography and the ethics of representation, among others. "The potential for stories for Africa, from Africa and to the rest of the world's media becomes exponential through this partnership," Tshiamo Mokgadi, CEO: Market Theatre Foundation, said.

Moments from the Market



Andrew Buckland delivered an unforgettable performance.



Actors Luxolo Ndabeni and Shalima Mkongi during Amaxelegu.



Windybrow Arts Centre's spelling bee.



Zoe Modiga's first show at The Market Theatre left audiences asking for more.



Liso the Musician and fans after her show at the Market Theatre Laboratory.



Participants refining their work at the photojournalism workshop.

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