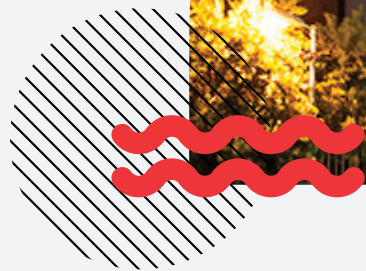




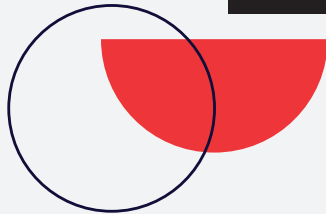
THE
MARKET
THEATRE
FOUNDATION



**THE MARKET
BUZZ**



**APRIL/MAY
2026**



THE
MARKET
PHOTO
WORKSHOP



THE
MARKET
THEATRE



THE
MARKET
THEATRE
LABORATORY



THE
WINDYBROW
ARTS CENTRE



'Under the shade of a tree I sat and wept' actor Kensiwe Tshabalala on stage



MEET THE MARKET THEATRE FOUNDATION COUNCIL



Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Hon. Gayton McKenzie, appointed the new Council in terms of Section 5(1)(a) of the Cultural Institutions Act (Act 119 of 1998).



Florence Masebe
Chairperson of Council

Dr Siphe Potelwa

Vanesa Pretorius

Shenay Lottering

Bernedette Muthien

Mamollo Miya

Rami Chuene

Francois Isak Smith

Nalini Maharaj

Editor-in-Chief: Lusanda Zokufa. **Copywriter and Editor:** Ace Moloji. **Layout and Design:** Zuko Ntshidi

For The Market Theatre Foundation:

CEO: Tshiamo Mokgadi. **CFO:** Devi Padayachee. **COO:** Lekgetho Makola. **Artistic Director:** Greg Homann.

BOLD PROGRAMMING FOR THE MARKET THEATRE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY REVEALED



Pictured: Actor Billy Langa on the cover of MTF's 2026 programme launch.

On 27 March 2026, The Market Theatre Foundation launched its 2026 artistic year across all its business units. The launch was held at Gramadoelas, and was attended by the institution's senior management, key stakeholders, the media and council members. Delivering the keynote address, Greg Homann – Artistic Director: The Market Theatre Foundation – highlighted The Market Theatre role in the struggle against apartheid.

“For 50 years, most vitally during our country's darkest years, our stages filled the emptiness of time with the weight of story. It took brave theatre-makers, volunteers, workers, patrons, and many other partners to hold space for a truly free, democratic, non-racial South Africa while it was still just a dream, so that when it became a reality, we all knew its familiarity,” Homann remarked.

Sharing bold programming for The Market Theatre, supported by The Market Photo Workshop, The Windybrow Arts Centre and The Market Theatre Laboratory, Homann stated that the year-long anniversary celebrations won't be a revival of the past, but a new look into the future of theatre. This artistic curation will be driven to a greater extent by women-of-colour playwrights, such as Amy Jephta, Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni, Shantal Stanfield and Qondiswa James, among others.

Jephta, who has been nominated for the prestigious Susan Smith Blackburn Prize that honours women+writing for the stage, will present her play, A GOOD HOUSE. Tiisetso's newly commissioned work, RISE '76, aims to reframe June 16, 1976 by placing ordinary lives at the centre of its happenings. Qondiswa's AMAXELEGU, which ran at The Market Theatre in 2024, has made a return, captivating audiences in Cape Town with tales of contemporary 'mjolo' before it jets off for an international run.

Stanfield will be one of the voices driving The Market Theatre's inaugural Queer Festival, which will amplify LGBTQ+ voices, strengthen representation and access and ignite a cultural shift.

Homann reaffirmed the relevance of The Market Theatre in post-struggle South Africa, saying the space continues to showcase works that critique our contemporary state of affairs, hold power accountable and present astute reflections on the society we're living in.

“As we move into the next 50 years, we remain committed to programming that continues to truly reflect the demographics of our country and a curatorial philosophy that advances our founding members' vision of a space for all. This is the spirit that gave life to this majestic institution, and it will continue to guide how we do things moving forward.”

The full programme is available for download on www.markettheatre.co.za.



MTF HOSTS SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCE EVENINGS



Pictured: MTF CEO Tshiamo Mokgadi addressing guests at the Partnership and Cultural Experience Evening.

The Market Theatre Foundation hosted a series of Partnership and Cultural Experience Evenings with the Foundation for Human Rights on 9 April 2026, as well as the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation and the Nelson Mandela Foundation on the 16th and 17th of April, respectively.

The experience was curated by Nomad Concepts in partnership with Le Creatives, Klooster Eberbach, Baron Knyphausen, Pflugler, Eagle Ford Motors, TATA Motors and Urban Zulu. This as The Market Theatre celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, a crucial milestone underscoring the institution's resilience, agility and consistency.

Soundscaping the experience were jazz musicians Yonela Mnana and Kumkanikazi.

More than just a gathering, the night offered meaningful engagement with culture, honest reflection on the state of human rights today and a shared conviction in the power of the arts to amplify unheard voices and spotlight hidden figures.

Speaking on the first night held alongside the Foundation for Human Rights, Chief Executive Officer of The Market Theatre Foundation Tshiamo Mokgadi said partnering with The Market Theatre was about investing in people and the stories that shaped their place in society.

"This institution," continued Mokgadi, "has never been built by infrastructure alone—it has always been built by people. And tonight is about people. It is not just a dinner. It is not just a performance. It is an intentional space where organisations like The Market Theatre and the Foundation for Human Rights come together with individuals who have the ability not only to appreciate the arts, but to shape its future."

The sustainability of institutions like The Market Theatre Foundation depended on relationships anchored on shared values.

Throughout the three evenings, guests were treated to an intimate viewing of a powerful and thought-provoking exhibition featuring works by Justice Mukheli, Fhatuwani Mukheli, Siphamandla EX, Steve Maphoso, Thabiso Dakamela, Toni Mac, Tshepiso Seleke.

Again, they watched "Under the Shade of a Tree I Sat and Wept", a piercing and irreverent new play that explores national reconciliation and public forgiveness through South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Kosovo's Movement for the Reconciliation of Blood Feuds.

The performance was introduced by Artistic Director Greg Homann, who also served as the play's dramaturg. Staged in the 30th year since the TRC – chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu – began its business, the play tackled the complexity of forgiveness, reconciliation and healing.

The TRC's 30th anniversary coincides with 50 years of The Market Theatre being "a custodian of history, a space of resistance, and a driver of contemporary cultural dialogue," according to Mokgadi.

Foundation for Human Rights Executive Director Dr. Zaid Kimmie stressed the power of memory, noting, "As we age out as a new generation, the past really is a different place. And part of our task is to continue to bring that past and our history to people. The world outside, as we've seen, is a grim and dark place, and getting grimmer and darker. And that should serve as a warning to us that as bad as things may look, they can get substantially worse, and we have to put in some hard work."

Janet Jobson from the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation echoed Mokgadi's remarks, describing The Market Theatre as a space that "refused to look away" but boldly held the mirror to a country that couldn't dare look at itself. Archbishop Tutu, she told the room, "loved people who refused to look away" like The Market Theatre's decades-long record.

Jobson was addressing the second night of the Cultural Experience, with a strong focus on the role of Archbishop Tutu in championing healing, justice and reconciliation both as an activist and the face of the TRC process.

The third and final episode of the evenings was held on Friday, 17 April 2026. It brought together the nation-building and reconciliation legacy of Nelson Mandela, as well as The Market Theatre's anti-apartheid resistance in one room. Like previous experiences, the night offered rich moments for reflection on current affairs, while reimagining a prosperous future for all.

Addressing guests, Mbongiseni Buthelezi – Chief Executive Officer of the Nelson Mandela Foundation – said more work still needed to be done to realise President Mandela's dream for a better life for all. "In South Africa today, we are still confronted with inequality, division, and unresolved pain," Buthelezi said. "Art has the power to hold up a mirror to society, not to shame us, but to ask: who are we becoming, and who do we still need to be?"

As critical conversations simmered and networks were formed, visceral artworks that blended photography and paintings lingered on the walls, beckoning everyone to remember not to forget.

"The exhibition expresses the essence of presence, and the presence expresses the essence of truth. If you go through all these images, you will see little glimpses of moments that you remember," stated creative director Kenosi Malebye.



Pictured: Janet Jobson, CEO of the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation.



Pictured: Siwe Hashe.

As The Market Theatre turns 50, we look back to celebrate not only the remarkable impact the space has had on South Africa's theatrical landscape, but also the people who dedicated their long years to making The Market Theatre the place to go to.

"To celebrate this crucial milestone, we will honour the people who turned this humble space into an internationally renowned theatre of struggle," said Artistic Director Greg Homann at the unveiling of 50th Year Programme on 27 March 2026.

This is because even though our stages are internationally renowned for showcasing bold works, it's the people supporting the creative vision who tell the most unforgettable stories.

One of them Siwe Hashe, or the Queen of Newtown. Whether you're new or a friend of The Market, Siwe's smile will meet

you with an authentic aura of home that settles you down, assuring you that you're more than just footfall.

Siwe's story bears testimony to what happens when organisations build legacies for the future from their talent pool. Having joined The Market Theatre for casual gigs in 1995, Siwe quickly proved she was for keeps, and in 1997 became a permanent Box Office Administrator. For a solid 31 years, there has never been anyone else at the Box Office, proof that true quality appreciates with time.

Although the journey hasn't been without challenges, she says her love for people, coupled with an uninterrupted decades-long run, give her the edge not many in customer care have. "Any organisation has its ups and downs," she admits. "I work with a lot of different people, patrons. And everyone has his or her own character, which is where I master how to deal with them differently and positively."

These personalities vary from staff members to international superstars, local artists, politicians, journalists, learners and many others who come to the theatre for a culturally rich experience.

She recalls meeting the iconic Harry Belafonte, who left her with words that changed how she viewed her role in the bigger vision of the institution. "He asked me what was my job title. I told him I am working at the Box Office and he said, 'Please don't take your job light because that's where we make money'. And he hugged me."

In moments of heightened frustration, such as when tickets are sold out, her track record of excelling under immense pressure comes out to play, as different customers try their tricks to get inside the theatre.

"They will always try to put me under pressure and with the experience that I have, I know how to handle the situation with my colleagues whom I'd be working with at that time."

What keeps Siwe humble is understanding the weight of brand representation and the power of strategic touchpoints, a lesson she credits The Market Theatre Foundation for: the ability to "stay calm all the time so that I can be able to resolve whatever situation I come across to present myself and The Market Theatre's image and as I am the face of the company".

For someone who joined the institution in its 20th anniversary when she too was in her early 20s, the 50th year of The Market Theatre is understandably a great accomplishment personally and professionally. "I never thought I would be here this time," she reveals, adding that

she's forever grateful to still be standing despite the harsh realities facing the cultural sector.

And Siwe Hashe would know, having been a prominent player across the Newtown cultural precinct—witnessing with her naked eyes incubated talent at The Market Theatre Laboratory now blossoming on the professional stages of The Market Theatre, and budding jazz bands hitting high notes at some of the country's big festivals.

"The key is to never give up, especially with the work and love that you give for the company you work for. I am super happy to be here and be one of the people to tell the story," she concludes.





Pictured: Precious Lieketseng Eze.

The Market Theatre Foundation has appointed Precious Lieketseng Eze as its new Partnerships Development and Engagement Manager, effective from 1 April 2026.

"We're excited to have Precious as part of our dedicated team. As the cultural sector faces funding challenges, she will lead our efforts in ensuring sustainability, preserving our heritage and optimising our brand legacy through building and maintaining relationships, while attracting investment into our key programmes across all four artistic hubs of The Market Theatre Foundation," said Chief Operations Officer, Lekgetho Makola.

In her new role as The Market Theatre Foundation's Partnerships Development and Engagement Manager, Precious will act as the driving force behind revenue diversification, leveraging the leading cultural institution's brand legacy and social impact to build sustainable, high-value partnerships.

Precious, who joins MTF from the SABC where she was the public broadcaster's National Sales Manager, brings with her over fifteen years of experience across high-value brands.

At the SABC, her record includes accounting for big annual revenue targets, increasing new business, building and managing high-value portfolios with major brands as well as successfully negotiating mutually beneficial contracts.

Her other previous roles include Account Executive at Times Media Group and Senior Account Manager at Kagiso Media, among others.

She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration specialising in Marketing and a Bachelor of Business Studies.



Pictured: The award-winning cast of Afropocalypse gears up for a return season ahead of Swedish tour.

The multi-award-winning ensemble from The Market Theatre Laboratory is geared up for a return season of "Afropocalypse" at The Market Theatre, after setting the stage on fire with energetic performances in 2025 with their professional debut. The play will show from 7 – 23 May 2026 in the Manie Manim Theatre, promising renewed energy and exciting storytelling that has proved to be a joy for audiences of all ages.

This electric and hugely imaginative production follows the journey of a group of storytellers in an apocalyptic setting as they share their fables of hope and resilience. In 2026, "Afropocalypse" scored six Naledi Theatre Awards nominations, winning Best Ensemble. At the 2025 National Arts Festival in Makhanda, the production won the Festival's highest Fringe accolade: the Standard Bank Gold Ovation Award.

Following its return run this Africa Month, the critically acclaimed production will head to Sweden for a showcase at the bibu biennial festival in May. Cherae Halley, Head of The Market Theatre Laboratory, says that "Afropocalypse" being one of only four international productions at this year's festival, selected from nearly 600 applications, is a notable milestone that speaks to the excellence of the production and the institution behind it.

"The Market Theatre Laboratory continues to build its reputation as a leading incubator for the development of skilled theatre-makers, while also producing bold, cutting-edge work. This international recognition is a testament to our brand and legacy. For most of the cast, which is made up of 14 graduates from The Lab's full-time two-year programme, this marks their first international debut, and I could not be more thrilled for this ensemble."

Directed by Daniel Buckland, "Afropocalypse" was originally produced by The Market Theatre Laboratory as their student production in 2024, and has now grown into an award-winning professional production. The brilliantly entertaining work uses physical comedy and tragic magic realism to paint a vivid and vibrant picture of the past, present and speculative future. The stories they tell are inspired by a myriad of South African voices, from Credo Mutwa to Jan Rabie, to our shared collection of modern South African myths and fables, all interwoven in a comical tapestry of catastrophe and release.

"This is a mischievous and vibrant look at South African society through the lens of all the weird and wonderful ways it could come to an end. The show uses dynamic and joyous ensemble storytelling, with bucket loads of physical comedy, puppetry and storytelling, to paint a vivid picture of the fallibility of humankind, as well as the resilience and creativity of the human spirit," states director, Daniel Buckland, continuing: "The story leans into joy and tragedy. The idea of an apocalypse is a dark subject matter and framing, the story itself is not only about that. It's a fun, silly platform to poke fun at contemporary society and take all the delicate bits of South Africa and satirise them."

Greg Homann, Artistic Director at The Market Theatre Foundation, adds: "This is a show young and old should look forward to watching. Its youthful energy combined with imaginative storytelling make for an entertaining tonic best enjoyed with loved ones and in groups. It's a wonderful work, with an impressive balance of dark moments mixed in with pure joy, hope, and theatricality."



The Market Theatre Foundation prioritises employee wellness and a caring culture.

The Market Theatre Foundation has appointed Lyra Wellness as its new employee wellbeing service provider. This appointment is aimed at boosting employee wellness, enhancing productivity and improving culture.

In addition to being available 24 hours, even on public holidays, the support is also offered in all official languages, ensuring access, comfort and representation. Face-to-face consultations are also available, thanks to the company's wide network boasting approximately one thousand counsellors.

Employees can access book appointments using various channels, such as USSD, WhatsApp, email, virtual consultations, direct calls as well as on the user-friendly app.

"Your organisation has partnered with us because they value mental health and your wellbeing. And they want to support you in your work life as well as in your personal life. They know that if you feel supported and valued, then you are more likely to be productive at work and perform better in your role," said du Preez.

Du Preez further emphasised that even though employees often reached out for issues such as mental health, relationships and stress, Lyra. "If you find yourself thriving and excelling in your personal and professional life," she said, "we can also help you keep that momentum through our coaching as well."



Pictured: Ihsaan Haffejee's winning photograph depicting young ballerinas in Soweto.

The year has started in a photogenic way for The Market Photo Workshop. This as several of its alumni and ambassadors feature on internationally recognised, competitive lists.

MPW's alumna, ambassador and partner Prof Sir Zanele Muholi has been announced as the 2026 Hasselblad Award Laureate, the world's largest photography award. This is not just a mention in a checklist but a rich opportunity that impacts careers.

As a recipient of this honour, which comes with prize money, a gold medal and a Hasselblad camera, Zanele will also host a solo exhibition at the Hasselblad Center from 10 October 2026 until 4 April 2027, along with a series of events during Hasselblad Award Week in Gothenburg, including a seminar in collaboration with the County Administrative Board of Västra Götaland, a concert with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, and an artist talk, among others.

Again, six MPW alumni – Fatma Fahmy, Fawaz Oyedeji, Mpumelelo Buthelezi, Tshepiso Mazibuko, Xoliswa Ngwenya and Zinyange Auntony – have been shortlisted for World Press Photo's 2026 Joop Swart Masterclass. Over 200 photographers were nominated for 2026.

This is a truly remarkable achievement that places African storytelling in the global frame. Aimed at encouraging new and diverse approaches to photojournalism and documentary photography, the Joop Swart Masterclass is World Press Photo's flagship education programme.

At a time when independent journalism faces growing challenges, the programme continues to invest in developing photographers and building skills for long and sustainable careers.

"This masterclass is aimed at encouraging new and diverse approaches to photojournalism and documentary photography, the Joop Swart Masterclass is World Press Photo's flagship education programme. At a time when independent journalism faces growing challenges, the programme continues to invest in developing photographers and building skills for long and sustainable careers," says Bandile Gumbi, Head of The Market Photo Workshop.

The Joop Swart masterclass has contributed to the development of generations of visual storytellers for almost three decades. Participants have later gone on to have their work published and exhibited in some of the most prestigious publications and institutions around the world, beyond.

Launched in 1994, the masterclass' core objective is to develop and guide photographers with 5 – 10 years' experience in their practice, with special emphasis on building skills for long and sustainable careers in photojournalism and documentary photography and beyond.

Meanwhile, Ihsaan Haffejee has been announced as one of the 2026 winners of the World Press Photo contest for his photograph depicting young ballerinas in Soweto.

The work zooms into the history of ballet in South Africa, portraying it from a contemporary and not colonial gaze.

Commenting on Haffejee's entry, the jury said: "This image captures a quiet and intimate moment of preparation among young ballerinas in Soweto, South Africa. The strong use of colour, light, and lines reveals a sense of tranquillity and concentration while also hinting at the girls' anticipation. Taken from a local photographer's perspective, the photograph highlights the beauty of everyday life and stands out for its calm, reflective tone."

Haffejee is an alumnus of MPW's Photojournalism and Documentary Photography Programme.

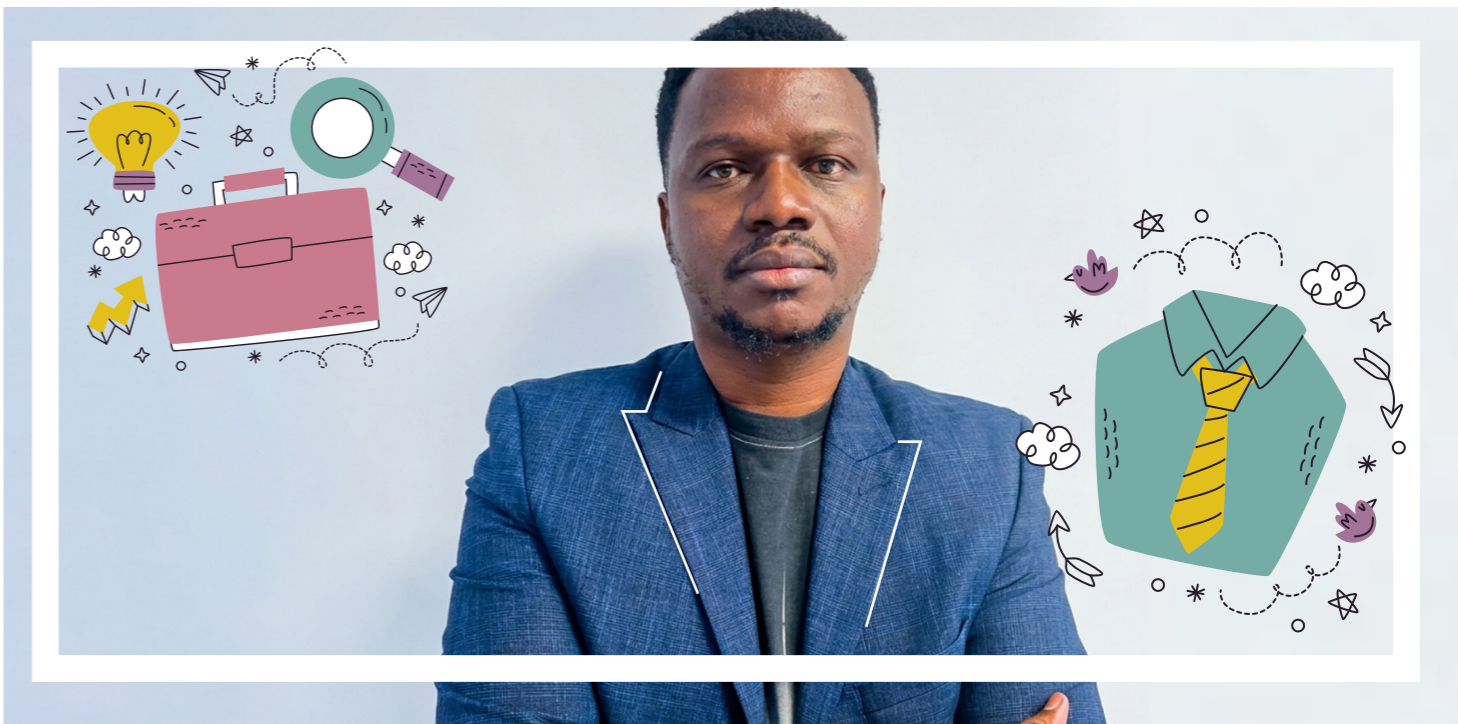
Hasselblad Award
Winner 2026

Zanele Muholi



NEWS

NEW ARCHIVES & COLLECTIONS MANAGER TO STRENGTHEN ARCHIVAL MEMORY



The Market Theatre Foundation (MTF) has appointed accomplished Library, Archives and Information Management professional, Nkadi Solly Mampana, as its Archives & Collections Manager.

Mampana holds a BA (Hons) in Information Science and a BCom in Business Management and Economics from the University of South Africa, supported by proven capabilities in cataloguing, digitisation, metadata management, reporting, governance and compliance in the public sector.

Among others, Mampana's new position will see him play a key role in leading and managing the implementation of the institution's bold Archival Strategy, including the consolidation of archives, access for research, publications, exhibition, heritage projects and public storytelling. Again, he will ensure the long-term protection and care of the collection across the Foundation's four creative hubs—The Market Theatre, The Market Photo Workshop, The Windybrow Arts Centre and The Market Theatre Laboratory.

"Securing and refreshing our institutional memory is not only in our organisational interest, but in the public interest as well," comments Chief Operations Officer, Lekgetho Makola. "Our work as a Foundation touches on the soul of the nation, documenting history as it unfolds through the ordinary details of life. We're therefore excited to welcome Nkadi Mampana and wish him a fulfilling journey with us."

Mampana joins South Africa's leading cultural institution from the City of Matlosana, where he served as Manager: Library, Museum and Heritage. Before then, he worked at the City of Tshwane as Librarian: Information Services, Senior Librarian: Information and Records Services as well as Assistant Director: Library, Archives and Information, respectively.





SKIN WE ARE IN bookings now open.

The Windybrow Arts Centre and Turquoise Harmony Institute, in partnership with ASSITEJ SA and the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), present the return of SKIN WE ARE IN, following its previous successful tours. This thought-provoking piece is set to start touring schools, festivals and community spaces from 10 March 2026, engaging young audiences in meaningful dialogue.

Originally performed by the Kwasha! Theatre Company, the production now features an all-new cast, bringing renewed energy and perspective to a story that remains deeply relevant.

It is directed by Mosie Mamaregane.

SKIN WE ARE IN is based on the acclaimed children's book of the same title, authored by Dr Sindiwe Magona and Professor Nina Jablonski and published by New Africa Books. The book, available in all 11 official South African languages, addresses the historical misuse of science to justify discrimination – particularly during apartheid – and reframes skin colour as something natural, meaningful, and often misunderstood.

Adapted for stage by award-winning playwright for young audiences, Omphile Molusi, the play offers an enriching theatrical experience designed to support conversations around race, belonging and shared humanity.

Through storytelling, music, and audience interaction, the piece introduces complex ideas in an age-appropriate and engaging way. Grounded in scientific research, the production challenges misconceptions about skin colour, emphasising that skin tone accounts for only 0.001% of human biological difference.

"Children are born with the innate ability to want to live, learn and adapt. If anyone can learn to look beyond small differences, to appreciate variety and value people for who they really are, it's them," says Dr Magona, on why the play continues to be an essential viewing for young audiences.

"Performances of Skin We Are In will allow more young people access to valuable research and ideas that already exist in the book," she adds. "It can also inspire teachers to shift conversations around skin colour and help foster healthier attitudes."

Gerard Bester, Head of The Windybrow Arts Centre, thanks Turquoise Harmony Institute and ASSITEJ South Africa for making sure this work reaches more audiences. "This project," Bester continues, "will create public forums through theatre and post-performance workshops, engaging young audiences, teachers and parents, that will challenge social biases and discrimination, foster empathy and create a safe space for necessary dialogue on identity."

For Turquoise Harmony Institute, the production forms part of its broader commitment to social cohesion and inclusive education across diverse communities. Through arts-based learning, the Institute seeks to create safe spaces for young people to explore identity, challenge prejudice, and build empathy. The 2026 tour reflects the Institute's ongoing work with schools to nurture dignity, mutual respect and shared humanity.

ASSITEJ SA is proud to partner with the production in order to reach more schools and youth in Gauteng. As an organisation, our work ensures access to the arts, supports artists, empowers education and connects and advocates for the role of the arts in the lives of children and young people," says Yvette Hardie, Director: ASSITEJ South Africa and Honorary President: ASSITEJ International Association for Theatre and Performing Arts for Children and Young People.

Hardie adds that the play will also be promoted as part of ASSITEJ SA's Take A Child (Teen) to the Theatre Today campaign, which celebrates the World Day of Theatre for Young Audiences on 20 March each year.



Tshepo Madlingozi, Commissioner: Anti-racism, Education and Equality Office at SAHRC, says "Skin We Are In" speaks directly to the Commission's key programmes, such as calling out for the phasing out of state racial classification, sensitivity and diversity training, Schools' Model Code of Conduct as well as the Rights and Responsibility Campaign.

"All of the above are anchored on and inspired by our National Question Campaign, which ultimately seeks to proactively create a South Africa where everyone has a sense of affective and material belongingness. The creative arts have a pivotal role to play in this regard. As an independent constitutional body, we are humbled and honoured to join this wonderful initiative," concludes Commissioner Madlingozi.





Whether you've followed him for years or you're simply in the mood for a seriously good night out, Skhumba at The Market Theatre is set to be one of the standout comedy events on the entertainment calendar.

South Africa's favourite funnyman, Skhumba Hlophe, is ready to light up the stage with a comedy experience fans will not want to miss. From 13 – 15 August 2026, Skhumba takes over the iconic Market Theatre for Skhumba at The Market Theatre, a special solo stand-up showcase packed with brand-new material, big laughs and the unmistakable energy that has made him one of the country's most loved comedians.

This is not just another comedy night—it is Skhumba like audiences have never experienced him before.

For the first time in this format, Skhumba will headline the stage alone, bringing audiences an up-close and personal performance in one of Johannesburg's most celebrated theatre spaces. With no supporting acts and no distractions, it's just Skhumba, his fresh new stories, his signature wit, and a room full of people ready to laugh out loud.

Known for his effortless storytelling, larger-than-life personality, and ability to turn everyday South African moments into unforgettable comedy, Skhumba is stepping into a more intimate and intentional space, giving fans the chance to experience him in a way that feels more direct, more connected, and even more memorable.

And for those who have been waiting for new jokes, new stories and a brand-new live experience, this is the one.

Set against the rich cultural backdrop of The Market Theatre, this limited-run comedy event promises a night of fresh humour, authentic connection, and world-class entertainment from a performer who continues to own his place as one of the country's comedy greats.

This is your chance to come see your favourite comedian live, raw, refreshed and funnier than ever. Don't miss this solo comedy show from 13 – 15 August 2026. Tickets are out on Webtickets.



In a landmark collaboration, the Baxter Theatre and The Market Theatre are proud to announce the world premiere of Rise '76, the latest work by acclaimed, two-time Fleur du Cap award-winning playwright and director, Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni. The production runs at the Baxter Studio from 8 to 30 May 2026, then transfers to The Market Theatre's Mannie Manim from 5 to 28 June 2026.

Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the June 16 Youth Uprisings alongside The Market Theatre's 50th birth year celebrations, this powerful work of historical fiction brings an intimate, human perspective to one of the most defining moments in South African history.

Rise '76 transports audiences to Molefe Secondary, a fictional school in Soweto, during the tense weeks leading up to June 1976. As the mid-year exams loom, student leaders Bafana and Kedibone find themselves in a heated confrontation with their principal, Mr Alfie Ndlovu, over the forced implementation of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction.

The production captures the friction between the Department of Bantu Education, the South African Police and

a generation of learners pushed to their breaking point. What begins as a localised academic dispute quickly evolves into a tragic turning point that would alter the course of the nation forever.

Playwright-director Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni developed the script by synthesising insights from over 40 individuals, drawing on firsthand interviews, archival records and literature to ground the fiction in harrowing reality.

"With an event of this magnitude, thousands of details can easily fall through the cracks. So, with this play, I've only picked up what I think are only a couple of crumbs - but the crumbs do give us an idea of the various flavours of that terrible day," says Mashifane wa Noni.

Instead of focusing on the 'heightened bigger picture' story that we know from history textbooks about the Uprising, she explains that she was interested in the smaller ripple effects.

"To explore this, the play adopts a documentary style storytelling lens that zooms into the lesser-explored domestic moments - like listening in on a teaching staff meeting as they discover all the textbooks are in Afrikaans, catching a glimpse into

a secret student logistics meeting or witnessing someone getting arrested before they could even take their morning bath."

The production marks a significant cultural moment for both the Baxter Theatre and The Market Theatre, emphasising a shared commitment to preserving South African history through the performing arts.

Reflecting on the importance of the partnership, Mashifane wa Noni says, "It is an honour and a privilege to be a part of this collaboration between these two institutions in commemorating this history defining event. What drew me to joining this project was not only the opportunity to reflect on something 50 years later with the hindsight of today, but also the challenge of telling a story that almost every South African knows and finding ways to experience it anew."

Rise '76 will run from 8 to 30 May 2026 in the Baxter Studio with evening performances at 19:30 and Saturday matinees at 15:00. Thereafter it heads off to The Market Theatre's Mannie Manim from 5 to 28 June 2026.

CALLOUTS & APPLICATIONS

The Market Theatre is calling out for bold, fresh and culture-shifting voices to apply for various opportunities to present work on our stages. Submissions, along with more details, are now live on our website.



NEW QUEER WRITING **APPLICATION DEADLINE: 11 MAY 2026**

Something exciting is happening...and it needs your voice. We're inviting bold, brilliant, chaotic, heartfelt, hilarious, brave, messy, magical LGBTQ+ writers to share their work onstage in our Gramadoelas space from the 21 to 25 October 2026 as part of The Market Theatre's inaugural Queer Festival. If you have some writing and you've been looking for a live platform to share it on – this is your moment.

We're looking for new LGBTQ+ writing in many forms, including: monologues, scenes, stand-up pieces, poetry, song, spoken word, short stories. Whether it's funny, furious, tender, political, surreal, glitter-soaked, or quietly devastating, we want to hear it. We're especially excited to platform work that is fearless and unapologetically you.

Performance slots will range from 5 minutes to 30 minutes, so bring us your short, sharp brilliance or your longer theatrical moment.



NEW QUEER CABARET **APPLICATION DEADLINE: 11 MAY 2026**

We're looking to develop a QUEER CABARET!

As part of The Market Theatre's inaugural Queer Festival from the 21 to 25 October 2026, we want to support a small team to create an all new LGBTQ+-centred cabaret experience. If you've got a concept that's bold, hilarious, heartfelt, political or provocative, we want to see your proposal.

We're looking to select one concept to develop across this year in collaboration with the artists from the successful proposal. The show will premiere for at least two performances during the Queer Festival, and then may be offered further dates beyond the Festival.

devastating, we want to hear it. We're especially excited to platform work that is fearless and unapologetically you.

Performance slots will range from 5 minutes to 30 minutes, so bring us your short, sharp brilliance or your longer theatrical moment.



PLAY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: SCRIPTS
APPLICATION DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2026

We're excited to invite writers to submit their unproduced full-length plays to our Play Development Programme. We are looking for fresh and compelling scripts that showcase a unique South African voice. Up to 40 plays will be selected to receive a Reader's Report. Based on the strength of the report, some of these plays may be identified for further development or, in exceptional cases, for a full production produced by The Market Theatre.

We encourage writers from anywhere in South Africa and of all backgrounds, ages, and experience levels to apply. Only full-length plays with an anticipated running time of between 60 to 120 minutes will be considered. The play must not have been produced before.

We welcome submissions in any official South African language and encourage you to submit work that reflects the diversity of our country.



PLAY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: ASSOCIATE PLAYWRIGHTS
APPLICATION DEADLINE: 19 APRIL 2026

We're seeking 12 playwrights who have a strong idea for a new work to be part of the next cycle (July 2026 – March 2027) of Associate Playwrights within The Market Theatre's Play Development Programme. The Associate Playwrights initiative is designed for entry to mid-career playwrights to practice their craft, meet regularly as a collective, and receive input from mentors. As an Associate Playwright, you will work on your play idea with The Market Theatre's Artistic Director in a supportive environment created to enable the completion of a new play that will then be considered for production.

We encourage applications from anywhere in South Africa and of all backgrounds, ages (18+), and South African language groups.



1-WEEK SLOT AT KIPPIES
APPLICATION DEADLINE: 19 APRIL 2026

The Market Theatre invites applications from artists and creatives of all live-performance disciplines to take up a 1-week slot at Kippies. This year's Kippies Fringe Programme will again be curated by The Art Cave. We are looking for dynamic artists with small-scale works in any form, including spoken word, stand-up comedy, poetry, music, and fringe theatre.

Successful applicants will be given a free 1-week slot to perform between 2 – 5 shows on a 70/30 door split in favour of the artists. The theatre will provide basic technical support, ticketing services, and limited support with publicity and marketing.

This is a great opportunity for artists who are interested in showcasing their talent, in testing a new work, in presenting Fringe-scale performances, or in trying out a performance with the support of one of the most renowned theatres in South Africa. Slots will be allocated from mid-June with a maximum of two slots available per month. This year we especially welcome applications aligned with Pride, Women's Month and works for young audiences.

UPCOMING SHOWS



THE MARKET THEATRE AND THE BAXTER THEATRE PRESENT

RISE '76

THE STORY OF JUNE 16TH

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY TISETISO MASHIFANE WA NONI

web tickets AVAILABLE AT [ClicknBuy](#)

8 - 30 MAY 2026 THE BAXTER THEATRE

5 - 28 JUNE 2026 THE MARKET THEATRE

The Market Theatre and mehlo-maya (eye-to-the-sun) present

KAZA KAMBA

PAN AFRICAN THEATRE FESTIVAL

Memory Against Forgetting

THURSDAY 20 - 23 AUG SUNDAY 2026

Curators Bobby Rodwell Lesego Rampolokeng

Image: Linda Wa Ka Shabangu



HOW NOW BROWN COW PRESENTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE MARKET THEATRE

SUZIE MILLER'S PRIMA FACIE

DIRECTED BY NEIL COPPEN

STARRING DANICA DE LA REY JONES

THE BAXTER STUDIO THEATRE 4 - 24 AUG

THE MARKET THEATRE 17 SEP - 4 OCT

THE MARKET THEATRE