

THE MARKET BUZZ

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THEATRE
FOUNDATION



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THE
WINDYBROW
ARTS CENTRE

THE
MARKET
THEATRE





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For The Market Theatre Foundation:

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

THE MARKET BUZZ



MTF — WHERE WOMEN BECOME MARKET LEADERS

The Market Theatre Foundation is home to bold, inspirational and competent women who lead with vision, care and empathy. As we celebrate Women's Month, we ask these industry leaders to share how their womanhood shapes their leadership philosophies and management styles.



I first joined The Market Theatre Foundation heavily pregnant, and fresh from university as a graduate looking for a training opportunity. Where most organisations would have seen a red flag, MTF saw potential. In doing so, it proved to be a caring organisation and safe space for a young woman like me to build and grow her career. Daily, this personal story is one of the things that empower me in my executive role. My purpose is as much about driving strategy as it is about creating a culture that allows all women to thrive, across all career, skills and educational levels. It's about validating young women who, like me many years ago, just need one person to assure them that they belong here.

- Tshiamo Mokgadi, Chief Executive Officer



Being a woman empowers me in leadership by deepening my empathy, strengthening my communication skills, and reinforcing my resilience. I strive to build lasting relationships by leading with both strength and sensitivity—balancing assertiveness with active listening and fostering synergy within teams. My experiences have equipped me to navigate complexity, cultivate inclusive environments, and elevate underrepresented voices while sharing knowledge and opportunities. My femininity is a source of emotional intelligence, enabling me to lead with authenticity, compassion and meaningful impact.

- Devi Padayachee, Chief Financial Officer



I lead with resilience, because I've had to navigate spaces where I wasn't always expected to succeed. I believe in collaboration over competition, because I know the strength that comes from lifting others as you rise. And I lead authentically and with empathy because representation matters. Every decision I make is driven by the knowledge that my leadership is not just about my success—it's about opening doors wider for the women and girls who will come after me.

- Lusanda Zokufa, Head of Brand and Communications

“ Being a woman has prepared me to engage people in a manner that shows that they are being seen in how they choose to present themselves. This is leadership-based humility and assertiveness, as I know that I am holding space for myself and others and hope that this self-knowledge is visible to those who are observing.

**- Bandile Gumbi,
Head of The Market
Photo Workshop**



“ I personally do not feel empowered by being a woman in a leadership role. So often we are having to legitimise ourselves and raise our voices just to be seen and heard, and more times than often we are asked to carry the administrative role in getting something done, even when I contribute to vision and strategy. But what I do hope for, is that my presence as a woman in leadership is seen by young girls of colour as an opened door for them to take their place at this table or envision the rebuilding of this table all together. Our industry needs it.

**- Cherae Halley, Head
of The Market Theatre
Laboratory**



“ Mentoring and being a role model to upcoming theatre practitioners. Sharing experiences and providing guidance to develop their skills to achieve their full potential.

**- Nomvula Molepo,
Head of Technical and
Stage Services**



“ In many ways, HR speaks to who I am as a woman. It's about taking care of the company's most precious resources (people), while also making sure there's order. It's an extension of who and what I already am.

**- Refiloe Chesane, HR
Generalist**



“ I love to bring people and organisations together, and as a woman I am particularly aware of the need for healthy relationships inside and outside the workplace. I bring my skills as a mother of two boys and a sister to two brothers into my work to build productive relationships that contribute to the development of South Africa's youth. My colleagues at The Market Theatre Foundation and the incredible community of artists around us in Newtown and at The Windybrow Arts Centre are a source of inspiration every day.

**Juliana Thornton,
Stakeholder Engagement**



“ I think it comes earlier for a woman to be emotionally intelligent and to be available for staff's emotional needs. This is a soft skill, yet very critical. Successful leaders who lead successful staff that are happy at their work and are happy to be at work must have this skill. It's one thing to be a successful leader, it's another to lead a successful team that loves what they do and love coming to work.

**- Thuli Hlaneke,
Facilities Officer,
Operations and
Housekeeping (FOOH)**



MTF APPOINTS NEW

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



The Market Theatre Foundation's CEO, Tshiamo Mokgadi, congratulated and wished the new CFO well in her new position.

The Market Theatre Foundation (MTF) is excited to announce the appointment of Devi Padayachee CA (SA) as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), effective from 11 August 2025.

Selected from a competitive pool of candidates, Devi's appointment signals MTF's ability to attract the best talent in the market—illustrating our status as an employer of choice.

Devi is a high-performing chartered accountant with vast experience across diverse industries, including the public sector. Among others, she was the CFO and Acting CEO at Ekurhuleni Housing Company, successfully leading the municipal entity's turnaround strategy, achieving clean audits, designing innovative ways for increasing revenue and cutting costs, while significantly reducing audit findings. Her excellent record at Ekurhuleni Housing Company distinguished her as an exceptional public servant with strong competencies in public financial management and a deep love for serving communities.

As an iconic cultural institution, MTF is committed not only to bold storytelling, but also good governance guided by strong internal controls, financial sustainability, creative models for revenue generation. Devi's background in public service will ensure that the organisation maintains its healthy financial status and meets its targets, while her experience in international financial reporting will be of great value to its internationalisation efforts.

The Market Theatre Foundation's CEO, Tshiamo Mokgadi, congratulated and wished the new CFO well in her new position, saying: "I wish Devi a great time at MTF, filled with all the joys and challenges that come with the work we do. We're excited that throughout Devi's illustrious career, MTF marks her first role working in the cultural industry. Her dynamic career record – especially in the public sector – is exactly what we need as we approach our 50th anniversary at the forefront of telling authentic South African stories."

The Market Theatre Foundation is an agency of the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture.

"As an iconic cultural institution, MTF is committed not only to bold storytelling, but also good governance guided by strong internal controls."



Pictured: Devi Padayachee, the New MTF CFO



JOIN US AT
**THE MARKET
THEATRE FOUNDATION
OPEN DAY**

**FRI 12 & SAT 13
SEPTEMBER 2025
TIME 10H00 – 14H00**


The Market theatre - An entity of the Department of sports, Arts & Culture

MTF'S FIRST OPEN DAY TO IGNITE CREATIVE DREAMS

The purpose of the Open Day is to create awareness about the various courses offered at MTF's two industry-acclaimed educational units, The Market Photo Workshop (MPW) and The Market Theatre Laboratory (The Market Lab).

The Open Day will expose learners to the possibilities of a career in the arts, hear about current and past students' experiences, and have networking opportunities. It will feature insightful panel discussions, a professional photo studio experience, a workshop for aspiring photographers, an exhibition walkabout, exciting dance challenges and performances by The Market Lab students as well as MTF's entry-level professional theatre company, Kwasha! Theatre.

"The Market Theatre Foundation's first Open Day is an invitation to step into the beating heart of our creative ecosystem. It's a chance for young people to imagine themselves

in spaces of excellence, learning, and possibility - whether behind the lens, on the stage, or shaping stories that move the world. We're proud to open our doors and showcase the transformative power of arts education that has been at the centre of what the Foundation does for almost 40 years," said Greg Homann, Artistic Director at The Market Theatre Foundation.

MPW's long alumni list includes Lebohang Kganye, a Johannesburg-based visual artist and photographer who won the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize in 2024, Tshepiso Mazibuko, winner of three awards at the 2024 Rencontres d'Arles Photography Festival, Lindokuhle Sobekwa, who scooped the 2023 FNB Art Prize.

Among others, television stars who studied at The Market Lab include Bonko Khoza (Marked, Red Ink, The Wife), Wonder Ndlovu (Justice Served, Scandal, Go!), Kgomotso

Moshia (The Woman King), Harriet Manamela (Skeem Saam), Sicelo Buthelezi (Skeem Saam), Lebohang Lephatoana (Youngins), as well as Billy Langa and Mahlatsi Mokgonyana, who jointly won the Standard Bank Young Artist of the Year in 2023.

The Market Theatre Foundation (MTF) is looking forward to its first ever Open Day, to be held on 12 and 13 September 2025, starting from 10:00 to 14:00 on both days.



Pictured: Xolani Ngubeni

NEW TIERNEY FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT ANNOUNCED

The selection of the 18th Tierney Fellow adhered to a thorough selection process with an expert panel of judges.

The Market Photo Workshop in partnership with The Tierney Family Foundation is excited to unveil Xolani Ngubeni as the 18th recipient of the Tierney Fellowship. Ngubeni will be based at The Market Photo Workshop for the duration of his fellowship. His work for the Tierney Fellowship will reflect on the emotional, generational, and symbolic journey of a father-daughter relationship in contemporary South Africa. The work is rooted in his personal life as a father raising a young daughter, and as a child raised by his grandmother in the absence of his own father.

The Fellowship will provide Ngubeni with the necessary resources to support the research, self-directed learning in the growth of a photographic body of work. Collaborating with mentors and a photographic arts and journalism community that now has global reach. The Tierney Fellowship

programme ran for the first time in South Africa in 2008. Its partner-institutions include The Market Photo Workshop, Wits School of Arts and The Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town.

“Being selected as the Tierney Fellowship recipient for 2025 is more than just an achievement but is also a deeply emotional moment that confirms the value of telling personal stories, and the recognition of the stories behind the photographs,” shared Ngubeni.

Bekie Ntini from The Market Photo Workshop said, “Xolani Ngubeni presented a strong body of work, exploring a timely and relevant subject in the South African context: the father-daughter relationship and the absence of father figures in many households. The work demonstrates a thoughtful use of symbolism and a sincere personal engagement with the theme. The Fellowship’s strength is the ability to work with fellows

to refine visual stories and build a cohesive photographic narrative.”

Xolani Ngubeni is a photographer based in Katlehong, east of Johannesburg. He developed a passion for photography in 2015, starting with weddings and events photography. In 2016, Xolani volunteered as a photographer for Kathorus Mail, a local community newspaper, and gained experience in visual storytelling. In 2024, Xolani completed the Advanced Programme in Photography at the Market Photo Workshop. He has been involved in the Of Soul and Joy Photo Project mentorship and has been part of several group exhibitions at Of Soul and Joy.



Pictured: Cast of "Breakfast With Mugabe"

REVIEW: BREAKFAST WITH MUGABE

This article first appeared on Diane De Beer's DeBeer Necessities.

If you are intrigued by the title, this is a play you will want to see. With the name Robert Mugabe having special meaning in South Africa, neighbouring country to Zimbabwe, it was a packed buzzy audience in attendance, always a joy to behold in an industry that's constantly in battle.

If you google the number of Zimbabweans living in South Africa, they are described as the largest group of foreign migrants in the country. "Some estimates suggest the number could be as high as 3 to 5 million." And it goes on to say that the influx is primarily due to economic hardship and instability in Zimbabwe.

South Africans will all have some opinion of what occurred in Zimbabwe. Mugabe is still an enigma to many because he started as a saviour in the new democracy in 1980 in a country which was ravaged by civil war. The education system alone can attest to that. Yet, because of the ambiguities, political perspectives and where you come from will come into play when watching this fierce production. If you are expecting answers to the many questions you might have, what you get is a view of the complications of a system which so clearly exposes the cliché, "you cannot please all of the people all of the time".

What you have is a deeply troubled man haunted by his actions as a political leader of a country that lay in ruins yet full of hope for a new dawn. The action is heightened from the start as Grace Mugabe (his second wife) has summoned a white psychologist to see her husband. What unfolds all happens in hushed tones, with people looking over their shoulders waiting for some kind of menace.

A man who was born to intimidate, Mugabe's bodyguard, is hovering and watching in constant attendance. A jittery wife at first seems worried about her distressed husband, yet as she almost pounces on her guest, it is clear that she is much more concerned with her own wellbeing as Shopper of the Nation (which is clearly and most deliciously displayed in her glitzy attire) and wants to make sure her own position isn't threatened. She is after all a secretary, who switched to sycophantic wife.

What happens next is like a thriller unspooling in almost Shakespearean fashion. Present are Robert Mugabe, his wife Grace, an English psychiatrist and the ever-present bodyguard. The tone is set by an obviously agitated and deeply paranoid leader who, even though haunted by the past, is intent on dissembling

reality. The cast is astounding, from Ndaba's resolved Mugabe and Jackson's bewildered yet embattled psychiatrist, to the staunch bodyguard portrayed by Chigudu and the glorious Ntshegang, who masterfully displays Grace's Machiavellian traits as she plays everyone differently.

The writing is a masterpiece. First written at the turn of the century, its relevance seems heightened in today's world where unfettered power is displayed and celebrated with such candour and even pride. But it's the way playwright Fraser Grace tackles all the issues, explores the ruthlessness of the regime and manages to stand aside from the writing that makes this hair-raising yet compulsive viewing.





CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON BLACK WOMEN IN PHOTOGRAPHY

From 21 – 23 August 2025, The Market Photo Workshop (MPW) will host the 2nd Black Women in Photography (BPW) Conference, aimed at spotlighting issues faced by Black women photographers on and off the field. The Conference – in collaboration with Muholi Art Institute – will also be a space to reimagine the future of photography.

“The current landscape of photography, particularly in South Africa, demands an urgent reimagining of how we create, collaborate, and care. This conference is based on a grounding in care, collaboration, a knowledge of self. We speaking about a practice of photography where mentorship is ethical, collaboration is mutual, and our bodies, work, and archives are protected with intention. The photograph may carry one name, but the journey is always plural. Collaboration, then, is not a strategy, it’s a remembering. A return to how we’ve always made sense of the world, together,” shares Bandile Gumbi, Head of The Market Photo Workshop.

Gumbi further highlights the Conference’s strong focus on the need for mentorship in the space, calling for a mutually respectful approach that shifts mentorship from being about power-plays to a place of care and integrity.

“Our work is not just a practice; it is a form of cultural resistance and legacy-building. We must be able to protect, preserve, and control the narratives we produce. This is not merely about images, it’s about integrity, care, and building sustainable creative futures. Through ethical collaboration, safe practice, and intentional mentorship, we aim to shape a photography culture where Black women are seen, safe, and have ownership of self in both presence and memory.”

The Black Women in Photography Conference will zoom into topics such as collaboration in practice, mentorship without exploitation, safety and security, creative practice in trauma, as well as archiving and ownership.



(R)EVOLUTION OF WORDS



WRITTEN BY LEBO MASHILE, CURATED BY JADE BOWERS & QUAZ ROODT, MOVEMENT DIRECTED BY SINENHLANHLA MGEYI



DIRECTED BY KHETHUKUTHULA JELE

REVOLUTION OF WORDS: POETIC UPRISING BRIDGING GENERATIONS

From 16 - 20 September 2025, The Market Theatre Foundation's Kwasha! Theatre Company and UJ Arts & Culture are set to stage 'Revolution of Words' at the UJ Bunting Theatre.

'Revolution of Words' is a powerful and thought-provoking poetry production that transcends time, bridging the richness of South African poetry with the urgency and resonance of contemporary voices. Featuring a curated selection of poems from the Grade 11 and 12 school curricula alongside the bold work of modern poets, the production invites audiences into a space where the past meets the present, sparking critical dialogue and reflection.

'Revolution of Words' is contextualised by the award-winning poet and cultural icon, Lebo Mashile, and is performed by the talented young artists of the Kwasha! Theatre Company. Under the direction of Khethukuthula Jele, with movement direction by Sinenhlanhla Mgeyi, this performance is set to be a transformative experience that speaks to the heart and challenges the mind.

In addition to its creative power, 'Revolution of Words' serves as a call to action—a celebration of language, identity, and the transformative power of poetry. This production promises to inspire, challenge and move audiences forward through the art of spoken word.

Gerard Bester, Head of The Windybrow Arts Centre, shared his thoughts on this collaboration, saying: "Working with UJ on 'Revolution of Words' has been an incredibly rewarding experience.

This partnership provides an exciting opportunity to work with emerging talent and to continue our mission of creating dynamic, relevant theatre. UJ's support has enabled us to amplify this important work, and together, we're giving voice to the next generation of South African poets and performers. It's a powerful collaboration, one that underscores the importance of community and culture in our storytelling."

"This performance is set to be a transformative experience that speaks to the heart and challenges the mind."



UNDERSTANDING SPACE AND BELONGING THROUGH THE CAMERA LENS

Amid rising tensions about space, belonging and migration in South Africa and many parts of the world, The Market Photo Workshop (MPW) partnered with the University of Pretoria (UP) for the 'Moved: Borders, Bodies and Belonging' exhibition.

Held from 26 July – 8 August 2025 at UP's Student Gallery, the exhibition explored the themes of migration, identity, transformation and belonging, through the work of MPW students.

"At the core of this exhibition was how people move through, are moved by, or are displaced in space, emotionally and physically. The themes included ideas of foreignness, public transport, spatial apartheid, exclusion/inclusion, and personal and political stories tied to space and inequality," said co-curator, Fiona Davhana.

Davhana continued that students were encouraged to reflect on their personal responses to the exhibition and explore possibilities for producing new work that spoke to shared or divergent experiences of migration, spatial belonging and transformation.

She added that the exhibition was followed by a workshop, which was aimed at creating a self-curated guerrilla exhibition, conceptualised, planned, and executed by the students themselves, expanding the reach of move beyond the gallery and into more spontaneous, public, or unexpected spaces.



HER LENS: PROVOCATIONS FROM THE FEMALE AUDIENCE

CURATED BY MATHABO TLALI

SUNDAY
24 AUG
2025

14H00

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THEATRE THINK TANK EXAMINES WOMEN'S PORTRAYAL ON STAGE

According to Cherae Halley, Head of The Market Theatre Laboratory, the upcoming Theatre Think Tank promises to be a bold examination of whether theatre has succeeded in holding a mirror for women in ways that truly represent them.

On Sunday, 24 August 2025, The Market Theatre Laboratory will present its second and final Theatre Think Tank instalment for the year. Focusing on women as active participants during live theatre performances, the Theatre Think Tank is titled 'Her Lens: Provocations from the Female Audience'. This free event will take place in the Ramolao Makhene Theatre at The Market Square, starting from 2pm.

The Theatre Think Tank will be curated by conversationalist, podcaster and content creator, Mathabo Tlali. Held in commemoration of Women's Month in South Africa, it promises to examine how women are portrayed in, and actively react to, theatre productions. Bringing together multimedia and talk show formats to produce an interactive experience, the Theatre Think Tank aims to centre the gaze of women not as characters, muses, subjects, or side notes, but as engaged participants during performances.

Curator Mathabo Tlali says, "If art is a mirror, this conversation turns it toward the audience and asks: What do you see—and what do you wish we'd notice? This is an invitation to those who mould women through their craft to sit, assess and reflect on the sociological and psychological implications of our creative work."

According to Cherae Halley, Head of The Market Theatre Laboratory, the upcoming Theatre Think Tank promises to be a bold examination of whether theatre has succeeded in holding a mirror for women in ways that truly represent them.

"It shifts the focus from the theatre practitioner towards the theatre consumer, specifically the female consumer. It asks: How do women see themselves reflected in theatre and popular culture? What is echoed back to them, what is celebrated, loved, erased and embraced? And as artists, can we match our desire to reflect womanhood with a willingness to embrace the complex impact of our portrayals of it?" Halley explains.

"The Market Lab's Theatre Think Tanks," she continues, "serve as an invaluable exploration and reflection on the wealth of knowledge enacted, embodied and performed by practitioners in the arts, culture and heritage field. The specific aim is to gather, organise and ultimately draw on the knowledge of local communities, making this accessible to the greater community."

The event is free, but audiences must book their tickets on Webtickets as space is limited.



KIPPIES 100 YEARS ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

HISTORIC PHOTOSHOOT FOR KIPPIE MOEKETSI'S CENTENARY

To honour this legacy in the year of Kippie's centenary, internationally acclaimed, award-winning photographer Siphwe Mhlambi is convening a gathering of players at the Market Precinct for a historic photoshoot and jam session.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but on Saturday, 20 September 2025 in the historic Market Theatre Precinct in Newtown, a picture will frame more than a thousand notes. This as approximately hundred South Africa's jazz players, veterans and youngsters will gather for a photoshoot and jam session in memorial tribute to pioneering modern jazzman, Kippie Moeketsi, who was born in George Goch, Johannesburg, 100 years ago.

Kippie's career stretched from early kwela music, through historic bands like the Harlem Swingsters, participation in South Africa's first LP by Black musicians, Jazz Epistles Verse One, the King Kong musical, work with Abdullah Ibrahim and, in total, more than 50 recordings. Kippie is hailed by generations of South African players as having instrumentally helped to shape the country's modern jazz sound, and as a mentor and teacher.

Now, to honour this legacy in the year of Kippie's centenary, internationally acclaimed, award-winning photographer Siphwe Mhlambi is convening a gathering of players at the Market Precinct, around Kippie's statue, for a historic photoshoot and jam session.

Mhlambi says, "In 1958, American photographer Art Kane assembled more than 50 jazz musicians in Harlem for an iconic image, usually called 'A Great Day in Harlem', that captured the American jazz community of that era: everybody from Dizzy Gillespie to Thelonius Monk. I hope our photoshoot for Kippie won't only be a fitting tribute to a towering musical presence, but will create a similarly iconic image of

our jazz landscape today – the seasoned veterans and the youngsters, men and women, who are shaping the unique sounds of today's South African jazz."

The jam session music director will be saxophonist and composer Khaya Mahlangu.

The team for the event also includes broadcaster Nothemba Madumo who hosts a jazz show on Radio702 and CapeTalk, and whose company 4everJazz has been creating content and events that promote jazz music, culture and preserving its legacy.

To preserve the legacy of Kippie Moeketsi and the significance of the iconic photograph, the team intends to produce merchandise for sale, with a portion of the proceeds going to the Johnny Meko School of Music for the benefit of music students with instruments and tutors.

The photoshoot will take place from midday until mid-afternoon, followed by a jam session at The Market Theatre from 3pm until 5pm, focusing on Kippie's compositions and repertoire. Tickets are free, but registration is compulsory. Bookings can be done on Quicket.

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