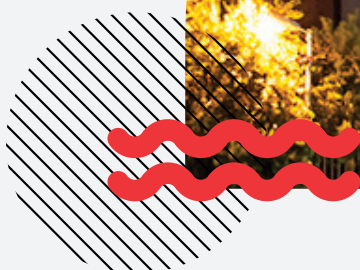


THE
MARKET
THEATRE
FOUNDATION



THE MARKET BUZZ



JUNE
2026

THE
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sport, arts & culture
Department:
Sport, Arts and Culture
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Market Theatre Foundation is an agency of the
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'Rise 76' actor Alex Sono on stage.



THE MARKET THEATRE'S 50TH BIRTHDAY WEEKEND: A CELEBRATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN STORY

The Market Theatre Foundation is excited to announce The Market Theatre's 50th birthday weekend celebrations, running from Friday, 19 June – Sunday, 21 June 2026 at The Market Theatre in Newtown. The anniversary festival will comprise a special performance entitled "Let's Meet at The Market", exhibitions, surprise appearances, a wall with the names of people who have shaped the Theatre, talks as well as a brand new play acknowledging the historic week in which the theatre opened in June, 1976.

Each of these activities stand as a touchpoint inviting audiences to feel and be a part of the Theatre's 50-year-strong internationally renowned legacy.

Tshiamo Mokgadi, Chief Executive Officer at The Market Theatre Foundation, describes the 50th birthday weekend as not just a calendar milestone, but a celebration of 50 years of culture-shifting storytelling, fearless resistance and giving a voice to authentic South African stories.

"As we look back, we reflect not only on the powerful works that have played on our stages, but the people who have turned our space into a dynamic, diverse and truly South African experience. This institution was not built by infrastructure alone; it has always stood on the unbending backs of many individuals, institutions and corporates whose names line the walls on the boards in our foyer."

Artistic Director, Greg Homann, adds that the weekend programme is framed as a celebration of the South African story, complex and nuanced as it is.

"We have curated the whole birthday weekend experience not only in memory of the past, but as a commitment that The Market Theatre will always be home to the South African story in as authentic a way as possible, told by voices from all backgrounds. This is what has made The Market Theatre so resilient, so agile, and so important for us as a country, and

the world, across the decades."

Below is a full line-up of activities:

Let's Meet at The Market – John Kani Theatre

Let's Meet at The Market is a 90-minute multidisciplinary stage production created to celebrate the extraordinary legacy of The Market Theatre. It is a work told through music, movement, spoken word, archival imagery and live performance. Beginning in the old Indian Fruit Market of Newtown, the production journeys across five decades of artistic rebellion, resistance and reinvention, tracing how an abandoned market became one of the world's most important theatres. The production is directed by Clive Mathibe.

Tickets for this once-off public performance on Sunday, 21 June 2026 are available at R50 from Webtickets. Bookings open on Monday, 8 June 2026.

50 Years Bold – Barney Simon Theatre

A series of five intergenerational conversations under the title, 50 Years Bold, will bring veteran actors, directors, writers, producers, designers, arts administrators and technical personnel into dialogue with the next generation of theatre-makers shaping the institution's future. Curated by the Artistic Director, with guidance from Vanessa Cooke, Zane Meas, and Nthathi Moshesh, the talks will reflect on the Theatre's radical history, while engaging in conversations around artistic legacy, cultural activism, mentorship, storytelling, production innovation and the evolving role of theatre in contemporary South Africa.

All talks are free, but reserving a ticket via Webtickets is essential. Bookings open on Monday, 8 June 2026.

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

For The Market Theatre Foundation:

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

The Market Theatre Foundation Exhibition – Lindelani Buthelezi Gallery

The Market Theatre Foundation Exhibition in the Lindelani Buthelezi Gallery traces the 50-year evolution of the Foundation, charting its journey from the founding of The Market Theatre in 1976 to the growth of its wider creative family. Through archival material, posters, photography and rare images, the exhibition explores the emergence of The Market Photo Workshop, The Market Theatre Laboratory, and the addition of The Windybrow Arts Centre, revealing how each space and programme now contributes to shaping South Africa's cultural landscape.

The exhibition is free. No reservation required.

Vision / Voice / Legacy Exhibition

This is a contemporary visual arts exhibition celebrating the icons, voices and cultural architects who continue to shape South Africa's future. The exhibition brings together sixteen contemporary artists commissioned to create original works inspired by some of South Africa's most influential cultural figures. The exhibition explores the intersection of legacy, identity, leadership, activism, sport, music, fashion and popular culture while creating an intergenerational conversation between the heroes of today and the dreamers of tomorrow. In partnership with the Riky Rick Foundation, the exhibition embraces the spirit of activism—the intersection of art, culture and social impact. The featured icons include Ricky Rick, Thuso Mbedu, Anele Mdoda, Trevor Noah, Zozibini Tunzi, Julius Malema, Black Coffee and more.

The exhibition is free and open all day from 10 – 29 June 2026 at The Market Theatre.

RISE '76 – Mannie Manim Theatre

The Market Theatre has teamed up with the Baxter Theatre to co-produce a brand new play, RISE '76: The Story of June 16th, that honours the 50th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising – a milestone that coincides with the week in which The Market Theatre first opened its doors in 1976. It is written and directed by multi-award-winning playwright and director, Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni.

Tickets are available now on Webtickets.

People of The Market

People of The Market is a wall of names that honours the thousands of individuals who have shaped the life of The Market Theatre over the past five decades. From actors, directors, writers and designers to technicians, administrators, front-of-house staff and producers, the project recognises the many people whose work and presence helped build the Theatre's legacy. The aim of the initiative is to create the most comprehensive record possible of all those who have worked for or at The Market Theatre across its 50-year history. During the birthday weekend launch and throughout the rest of 2026, digital pads will be available for the public, former staff, artists and collaborators to submit suggested names for inclusion.

The growing installation can be visited during the Theatre's open hours.

The Market Theatre Tours

Guided tours across the birthday weekend will offer the public a rare behind-the-scenes journey through one of South Africa's most iconic cultural spaces. Audiences will have the opportunity to explore rehearsal rooms, backstage corridors, dressing rooms, technical areas, and other hidden corners of the Theatre that many never get to see. The tours promise an intimate glimpse into the stories, creativity, and community that continue to define the theatre's legacy.

Tours are ticketed at R20 on Webtickets and via the Box Office. Bookings open on Monday 8 June.

For fifty years, our stages have been the home of the South African story, fearlessly centring the rich artistic life that has shaped a nation. Join us for a special weekend-long celebration as we journey across the decades that have forged this iconic space.



NEWS

THE MARKET THEATRE @ 50: ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CHATS TO POWER FM'S LERATO MVELASE

As The Market Theatre marks its 50th anniversary this year, the institution continues to stand as South Africa's cultural conscience, using the power of storytelling to highlight important issues of the day and creating a warm space for authentic connection.

On Sunday, 10 May 2026, Greg Homann – Artistic Director at The Market Theatre Foundation – joined Lerato Mvelase on Power FM to discuss The Market Theatre @ 50. Mvelase hosts Power Perspective on Sundays between 18h00 – 21h00. Legendary actor Zane Meas, who sits in The Market Theatre's 50th Anniversary Steering Committee, was also part of the interview, which looked at the survival, reinvention and future of live performance in a digital era.

At its heart, Homann told listeners of the Jo'burg-based talk radio station, The Market Theatre has always been about telling the South African story, reflecting the true demographics of the country across language, culture, race and sexual identity, as well as creating a home for artists.

"I think The Market Theatre has proved for 50 years that it's about telling the South African story. And it's about telling the South African story in as authentic a way as possible, by South African artists in all the diversity of the country in terms of language, in terms of culture, in terms of age, race, and everything else...and I think that at the heart of it is what has made The Market Theatre so resilient, so agile, and so important for us as a country."

At the height of apartheid, The Market Theatre became a powerful tool of resistance, opening its space to people of all races and backgrounds. Restrictions on international work forced South African artists to write their own original material, exposing injustices and mobilising audiences against the oppressive regime. Having transformed a fruit market into a space that traded in ideas, performances were more than just entertainment; they were acts of cultural defiance and political activism.

Today, the landscape has changed. Audiences – especially young people – consume content differently. Streaming platforms, social media and podcasts have shifted the nature of content creation and storytelling, leading to communal spaces like theatres and cinemas seeing lesser footfall.

For The Market Theatre, however, there has been notable improvement in attendance.

According to Homann, while the digital age has altered how audiences consume cultural works, it has also affirmed the irreplaceability of live performance. Theatre, he continues, offers something fundamentally human: a shared space of genuine connection. He further asserts that having been isolated and socially distanced for a couple of years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, people now cherish the value of community.

"I think the pandemic reminded us of how important community is. Theatre offers something unique; a moment where strangers come together to share an experience in real time. foyer spaces and adjacent venues so people can gather, talk, and connect."

As The Market Theatre celebrates its historic milestone, the focus is firmly forward-looking. It's about honouring the past without reliving it, and projecting the artistic gaze into the future. Commissioned works such as Mr. Duiker Sang the Blues and Rise '76, led by emerging voice in the industry, locate the space within the current context instead of fixing it in one epoch.

The Market Theatre has proved for 50 years that it's about telling the South African story.

“What I’m so excited about,” Homann said, “is that we have chosen not to do a series of revivals this year. Rather, we want to embrace the legacy of what The Market Theatre stands for. We want to set a tone for the next 50 years, because then that means young people can also feel like they are part of the new storytelling, but also looking back to where we come from.”

In a rapidly changing world, The Market Theatre still holds on to this bold truth: that theatre must make power uncomfortable. This is what the journey from 1976 to 2026 has been about, and it’s not changing anytime soon.



Greg Homann - Artistic Director at The Market Theatre Foundation

NEWS

PEOPLE OF THE MARKET - HOW NOMVULA LIT HER OWN SPOT IN A RIGGED GAME



Nomvula Molepo - Head of Technical and Stage Services at The Market Theatre Foundation

Twenty eight years ago, a young woman started a journey at The Market Theatre with only faith, passion and a determination to disrupt how women were viewed in the technical space. This year as The Market Theatre turns 50, a milestone that runs concurrently with the June, 16 1976 youth uprisings, Nomvula Molepo reminisces about her journey at South Africa’s leading cultural institution with a deep sense of gratitude—from being an intern in the mid-90s to her current senior position as Head of Stage and Technical Services at The Market Theatre Foundation.

In this role, she oversees broader technical operations, infrastructure and production delivery. As an intern, Nomvula assisted the stage manager with preparing rehearsals and supported backstage operations during performances, including setting up lights during technical get-ins. Her dedication to the job and willingness to learn set her apart as the future of technical operations, and in 1998 she naturally progressed to a full-time job as Lighting Technician. This opportunity, she recounts, marked the beginning of an exciting journey in live performance under the highly sought after mentorships of Mannie Manim, Declan Randall, Wesley France, the late Aubrey Ndaba, Jacob Mogale and many others.

“Their guidance played a pivotal role in shaping my career

and deepening my understanding of lighting design within the performing arts sector,” Nomvula says.

The road wasn’t easy for Nomvula as a young, Black woman in a space many men felt entitled to. She narrates, “I have navigated a male-dominated technical environment in the early stages of my career, where there were very few Black female lighting technicians and designers. I have experienced workplace dynamics where female practitioners were at times undervalued or discouraged, particularly around feelings of the physical and technical demands of lighting work.”

These misconceptions did not discourage Nomvula, but challenged her to intentionally train a new and diverse generation of technical practitioners to create balanced demographics. Her products can be found at many cultural institutions, a legacy she’s deeply proud of.

She also focused on her personal, career and leadership growth, equipping herself for the changing cultural landscape, including the nature of work. “I have progressed through a full professional career growth within the organisation, advancing from Intern to Lighting Technician, Lighting Designer and later Head of Lighting.

I have benefited from organisational support for continued professional development, with the institution funding my studies to strengthen my technical and leadership capabilities.”

Among Nomvula’s many highlights in the nearly three decades’ journey was when she served as an Assistant Lighting Designer under the mentorship of Stan Presler from the UK. This was part of a major international collaboration between The Market Theatre Foundation and Stockholm’s stadsteater for a production titled “The Blacks” which brought together South African and Swedish artists.

“I played a key role in supporting the lighting design process, technical implementation and execution across venues. The production successfully toured internationally, with performances in Sweden and South Africa, providing valuable experience in adapting lighting designs to different theatre infrastructures and touring conditions,” recounts Nomvula.

What do people often misunderstand about her job?

“That it’s purely technical,” she replies.

The role, she clarifies, sits between artistic vision and technical execution. This is both a strategic and tactical position that translates bold creative concepts into high-

quality productions, delivered on time and within the allocated budget. Nomvula states that a significant part of the job is about leadership, mentorship and accountability.

“Once a show opens, the job is done.”

But the job is far from being done for Nomvula. Not only is she looking forward to clocking 30 years at The Market, but she’s also excited for the theatre’s 50th anniversary.

“Reaching the 50-year milestone of The Market Theatre Foundation is significant for me personally. I am so proud to still be contributing to MTF legacy.”

I have navigated a male-dominated technical environment in the early stages of my career, where there were very few Black female lighting technicians and designers.



NEWS

PEOPLE OF THE MARKET - MOTLA AND THE ART OF CAPTAINING A SHOW



Motlalepule Makhate - Senior Stage Manager at The Market Theatre Foundation

As The Market Theatre Foundation pursues a bold archival strategy to secure its legacy, it continues to treat its most important resource – employees – as custodians of its decades-long institutional memory.

One of the anchor points for The Market Theatre’s 50th anniversary celebrations, said Artistic Director Greg Homann, is honouring the many people who have embodied the ethos of the space, across its hierarchy. “It took brave theatre-makers, volunteers, workers and patrons 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 noted as he unveiled the 50th anniversary programme.

The Market Theatre was just about two decades old when Motlalepule Makhate, in her late twenties, walked down its corridors to train as a stage manager. Thirty years later, now as a Senior Stage Manager, she beams with joyful pride for still being here as The Market Theatre marks 50 years of fearless storytelling. In her signature sense of humour, she quips that she has become an ancestral figure, which – jokes aside – is a testament of the organisation’s intentional retention of great talent.

Motla points out the wealth of memory that she carries as she reflects on what The Market Theatre’s 50th birthday means for her. “It means I hold significant institutional knowledge and cultural DNA. It is a testament to longevity and a positive career choice for me who was given an opportunity to pass on the skill to young upcoming, future stage managers and production managers.”

It’s a rare moment, she notes, to be part of making history at the very same institution that provided her with security and growth for many years.

“My interpersonal skills improved,” she says when asked about her best highlights, further citing “opportunities to study” as one of the many ways The Market Theatre Foundation has impacted her.

She wishes people could understand that working behind the scenes isn’t as easy a job as it seems. It requires a detail-oriented, highly organised and flexible person. “You need to grow an extra layer of a thick skin, a lot of patience and calmness, discipline, time management.

Communication is very vital (verbal and writing). You must be able to think on your feet and troubleshoot, be a team player and able to organise and lead, work on a very difficult and challenging task, and able to work under pressure."

For a career so grounded and colourful, it's difficult to shortlist one's favourite shows of all time, as each moment carries enduring memories. But "Ways of Dying" through which Motla had her first international tour to Amsterdam and the star-studded "Suitcase" are top of the mind. Another standout moment for her is when she, in 2013, technically led more than five productions to the National Arts Festival in Makhanda as MTF's acting production manager.

About this she reflects: "It was challenging though, but also fun. Wonderful lessons were learnt. I travelled with colleagues that always do a great delivery of different tasks, professionally and effectively."



FEATURE

LEGACY CELEBRATED: KENNETH NKOSI MARKS 32 YEARS IN THE INDUSTRY



Kenneth Nkosi at his surprise birthday party at The Market Theatre.

South Africa's entertainment industry gathered for a spectacular evening celebrating the remarkable career and life of acclaimed actor and producer Kenneth Nkosi, as family, friends and leaders honoured his 32 years in film and television, alongside a surprise celebration of his 53rd birthday.

Hosted at The Market Theatre's iconic John Kani Theatre, the celebration held deep sentimental value, as The Market Theatre is where Kenneth Nkosi began his acting career 32 years ago. Returning to the very stage where his journey started made the occasion especially symbolic and meaningful for both Nkosi and those who have witnessed his rise in the South African entertainment industry.

Kenneth's former arts classmate, Dan Robertse, who was among the distinguished speakers and guests attending the celebration, fuelled the evening with emotional significance as his presence signified a full-circle moment, honouring the early foundations that helped shape Nkosi into the celebrated performer he is today.

A household name whose work has entertained families for decades, Kenneth Nkosi has built an extraordinary legacy through his contributions to film and television both locally

and internationally. With a career spanning more than 20 film productions and numerous television appearances, he continues to shape the entertainment landscape, inspiring audiences and emerging creatives alike. His dedication, talent, and passion for storytelling have cemented his place among South Africa's entertainment icons.

His family organised this special celebration, bringing together some of the country's leading entertainment figures, close friends and loved ones to pay tribute to his journey, achievements and influence in the industry.

Adding a unique and memorable touch to the evening, Converse All Stars gifted guests with a special pair of custom Converse sneakers featuring Kenneth's name; a symbolic tribute to his enduring legacy, individuality and influence within the entertainment industry. The guests were also treated to Zoetendal Vineyard boutique wines mainly The Empress 2023 (Cap Classique), Chenin Blanc 2022 and The Monarch 2018 (Red Blend).

Guests in attendance included celebrated actors and industry colleagues such as Hamilton Dlamini, Rapulana Seiphemo (Kenneth's longtime friend and former business partner), Rami Chuene, Desmond Dube, Warren Masemola, Thomas Gumede, Nthathi Moshesh, Dr Jerry Mofokeng, Shane Maja, as well as John Morapama, alongside family members—his only sister, children and the children of his late siblings.

The evening was a heartfelt celebration of legacy, family, friendship and the enduring impact Kenneth Nkosi has had on South African entertainment.

As he marks both his birthday and over three decades in the industry, this occasion stands as a tribute to a man whose work continues to bring joy, inspiration and pride to audiences across generations.



NEWS

REVIEW: RISE '76: A HAUNTING AND POWERFULLY HUMAN PORTRAIT OF THE SOWETO UPRISING



Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni's *RISE '76: THE STORY OF JUNE 16TH* is a searing and deeply affecting piece of theatre that confronts the horrors of Apartheid with intelligence, artistry and emotional force. Beautifully written and masterfully directed, the production draws audiences into the tense and painful atmosphere surrounding the 1976 Soweto uprising, while never losing sight of the humanity of the individuals caught within it.

The ensemble cast (featuring: Zilungile Mbombo, Deon Lotz, Mfuneli Ntumbuka, Sbuja Dywili, Ben Albertyn, Alex Sono and Botlhale Mahlangu) delivers exceptional performances, each actor creating a distinct and memorable character with their own perspective on the unfolding events. At times the cast moves and speaks together like a powerful Greek chorus, amplifying the collective fear, anger and grief of a generation. In quieter moments, their voices become intensely personal and expressive, often moving the audience to tears.

Visually, the production is striking. The sepia-toned projections designed by Xolelwa Nhlabatsi add texture and

historical resonance, while the projected words above the stage create a haunting reminder of the political machinery driving the oppression. The simple yet highly effective set by Leopold Senekal is utilised with remarkable imagination, constantly transforming into new locations and emotional spaces through fluid staging and movement.

The physical movement of the actors is another standout feature. Patterns shift seamlessly across the stage as performers create classrooms, streets, meetings and moments of confrontation with extraordinary precision and energy. Every transition feels purposeful and alive, contributing to the relentless momentum of the production.

What remains most powerfully after the final scene is the emotional impact. *RISE '76* is not only an important historical work; it is also a profoundly moving reminder of the brutality inflicted during South Africa's apartheid past.

The production leaves one horrified by what was done, yet deeply grateful for theatre that continues to keep these stories alive with such honesty, artistry and urgency.



Thembisa Mdoda-Nxumalo returns to play Winnie.



The National Arts Festival

The Market Theatre Foundation returns to the National Arts Festival in Makhanda with two compelling productions – The Cry of Winnie Mandela and Children of the Buffalo Thorn Tree – that interrogate memory, power dynamics, how history is remembered and which voices are heard.

Presented as the country marks the 50th anniversaries of June 16, 1976, and The Market Theatre, both works further grapple with the ongoing work of transformation, the power of representation and the place of black women in history—reaffirming the role of theatre as a tool for critical conversations.

THE CRY OF WINNIE MANDELA

26 – 28 June 2026

Rhodes Theatre

The critically acclaimed The Cry of Winnie Mandela – based on Njabulo S. Ndebele's seminal novel of the same name – reignites collective and individual memory around struggle stalwart Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, reclaiming her place in South Africa's historical narrative. Following its run in Makhanda, the show will transfer to Jo'burg for a limited and highly anticipated season at The Market Theatre, starting 08 – 12 July 2026 in the John Kani Theatre.

Directed by MoMo Matsunyane, the play brings together four women bound by the shared experience of waiting for their husbands' return. Through intimate moments of reflection and fellowship, they draw strength from—and locate themselves within—the legacy of Winnie Mandela.

The women interrogate their waiting, and the emotional, psychological, and social impact it has had on their lives. These explorations unfold into layered, haunting, and deeply resonant conversations that connect the historical struggles of women to contemporary realities—highlighting how the past continues to live in the present.

Matsunyane describes the work as a courageous story of endurance and emotional survival: "Winnie Mandela continues to be a powerful, multi-layered figure to explore. Her revolutionary spirit, resilient character and generous heart have become anchors for many women of all generations and identities. Indeed, she did not die; she multiplied."

CHILDREN OF THE BUFFALO THORN TREE

26 – 29 June 2026

Centenary Hall

Created by second-year students at The Market Theatre Laboratory under the direction of Monageng Vice Motshabi, Children of the Buffalo Thorn Tree uses forensic approaches to memory, testimony, and excavation to uncover the stories of young people lost, erased, or buried without recognition in South Africa's violent past.

The Market Theatre Foundation returns to the National Arts Festival in Makhanda with two compelling productions – The Cry of Winnie Mandela and Children of the Buffalo Thorn Tree – that interrogate memory, power dynamics, how history is remembered and which voices are heard.

Presented in the context of the 50-year commemoration of the 1976 Soweto Uprising, the production confronts the absence of young bodies in the national archive—grappling with unmarked graves, missing youth, and silenced narratives.

The work asks urgent questions: How do we honour those who resisted but remain unacknowledged? What histories remain buried? And how can theatre function as a form of forensic recovery—restoring presence to those rendered invisible? In doing so, the production collapses past and

present, positioning history not as something concluded, but as a lived and unresolved reality that continues to shape contemporary identity and consciousness.

A Johannesburg preview will take place on 20 and 21 June 2026 at 15h00 at the Ramolao Makhene Theatre, The Market Square.

At this crucial moment of national reflection, these works – in their own distinct ways – confront memory, struggle and place.



RISE '76 OPENS TO GREAT REVIEWS IN CAPE TOWN, GEARS UP FOR JO'BURG RUN



Commissioned by The Market Theatre and the Baxter Theatre, RISE '76 is a captivating work of historical fiction that tells the story of June 16th like never before.

Rise '76 – written and directed by Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni – opened at the Baxter Theatre on 12 May 2026 to critical and commercial success. As the show prepares to transfer to The Market Theatre for its Jo'burg season starting from 5 – 28 June 2026 in the Mannie Manim Theatre, those

After catching the show, Thembi Mtshali-Jones posted, “Last night I was reminded the importance of storytelling and the responsibility of carrying the story with honesty, sensitivity and care.” The veteran actress lavished the work with praise for reviving and adding to the memory of June 16th. “The story carries such an emotional and historical weight. But when the creative team handles it with honesty, care, sensitivity and gentleness, it becomes more than just a performance; it becomes an act of remembrance.”

Broadcaster Nancy Richards described the show's run as a serious piece of history, intended to honour the 50th anniversaries of June, 16 1976 as well as the birth of The Market Theatre. Richards further wrote, “Whatever you remember (if you're old enough) or whatever you've been told, this piece is worth seeing if only for the interpretation by the whole creative team and the power of the performers.”

“Raw, fearless and deeply emotional” is how Saskia Goldberg found, saying it “brings the youth of 1976 roaring back to life—not as history-book heroes, but as young people with fire, fear and impossible courage.”

Beryl Eichenberger concurred. “Outstanding, poignant, tragic...I was left feeling smacked in the gut! The brilliant cast delivered in so many ways, their characters heartfelt. Staging and the use of visual footage from the time added atmosphere and authenticity. It is a pivotal piece of our troubled history that should be remembered, reflected and seen by all.”

Rise '76 transports audiences to Molefe Secondary, an imaginary school in Soweto. As the mid-year exams loom, student leaders “Bafana Buthelezi” (played by Alex Sono) and “Kedibone Moloi” (Zilungile Mbombo) find themselves in a heated confrontation with their principal, “Mr Alfie Ndlovu” (Botlhale Mahlangu), over the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. The disagreement quickly escalates into a tragic turning point, altering the course of history and exposing the regime's brutality.

“With an event of this magnitude, thousands of details can easily fall through the cracks. So, with this play, I have 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,” commented playwright-director Tiisetso Mashifane wa Noni.

“My philosophy in telling this very well-known story was to always remember that there is not one dominant ‘true’ voice. Rather, there are many different voices that can complement or contradict the greater historical narrative that we know.”

ZILANDE / LANDA ABAKINI: NEW EXHIBITION URGES A RETURN TO SELF



ZILANDE / LANDA ABAKINI LEBOHANG KGANYE

PUBLIC OPENING: 30 MAY | 10:00 - 14:00

30 MAY - 6 JUNE | 10:00 - 17:00 | OPEN TUESDAY TO SATURDAY
46 7TH AVENUE, PARKTOWN NORTH

Ba re e ne e re... (“Once upon a time...”), the ancestral threshold of Sesotho folktales, opens this exhibition like a breath drawn across generations. It reminds us that every story arrives already plural, already borne by a chorus of voices. In Zilande / Landa Abakini, this invocation becomes both method and cosmology: memory is not merely retrieved but summoned; not simply preserved but performed into being.

The exhibition title draws from isiZulu: Zilande, “fetch yourself,” and Landa abakini, “fetch your family,” a phrase resonant within spiritual practices of ancestral veneration. Together, they extend Athambile Masola's articulation of ukuzilanda as a conjuring of familial presence through which the self is continually constituted. Kganye's practice enacts this call by deconstructing domestic photography, extending oral traditions into visual form, and producing

archives that are at once evidentiary and haunted. What begins as intimate memory-work reverberates outward, summoning spectral kin and the fragile seams of relation that contour Black life.

Language, particularly Sesotho and isiZulu idioms, structures how Kganye remembers, imagines, and reanimates the vernacular photograph. The homeplace and its hand-me-downs: family albums, garments softened by touch, objects worn by use, become portals through which stories circulate. Like photographs, these narratives enact Ba re e ne e re...: they hold gaps, inconsistencies, and ellipses that refuse the closure demanded by conventional archives. In Kganye's hands, absence becomes an active archival condition, a generative aperture through which memory gathers, disperses, and transforms.

Across five bodies of work (“In Search for Memory”, “Shadows of Re Memory”, “Keep the Light Faithfully”, “Le Sale ka Kgotso” and “Mosebetsi wa Dirithi”), Kganye traces how families, nations and identities are shaped through inherited stories and whispered histories. Together, these works form a constellation of matrilineal memory, where oral, visual and domestic practices cohere into a living counter-archive.

Through cardboard silhouettes illuminated from within, staged photographs, fabric, animated film and sculptural installation, Kganye composes immersive worlds in which fragments of personal history overlap with broader political and postcolonial realities. She repeatedly inserts herself into her own archive, refusing the distance between storyteller and story. Memory becomes a fragile, performative practice: rehearsed, revised and returned to in ever-shifting form.

Here, the archive is not a sealed repository but a porous, breathing terrain shaped by women’s labour, by gestures and pauses, by the spectral intimacies that linger in fabric folds and the edges of shadow. “Zilande / Landa Abakini” invites viewers into this terrain, asking them to witness how stories fetch us, how we fetch one another, and how memory, ever incomplete, remains a practice of care, conjure and continual becoming.



NEWS

WINDYBROW TEENS STAGE A MUTINY AT THIS YEAR’S FEDA



Now in its 21st iteration, over 60 productions from schools in and around Johannesburg sweated it out for the ultimate honour, turning the Joburg Theatre into a battleground of dramatic and artistic excellence.

The Windybrow Arts Centre continued its multi-year participation at the Festival of Excellence in Dramatic Arts, known as FEDA, when its Senior Arts Group competed at this year’s competitions.

FEDA is a one act play festival for high schools held every year in May in Johannesburg, with the objective of providing a safe and celebratory platform for young artists and theatre makers to produce, direct and create exciting theatre.

Windybrow teenagers – the mutineers – staged MUTINY on 16 May 2026 to critical success. Coming out in numbers to cheer them on were parents, siblings and friends. Parents made cards, while the cast itself bought the director, Angel Dube, a present.

Mentor and facilitator Sibahle Mangena received flowers in what was a shared, moving outpouring of love.

MUTINY: Teen’ocracy tells the story of a 14 years old boy named Tony, who creates a game that imagines a world without parents. After a small altercation with his dad over the game, Tony and his classmates wake up to a world with no parents, a world where they set the rules and live without limits. The play gives you a fresh look into the minds of teenagers and leaves us asking whether a

parent-free world would be teenagers’ sweet dream or their worst nightmare.

The play was written by Unathi Ndlovu and Angel Dube, while Angel Dube and Mongezi Mahlobo directed it.

“I’m speechless, the performance was outstanding. I’m so proud of them and they looked amazing. Your hardwork and dedication doesn’t go unnoticed,” a parent commented after watching the play.

“I appreciate what you are doing to my child. He is someone today because of you. Keep it up. Besides cheering for our stars, I am overwhelmed to meet the team that is behind all this.

We as parents appreciate you. You keep our kids busy with profitable activities, rather than them roaming in the streets,” another proud parent wrote to The Windybrow Arts Centre staff.

MUTINY was felt by the festival organisers as well, who wrote on FEDA’s Facebook page, “Another explosive, fabulous entertaining showcase of theatricality and creativity! Imagining a world with no rules, no adults, limitless freedom...An energy like no other!”

THE ART CAVE RETURNS TO CURATE THE KIPPIES FRINGE DURING THE MARKET THEATRE'S 50TH YEAR



The Market Theatre is proud to announce the return of the Kippies Fringe, curated for the second year running by The Art Cave (Philangezwi Nxumalo and Tebogo Malapane). The 2026 programme – which unfolds from July to December 2026 at Kippies – promises a bold and dynamic offering that engages multiple generations, themes and communities.

This year's iteration, in the 50th year of The Market Theatre, marks a significant milestone for The Art Cave, while reaffirming The Market Theatre's commitment to bridging access, empowering up-and-coming storytellers and developing new audiences.

For The Art Cave, having a return season as curators of the Kippies Fringe is exciting and deeply affirming, reflecting the trust placed in this trailblazing organisation's ability to present a compelling artistic offering. "Last year taught us the importance

of balance between emerging and established voices, between experimentation and accessibility.

This year, we have been more intentional in shaping a programme that not only challenges audiences, but also invites them in. We have improved on structure, diversity and thematic cohesion," says Philangezwi Nxumalo, Artistic Director at The Art Cave.

"We have broadened regional inclusion, strengthened youth participation, and ensured a more conscious gender balance across the programme. This is not just a programme, it is a reflection of where we are as a society, and where we are going," Nxumalo adds.

This year attracted more than 200 applications across the categories of live music, theatre, comedy and young audiences. The selection process focused on authenticity, urgency and artistic innovation. "We were looking for work that is honest, relevant and bold in its storytelling. The selected productions stood out because they are not only artistically compelling, but they also speak to the times we are living in. There is a strong sense of identity, experimentation, and intention across the programme," shares The Art Cave's Producer, Tebogo Malapane.

In **July**, the programme honours the spirit of legendary jazz icon Kippie Moeketsi through a curated Music Unplugged Weekend. This segment showcases emerging voices in South African soul and jazz, including Sanele Mfene's Imanyano Yobuhlobo and S'nazo's self-titled S'nazo Unplugged, offering a contemporary continuation of a rich musical legacy. The month concludes with Zweli and the Lemon Seed, a theatre production for young audiences that blends entertainment and education, focusing on environmental awareness and sustainability which is a clear investment in the next generation.

August, aligned with Women's Month, explores themes of collaboration and shared space. The programme intentionally features works created by men that centre and elevate women's voices. Productions such as First Love and Voice of Women reflect a commitment to gender inclusivity, with women leading as directors and performers, while male creators actively create space for female narratives to thrive.

In **September**, the programme expands into a broader exploration of heritage and identity. Moving beyond a singular cultural lens, works such as Roti Queen and Sade in Hollandse kombuise spotlight Indian and Afrikaans cultural narratives. This curatorial choice reflects a commitment to unity and dialogue, embracing South Africa's diversity while reimagining a shared future.

October serves as a space of transition and experimentation within the programme, featuring works such as The Champion and

Askies! Sorry. This period continues the programme's commitment to bold and innovative storytelling that challenges form and expands theatrical language within the Kippies Fringe context.

November brings the programme into an intimate and emotionally charged space through Sense by Thato Moeng and Who Left the Fridge Open? by Botshelo Mmutle. These pieces are intentionally positioned to explore the pressures of everyday life and the complexity of human presence through small-scale, character-driven storytelling. This moment in the programme invites reflection, confrontation and recognition.

The programme concludes in **December** with the Soweto Comedy Festival curated by Kedibone Mulaudzi. This closing moment embraces comedy as both liberation and connection, celebrating voice, resilience and the power of storytelling to travel beyond its origins while remaining rooted in lived experience.

All productions are staged at the intimate 50-seater Kippies venue, located adjacent to The Market Theatre. Tickets for all shows sell for R100 and are available on Webtickets.

UPCOMING SHOWS





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