THE MARKET THEATRE FOUNDATION



THE MARKET BUZZ

SEPTEMBER 2026

THE MARKET PHOTO WORKSHOP

THE MARKET THEATRE

THE MARKET THEATRE LABORATORY

THE WINDYBROW ARTS CENTRE

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

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



The Cast of **A Good House** on set

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THE DALRO CAN THEMBA MERIT AWARD UNLOCKS NEW VOICES



The Merit Award is made possible through a partnership between DALRO, UKZN's Centre for Creative Arts, Wits University Press and The Market Theatre Foundation.

In 2025, the inaugural winner of the DALRO Can Themba Merit Award was announced, with one of the prizes being an adaptation of their short story into a theatrical piece. Dyondzo Kwinika's Mr Duiker Sang the Blues impressed the judging panel, which comprised The Market Theatre Foundation's Greg Homann, among others.

Lerato Mahlangu's Zombie was named runner-up.

The competition attracted more scores of submissions, from which the top 10 finalists were chosen and featured in an anthology titled When Water Wants To. The book was edited by Neil Coppen and published by the Wits University Press.

The DALRO Can Themba Merit Award runs on a two-year developmental cycle—2025 focused on the literary component, mentorship, story refinement and publication, while 2026 was dedicated to the dramatic adaptation of the award-winning short story into a stage play.

The winning story – Mr Duiker Sang the Blues – is now a brand new play-with-music that follows an exceptional jazz musician named "Themba", who enjoys a successful music career while wrestling his inner demons. Through the recollections of his family and those closest to him, the play presents a deeply intimate and honest exploration of family, friendship, memory and the complexities of mental health.

The production will run from 13 September to 4 October 2026 at The Market Theatre, directed by Greg Homann.

By creating cross-disciplinary creativity and supporting emerging talent, the DALRO Can Themba Merit Award ensures that South African storytelling thrives, on the page, on stage and beyond, reflecting Can Themba's journey.

"The DALRO Can Themba Merit Award has been important in my writing journey. It gave the story a life beyond me and gave me the opportunity to discover playwriting," said Kwinika, reflecting on the upcoming premiere of his newly adapted work.

Nearly 60 years since his passing in September 1967, Can Themba's writing remains a South African literary treasure and an inspiration to many writers. In addition to his works being adapted from page to stage, he continues to be a subject of study in journalism and related disciplines.

NEWS

MR DUIKER SANG THE BLUES: A MEDITATION ON THE DEATH OF AN ARTIST



The Market Theatre in partnership with the Dramatic, Artistic and Literary Rights Organisation (DALRO), Wits University Press and the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Centre for Creative Arts (UKZN CCA) have teamed up for the premiere of Mr Duiker Sang the Blues, a theatrical adaptation of the 2025 DALRO Can Themba Merit Award winning short story of the same name, written by Dyondzo Kwinika.

This new play-with-music tracks the life of an exceptional jazz musician named "Themba", who enjoys a successful music career while wrestling his inner demons. Through the recollections of his family and those closest to him, the play presents a deeply intimate and honest exploration of family, friendship, memory and the complexities of mental health.

The production will run from 13 September to 4 October 2026 at The Market Theatre. This timing has special significance as September is the month in which Can Themba died nearly 60 years ago in 1967. In addition, staging this work in South Africa's Heritage Month provides a moment for deep reflection on Themba's literary legacy, while inspiring the current generation of writers—including Dyonzo Kwinika.

Legendary actor Desmond Dube, who featured prominently during The Market Theatre's 50th anniversary celebrations, leads the play-with-music's phenomenal cast comprising of another veteran of the stage, Nomathamsanqa Ngoma. William Harding and Tankiso Mamabolo complete the cast, with experimental and narrative-driven live music composed by Yogin Sullaphen and Pertunia Msani.

Mr Duiker Sang the Blues is directed by Greg Homann.

Nelisiwe Xaba makes a comeback to The Market Theatre as the play's movement director.

The script presents a meditation on the meaning of an artist's death, while poignantly exploring grief, how it lingers and how we reckon with loss. With death as its meditative anchor, this musically rich work calculates the hefty psychological price for creative talent, and the cost of balancing artistry, personality and celebrity.

It further lends much needed language to mental health challenges facing the creative community, often masked in performative joy and the unending pursuit of perfection. It asserts that the true legacy of artists is not measured by the outpouring of condolences when they pass on, but the respect and integrity with which they were treated during their life and times.

The DALRO Can Themba Merit Award was launched at the Time of the Writer Festival in March 2025 as a groundbreaking collaboration between DALRO, The Market Theatre Foundation, Wits University Press and the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Centre for Creative Arts. The competition attracted more than 250 submissions from different parts of South Africa. An anthology featuring the top ten shortlisted stories titled When Water Wants To – including Kwinika's Mr. Duiker Sang the Blues – was published by the Wits University Press and edited by playwright-director, Neil Coppen.

Reflecting on this moment, Kwinika says, "I wanted to write about the guilt, the silence, the unbearable. And Mr Duiker Sang the Blues came out of that place. I wrote it as a short story, so seeing it become a play is still strange to me. Words that started with me are now being spoken by actors, and other people are finding their way into the work. The DALRO Can Themba Merit Award has been important in my writing journey. It gave the story a life beyond me and gave me the opportunity to discover playwriting. I am still learning what happens when a story leaves your hands and enters a room."

Director, Greg Homann, who is also the Artistic Director at The Market Theatre Foundation, says Mr Duiker Sang the Blues continues on the theatre's impressive record of staging and adapting some of South Africa's favourite novels and short stories into plays.

"For us at The Market Theatre, adaptation has long been a powerful way of giving stories a life from page to stage. Through this tradition, iconic works such as The Suit, The Life and Times of Michael K, The Promise, The Cry of Winnie Mandela and now Mr Duiker Sang the Blues have found new audiences at The Market Theatre, expanding access to these important narratives while vitally preserving, growing and celebrating our rich literary heritage," states Homann.

For DALRO, this work is closely linked with its commitment to safeguarding the rights of creators and advancing an ecosystem in which artists are fairly recognised and remunerated, both of which are essential to their wellbeing, sustainability and legacy.

"The journey of Mr Duiker Sang the Blues from an award-winning short story to a fully[DM1.1] realised stage production is exactly what the DALRO Can Themba Merit Award was created to achieve," says DALRO Managing Director, Lazarus Serobe.

"The award is more than a writing competition. It is a developmental platform designed to identify, nurture and invest in emerging South African writers, providing mentorship, publication opportunities and pathways into other creative disciplines. We are immensely proud of Dyondzo Kwinika's achievement and of how this story has progressed from a call for submissions to publication and now to the professional stage. In celebrating Can Themba's legacy, we are also creating opportunities for a new generation of writers to find their voice, build sustainable creative careers and contribute to the future of South African storytelling."

INSIDE THE MARKET THEATRE'S FIRST EVER QUEER FESTIVAL



This year's Pride Month is set to be a theatrically rich, exhilarating affair as The Market Theatre presents its first ever Queer Festival from 21 to 25 October 2026.

With this inaugural iteration, The Market Theatre enters a bold new chapter, promising a vibrant celebration of identity, resistance and radical joy.

This new initiative aims to bring together a mix of performance, featuring a brand-new LGBTQ+ cabaret called BUM STUFF about anal sex (18+).

Audiences can also expect daring new works including THE BREASTS OF TIRESIAS (about a transman's experience of transitioning) and a powerful new play with music by Chantal Stanfield called SHOCKWAVE, which tells a gripping story of courage, secrecy and the struggle to be seen.

Again, Thamsanqa Tshabalala, recipient of the 2026 Barney Simon Residency, will present their dance-based work, IT'S A LONGSTORY, aimed at investigating the becoming of the Black queer body through the lens of an African child and their journey throughout history. The work will sit alongside a curated series by Jason Wheeler and Maralin van Reenen of fresh, provocative LGBTQ+ writing from emerging and established voices comprising spoken word and drama, among others.

In a thrilling return, Pieter-Dirk Uys is set to showcase a special work, EVITA @ 91 reflecting on Evita's 1981 birth at The Market Theatre – when even drag was outlawed – reminding us how far we've come, and how far we must still go.

The Johannesburg Queer Chorus will give a concert, singing a repertoire that acknowledges Johannesburg's Queer Community and South African artists aligned to LGBTQ concerns. They will perform a repertoire centred on artists and song writers whose work connect with the queer experiences of Johannesburg.

Their concert will be under the title, QUEER JOY.

Developing works such as THE BLUE ALBUM, which showcased at the Kippies Fringe as well as the National Arts Festival Fringe, will add contemporary queer voices to the programme. The Blue Album fuses poetry, monologue, movement and choral voice to stage an intimate portrait of Queer life and love in townships.

Look out on our various digital communication platforms for a full line-up of The Market Theatre's Queer Festival.

REVIEW

THIS HOUSE. IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR PARADISE



A Review of A Good House by Robyn Sassen.

With the smile of a classic real estate agent, that is practiced and lightly polished in its benign-ness: not too happy or too threatening, Lynette (Mary-Anne Barlow) sums up a significant tale, sophisticated in its ability to poke hilariously and dangerously at the preciousness of a thirty-year old democracy in a world coloured and somewhat crippled by political correctness.

A Good House, by Amy Jephta is a muscular contemplation on housing in South Africa that will have you cringing so hard, you've got to laugh and sometimes you might want to weep. It's on at the Mannie Manim Theatre, Market Theatre complex until 30 August.

Picture the scenario: A brand new high-end suburban complex with all the checks and balances that define privileged living. Everyone tiptoes around everyone else with a developed sense of conversational hygiene, carefully clicking every 'c', 'x' and 'q', with different parts of their tongues which are not used to doing such things, as far as they can. Proverbially speaking that is. And then Sihle (Nhlakanipho Manqele) meets Chris (José Domingos) during the most stressful part of renovations and the Pandora's box of assumptions and no-no's begins to show its flaws.

But this is not a simple yarn of politically incorrect faux pas. No. It's an evolved understanding of what matters to you because of where you come from. Is it a problem to be laughed at by some people while you are on the road up? Is it an issue that others make grotesque assumptions about you because of the tracksuit you are wearing? It is hurtful to be served water in an enamel mug because the neighbours secretly think you unworthy of a ceramic one? It's the old story of assuming having the power to make an 'ass' of you and me.

With a strong cast representing six stereotypes, reaching from mung-bean-eating yogis to yuppies to people who come from a history of not being enough or of being too much, the work is a pungent essay on the multi-headed beast of real estate – and this doesn't allow us to forget the informal house being built in bits and pieces through an inset on stage.

But in the context of the play, it's on the cul-de-sac around the corner, just out of eyeshot of most of the complex's residents. The shack that serves as a conversation opener through this work. Everyone fears the unknown residents of this little house, for different reasons.

The work is beautifully scripted, performed with careful nuance and a wise cast and splayed out in a space which has been reworked to be widely horizontal and tennis-court like, grouping audiences along both long sides of the space and forcing their heads to turn this way and that as the discourse bounces into dangerous and discomforting terrain. It's also very cleverly designed, in terms of what subtleties can change one high-end cardboard cutout home into another. And it's about the dynamic of relationships and triggers.

But more than all of this, A Good House is a razor sharp bit of contemporary SA repartee, which evokes the writing of theatre-makers such as Mike van Graan, while retaining its own identity. It's the kind of production which does local theatre proud.



NEWS

MPW STUDENT, JESSICA NKUNA, CAPTURES FRONT PAGE IMAGE FOR THE CITIZEN NEWSPAPER


citizen.co.za

Tuesday 8 September 2026

The Citizen

MORE NEWS. YOUR WAY.

R13.00 INC. VAT

Cardoso hails Downs' spirit Phakaaathi

PAGES 28 & 29

Easy bacon and egg pie

CITY PAGE 15

Eskom twists the knife

→ Another punishing tariff hike cuts deep into household and business budgets, with an 8.83% increase looming for 2027-28 – nearly triple the inflation target. Rising executive pay and incentive costs fuel the squeeze, while taxpayers prop up profits. Consumers face yet another blow as affordability collapses.

NEWS PAGES 3 & 10

57 000 deported, R157m spent

NEWS PAGE 3

NEWS PAGE 2

Dept orders probe into 'tender scam'

→ Whistle-blower turns to court over 'victimisation'.

De Kocks plot Dubai return

RACING EXPRESS PAGE 9

Renaming fever

Washington – US President Donald Trump's name-changing spree found an unlikely new target when he suggested the state of New Mexico could become "New America".

His proposal, which was dismissed by the state's governor, comes days after he signed an order to rename Lake Ontario as "Lake America" in the middle of a trade war with neighbouring Canada.

"Many people suggested changing the name of New Mexico... to NEW AMERICA," Trump posted on social media.

The White House reposted an image showing the Mexico part of the state's name crossed out and replaced with "America".

State governor Michelle Lujan Grisham told Fox News the name "isn't up for debate – it's been ours since before the United States existed."

She said Trump wanted to "distract Americans" from issues such as soaring petrol prices. Trump last week suggested renaming the Strait of Hormuz as "Trump Strait". He renamed the Gulf of Mexico as the "Gulf of America" last year in a move rejected by Mexico.

Canada has also rejected the attempt to rename Lake Ontario. – AFP

City mirror after rain

A taxi drives past the reflection of the Market Theatre in standing water along Lilian Ngoyi Street in Newtown, Johannesburg, after heavy rain yesterday. Joburg remains under wet and cold conditions, with scattered showers and thunderstorms forecast across Gauteng as a cut-off low-pressure system affects the province. Picture: Jessica Nkuna

→ AKA thought Anele Tembe 'was just playing'

NEWS PAGE 6

THE MARKET PHOTO WORKSHOP

The Market Photo Workshop's Photojournalism & Documentary Photography student, Jessica Nkuna, snapped a powerful photo that appeared on the front page of The Citizen newspaper, dated 8 September 2026. Nkuna caught a reflection of a taxi from the standing waters at the corner of Lilian Ngoyi and Margaret Mcingana, The Market Square.

The image generates insights to the current storms that usually bring flash floods in and around Johannesburg. More than just a picture, this is a bold commentary on service delivery, stormwater infrastructure maintenance and what it means to live in Newtown. This is a reaffirmation of the role of photojournalism in holding power accountable, calling for engaged citizenry and being a voice to the often unheard—especially towards the upcoming local government elections.

The Market Photo Workshop's Photojournalism & Documentary Photography Programme (PDP) is designed to empower photographers to ethically document and engage with pressing social issues through responsible storytelling and strong visual narratives.

Nkuna is currently on an internship with The Citizen newspaper. As part of the internship, she works with a mentor to produce news photographs from across Gauteng.

THE MARKET THEATRE FOUNDATION'S OPEN DAY PAVES WAY TO FULFILLING CREATIVE CAREERS



THE MARKET THEATRE FOUNDATION

For many decades, The Market Theatre Foundation, through its renowned educational institutions, The Market Theatre Laboratory and The Market Photo Workshop, has dedicated itself to training and developing the next generation of storytellers, creatives and cultural leaders.

With distinguished alumni making their mark across film, television, theatre, photography, and photojournalism, our programmes are recognised for their industry relevance and practical approach. Students gain the skills, experience and entrepreneurial mindset needed to thrive in the challenging economic landscape, graduating with a strong foundation for impactful, sustainable careers.

Join two of Johannesburg's leading institutions, recognised locally and internationally for their innovative curriculum, thought leadership and industry relevance, and take the first step towards a meaningful career.

SOL RACHILO REMEMBERED AT THE MARKET THEATRE



Solomon Cedric "Ntsweing" Rachilo was laid to rest on Wednesday, 26 August 2026, at a Special Provincial Official Funeral at the Soweto Theatre.

The Market Theatre hosted the memorial service of theatre stalwart Bra Sol Rachilo on Tuesday, 25 August 2026. The service ran from 11:00 to 15:00, providing his loved ones and the creative community with space to honour and celebrate his remarkable life.

For generations of South African artists, Bra Sol was far more than an actor; he was a living archive with rich memory, embodying the histories, struggles, dreams and stories of his people.

A son of Pietermaritzburg who left indelible imprints across the Vaal, Soweto, Newtown and beyond, Bra Sol strode through the world of South African theatre. He was gentle and kind-hearted, yet fiercely gifted; generous with his knowledge and unwavering in his artistic truth.

His rich artistic legacy endures through works such as 'Lakutshona Ilanga', 'Three in Number', 'The Township Housewife' and 'Grounded in Mshenguville', while his memorable performances in productions including 'No-Good Friday', 'Sponono', 'Gangsters', the film 'Game for Vultures' and the television drama 'Lisenethini' cemented his place as one of South Africa's most valued talents.

Belonging to a golden generation that shaped the country's unique artistic identity, Bra Sol lived through the everchanging socio-political environment as one of the cornerstones of our cultural architecture, from the 1950s when he debuted as a performer to his final moments.

Speaking at the memorial service on behalf of The Market Theatre Foundation, Simphiwe Boya – Assistant Front of House Manager – said, "To the family of Bra Sol, I stand here to pass The Market Theatre Foundation's deepest condolences for your loss, and to assure you that we sit with you in these difficult times, as this is our loss."

"This space," he went on, "will never be the same without his smile, charming personality, endless stories and passion for the arts. As we continue celebrating 50 years of The Market Theatre, this is a loss we were never prepared for."

Solomon Cedric "Ntsweing" Rachilo was laid to rest on Wednesday, 26 August 2026, at a Special Provincial Official Funeral at the Soweto Theatre.

FEATURE

IF A SUPPLIER DOESN'T KNOW THEIR STORY, VICKEY DOESN'T BUY IT



The Market Theatre Foundation's procurer, Vickey, is a diligent steward of public funds.

The Market Theatre Foundation's buyer, Vickey, is a diligent steward of public funds.

Finding the right person for a project is a combination of a business science and the human eye. At The Market Theatre Foundation, the function of Supply Chain Management (SCM) is not just a game of RFQs, bidding documents and appointments of service providers. Rather, it's about connecting likeminded suppliers with the leading cultural institution's vision, while strengthening systems, improving productivity and creating a healthy organisational culture.

At the MTF, one man stands at the intersection of this value exchange: Vickey Pienaar – SCM officer. Vickey arrived at the MTF in 2015 from the City of Joburg's Pikitup. Throughout his eight years at the organisation, he has moved across different roles, from being a payroll clerk to being a junior buyer and now SCM officer.

To Vickey, waking up every day to come to The Market Square goes beyond sifting countless bidding documents and ensuring compliance—it's an operationalisation of sound public financial management, strong internal controls and accountability.

"In terms of doing buying for the MTF, it is a strategic role, so without this position there will be no accountability in terms of spending the funds given from the state," he says.

Of course, this is no walk in the park. The job comes with many challenges, such as missing mandatory documents like tax compliance certificates, Central Supplier Database (CSD) registration details, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment affidavits, incomplete bid forms, late submissions and high volumes of applications, among others.

For many practitioners, these challenges would be enough to ruin a day at the office. But for Vickey, it is not the hurdles before a contract is awarded that keep him up at night. Instead, his greatest concern is what happens afterwards, ensuring the organisation receives value for money.

He points to the non-performance of suppliers in delivering contracted services as his biggest challenge. When suppliers fail to deliver, projects are delayed, timelines are disrupted, and the organisation often incurs additional costs, straining the already thin resources.

For this dedication, it is especially rewarding for Vickey when the organisation receives clean audit outcomes, knowing that the SCM processes he oversees are an integral part of those results.

But this is not all Vickey Pienaar lives for. He has built an equally fulfilling life outside of work where he connects with nature, refreshes his mind and spends quality time with loved ones.

"I love boating and hiking. I am an outdoor person," he reveals.

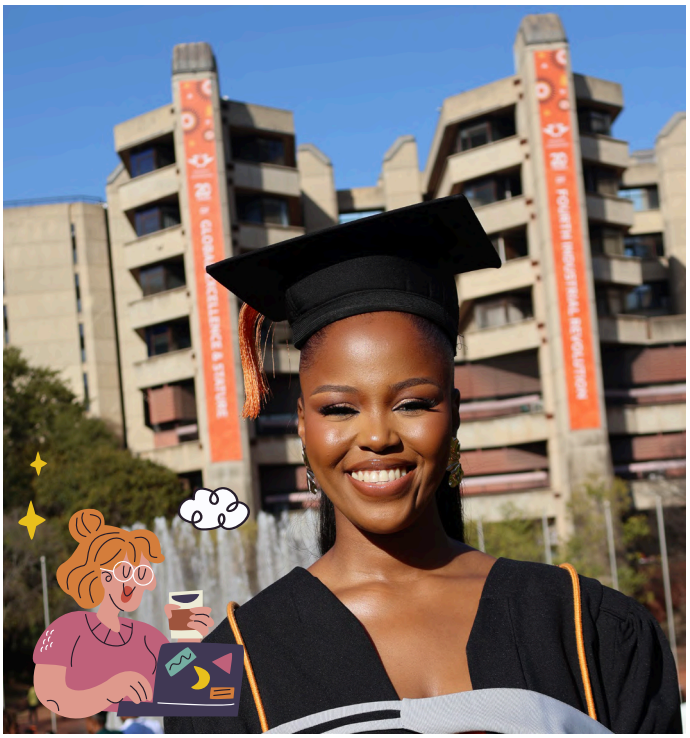




FEATURE

INTERNS OF THE MARKET: GET TO KNOW OUR 2026 COHORT

The Market Theatre Foundation's internship programme attracts talented graduates across various fields, injecting youthful energy and innovative ideas into the organisation. From sound and graphic design to information technology and corporate affairs, we continue to shape careers through skills transfer. The Market Buzz had a chat with our vibrant cohort of interns to see how they're finding their feet here at the cultural employer of choice



LIBO NGANGELIZWE

Age: 24

Field of Study: Communication Design

Role: Intern – Graphic Design (Brand & Comms)

Highlight of the Year: Simply being part of the space. As an aspiring actor, being surrounded by theatre has been incredibly inspiring and has constantly reminded me of the dream I'm working towards. When my journey as a trainee graphic designer at The Market Theatre Foundation comes to an end, I can't wait to join The Market Lab, learn more and continue growing in the space I truly love.

Words of Wisdom: "Live beyond societal conformities."



AMUKELE KGOTHATSO XABA

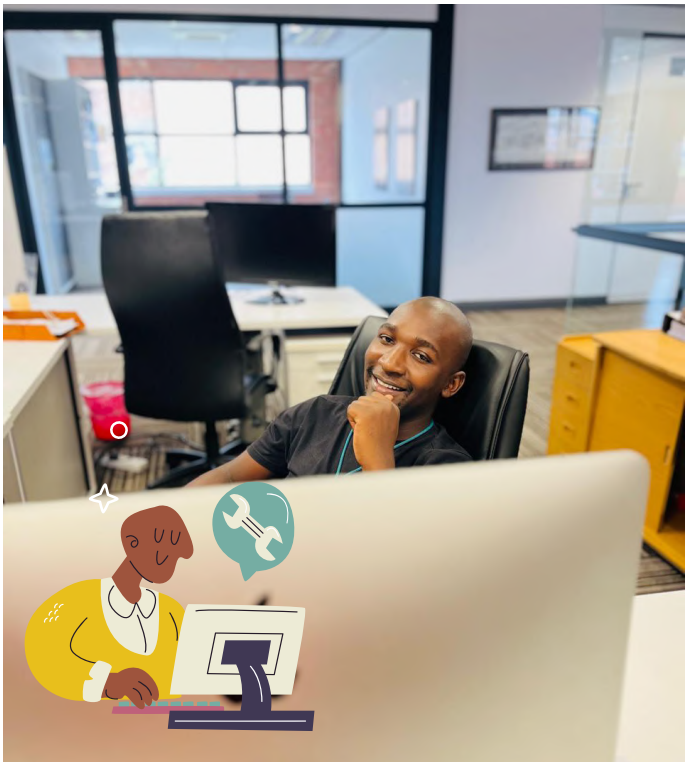
Age: 24

Field of Study: Motion Picture Medium

Role: Intern – Programmes Coordination at The Windybrow Arts Centre

Highlight of the Year: Gaining the confidence that I have today and this was truly done by the safe space provided by my colleagues, and just the overall mentorship from Zintle Radebe and Aroma Lebooa.

Words of Wisdom: If you can dream it, you can achieve it.



BALOYI RIPFUMELO ACCESS

Age: 24

Field of Study: Information Technology

Role: Intern – IT

Highlight of the Year: Being part of the family. I've learnt a lot about networking, domains and hardware, while also gaining experience of what it's like to work in a professional environment. It's been a valuable learning experience for me.

Words of Wisdom: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." – Philippians 4: 13



ROTONDWA MALINDI

Age: 26

Field of Study: Management Services

Role: Intern – Corporate Administrator

Highlight of the Year: My highlight has honestly been the people I've met, the exposure I've gained and how much I've grown at MTF. When I came in as an intern, I was excited to learn and gain practical workplace experience, but the journey has been more than I expected. I've had the opportunity to work closely with Senior Management which has always been a dream of mine; it aligns closely with my career and not forget other different departments. Every experience has taught me something new and helped me become more confident in myself and my abilities. Even though my internship is slowly coming to an end, I'm truly grateful for the people, lessons and memories I've gained along the way. I've really enjoyed being part of the MTF family and I'm hopeful that our paths will cross again in the future.

Words of Wisdom: Trust God's timing, keep working, stay consistent, and never give up on the vision you have for yourself. What is meant for you will find you at the right time.



DIANA MATSOSO

Age: 28

Field of Study: BA Honours in Drama and Theatre Arts (Technical Theatre Management) + BA Drama and Theatre Arts (Film and Television)

Role: Intern – Technical at The Market Theatre Laboratory

Highlight of the Year: The highlight of the year is being part of this internship and working on both local and international productions which has honed and sharpened my technical skills thank you to all Departments who have always supported each department.

Words of Wisdom: "Reach for the stars, so if you fall you land on the clouds." – Kanye West



BALUNGILE MFINGWANA

Age: 26

Field of Study: Library and Information Science

Role: Library and Administrator Assistant

Highlight of the Year: Getting the opportunity to be part of the MTF family, learning from experienced professionals and growing both professionally and personally.

Words of Wisdom: "Knowledge is meant to be shared, and service is where purpose lives."



TSHIAMO MUSI

Age: 25

Field of Study: Technical Theatre and Design (Performing Arts)

Role: Intern – Lighting Technician

Highlight of the Year: The Vault with Zoe Modiga. Working on this production from start to finish has definitely been one of my highlights so far this year. Proud to have been part of bringing this vision to life. The production reflected how much I've grown within the space, how my confidence has grown and a reminder that I get to bring visions and stories to life through my profession as a lighting technician.

Words of Wisdom: "Rome was not built in one day." Great success doesn't happen overnight. It is built through hard work, dedication, patience, and consistency. It is a journey of trial and error, growth and perseverance."



ISIDRO MOROE

Age: 24

Field of Study: Human Resources Management

Role: Intern – HR

Highlight of the Year: Working in a creative and artistic environment, where I have had the opportunity to meet new people with different personalities. Another highlight would be working alongside my line managers who have been patient, supportive and have helped me gain more insight, experience and skills within HR. Since joining MTF, I have developed valuable skills such as emotional intelligence, professionalism and accountability.

Words of Wisdom: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)



SHABANA KHAN RAJA

Age: 23

Field of Study: Sound Engineering and Production

Role: Intern –Sound Technician

Highlight of the Year: Setting up for and running my first show “Afropocalypse”.

Words of Wisdom: “For you to go ALL OUT, you gotta be ALL IN!”



GIG GUIDE

WHAT'S ON AT KIPPIES: A LOOK INTO UPCOMING FRINGE PRODUCTIONS

The Market Theatre Kippies Fringe is still continuing at the small 50-seater Kippies venue, where bold, disruptive and highly entertaining works have a life. Here's what you can catch in the next months:



SADE IN HOLLANDSE KOMBUISE

10 – 13 September 2026

Susan, our only-English-speaking but Afrikaans protagonist, is bent on convincing herself and the world that Afrikaans is not only redeemable but deserves a place on this rich African soil. And so, she goes in to get her hands dirty, literally and figuratively as she unearths the history of her family as well as her cultures.



ROTI QUEEN

24 – 27 September 2026

The production explores identity, family, sacrifice and self-discovery through a distinctly South African Indian lens. At a time when conversations around marriage, caregiving and women's roles continue to shape public life, the show opens a window into what happens behind closed doors.



THE CHAMPION

1 – 4 October 2026

This dynamic four-hander brings together four actors in a physically charged, humorous and deeply moving exploration of manhood, fatherlessness and alcoholism that resides in South African townships.



ASKIES / SORRY

15–18 October 2026

Two characters arrive to pay their respects to a mutual friend. What should be a solemn occasion quickly unravels into a whirlwind of interruptions, misunderstandings, apologies, accusations, flirtations and awkward encounters.



SENSE

5 – 8 November 2026

Created to give voice to experiences that are often misunderstood or stigmatised, the production uses storytelling and performance to foster empathy and understanding around issues of womanhood, infertility, identity, mental health and social stigma.



WHO LEFT THE FRIDGE OPEN?

18 – 22 November 2026

A comedy rooted in everyday South African life, exploring the chaos, humour and tension that comes from shared domestic spaces, family dynamics and small misunderstandings that spiral out of control. The production leans into simplicity and immediacy, allowing audiences to connect directly with the performers and recognise their own lives reflected on stage.

NEWS

PRIMA FACIE COMES TO JOBURG AFTER RAVE REVIEWS IN CAPE TOWN



How Now Brown Cow and The Market Theatre bring Prima Facie to Jo'burg to continue these vital conversations. The premiere South African season of the Tony and Olivier Award winning gripping play, Prima Facie, has now ended it's highly successful run in Cape Town, having received rave reviews and multiple standing ovations during its mostly sold-out season.

Written by Suzie Miller, this production is directed by esteemed director Neil Coppen (Isidlamlilo/ The Fire Eater; Animal Farm; Tin Bucket Drum), fresh from multiple award wins at the recent Cape Town Theatre Awards, with powerhouse performer Danica De La Rey Jones (Hunting Jessica Brok; Unseen; For Colored Girls) starring in the role of Tessa, a brilliant young barrister, who climbs her way up from working class origins to the top of her game.

The piece has received rave reviews during its Cape Town run. Former public protector Professor Thuli Madonsela called it "a brilliant play", while Daily Maverick's Keith Bain wrote that it's "...hugely entertaining and deeply affecting....it is drama you feel, its message a punch to the gut, its argument so thoroughly down to the simple logic of what it means to be human that the weight of it lands in your heart, fills you with a kind of emotional "Aha!" long before any need to unpick its meaning or intellectualise its discourse....Danica De La Rey Jones is a revelation, her performance captivating."

Pipa Hudson from Cape Talk added that Prima Facie is "an incredibly powerful piece of theatre, and an absolute tour de force of a performance...the impeccable music, set and lighting design are all part of the spell."

In the play, Tessa believes in the legal system until a brutal attack turns her world upside down as she navigates the same system she once championed - defending, cross examining and winning. Now put on trial herself, re-traumatised through her cross-examination, she finds herself questioning everything she believed about justice.

Prima Facie is a hard-hitting look at the "patriarchal power of the law" where the burden of proof and existing rules of evidence often work against victims of sexual violence.

The 2022 London production of the show was nominated for five Olivier Awards, with wins for Best New Play and Best Actress for Jodie Comer, who subsequently won a Tony Award for the same role on Broadway in New York.

Director Neil Coppen states excitedly; “After the overwhelming response received in Cape Town with a largely sold-out season and ecstatic responses from the audiences that really connected with the work, as has happened wherever this piece has been performed globally, it’s really exciting for us as a team to now bring it to Joburg and to continue this conversation in different parts of South Africa.”

Prima Facie will be on the Barney Simon stage at The Market Theatre from 17 September – 4 October 2026.

Prima Facie runs for 2 hours with no interval. Due to the sensitive subject matter and out of respect to the artist, no latecomers will be admitted once the show has begun and should anyone leave during the show, there will be no re-admittance.



NEWS

JOMBA! @ THE MARKET THEATRE CELEBRATES WORLD-CLASS CONTEMPORARY DANCE



Following the 28th edition of the Centre for Creative Arts's JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience in Durban, the acclaimed festival expands access to groundbreaking contemporary dance by bringing a selection of the JOMBA! festival's most celebrated productions to Johannesburg audiences. The carefully curated four-night season celebrates exceptional contemporary dance. Running from 9 – 12 September 2026, the programme features African and European internationally acclaimed artists and companies alongside two of South Africa's most influential choreographic voices.

Opening this 4th iteration of JOMBA! @ The Market Theatre is the extraordinary HEROES, presented by the acclaimed Dutch company Introdans in collaboration with Uganda's Joseph Tebandeke and Durban's FLATFOOT DANCE COMPANY. This remarkable programme spans celebrated choreography by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Iratxe Ansa and Igor Bacovich, including new South African choreography by Zinhle Nzama.

The programme also features the inclusive masterpiece IUNGO by Adriaan Luteijn, bringing together performers of different backgrounds, generations and physical abilities in a powerful celebration of humanity, diversity and connection.

The season then honours two previous JOMBA! Legacy Artists whose work has transformed contemporary dance in South Africa and beyond.

Acclaimed choreographer Mamela Nyamza presents her breathtaking ensemble work THE HERD/LESS, a visually arresting meditation on community, conformity, vulnerability and survival. Characterised by Nyamza's fearless choreographic language and uncompromising social commentary, the work powerfully interrogates belonging and resistance.

Internationally regarded choreographer and performer Vincent Mantsoe, whose deeply embodied artistic practice bridges ancestral knowledge with contemporary performance, presents his compelling new solo Desert Poems. This intimate work offers a profound meditation on endurance, spirituality and transformation through Mantsoe's distinctive movement vocabulary.

Additionally, as part of the season, JOMBA! and The Market Theatre will host two free professional development workshops, offering dancers and movement practitioners the opportunity to work directly with some of the artists involved in the festival.

On Tuesday, 8 September (4.30–6pm), Giuseppe Calabrese, ballet master with Introdans, leads a repertoire workshop exploring the choreographic language of renowned Belgian-Moroccan choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. Participants will engage with concepts of fluidity, musicality, connection and dynamic movement quality, drawing on Calabrese's extensive experience performing Cherkaoui's celebrated repertoire.

On Friday, 11 September (4.30–6pm), Vincent Mantsoe shares his celebrated KOBA Technique, described as a "physical meditation". Integrating traditional and contemporary dance practices, the workshop invites participants to explore identity, presence and embodied expression through Mantsoe's internationally recognised movement philosophy.

Workshop places are free but booking is essential as numbers are limited.

Safe, affordable and secure underground parking available at Newtown Junction.



YES LET'S FESTIVAL MARKS FIVE YEARS OF EXPERIMENTAL WORKS



The cast of Jonathan Maseng's MUNSIEVILLE EXIT TRUTH in rehearsals for their showcase at this year's Yes Let's Experimental Festival.

The Yes Let's Experimental Festival celebrates five years of creating space for emerging theatre-makers to experiment, take risks and develop new work. Presented by The Art Cave in collaboration with The Market Theatre Laboratory, this fifth iteration is set to take place on 19 September 2026 at the Ramolao Makhene Theatre, The Market Square, Newtown.

This year's festival is themed "The End & The Beginning", marking the close of its first era and the beginning of a new chapter.

The fifth anniversary edition brings together eight works and eight emerging artistic voices, offering audiences different perspectives on the country, society and the experiences that shape us as individuals. Rather than presenting one idea of what emerging theatre should look like, Yes Let's creates room for different artistic backgrounds, forms and approaches to meet on one stage.

For audiences, the festival is an opportunity to encounter new work, discover artists at an early stage of their careers and experience theatre that is still asking questions rather than pretending to have all the answers.

The programme is divided into two segments that look at two sides of our experience: 'A Nation in the Mirror' and 'Inside the Human Condition'. The first turns its gaze towards society, featuring Periods are (P)olitical by Eulogeo Raphasha, The Pedestrian by Timothy Soal, Munsieville Exit Truth by Jonathan Maseng and Who Killed South Ahh??? by Keabetswe Mokadi.

The second frame looks inward through Behind the Pole by Modipadi Mokgohloa, Untitled by Mzwandile Mphiti, The Liminal Space by Bongi Mtsweni and A Gift From Solitude by Naledi Mqoma.

The programme also reflects the different places from which new theatre-makers emerge. Artists connected to Wits, AFDA and The Market Theatre Laboratory feature alongside practitioners developing their work through community-based spaces. Munsieville Exit Truth, created by community-based emerging maker Jonathan Maseng, is one example of the festival creating a pathway for work developed outside formal training environments to enter the professional theatre space. It forms part of a wider question at the heart of Yes Let's: What happens when more people are given the opportunity to tell their stories?

"For us, five years of Yes Let's is an opportunity to reflect on the journey while thinking seriously about what comes next. The festival was created to give artists room to experiment, and we have seen that experimentation come from different places — from training institutions, independent artists and communities. This year is about recognising that journey while opening ourselves to the next chapter," says Tebogo Malapane, Co-curator and Producer of Yes Let's Experimental Festival.

For Co-curator Philangezwi "King SMS" Nxumalo, the anniversary is not simply about looking backwards.

"The End & The Beginning speaks directly to where we are. We are celebrating five years, but we are also saying that the first five years cannot be the final definition of Yes Let's. We want to keep creating a space where artists can try things, take risks and discover their voices. The next era should be bigger in possibility, not simply bigger in size."

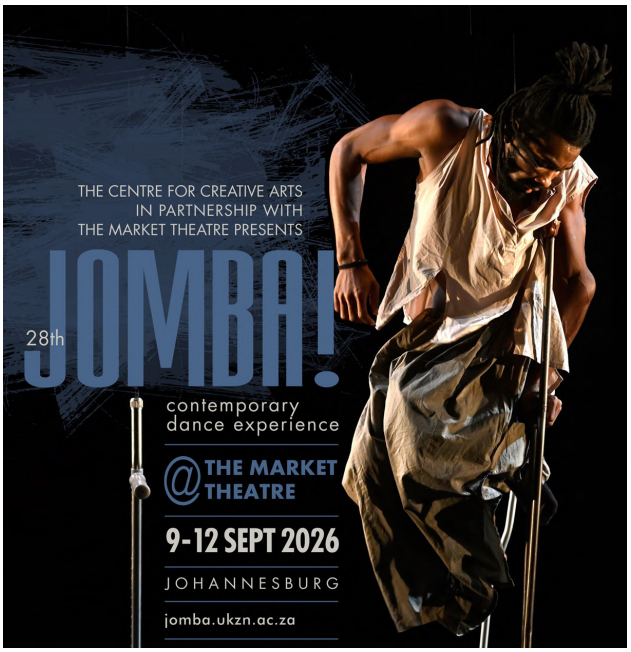


UPCOMING SHOWS



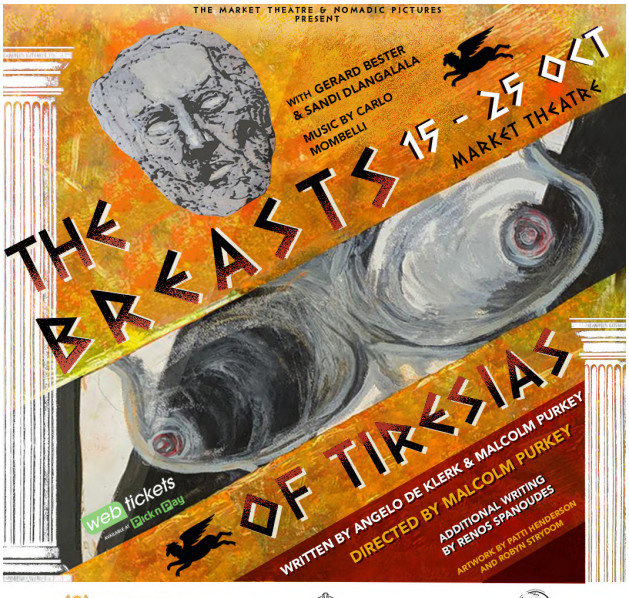

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