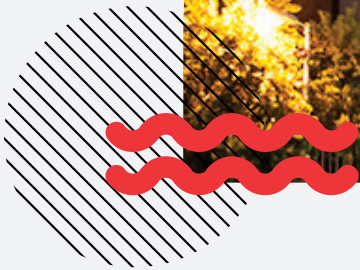


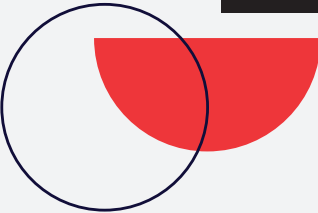
THE
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THE MARKET
BUZZ



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2025



THE
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THE
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THE
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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

A photograph of two shirtless men in a dramatic, low-key lighting setting. The man in the foreground is leaning forward, looking intensely at the camera with a wide-eyed, slightly fearful expression. The man behind him is also leaning forward, looking directly at the camera with a stern, intense expression. They are both wearing dark shorts. The background is dark and indistinct.

'Fatherhood' actors,
Tshepang Ramasehla and
Mike Dzova

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

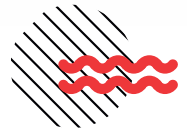
For The Market Theatre Foundation:

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



10/25

THE MARKET BUZZ NEWSLETTER

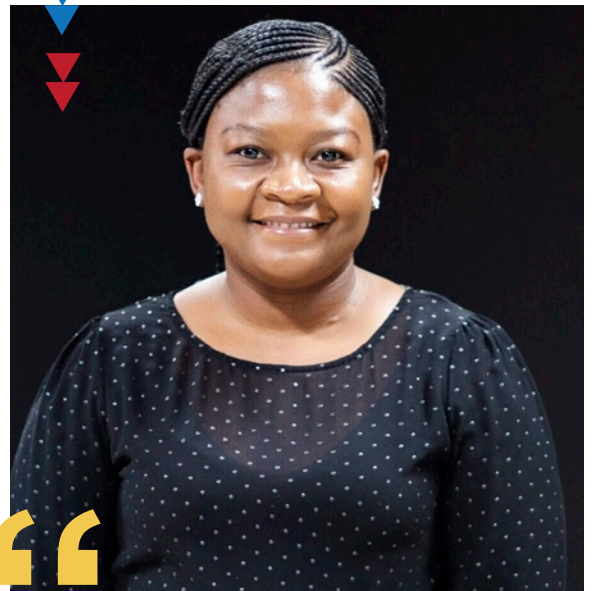


FIRST CLEAN AUDIT FOR THE MARKET THEATRE FOUNDATION IN OVER A DECADE

The Market Theatre Foundation has received its first clean audit in more than ten years. According to Auditor-General Tsakani Maluleke, the audited financial statements “present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Market Theatre Foundation”.

The audit covered the financial year ending 31 March 2025 and found no material misstatements in the financial statements, no material non-compliance with legislation and no significant internal control deficiencies. Performance targets were also overwhelmingly reached.

In her Annual Report 2024/25 foreword, Council Chairperson Ms. Khanya Sithebe described the audit outcome as a significant milestone for the organisation.



I feel deeply fulfilled by what we have achieved together over the past five years.



“This reflects the culmination of years of work to rebuild governance, financial controls and performance systems—all while maintaining its commitment to artistic innovation and transformation,” said MTF Council Chairperson, Advocate Khanya Sithebe, adding: “This achievement, led by CEO Tshiamo Mokgadi and CFO Mbali Buthelezi, is a testament to the resilience and professionalism of the management team and staff.”

Ms. Sithebe also commended the previous council for ensuring that MTF fulfilled its mandate as a beacon of artistic excellence, social dialogue and cultural reflection.

MTF CEO, Tshiamo Mokgadi, welcomed the clean audit with immense pride. “This accomplishment,” she said, “is a testament to years of dedicated efforts to restore good governance, improve financial discipline and foster a culture of accountability within the organisation.”

Mokgadi further praised the excellent work and strong leadership of former CFO Mbali Buthelezi—MTF’s first Black woman CFO in nearly 50 years. “Her steady guidance and unwavering focus helped navigate us through a financially demanding and compliance-intensive environment,” she remarked.

Reflecting on her tenure, she said, “I feel deeply fulfilled by what we have achieved together over the past five years. This includes the organisation’s recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the re-centering of our artistic and heritage mission, and the steady reinforcement of our governance and internal systems. As we look forward to the Foundation’s 50th anniversary and the beginning of a new strategic cycle, I remain confident in the resilience of the institution and the people who carry its work forward.”

NEWS

THE WINDYBROW ARTS CENTRE AND CAMP I AM HOST THIRD AND LARGEST SPELLING BEEHIVE EDITION

This article first appeared on News24. Credit: Justin Fortuin

A 13-year-old Grade 7 pupil from Lenasia Muslim School outspelled 21 contestants to win the 2025 Spelling BeeHive, a fast-growing literacy initiative hosted at the Ramolao Makhene Theatre, Market Square in Newtown, Johannesburg.

On Saturday, Sameera Sayanvala emerged as the youngest winner against Grade 9 pupils in the competition’s top three contestants, drawing pupils in Grade 7 to 9 from 43 schools in the south of Johannesburg. Her winning word was “subpoena”.

Twenty-one schools advanced to the finals after months of preparation using a list of 1 200 words drawn from the Grade 7 to 9 curriculum.

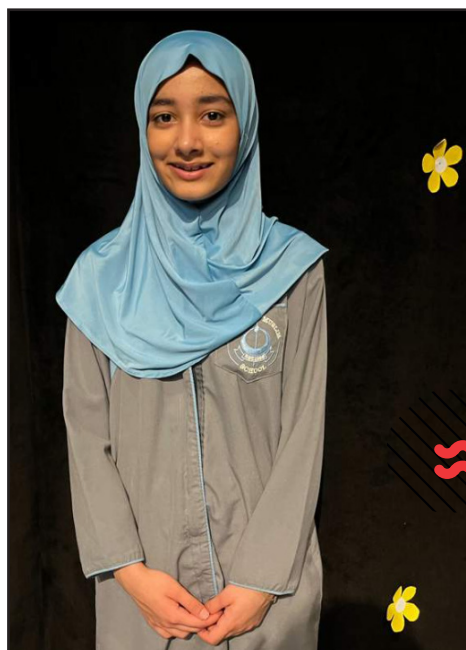
“We’re not teaching children to memorise a list for a competition and forget it two months later. We’re teaching spelling rules, patterns, mnemonics, prefixes and suffixes. If you can spell, it helps your reading fluency. All these things are interconnected, and it’s about bringing joy to our children,” said Camp I Am Executive Director, Kai Crooks-Chissano.

Second-place finisher Karabo Mkaliphi, a Grade 9 pupil at Leshata Secondary School in Orange Farm, said she had aimed for the top spot. “It really went well, even though I was nervous. Some words were new to me,” Mkaliphi said. “I didn’t know the pronunciation when they gave me the last word. That was a bit tricky. My aim was number one, but things go on.”

Third place went to Lebohang Makhaka from John Orr Engineering School of Specialisation in Braamfontein. For him, reaching the podium was “a huge achievement” for his school, which has struggled in previous years. “The semifinals were tense. For me, it was about finding out how competitive people are and getting used to the atmosphere here at Market Theatre,” he said.

Makhaka described a mental tactic he used to stay calm under pressure: “I only think about me, microphone and spelling word correctly.

My coach told me stay calm and have fun with it if I get nervous looking at people or adjudicators I close my eyes visualise word that’s how I get through it.”



For The Windybrow Arts Centre, the BeeHive builds on its literacy and homework support programme, launched two and a half years ago. “We have one of the most beautiful children’s reading rooms in South Africa,” said Gerard Bester, head of the centre. “Young children come, read books, do storytelling, and work with a wonderful group of university students who are part of a presidential internship programme. It felt right to then start new programmes that support literacy and homework. Three years ago, we launched the spelling bee, connecting the schools around Windybrow Arts Centre and community arts organisations running homework support for inner-city children and youth.”

This year, the programme expanded with the support of the Gauteng Department of Education to cover Orange Farm to Hillbrow. “It’s wonderful to be here at the Ramolao Makhene Theatre in Newtown. This is our first time bringing the spelling bee across from Windybrow to the Market Theatre,” Bester said.



The Market Theatre's artistic focus over the next few months centres, in part, on issues relating to fathers.

The Market Theatre is pleased to present 'Fatherhood', a production that won the 31st iteration of one of the most significant and longest running community theatre festivals, the Zwakala Festival. Originally created through The Alex Theatre Company and Academy, the play will have begun a run starting from 9 – 19 October 2025 in the Barney Simon Theatre.

'Fatherhood' features a young cast that poignantly bares the crisis of absent fathers for our collective reckoning. It is written by Mike Dzova and directed by Archie Oupa Matsetela, under the mentorship of award-winning playwright and director, Ntsheng Mokgoro. The script presents a fresh take at this complex societal issue, calling for a moment of reflection on the kind of world we're creating for younger generations. The show promises to captivate audiences with its dynamic blend of acapella with saxophone, slick movement and text.

Matsetela describes 'Fatherhood' as a work that is as much urgent as it is edgy, innovative in how it confronts the emotional impact of fatherlessness and intergenerational conflict on families. He continues, "The play follows the struggles of four boys, most of whom raised by single mothers, who try to comprehend the void left by their absent fathers—and the fathers they thought they had. The text comes from a place of childhood innocence, and is therefore carried out with brutal honesty, humour and emotiveness. As the friends reflect on growing up in broken homes, they hold a mirror for audiences to witness the emotional turmoil caused by fatherlessness."

While the piece depicts the ills of absent fatherhood, it equally shines the spotlight on mothers who have had to stand in the gap for runaway fathers. In exposing the emptiness children without present fathers often contend with, it further highlights the resilience it takes to run single-parent households. According to the 2024 State of South African Fathers report, only 35.6% of South African children live with their biological fathers, while 24% stay in households without any man. The impact of absent fathers on children, especially boys, is widely documented.

The Market Theatre's artistic focus over the next few months centres, in part, on issues relating to fathers. 'Fatherhood' will sit alongside the beautifully crafted Naledi-nominated dance-theatre piece, 'Father & I', as well as 'Gabo Legwala': an autobiographical piece by Modise Sekgothe that blends poetry, music and storytelling to highlight the scourge of fatherlessness. Greg Homann, Artistic Director at The Market Theatre Foundation, said, "It's our mission as an organisation to break down barriers to entry for community theatre makers, shaping the next generation of South African storytellers. We aim to go beyond unearthing authentic stories from communities, and commit to also develop and introduce them to our mainstream stage."



This article first appeared in the Sandton Chronicle. Credit: Duduzile Khumalo.

Sandton commuters got more than just a train ride on October 3. This as Gautrain unveiled its new Art in Transit project, transforming platforms and trains into living canvases for South African art, storytelling, and performance. The initiative, launched at Sandton Station in partnership with the Market Theatre Foundation, reimagines public transport as a cultural experience. Commuters were treated to live theatre, performances, and a striking photographic exhibition that turned the station into a buzzing stage.

Tshepo Kgobe, CEO of the Gautrain Management Agency, said, "Art in Transit is about more than aesthetics; it's about transformation. We want Gautrain to be a space where people pause, connect, and reflect, not just pass through."

For the Market Theatre Foundation, the collaboration marks a milestone ahead of its 50th anniversary in 2026. CEO Tshiamo Mokgadi described the project as historic, placing South African art in spaces beyond galleries and theatres.

"The history of passenger rail has always been intertwined with storytelling. Every journey is a performance, with passengers as the cast. Through this partnership, travel becomes narrative, where movement and meaning converge," Mokgadi said.

The Gauteng Tourism Authority has also thrown its weight behind the project, linking it to the province's broader Destination Beautification and Place Marketing Strategy. GTA CEO Sthembiso Dlamini stressed that reliable transport underpins tourism.

"Whether international visitors are landing at OR Tambo or local tourists are exploring the country, their entire experience depends on how easily they can move around. Initiatives like this help create pride, beauty, and identity in our public spaces," she said.

The project will roll out in phases across the Gautrain network throughout Transport Month. For commuters, it means their daily journey could now come with a touch of theatre, music, or visual storytelling. As Kgobe put it, "This is just the beginning. The Gautrain is becoming more than a train, it's a stage, a gallery, and a mirror of who we are as South Africans."



MTF Senior Management: Lekgetho Makola (COO), Tshiamo Mokgadi (CEO) and Greg Homann (AD), with MTF council member, Rami Chuene, alongside Gautrain CEO, Tshepo Kgobe.

A group of artists from Europe and Africa reflect on the lessons that the 1990 Blood Feuds Reconciliation Campaign in Kosovo and the 1995 Truth and Reconciliation Campaign in South Africa offer us today.

In 1990, with war on the horizon, a group of former political prisoners, students and intellectuals from Kosovo initiated a historical movement for blood feud reconciliation. Up until this point, hundreds of families in Kosovo were in a state of enmity and blood feud. The cycle of vendetta had taken the form of a vicious circle, with feuds passed down from one generation to the next and the number of murders between the two sides sometimes amounting to thirty.

What started as a small reconciliation movement, quickly transformed into a public national forum, with mothers, fathers and family members taking to the stage in front of an audience and forgiving the blood of their beloved to the family of their murderer. Many public 'sessions' took place and hundreds of families reconciled during this process. 1,275 blood feuds and conflicts were resolved in total. Over half a million people attended the last public session of reconciliation.

On the other side of the globe, in 1995 the South African government initiated the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, aiming to heal the country and reconcile the people, by creating a space for them to confront the truth of crimes committed against them during apartheid, Victims and perpetrators were put in front of each other, in a 'trial' where terrible truths from these periods of violence, oppression and persecution were revealed.

These two major social and historical events, very distinct and yet in many ways similar, have forgiveness at their very core, as a cornerstone to social healing and cohesion, emancipation, and reconciliation.

Through archive and newly-collected testimonials, a group of artists from Europe and Africa reflect on the lessons that the 1990 Blood Feuds Reconciliation Campaign in Kosovo and the 1995 Truth and Reconciliation Campaign in South Africa offer us today—lessons that could serve us in a world once again engulfed in violence and conflict. If 30 years ago, the truth was believed to be able to liberate us, what liberates us in today's post-truth age? When we forgive, do we forgive unconditionally?

Following the world premiere in Kosovo, at Gjilan City Theatre, "Under the Shade of a Tree I Sat and Wept" will be presented at the Kosovo/North Macedonia Theatre Showcase which takes place between 28th October – 1st November as part of Balkan tour. It will embark on a European tour in April 2026 and be performed in New York in March 2027.

"As The Market Theatre, we are drawn to stories that confront uncomfortable truths with nuance and imagination. 'Under the Shade of a Tree I Sat and Wept' resonates with our commitment to holding space for memory, justice, and healing. This collaboration offers a powerful opportunity to explore reconciliation not as a fixed destination, but as a deeply human and often painful journey shaped by who gets to speak, who listens, and

what is remembered," said Greg Homann, Artistic Director of The Market Theatre Foundation, who also serves as the show's dramaturg.

The show will be directed by Blerta Neziraj, whose productions for Qendra Multimedia have toured internationally to places including Lausanne, Milan, Vienna, Firenze, Hamburg, Lyon, Sarajevo, Bern, Paris and New York. It is written by Jeton Neziraj, who has written over 20 plays. His plays have won numerous prizes and have been performed in theatre festivals throughout Europe and in the US and he has been described by German theatre magazine Theater der Zeit as the 'Kafka of the Balkans'



**under
the shade
of a tree
I sat
and wept**

Written by
Jeton Neziraj

Directed by
Blerta Neziraj

Dramaturg
Greg Homann

Performers:
**Ena Andrea
Gontse Ntshagang
Ilire Vinca
Kenswe Tshabalala
Arben Bajraktaraj
Les Made**

Performer & music Composer: Bongile Gorata Lecoge-Zulu
Stage Designer: Theun Mosk & Ruimtetijd
Choreographer: Jochen Roller
Costume Designer: Blagoj Micevski
Video: Besim Uzmaçli
Lighting Design: Vincent Longuemare
Asa. Director: Gëzim Hasani

In cooperation with:
Ruimtetijd - Amsterdam, La MaMa - New York,
Gjilan City Theatre - Gjilan, Sens Interdita Festival - Lyon

Co-production with:
O'orms
Theater Dortmund

Supported by:
THE MARKET THEATRE
Theater der Zeit



The Market Photo Workshop (MPW) proudly hosted the South African leg of World Press Photo's 70th anniversary exhibition as well as pop-up festival. These two events formed part of the international curation to mark World Press Photo's 70-year impact in photojournalism. This milestone presented an opportunity to look back at the remarkable history of the organisation, while examining how the images World Press Photo awarded and helped to give a global platform over the past seven decades have shaped the public's understanding of the world.

The exhibition – 'What Have We Done? Unpacking Seven Decades of World Press Photo' – was curated by artist and photographer Cristina de Middel, and took place in several locations. The world premiere of the exhibition took place on 19 September 2025 at the Niemeyerfabriek in Groningen, and will run until 19 October 2025 across various locations, including in Jo'burg.

In addition to the exhibitions, pop-up festivals brought together critical thinkers, photographers, and speakers for a dynamic programme of talks, presentations, workshops, guided tours and educational activities—all aimed at deepening engagement with the exhibition's themes and sparking meaningful dialogue.

The 'What Have We Done?' exhibition featured over 100 photographs from photographers working across the 70 year period, becoming an invitation to rethink not just how visual language has evolved but how we, as viewers and citizens, should learn to read images with a sharper and more critical eye.

Six recurring visual patterns, identified in World Press Photo's extensive archive, informed the exhibition. They are: Weeping Women and Men Rescuing; Emotional Soldiers and Debris; Being a Man and Being a Woman; Black Skin and The Dark Continent; Silhouettes and Shadows; The 'Wow' Moment as well as Fire and Smoke.





True to its history, The Market Theatre continues on the high note of staging exciting musical works.

Celebrated jazz singer and composer, Dumza Maswana, is set to perform at The Market Theatre for the first time, alongside an orchestra. After two years of acclaimed performances across the Eastern Cape, the Umngqungqo Orchestral Experience will arrive in Jo'burg for the first time, bringing a symphonic celebration of African heritage. For Maswana, coming to The Market is a dream fulfilled. "Performing in Jozi is like coming home. It's where my dreams grew, and where so many of my musical heroes inspired me."

Umngqungqo Orchestral Experience will take place in the John Kani Theatre on 18 October 2025, starting at 7pm.

Joining the multi-award-winning jazz artist and Umhlobo Wenene radio presenter is iPhupho L'ka Biko, who will be presenting Vuleka Mbobo, Mbobo Vuleka! [est 2015], a one night only sonic remembrance of the Fallist Movement 10 years on.

The show will take place on 27 September 2025 at The Market Theatre, starting from 7pm. The show adds an interdisciplinary flair to The Market Theatre's curatorial commemoration of the #FeesMustFall Movement, which started with theatre productions, 'The Fall' and 'The Good White'.

"This work is a chant to the unfinished project of liberation. We gather to remember, to (re)think, to (re)imagine, to reflect, to love, to heal and to resist," says music director, visionary Nhlanhla Ngqaqu.

Jazz lovers can also look forward to the Kippie Moeketsi centenary jam session, directed by saxophonist and composer, Khaya Mahlangu. The jam session, held in honour of Kippie Moeketsi in the John Kani Theatre, will be a continuation of the iconic jazzman's 100 years celebration. It will be preceded by a photoshoot comprising about 100 jazz players, veterans and emerging voices for a remake of the historic A Great Day in Harlem portrait. Dubbed 'A Great Day in Newtown', this image will be taken by award-winning and internationally acclaimed photographer, Sphiwe Mhlambi.

Gospel muso, Qiniso Nsele, adds a twist to the musical programming with his live concert. Renowned for his soulful voice, captivating stage presence, and ability to blend heartfelt storytelling with rich South African musical traditions, Qiniso Nsele promises a performance that will move, inspire, and entertain audiences from the first note to the last. The concert will be hosted on 4 October 2025, from 7pm.

"Performing live is where my music truly breathes and this will give me a chance to narrate what each song really means to me. The Market Theatre holds a special place in South African culture, and I can't wait to share this moment with everyone who loves music as deeply as I do," states Nsele.

THIS IS WHO I AM SOUTH AFRICAN PREMIERE



Performances will take place at The Market Theatre from 23 – 27 October 2025, with a Press Night on 24 October 2025 and a special G20 Ministerial Launch on 27 October 2025.

The British High Commission, in collaboration with Windybrow Arts Centre (The Market Theatre Foundation) and London Artists Projects, proudly presents *This Is Who I Am*—a powerful multidisciplinary arts initiative that brings the voices of Hillbrow residents to the stage and screen.

Launching as part of the G20 Culture Ministerial in South Africa, *This Is Who I Am* is a revolutionary theatrical experience that explores identity, resilience, and community through the lens of ten Hillbrow residents. Each participant performs a deeply personal 500-word monologue in response to the project's title, revealing stories of abuse, alienation, disability, violence, and xenophobia—all woven into a mosaic of hope and resistance.

Co-directed by Jeremy Goldstein (UK) and Jaden Mmokwa Oratile Mosadi (SA), the project features live and online performances set to an original score by Dyskinetic (UK), photo portraits (including tactile prints for visually impaired participants), and digital content. The initiative is supported by Canon South Africa, whose photographers Roger Machin and Quintin Mills contributed to the visual storytelling.

"This project is a unique artistic channel for intercultural dialogue," says Dr Sarah Meisch Lionetto, MBE, Public Diplomacy Lead at the British High Commission. "It explores what it means to be human and creates an innovative opportunity for underrepresented voices to speak from the truth of their lived experiences."

British High Commissioner Antony Phillipson CMG adds, "*This Is Who I Am* reflects our commitment to inclusion and access in the arts, challenging stereotypes and fostering respect and understanding between the UK and South Africa."

The Market Theatre Foundation's Chief Executive Officer, Tshiamo Mokgadi, emphasises the importance of this partnership in advancing arts education, telling authentic African stories and maintaining the organisation's international appeal as a strategic partner. "As The Market Theatre nears its 50th anniversary, marking a legacy of a bold vision and artistic excellence, *This Is Who I Am* reminds us of the importance of the stories each one of us carries. We're honoured to be a crucible for these deeply personal, thought-provoking accounts that prompt us to look beyond difference and recognise our shared humanity. This is who we are."

This Is Who I Am is created by award-winning British theatre maker and HIV+ activist Jeremy Goldstein, as part of a long-term theatre project inspired by the political and philosophical beliefs of Nobel Prize-winning playwright Harold Pinter and his Hackney Gang, who included Goldstein's late father Mick Goldstein and poet Henry Woolf who original poetry bejewels the work.

This Is Who I Am is a co-production between London Artists Projects and Windybrow Arts Centre, commissioned by the British High Commission South Africa, in partnership with Canon South Africa.

Live Performance Dates:

23 October 2025 – Preview (7pm)

24 October 2025 – Press Night (7pm)

25 October 2025 – Performance (7pm)

26 October 2025 – Performance (3pm)

27 October 2025 – G20 Ministerial Launch (3pm)



True to its history, The Market Theatre continues on the high note of staging exciting musical works.

The National Arts Council of South Africa (NAC), in collaboration with the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), is excited to present the second instalment of Journey of Discovery, a much-anticipated concert taking place at the renowned Market Theatre on 24 and 25 October 2025.

This groundbreaking cultural exchange was launched following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the NAC and HKADC on 2 February 2024. It gained momentum at the inaugural Hong Kong Performing Arts Expo (HKPAX) held from 14–18 October 2024, where South African and Hong Kong-based musicians captivated audiences with a unique co-created musical showcase.

“This is more than just a concert; it is a celebration of shared humanity, musical dialogue, and creative expression that transcends borders. Through this collaboration, the NAC continues to foster global visibility for South African talent while honouring the importance of cultural diplomacy and creative exchange,” said Lebogang Mogoera, Interim Chief Executive Officer of the NAC.

The featured South African artists include Mbuzeni Mkhize, Ayanda Jiya, Thandeka Mfinyongo, Natalie Rungan and Sibahle Dladla. Together with their Hong Kong collaborators, these award-winning musicians will present an innovative, cross-cultural performance that bridges continents through music.

“I am delighted to witness the fulfilment of this strategic partnership with the South African National Arts Council. It marks a meaningful step forward in deepening cultural exchange and mutual understanding through the arts. As we enter the second year of the Journey of Discovery concert series, I am confident it will be even more impactful as we proudly extend our artistic footprint onto the African continent,” said Kenneth Fok Kai-kong, Chairman of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, a statutory body established by the government to promote the development of the arts in Hong Kong.

Tshiamo Mokgadi, CEO of The Market Theatre Foundation remarked, “This partnership reflects the power of the arts to transcend borders and connect communities. Our team is working tirelessly to ensure that all preparations are in place to welcome both local and international guests for what promises to be a wonderful musical experience, shared across borders.”



The play chronicles six barbershops across the cities of Johannesburg, Harare, Kampala, Lagos, Accra as well as London.

All men will be free this November to cheat on their barber and never regret it, as The Market Theatre ends the year with staging the renowned “Barber Shop Chronicles” for the first time on African soil. Brilliantly written by Nigerian-born British playwright, Inua Ellams, the international-hit play is directed by Sibusiso Mamba.

It will run from 6 – 30 November 2025 in the John Kani Theatre.

The play chronicles six barbershops across the cities of Johannesburg, Harare, Kampala, Lagos, Accra as well as London. It’s an insightful exploration of masculinity, vulnerability and connection. Ellams explains, “The narrative unfolds over a single day, connecting the lives and stories of African men. These barbershops serve as sanctuaries where men gather not just for haircuts but for camaraderie, debate and solace, exploring themes of identity, fatherhood, history, relationships, culture, race and masculinity. It also offers a poignant and humorous exploration of the African diaspora experience.”

Having been loved by audiences internationally, the play’s African premiere marks a surreal moment for Ellams. “The Market Theatre,” he says, “is every progressive theatre-maker’s dream venue. To have my work not just staged on the African continent but at this iconic institution is an honour I wouldn’t have imagined possible. I’m greatly excited for the

future ahead, hopeful that this premiere will be the beginning of the production’s intra-Africa tour.”

This highly anticipated piece unmasks men in their complexities, showing barbershops as integral communities in which connection and correction mutually thrive. While culturally prejudiced gazes may have framed barbershops as problematic, chaotic and misogynistic, the play offers an unapologetic counter-framing that highlights the safety, honesty and comedy characterising these spaces.

The play enthusiastically shows barbershops across Africa as dynamic spaces uniquely designed for black men to try make sense of their world, with barbers going beyond crafting eye-catching crispy fades and becoming unofficial therapists, football analysts and relentless comedians, in the process creating unbreakable brotherhood. This charged atmosphere turns the old rule about never cheating on your barber into more than loyalty to the one holding the clippers—it defines the barbershop as a space where a man leaves looking and feeling transformed. The refreshing sense of newness shines through the haircut as it is noticeable in the change of perspective, neatly trimmed by razor-sharp engagements with peers. It’s an unmistakable feeling of having let go of a burden and embracing change.

Director, Sibusiso Mamba, describes the work as a pan-African and diasporic celebration of black masculinities in their various ways of being. “This play confronts the often repeated notion that men don’t have platforms where they can really talk, making a strong case for the babershop as a space for men’s gatherings. The fact that men talk in a language often times misunderstood by the world doesn’t mean there’s no talking happening. Just as no two men’s hair is identical or needs the same cut, the script acknowledges the difference and sensitivity in each one of us and the different forms of masculinity that exist. Barbershops can therefore be sanctuaries that allow men to pour out their hearts, find fellowship and crack jokes without care of societal expectations,” concludes Mamba.

Greg Homann, Artistic Director at The Market Theatre Foundation, is chuffed to programme this powerful and electric theatre piece on the John Kani Stage by one of the leading contemporary playwrights in the world.

“For us, this production deepens our ongoing commitment of being the home of African storytelling by programming works that not only focus on local issues, but the broader continent as well. Arriving at a time of harmful narratives against African immigrants, the play’s infectious humour, witty writing and edgy drama will act as a much needed balm to sooth us into the end of 2025. We’re in a phase of boldly reaffirming the kind of work that we’ve always been known for throughout our nearly 50 years of fearless existence as South Africa’s cultural cornerstone.”



FEATURE

MAKING SOUND DECISIONS—A DAY IN THE LIFE OF MANDISA VILAKAZI

Sound is to live performance what salt is to food. Its impact is subtle yet indispensable. It's not just a cue, but an essential component of technical production that can make or break a show. "It's a very mathematical and science-based job, and it takes a lot of brain and physical power to achieve," says Mandisa Vilakazi, Sound Technician at The Market Theatre Foundation.

Born in Mooi River, KwaZulu-Natal, Mandisa obtained a Diploma in Sound Engineering from CityVarsity's School of Media and Creative Arts. Her first gig at MTF was in 2018 at the Zwakala Festival, where she was a sound design incubatee for a show called 'Eqhudení'. The mother of two continued freelancing in the space, until she was appointed Sound Technician at South Africa's most iconic cultural institution. This role allows her to merge her passion for creating captivating auditory moods with the practicality of financial stability in an otherwise challenging sector.

Starting first on a fixed-term contract, she is now employed on a full-time basis, signalling her excellence in the field not so many women step into.

Mandisa might have won a car in her student days, but it's no act of luck for her to occupy this crucial position in the value chain of theatre-making. "The technical team puts the show together, making it look and sound amazing. Without us, there is no show," she tells The Market Buzz.

This job, continues Mandisa, requires soft skills such as people management and communication, as the technical department engages with different types of clients to ensure a smooth production.

Given the calibre of stakeholders and artists staging their ideas at The Market Theatre, it's not easy for Mandisa to single out a specific moment as her career milestone—"I've done so many shows I forget what's happened sometimes." Even though all shows are highlights for her, some are higher than others. "One of my favourite moments was when I first started working with lapel mics and the first person I ever miked up was uTata John Kani in the John Kani Theatre," she recounts with pride.

As an audio-visual technician, Mandisa has worked alongside seasoned directors, such as Mmabatho Montsho, Palesa Mazamisa and James Ngcobo, among others.

IN HER OWN WORDS

What I wish colleagues understood about my job is...

It's a very difficult job to do; I just make it look easy. But it takes a lot to do something that would seem so simple.

When I am not at work, I...

Rest as much as I can and try to spend time with family. I usually go home to rest, then get ready for another workday. A day or even days can pass without me seeing my family, even though I live under the same roof as them.



For me, a good day at work is when...

Everything works well without any problems. If you see me running, I'm having a rough day. If you see me relaxed and smiling, everything is going well and there are no problems.

Being a young woman in a technical role means...

Being a young woman in a technical role means... being undermined a lot. There are people who don't trust that I can do my job simply because I'm a woman, and being small doesn't make things easier, but once they see I know what I'm doing, they start to understand why I was hired for the job.under the same roof as them.

KAZA KAMBA

PAN AFRICAN
THEATRE FESTIVAL

THUR 6TH NOV 2025
 FRI 7TH NOV 2025
 SAT 8TH NOV 2025
 SUN 9TH NOV 2025

Curators
 Bobby Rodwell
 Lesego Rampolokeng

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

Workshop
Finding My Voice, Speaking My Truth ... Directing for Theatre

Liatile Mohale
 [Lesotho]



THE 2ND ANNUAL
**KAZA
 KAMBA**
 PAN AFRICAN
 THEATRE FESTIVAL

FRIDAY
7TH NOV
 14h00 - 16h00

No Charge

Creating a space for directors and storytellers to share experiences. How do we ensure that we always speak from a place of 'truth', not only our own stories but also the unarticulated stories of the collective?



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

Workshop
Barena ... Reimagined

Smangaliso Ngwenya
 [South Africa]



THE 2ND ANNUAL
**KAZA
 KAMBA**
 PAN AFRICAN
 THEATRE FESTIVAL

FRIDAY
7TH NOV
 14h00 - 16h00

No Charge

"Barena Reimagined" takes the form of a performance lecture that reflects on Vincent Mantsoe's "Barena" (1998) while paying homage to the late David April. The workshop looks at April's philosophies and practices as a facilitator, choreographer, mentor and visionary.



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

Workshop
Still We Dance

Gaby Saranouffi
 [Madagascar]



THE 2ND ANNUAL
**KAZA
 KAMBA**
 PAN AFRICAN
 THEATRE FESTIVAL

SATURDAY
8TH NOV
 12h00 - 14h00

No Charge

A safe inclusive space to deal with gender based violence by transforming pain into movement, silence into voice and trauma into healing. For women, children and men to reclaim their bodies and their stories through both ancestral wisdom and contemporary practice.



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

Workshop
Somatic Library

Mpho Malesa & Gifter Ngobeni
 [South Africa]



THE 2ND ANNUAL
**KAZA
 KAMBA**
 PAN AFRICAN
 THEATRE FESTIVAL

SATURDAY
8TH NOV
 12h00 - 15h00

No Charge

A space to focus on the embodiment of vocal health to ground the voice at the centre. Somatic Library offers tools to cultivate quality of tone, resonance, articulation ... for externalising breathe and sound on stage. Critical for performers on the African continent.



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

Workshop
Sgubhu seNtshomi (Djembe of Stories)

Sibusiso 'Vonder' Fihlani
 [South Africa]



THE 2ND ANNUAL
**KAZA
 KAMBA**
 PAN AFRICAN
 THEATRE FESTIVAL

SATURDAY
8TH NOV
 12h00 - 15h00

No Charge

A workshop for 13 - 18 year olds where djembe drums, storytelling and African philosophy speak rhythm and creative connection. Rooted in transformation we create our own show at the festival.

Plus: there will be a joyful baby programme with our resident Theatre Babysitter.




LET'S MEET AT THE MARKET

A cultural complex for visual, theatre, music, dance and the allied arts.



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Visit www.markettheatre.co.za for show info.