



Beyoncé impresses her South African fans

.....PAGE 8

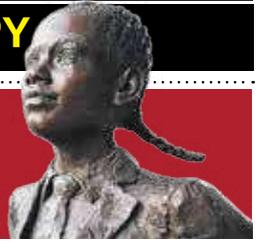


Rivonia trial documentary a fascinating tale

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Africa's fearless girl stands next to lion

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Multi-disciplinary artist bags *Cassirer Welz* award

Edward Tsumele

Zimbabwe is probably the last country on the continent where one would expect to find both an opportunity and inspiration to create an award-winning body of work right now, because of the country's current complicated economic situation and general hardships facing citizens.

However, Bloemfontein born and Cape Town raised multi-disciplinary artist Olivia Botha has found both across the Limpopo.

Having graduated from art school, Michaelis at the University of Cape Town last year, Botha moved to Zimbabwe where her partner she met at university hails from, and settled there to practise her art, complete with a home studio in the city of Bulawayo. And the work she creates while there is winning the 27 year old artist accolades. **See page...4**



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EDITOR'S NOTE



It is hard to imagine that the year has just come and it is already gone. We are now looking forward to the brand new year, 2019. We at Cit-

See you in 2019, as together we will continue to promote and develop the art market.

We know the economy is currently struggling with especially



We at CityLife Arts, would like to take this opportunity to wish our readers and advertisers a peaceful festive season and a prosperous 2019.

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state owned companies such as South African Airways, Eskom, South African Broadcasting Corporation and Denel, for example,



Edward Tsumele

Editor & Publisher

citylifearts@gmail.com

struggling to get their business models to work more efficiently. However it is times like these when artists produce intellectually stimulating works.

While the country will over-

come its current economic challenges eventually, as far as the arts are concerned the show goes on as the many interesting features in this publication attest. You will read so many interesting features in this particular issue, that we hope will give you the confidence to start afresh in 2019 and do things differently and more intelligently. If 2018 proved to be a

challenge. For example, you will read about Olivia Botha and how she found inspiration out of all the places in the world, in Zimbabwe to create an award winning body of work. She is our lead for this issue. You will, also read about Outie+Bakery in Newtown, which is bringing class to that part of Johannesburg. That is not all as you will also read about a new documentary on Rivonia Trial, a new confident girl in town, Africa's own Fearless Girl symbolising a strong and confident young African Girl ready to take her space in life. See you in 2019. *Enjoy the read.*

Exhibition shines torch on Barbados' simmering trauma

Edward Tsumele

Seasoned travelers are in most cases aware of the habit of tour guides in the countries they find themselves in giving them sanitised image of the country. For example, tourists are mostly taken to the good parts of the country or city, while the less sanitised parts are avoided at all costs. And this in most cases is done with good intentions as no one wants to hang their dirty linen in public. However as a tourist in a new country, not only does one want to be given a complete picture of the country or city, warts and all, but it is the less glamorous history told alongside its heroics that demonstrates human integrity.

However that is one side of the coin. The other side is that some tourists are actually aware of some of the painful histories and legacies of some of these destinations, but to make them-

selves feel good about enjoying their lives amidst for example, poverty and glaring inequalities in the counties they visit, they rather pretend that everything is cool. This is so especially among the ranks of visitors from the West, visiting former colonies where the legacy of colonialism and slavery in some cases are still visible.

Paradise is an exhibition by widely travelled German born but Johannesburg based artist Philipp Pieroth, which opened recently at In Toto Gallery in Birdhaven, Johannesburg. The exhibition in an insightful way interrogates the idea of tourists imagining themselves being in Paradise in some of their destinations, even in the face of reality that points in the contrary. The exhibition was inspired by Pieroth's experience during a residency in the Caribbean island of Barbados. The artist says while there he discovered that in as much as there is so much pretence about the para-

German born artist Pieroth interrogates Paradise illusion

dise-like atmosphere prevailing in on the island, the truth lies hidden underneath this pretentious mask. As a result he was forced through this art work to successfully interrogate this idea of hiding some of the less glamorous legacies of some travel destinations by society in the host country. Through this exhibition one is forced to rethink carefully about the stories you might have been told about certain places one visited as a tourist and question whether the picture painted is a true image of the society one interacted with, or is just a sanitised version directed at tourists.

Paradise enables one to interrogate the idea of completely believing in the stories that one is often fed by society in countries that one visits, and therefore creates a yearning to find more about the society one visit, scratching beyond the surface presented by tourists brochures and coached tour guides.

After his residency in Barbados in 2017, Pieroth dug a little deeper into the local history and found a sad and hellish history of slavery and misery. On the surface, the island life is blissful with a population mostly of African descent. The native rhythms of the island give the illusion of a paradise while tourists are in denial about the truth of how the locals settled in 'Paradise'.

He believes that the West consumes places without fully understanding the history of a destination.

In this exhibition, Pieroth in a powerful way, uses the images in this exhibition to confront the idea that travelling comes with responsibility and humbleness, not only in the Caribbean but in South Africa

as well.

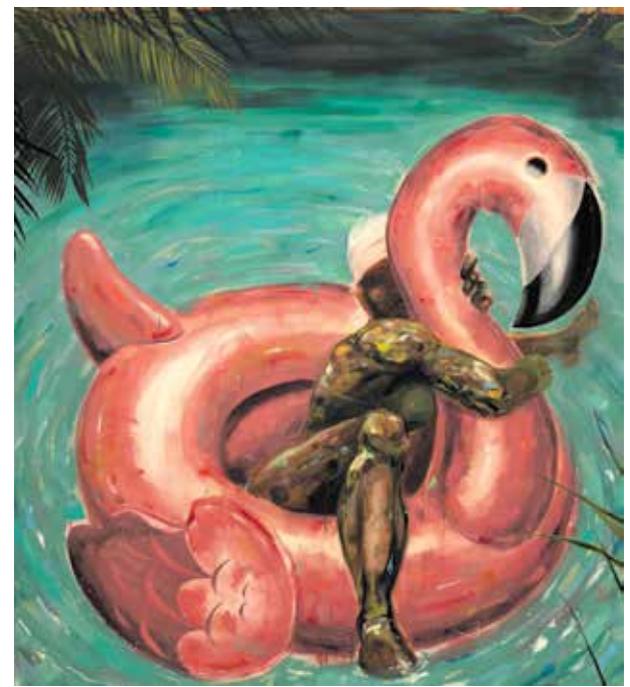
In these paintings, it is clear that the artist hopes to draw attention to the circumstances in which the locals came to settle in 'Paradise' and create tension and disruption with its contextual discrepancy.

"In my research while I was in Barbados, I found out that there is a sense of tension in the air, pointing to the fact that that society is traumatized, especially the old generation whose memories of the horror of slavery passed down to them are still etched in their psyche. This awareness is present despite the illusion of paradise where tourists in denial seem to keep a blind eye to this reality. To look at that island as paradise, which is often done by tourists from the West, is an illusion," says Pieroth in an interview.

The trauma Pieroth tries to investigate in this body of work is the type that psychologists call intergenerational trauma, which holds the notion that descendants of a traumatized generation themselves also suffer another kind of trauma/ This trauma comes in different forms and manifests itself in different ways, such as identity complexes.

Pieroth added that while in Barbados, it became obvious to him that the majority of the tourists visiting the island were in denial about the unease situation that exist - the seeming calmness masked deep seated scars among the population that can be traced back to slavery.

"It is not unusual to hear a Western tourist claim that the people are happy and cool as they smoke their expensive cigar and drink rum. That is unfortunately denying the uncomfortable pain that is still



written on the faces of many descendants of slavery, a horrific experience suffered by their forebears who were forced to work on the plantations under the scorching sun. This ironically in sharp contrast the modern situation whereby the current tourists have the privilege of putting up umbrellas to cover themselves from the sun," he says.

This idea is illustrated best by a series of mixed media paintings entitled Shade 1 to Shade 5, representing umbrellas used by the tourists on the island's beaches. Some of the pictures are images of tourists in bikinis exploring the beach or prowled on the sand, tanning, a privilege that only the tourists enjoy. There are also paintings of modern day cruises on the beaches brining in wealthy overseas tourists on holiday. Juxtaposing this image in thought to how the ships that brought slaves there centuries ago makes uncomfortable contemplation. One art piece entitled Banana Boat, shows a group of happy tourists on a banana boat, satisfied and giving a high five to those on the land as they sail onto the sea.

"However the sense of calmness and seeming easy going and relaxation that many would like to believe exists on the island has no resemblance to reality.

"In South Africa, Cape Town is a good example of that.

Granted, Cape Town is beautiful and there is a sense that it is relaxed and tourists are comfortable there. However when one looks deeper, scratching the surface further, one finds out that actually that picture is false. The contrast in living standards for people in Cape Town is sharp. For example in Camps Bay, the people are obviously wealth there, while in townships such as Langa and Gugulethu, there is abject poverty everywhere. There is no integration whatsoever, and discrimination based on race that is akin to the apartheid period is rife there. For example, come 5pm, black people leave Cape Town city centre en masse heading home to the townships," says Pieroth.

The artist who has been based in South Africa since 2016, is widely travelled. His travels on the African continent include touring Ghana, Namibia, Tanzania, Morocco, Mozambique and Swaziland, while his travels abroad include Brazil and Cuba. It is these travels that inform his art practice as a European artist practising contemporary art on the African continent.

"My experience travelling on the African continent informs my art," he says.

Paradise is at In Toto Gallery in Birdhaven, north of Johannesburg, until January 31. Pieroth will host an exhibition walk-about in mid January 2019.



CITY LIFE /ARTS

Publishing Editor.....Edward Tsumele
citylifearts@gmail.com
082 066 9010

Photojournalist.....Giyani Baloi

Layout Artist.....Nimrod Gunde

Advertising and Sales.....Edward Tsumele
citylifearts@gmail.com
082 066 9010

Contributors

●Giyani Baloi ●Treasure Louw ●JojoKhala Mei
●Danushka Louw ●Dr. Julie Taylor
●Jobe Sithole ●Thandiwe Ngele ●Ismael Mahomed

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Self-publishing industry thriving in South Africa



Publisher Thandiwe Ngele. Picture Supplied

Thandiwe Ngele

Destex Publishing Services (DPS) is a robust publishing company which was established to serve the growing needs of businesses, and everyday customers in terms of quality publishing services and design solutions.

The company offers design-based services - book cover designs, CD cover designs and cover designs for various documents, logo designs, creating and presenting visual concepts, transforming statistical data into visual graphics & diagrams, advertisements, brochures (including menus & programs), corporate reports, corporate identity (company profiles, newsletters, letterheads, signature e-mails), posters, handcraft and digital invitation cards, layout coordination (typesetting on books, reports & documents); and general services - copyright of various content, ISBN and barcode acquisition, eBook creation and distribution, services for self-publishing and upcoming authors

In terms of the performance of the company by its service offerings, authors and other clients have responded positively; satisfied with the uncompromised quality and execution of various projects by the publishing company. DPS has also provided services to other authors multiple times on different occasions which has resulted in a continu-

ous and healthy, growing relationship between the company and its authors.

This growing publishing company was established towards the end of 2015 in response to the demand.

Publishing services (such as those offered by DPS) are growing in demand because there is an increase in self-publishing authors nationally and internationally. But publishing services are also employed by other industries and individuals since there has never been a time in history where information and content are easily accessed, shared and conveyed like today.

Personally, because of the old definition of a reading culture (more rudimentary) the idea that the majority of black people lack or have no reading culture is still prevalent. However, the information and technological age has ushered new and different ways for people to read and consume written words, and there is an increasing number of black phone owners who use the internet daily to read among doing other things.

However the reading and literacy statistics of black people are still alarming which means there is still a long way to go. But a way to improve this is through literacy campaigns by partnerships. Publishers, schools and the government should partner with each other to make use of technological opportunities to develop regular, reading initiatives or campaigns that are relevant to the youth (and can be

“Publishers, schools and the government should partner with each other to make use of technological opportunities to develop regular, reading initiatives or campaigns that are relevant to the youth...”

measured over time to see their efficiency).

While writers are content creators their audiences should always be taken into account; one way to get the masses of rural citizens to read is by reaching out to them with relatable content and literacy strategies – stories-preservation for and by older generations, easy solutions for convenience (content regarding cooking methods, and water filtration).

I do think that there is more interest in local books by local writers although I am not convinced that the growth against international writers is rapid. The interest is growing because the number of local, influential writers that have produced outstanding work is on the rise and this is also directly affected by the increasing level of recognition given to local content producers.

The motivation to start a publishing business, with very little resources but a truck load of determination, was my interest in present and future possibilities for the growing industry. I also firmly believe that the publishing evolution is continuing and I want my company to be part of the next advances.

The Publishing industry has its own challenges that are unique to authors and publishers. Some of the trials local authors (in general) experience are: getting or maintaining high book sales, getting fair royalties from traditional publishers and fighting to get their books to have a presence in bookstores instead of being invisible.

But self-publishing authors are more familiar with challenges such as: being rejected by traditional publishers, not possessing enough funds to produce books, marketing and selling books profitably, positioning their books to compete against traditionally published books.

Publishing companies, on the other hand, face different challenges which include: getting business consistently, balancing between charging affordable prices and maintaining profit margins, sharpening the voice of

self-publishing authors who don't have a specific readership, reaching common grounds regarding book decisions with some authors.

However the self-publishing industry is growing with the increasing number of vanity (self-publishing) authors who need the assistance, expertise and guidance of publishers who are committed to helping them.

Self-publishing, debut and upcoming authors need to stay clued up on the changes in the publishing industry and improve their writing craft by attending writer's courses, reading widely and frequently, joining authors' associations or groups, signing up for publishing-related newsletters, reading news covering current publishing and author-related topics, invest in publishing services offered by professional publishers and designers, attend consultations, and also attend workshops and seminars directed at authors.

Destex Publishing Services as a publishing company plays a critical role as a bridge between authors' written expressions and their readers who must strategically be made interested to read, engage and purchase written material.

Ngele is a publisher and design specialist.

The Publishing industry has its own challenges that are unique to authors and publishers. Some of the trials local authors (in general) experience are: getting or maintaining high book sales, getting fair royalties from traditional publishers and fighting to get their books to have a presence in bookstores instead of being invisible.

BASA appoints Ashraf Johardien chief executive officer



Edward Tsumele

Ashraf Johardien the executive producer of Grahamstown National Arts Festival is set to take over from veteran SAFm presenter Michelle Constant when she steps down from the top arts position in February.

The arts organisation recently announced Johardien as the one to take over from constant as chief executive.

“When Michelle announced her decision to pursue other interests after a decade of achievement with BASA, the board knew finding a successor would not be an easy task. After a robust recruitment period, Ashraf Johardien's strategic business and arts experience, his vision for how to lead BASA in its third decade and his appreciation for how the arts can truly be a job creator and social cohesion facilitator, made him the successful candidate. On behalf of the BASA board, I congratulate Ashraf and also thank Michelle for her contribution and unwavering commitment,” says Charmaine Soobramoney, BASA Chairperson.

Johardien is a seasoned manager with 20 years of arts administration experience in progressively senior leadership roles across a spectrum of creative and cultural disciplines.

Prior to his joining the National Arts Festival (NAF) as executive producer in 2015, Johardien was head of Arts & Culture at the University of Johannesburg and worked at numerous bodies such as the Arts & Culture Trust and the Wits Theatre.

Johardien will take over as BASA CEO on 1 March 2019. “I am very excited by the opportunity to work with the BASA team, the board, the Department of Arts and Culture, and our many other vital stakeholders. BASA's vision and mission powerfully resonate with my own purpose as a creative catalyst and my drive to play a meaningful role in brokering partnerships which have deliberate value for the benefit of all South Africans,” says Johardien.

Botha wins Cassirer Welz Award

She is currently a resident artist at Bag Factory in Johannesburg

Edward Tsumele

Zimbabwe is probably the last country on the continent where one would expect to find both an opportunity and inspiration to create an award-winning body of work right now, because of the country's current complicated economic situation and general hardships facing citizens.

However Bloemfontein born and Cape Town raised multi-disciplinary artist Olivia Botha has found both across the Limpopo. Having graduated from art school, Michaelis at the University of Cape Town last year, Botha moved to Zimbabwe where her partner she met at university hails from, and settled there to practise her art, complete with a home studio in the city of Bulawayo. And the work she creates while there is winning the 27 year old artist accolades.

"I know it sounds crazy, but that is where I found an opportunity to practise as an artist and also the inspiration to do the kind of work I create. My partner who I met at university comes from there, and I left for Zimbabwe with him last year and have settled there and am working as an artist. I could not just leave the opportunities that came my way and come back to South Africa," she says.

The artist said in an interview that she was in fact embraced warmly by fellow artists in that country, making her feel at home. "What I found is that artists wish fellow artists to succeed and the competition among artists is healthy. It is not cut-throat," she says.

Botha was recently announced as the winner of the 2019 Cassirer Welz Award at an event held at Strauss & Co's Johannesburg offices.

A partnership between the Bag Factory Artists' Studios, Strauss & Co Fine Art Auctioneers and SMAC Gallery, the Cassirer Welz Award gives emerging artists an opportunity to showcase their work for a wider audience and significantly elevate their professional career. Now in its



Olivia Botha, Things Left Behind, 2018. Picture Supplied

eighth year, the award was created in honour of renowned art dealer, Reinhold Cassirer, and Stephan Welz, the late art auctioneer and co-founder of Strauss & Co.

"It's wonderful to end the year with the announcement of the Cassirer Welz Award winner, and we'd like to congratulate Olivia on her achievement," said Susie Goodman, general manager, Strauss & Co Johannesburg. "This year we have put significant resources and energy into our commitment to sustain and grow the entire art market in South Africa. Investing in arts education and supporting emerging talent are core business values of ours and we will be intensifying these aspects of our work in the new year."

The Cassirer Welz Award was originally established by Stephan Welz with Nadine Gordimer in hon-

our of her husband, art dealer Reinhold Cassirer. It was renamed the Cassirer Welz Award following Stephan Welz's death in 2015. "Stephan was passionate about nurturing and supporting new talent, and was also determined to ensure Reinhold Cassirer's contribution to the visual arts in South Africa was not forgotten," added Goodman. "The whole Strauss & Co team is proud to continue the legacy of both of these individuals, through our support of the Cassirer Welz Award and the many other initiatives within our our Strauss Education programme."

Botha's prize is a ten-week residency at the Bag Factory Artists' Studios in Johannesburg, which started early in December. The residency will culminate in a solo exhibition of new work at SMAC Gallery, Johannesburg in mid February



Olivia Botha, Silence Bleeding (video still), 2018. Picture Supplied

2019, marking the onset of a new relationship between the Cassirer Welz Award and this leading contemporary art gallery.

Along with Joe Turpin and Sharon Moses, Botha was one of three finalists chosen by an independent selection committee. "The work of all three of our finalists was exceptional but the committee felt that Olivia's really stood out," commented Candice Allison, Director at Bag Factory Artists' Studios. "What's notable about Olivia's practice is the clear impact of the year she's spent as part of the residency programme at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Bulawayo. Her work shows great maturity and conceptual development and we're excited to see what emerges during her upcoming residency with us."

The Cassirer Welz Award will see Botha provided with studio space, a contribution towards material costs, and transport stipend, as well as the opportunity to interact with the resident artists at the Bag Factory. Through the exchange of ideas, mentorship and skills development, she has an opportunity for substantial creative and professional growth.

The impact of the Cassirer Welz Award over the past seven years can be seen in the list of previous win-

ners, which includes Blessing Ngobeni, Nompumelelo Ngoma, Tshepo Mosopa, Asanda Kupa, Thato Nhlapho, Richard "Specs" Ndimande and Keneilwe Mokoena.

Botha's solo exhibition at SMAC Gallery will take place in February 2019, in the gallery's new, bigger space at Keyes Art Mile. "SMAC is putting a lot of effort and time into identifying new talent and supporting young and emerging artists and we are thrilled to be partnering with SMAC and Strauss & Co for this important award," says Allison.

Botha's art involves sound and sculptural installation. Her work deals with a range of topics, with the aim to reflect on, examine and deconstruct her own and perhaps a collective experience of belonging, identity and place. Botha completed her residency program at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo in 2018 and was the only South African represented at The E-qualities of Women exhibition at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe in Harare in the same year. Botha has recently been awarded the Moleskine Foundation Scholarship to participate in the AtWork workshop conducted by Simon Njami and Andrew Tshabangu at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Harare

Sho Madjozi championing the case for Xitsonga culture

Edward Tsumele

She has the attitude, the guts and the talent. Sho Madjozi (pictured) has in the past year single-handedly done her xiTsonga culture proud. Modern, progressive, and educated too, the Gqom artist has made singing in xiTsonga cool, especially in a society that in the main in the past has notoriously tended to treat minority cultures such as Tshivenda and xiTsonga with prejudice.

With the release of her first debut album this December, aptly entitled Limpopo Champions League, the artist is definitely cementing her

foothold on the South African music scene in general and popular culture in particular.

Sho Madjozi also featuring on Apple Music's African A-list this past December. As if that was not enough, the artists also launched her clothing line with EdgarsXShoMadjozi in stores also from December. Besides belting out those beautiful tunes, delivered in her mother tongue xiTsonga, she is also respected for making wearing the xiTsonga colourfully decorated skirt xibhelane cool.

Recently back from her successful show at the SoleDXB festival in Dubai, Global Citizen Sho Madjozi Festival Sho Madjozi seems poised for local and international success.

Limpopo Champions League, this 13-track album sounds like a celebration of being young and African. The song Kona, in which Sho Madjozi sings that Tsonga people belong everywhere, is an exhilarating affirmation of her Tsonga culture, while the lively track Don't Tell Me What to Do is fun and talks about being a carefree African girl. Acclaimed Nigerian artist YCee is featured on party track Wakanda Forever.

For Album Pre-orders and Streaming see link: https://africori ffm.to/shomadjozi_lcl

After winning the award for Most Innovative Style at the South African Style Awards in November 2018, Sho Madjozi has partnered with Ed-

con to launch her first clothing line. The unique range focusses on three lifestyle themes: Chill, Play and Party.

Sho Madjozi (born Maya Wegerif) first came into the public eye in early 2017 but she really shot to fame with her first hit Dumi hi Phone and then her Swahili hit single Huku.

This was followed by her being featured with local hip hop artists Ms Cosmo, Rouge and Moozlie on Ay Baby and a role on Mzansi Magic's telenovela Isithembiso.

She made international headlines with her recent performance at the Global Citizen Concert in Johannesburg. She also performed at the New York leg of the concert.



Africa's fearless girl stands next to lion

Edward Tsumele

Her poise is confident and she looks like someone who has everything in her life under control. Visitors to the RMB precinct corner Friedman and Rivonia roads in Sandton will come face to face with a new girl in town, who is fearless in the form of a newly launched sculptural art work dubbed Africa's Fearless Girl.

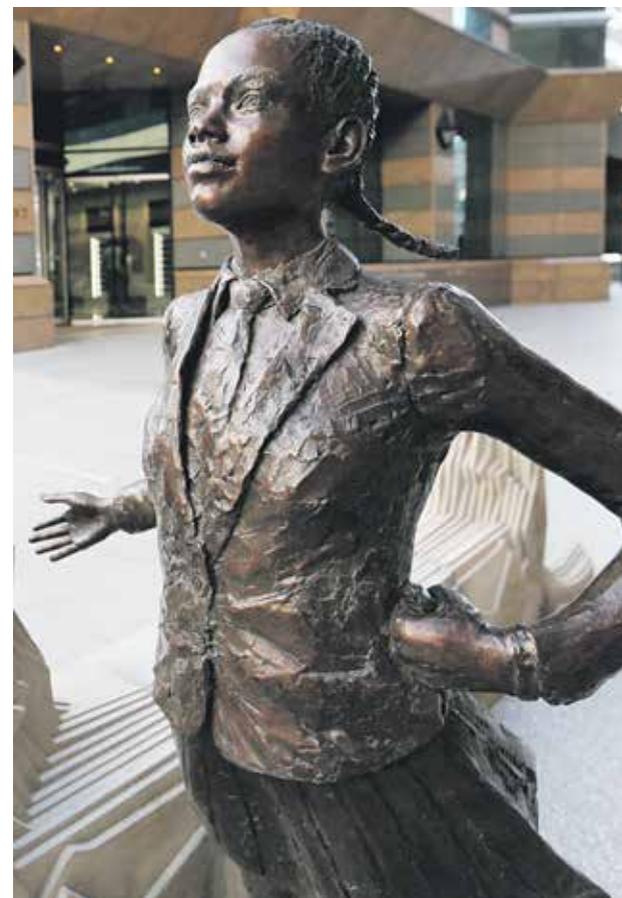
Yes, the idea is not original as those that have recently travelled to Wall Street will attest to as the idea originated there. But who cares as this sculp-

tural piece, which stands confidently side by side with a concrete sculpture of a lion representing the logo of the financial institution, has been adapted to create a suitable narrative about gender parity in an African context.

Standing proudly close to the lion is symbolic in many ways, even ironic as the lion clearly represents masculinity. The bank though founded by visionary men is sending out the message that now is the time for African women to stand proudly alongside men in leadership in the corporate sector. This sculpture captures that message aptly. She is young, she is proudly African and she is

fearless. Prompted by their Athena initiative for gender equality, RMB commissioned artist Marieke Prinsloo-Lowe to create Africa's 'Fearless Girl' (inspired by the original 'Fearless Girl' that faces the 'Raging Bull' in front of the New York Stock Exchange), who adds a uniquely proud and conversational piece to the outdoor RMB Precinct Art Collection.

"The bronze girl, positioned assertively alongside the concrete lion bench promotes and reinforces the gender agenda and captures the positive, collaborative reality of men and women at RMB," the banks says in a statement.



Newly launched sculptural art work dubbed Africa's Fearless Girl

New novel dispels apartheid history myth

Jojokhala Mei

The land question in South Africa has been topical ever since that fateful Cape of Good Hope day in April 1652. Hence Mphuthumi Ntabeni's majestic new novel.

The Broken River Tent would be just an interesting novella on a drifting-philandering German-trained architect Phila's search for true love and professional meaning, were it not for majestic and mysterious physical manifestations of the spirit or the benevolent 'ghost' of Xhosa King Maqoma who bore the brunt of English and Afrikaner expansion into Xhosa land through the 1880s.

The novel starts with Phila driving from the city of Port Elizabeth to bury his...

The novel starts with Phila driving from the city Port Elizabeth to bury his estranged father in a frontier village, and then move on to research colonial encounters with locals.

A moving heartfelt eulogy foreshadows King Maqoma's riveting telling of land dispossession that traumatized me even in books like JS Bergh and JC Visagie's

The Eastern Cape Frontier Zone 1660 – 1980: A Cartographic Guide For Historical Research. Not that I bothered to study History. King Maqoma constantly interrupts Phila's casual visits to historic sites in the most unexpected ways that evoke shrieks of laughter.

The king's authoritative eye-witness narration of distrust between Royal factions, and ever flowing blood which explains to Phila why the Xhosa were eventually fooled to believe the notorious predictions

of Nongqawuse that killing all their cattle and burning their fields would raise the death in their defence against the colonialists.

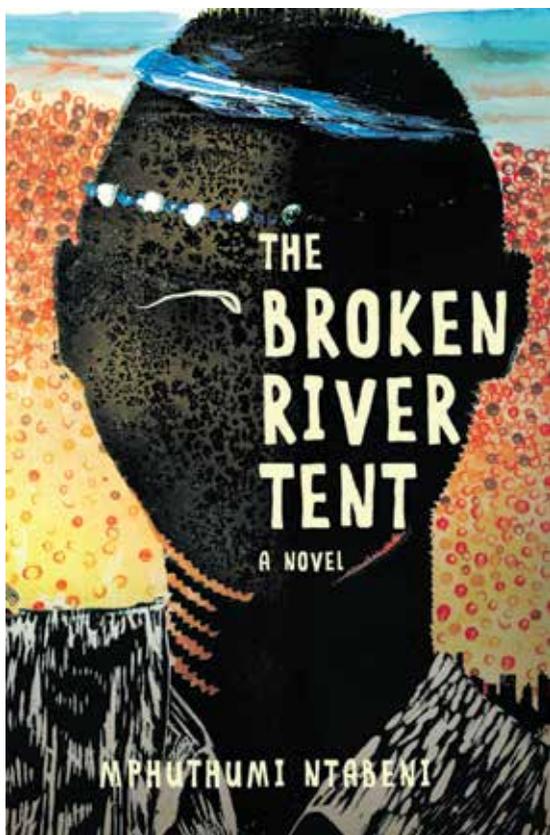
How ironic that King Maqoma manifests to Phila, a descendant of the very same Mfengus whom he says colonialists gave land they seized from the Xhosas. But then again, King Maqoma is a surprisingly metropolitan spirit familiar in the after- life with German philosophers who lived in his times on earth, for him to be ignorant that some heroic Mfengu descendants have fought tooth and nail to reclaim land lost to marauding colonialists.

Phila always excuses his roaming eye with touching language like "Her Face had a troubling humility". His restlessness echoes mauled Xhosa psyche itself when Phila is hosted in the Nkonkobe or Winterberg Mountains by a wasted sickly villager who quips that "We know the grave enemies of Jong' Umsobomvu [King Maqoma].

This is the reason to this day dogs are named Somerset in our villages. That was the man Maqoma taught a lesson in these mountains." All in all, a genealogical chart of the Xhosa royal houses would be of use like in Zakes Mda's historical novel The Heart of Redness.

Equally, I've taken the liberty to replace Ntabeni's derogatory colonial reference to Maqoma as a 'chief', in the same spirit and motivation Mazisi Kunene in his epic poem Emperor Shaka The Great; and not Chief Shaka The Great.

But Mphuthumi Ntabeni's great new novel creates the perfect ruse to dispel an important myth of apartheid history that portrayed the conquered Xhosa as stupid and strategic fighters. For that we are eternally thankful.



New Book celebrates Sesotho poetry

Edward Tsumele

Awriting competition ironically organised by one of the traditional mainstream publishing companies in South Africa has opened the doors for self-publishing by Sesotho poet Motlalekgotso Ponya.

After participating in a writing competition in 2011 and winning a prize that included getting his work published in Amazwi Ethu, a Penguin poetry anthology, a new literary journey for Ponya began.

"The brief from the publishers was for participants to write about a place of their choice. But fortunately for me I already had written a piece about a place where I come from Mount Fletcher near Matatiele in the Eastern Cape, a place that is a melting pot culturally because it is home to Sotho, Xhosa and Zulu speaking people.

The piece was accepted and was published in an anthology. That encouraged me to pursue writing further. It opened my eyes and for the first time I could see possibilities in writing. Before I used to write just to express myself with regards to my spirituality as well as dealing with the challenges of life.

I actually never knew that I was a writer until I was included in the competition," he says in an interview held at popular Newtown, Johannesburg, coffee shop Outie.

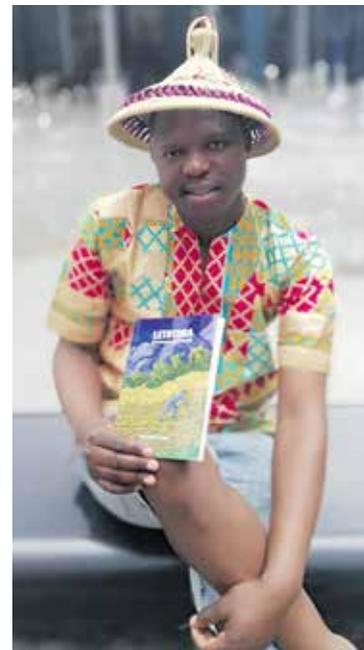
Ponya was after approached by Gecko Publishing who gave him a deal to publish his debut Sesotho book of poetry entitled

Kubelle in 2014.

He has however now chosen the self-publishing option for his second poetry book which has recently been published and is doing well on the market, according to the author.

The 36 year old married who hails from Tsolobeng village, in Mount Fletcher in the Eastern Cape, has just released Letotoba (SeSotho for walking stick) a collection of 33 new poems through his own publishing entity Entsho Phuti Tsopia.

“Ponya was after approached by Gecko Publishing who gave him a deal to publish his debut Sesotho book of poetry entitled Kubelle in 2014



Sesotho author Motlalekgotso Ponya.

Bringing classy experience to Newtown

Edward Tsumele

When Sibusiso Radebe workshopped his idea of starting a bakery with fellow students in a study group while pursuing a diploma in business leadership at the University of South Africa in 2014, he knew straight away that he had a business.

“The figures were right, and what was lacking was the place where to implement the idea. But then in 2014, I noticed that in Newtown there is potential, especially with the nearby Junction mall completed and the vibrant Market Theatre nearby, it made sense to situate Outie+Bakery in the area.

The idea was to bring a classy establishment to the area in order to offer people of Johannesburg the same classy experience one would find in say Melrose Ark, Sandton or Rosebank” he says.

Outie+Bakery, will be open during the festive season, with the exception of Christmas Day and Boxing Day

Now increasingly becoming well established in the area, popular mostly with artists, especially actors, musicians and the media, for meetings while having a cup of coffee or a meal, Outie+Bakery, which opened its doors to the pub-



Respected businessman Sizwe Nxasana, his wife and newly installed chancellor of Wits Dr Judy Dlamini with owner of Outie+Bakery Sibusiso Radebe. Picture/Supplied



The late former South African President Nelson Mandela's grandson Ndaba Mandela with businessman Sibusiso Radebe. Picture/Supplied

lic in August 2017, directly opposite the Market Theatre, has also become a venue of choice for theatre audiences who quickly have a meal before they get into the theatre to watch productions.

On any given day, this classy venue which serves great coffee and offers a comprehensive food menu, complete with breakfast, lunch, dinner “and anything in between” according to the former human resources corporate executive-turned businessman, hosts well known arts personalities and those having a quick business meeting as the place is convenient.

The establishment is fully licensed and serving drinks such as cocktails, whisky and beer.

“The fact of the matter is Newtown is in the city, but at the same time outside the city centre and accessible whether one is coming from the South or the North as the Highway is just nearby.

“Since we opened in August last year, we have seen an ever increasing number of people coming through, either to have a quick meeting while having coffee or to dine. What is also a plus for us is that besides the restaurant, we also have a bakery on the premises. Whether it is cakes or bread, we bake everything fresh here, and we also supply other establishments around Johannesburg.”

And indeed since the venue opened, it has catered for many

events such as those happening at the Market.

“For example, last year and this year, we catered for the South African Book Fair. This year we have also catered for the inaugural Ariff (Arika Rising International Film) Festival, and in 2019, we are partnering with the Rapid Lion Film Festival which is taking place at the Market Theatre. In addition, we have also introduced an Open Mike Poetry session, which takes place every first and last Wednesday of the month, which attracts mainly people who before never came to Newtown, such as students. Some of them come from as far as Pretoria for those sessions,” says the 42 year-old businessman

who hails from KwaThema on the East Rand.

In addition to the poetry festival, Outie as it is popularly known, also hosts regular Jazzy Sundays sessions, catering for those who love jazz.

“In 2019, we are introducing a craft market whereby artists will come and trade here once a month,” Radebe says.

Outie+Bakery, which is open during the festive season, with the exception of Christmas Day and Boxing Day, is available on social media platforms such as facebook handle Outie+Bakery and instagram, Outie+bakery. Yu can also reach the establishment on twitter @outie+bakery.

Rivonia trial documentary a fascinating tale

Walter Sisulu shines in courtroom cross examination

Ismael Mahomed

Irecently attended an exclusive screening of the documentary The State against Nelson Mandela and the others, hosted by the Embassy of France at the Newtown Junction during the Africa Rising International Film Festival

The documentary is made from archival sound recordings of the Rivonia Trial. It is enhanced with animation by French artist Oerd and interspersed with interviews with Rivonia Trialists Ahmed Kathrada, Dennis Goldberg, Andrew Mlangeni and several other

people. While the Rivonia Trial itself is a powerful moment in South African political history, its telling in a documentary could risk being a talking heads show. This film is not! Instead, the documentary is raised way above the ordinary by Oerd's charcoal animation. It gives the film a sense of playfulness against the political backdrop.

The film also provides brilliant cameo personal narratives. It humanizes the leading players in the documentary — Winnie-Madikizela Mandela's narrative about her young daughter calling her a liar, Percy Yutar's son David's cynicism about his father's role in the trial, George Bizos throwing a few Amandla fists into the air, Ahmed Kathrada's fiancée Sylvia Neeme reading Kathrada's last letter to her, Dennis Goldberg telling his aged

mother about his sentence — these are the personal narratives that often get overshadowed in the telling of the Rivonia Trial. In this film they're unravelled with a deep sensitivity — the film's subtext about pain, loss and grief humanise the characters who are known mostly for their courage and their conviction and hardly because their political involvement also had a profound impact on the personal lives of the people who were their significant others.

In the film, Mandela's famous speech from the docks is a testimony of his conviction but it is really Walter Sisulu's lesser known powerful courtroom interaction that gives the film about the Rivonia Trial a superb edge and a breath of fresh air over so many other stories about the Rivonia Trial. The film screening

was followed by a discussion facilitated by the film distributor, Steven Markovitz. There was a lot of discussion about why the film should be distributed at schools to enrich history teaching.

I wish the film is distributed to schools not as a history lesson but rather because the film is crafted with such eloquent brilliance. Its style is fresh and engaging. It is an extraordinary work that I wish was appreciated simply for its artistic genius — the history lesson which inevitably will be learnt I am sure was not the filmmaker's primary intent for wanting to produce a film that oozes with absolute creativity, originality and innovative storytelling. The documentary is fascinating not only for its subject but more-so for the creative way in how it treats this subject.

Ishmael Mahomed Chief Executive Officer of the Market Theatre. Picture Sarah Pickering

Talking movies with Mayfair director Sara Blecher

“My purpose in making movies is to tell a truly South African story in an aesthetically authentic way, without compromising creativity”

Edward Tsumele

When we met recently for this interview in one of the bustling restaurants in Rosebank, I reminded her about what seems to be her affinity of sorts with this particular restaurant, for I had suggested something else for this interview instead of this particular restaurant that she chose. Her seeming love affair with this eatery is reinforced by the fact that this is the second time in seven years I had a meeting with the prolific filmmaker at the same place, the first time being in 2011. That time it was yet another interview ahead of the release of one of her impactful movies, *Otelo Burning*, which left many a movie maker in awe of Blecher and her crew for turning what under the direction of another director could have easily been just an ordinary story of a black guy aspiring to become a wave surfer, into a fantastic movie that got everyone talking for much of the year.

Sara has since released other successful movies in between, such as *Ayanda* (2015), and *Dis Ek Anna* (2015) and now *Mayfair*, a gangster tale by the award-winning director.

“A lot is fast changing in Rosebank with some old building coming down to be repurposed by the developers. There are now great residential apartments going up. The place seems to be fast becoming self-contained, offering a number of amenities, including a remarkable shopping experience, good restaurants, clothing boutiques and convenience grocery shops such as Pick ‘n Pay and now there is a Spar which has just opened. This is in addition to the cinemas within the space. For those who love to watch theatre, there is also a theatre house in nearby Sandton, Theatre on the Square. Gautrain also now makes Rosebank a comfortably accessible place by public transport. I actually love the place, and if I had the money to afford buying property here, I would definitely do so. That is perhaps why I need to make a block buster of a movie,” says Blecher amidst a chuckle in admiration of the repurposing of Rosebank and what promises to be a great look and feel once the obstructive renovations and construction activities are completed.

Blecher however insists that in her career as a filmmaker making a block buster is not her intention, even though she would welcome such as development in as long as



Film director Sara Blecher/Picture Supplied.

in the making of such a movie, creativity is not trembled on.

“My purpose in making movies is to tell a truly South African story in an aesthetically authentic way, without compromising creativity. If someone makes a movie in order to make a block buster and make money in the process, creativity suffers. In *Mayfair*, there is a good balance. Without going too much into the details, in *Mayfair*, there is gun fire, blood and a dark side to human existence.

The issue is, *Mayfair* itself as a suburb has a rich and interesting heritage. The Indians who lived there during apartheid had big houses, some are even mansions.

But when the new South Africa came, and allowed people to live anywhere they wanted, the South African Indians left for other suburbs, leaving behind these big houses that are now rented to immigrants such as Somalis, Pakistani people and those from Bangladesh.

Now, the only thing that is common among South African Indians who once lived in *Mayfair* and the new immigrants is religion, otherwise anything else is different, including culture,” Blecher reveals.

The director explained that in *Mayfair* of the past there used to be Indian gangs there, an aspect of life well captured in the movie

Mayfair, which was entirely shot in the suburb.

Blecher however added that her aim in filmmaking is not actually to make that ultimate South African film, but to have an opportunity to tell South African stories, rich with its diverse and nuanced culture and share this with the rest of the world.

“If I did that, it means I would then stop making movies, which is a prospect I am not looking forward to,” she says. Her main objective of making movies is to touch audiences by telling them stories about themselves, stories that however are universally appealing.

In fact she has just done so with the completion of, *Mayfair*, which opened at cinema houses around the country on October 2, and whose script was crafted by Neil McCarthy. She takes on the role of director, an area in which she has excelled over the years, transforming with remarkable skill, many a writer’s script into a visual spectacle enjoyed by many a cinema lover, both in South Africa and abroad.

This is the same skill that she has brought into *Mayfair*. “I was approached by two Indian gentlemen, staunch film lovers who are

tired of how Indian stories have been represented on South African cinema over the years as they believed that there was something these movies often missed in capturing aptly Indian life in contemporary South Africa.

“Imran Jeeva and Omar Khan are die-hard movie lovers even though their actual profession is in the property finance sector. They just love movies, but have a problem with how Indian life is often represented on the big screen in South Africa.

They want to see an authentic representation of Indian daily life on the big screen, and therefore even suggested the theme and the story line for *Mayfair*,” says Blecher

Already the movie is making waves at film festivals around the world, including the UK and Australia, with its chilling exploration of urban ganglands and organised crime syndicates.

Mayfair tells the story of prodigal son Zaid Rander (Ronak Patani) who returns home to *Mayfair* in Johannesburg, where his overbearing father Aziz (Rajesh Gop-

ie) – a thriving import-exporter and occasional money launderer and loan shark – is facing death threats. Zaid has been unfairly dismissed from his job as an aid worker and on his return, he finds himself living in the shadow of his father and his dodgy dealings. When a murderous rival gang threatens the family’s business, Zaid is forced back into the life he’d hoped to leave behind.

‘*Mayfair*’ follows on from the recent success of Indian stories set in South Africa, including *Material*, *Keeping up with the Kandasamys* and *Broken Promises*.

“It’s great to be adding this film to the list of stories for the big screen about Indian South African experiences.

“It was also really gratifying to work with an authentic and impressive cast who have brought so much depth to the story,” says Blecher.

In the role of Aziz is Rajesh Gopie, a well-known South African Indian actor, comedian, writer and voice artist who has appeared in such television series as

Generations and *Zero Tolerance*, and is best known for his role in South Africa’s highest grossing film of 2017, *Keeping up with the Kandasamys*, a comedy that tells the story of a long-standing rivalry between two families, the Kandasamys and the Naidoos.

Shady businessman and long-standing rival of the Rander family Jalaal is played by Jack Devnarain, who has performed in numerous TV and film productions, including the heist thriller *31 Million Reasons*. Devnarain describes his character as ‘a puppet-master dealing in money, power and blood’.

“The film explores similar themes to the current Saif Ali Khan headed thriller *Sacred Games*, the first Indian Netflix Original web series, which has proved to be a game changer in the Indian entertainment scene,” says Helen Kuun, managing director of Indigenous Film Distribution.

Sara Blecher however likens *Mayfair* to *Godfather*. “In the *Godfather* mafia families, the Irish who settled in New York earlier than the new arrivals The Italians are at each other’s throats. *Mayfair* is dealing with similar issues in different circumstances and different places, but the contexts are the same,” she says.

Mayfair itself as a suburb has a rich and interesting heritage

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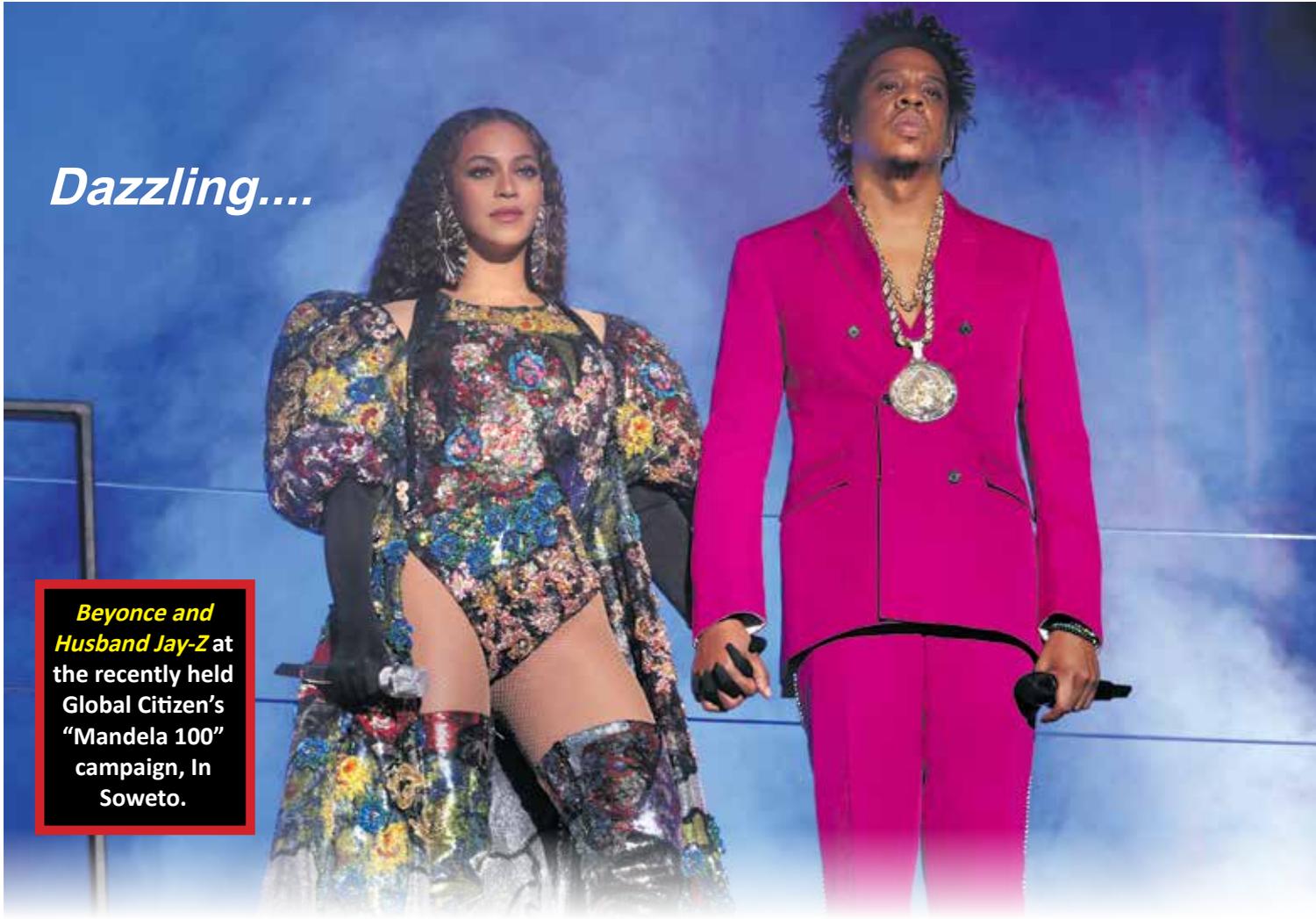
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Beyonce impresses her South African fans

Dazzling....

Beyonce and Husband Jay-Z at the recently held Global Citizen's "Mandela 100" campaign, in Soweto.



Edward Tsumele

The recent Global Citizen Mandela 100 festival at FNB on December 2, which among others starred Beyonce and her husband Jay-Z and local artists such as Casper Nyovest and Sho Madjozi among others, was spectacular, according to those that made it to the event.

The Festival is the culmination

of Global Citizen's "Mandela 100" campaign; a series of global events honoring the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela in his centenary year, seeking to mobilize USD \$1 billion in new commitments for the world's poorest, with at least 50% to better the lives of women and girls around the world was hosted by the Motsepe Foundation.

Those who made it to the festival understandably regard it as

the highlight of their 2018 entertainment experiences.

The dumper to this experience though was the death of a rigger who fell to his death from injuries sustained when he fell as he was working on putting up the stage, and of course the much reported criminal incidents that happened after the show when a marauding gang of criminals targeted revelers while they were waiting for their transport to take

them home outside the stadium after the show.

Well, while the blame game is going on about whether police provided enough security to the revelers, what is in no doubt however is the fact that those who made it to the concert to watch especially Beyonce wrapped up the festival were impressed by her stage presentation.

FESTIVE SEASON CHILLOUT



Dj Ziduma-Mo and Andrew Tshaka.

Festive is that time of the season where everyone wants to feel at ease, spending quality time with family and friends.

Life@40'n Beyond, a social movement for men and women aged 40 and above will be hosting the 4th Annual **KATIBA FESTIVAL** on **15 December at Thoriso Guests House in Walkerville** featuring masters of old skool Deejays; Andrew Tshaka from Jozi FM, Mokapetene from Kasie FM and Dj Ziduma-Mo.

Tickets: 120 per person

Time: 11am to 10pm

Theme: Wear Your Katiba [Hat] with pride

Picnic basket, Cooler Box, Camp Chairs, Garden Umbrella and Gazebos allowed,

Terry Mokoena Mamphwe
Office +27 029 4841
Mobile +27 82 640 4841

#Hear me too at Market Theatre

Jobe Sithole

On Friday, December 7 the Market Theatre was filled with a sombre mood. The emotions in the main theatre could be cut with a knife. Some in the audience shed a tear.

On stage was a #HearMeToo production headlined by a brilliant woman only cast. This was to mark the 16 Days of Activism against the Abuse of Women and Children.

The melodic voices of the ladies together with their moving acting made for a moving production. Its story line was based on true stories that had been reported in the media.

As the cast who were all in black made their way to the theatre they carried photos of victims who had died at the hands of their partners. The pictures were hung at the theatre throughout the musical. Among those who were shown was Zolile Khumalo, who was shot and killed by her boyfriend at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Karabo Mokoena who was killed and burned to ashes last year and Reeva Steenkamp who was also shot and killed by her boyfriend athlete Oscar Pistorius.

It starts with a young woman who

relives her pain of how she suffered at the hands of her boyfriend. This is followed by songs such as 'Kwenzenjani madoda' 'Stop With the Killing'. A shattering story of how a lesbian was gang raped and had a beer bottle inserted in her vagina is also relived through by this powerful production.

Directed by renowned actor Meshack Mavuso it covered various topics of abuse that had become way too familiar with South Africans. Women who died at the hands of their partners, 'corrective rape' of lesbians, young women who fell for rich men who treat them as their property and victims of abuse who end up killing their partners were but some of the themes that the musical covered.

The musical which kept audiences glued to their seats delivered a simple message. It was that men must stop with the killing and made a clarion call to the good men to fight abuse whenever it reared its ugly head in our communities.

Preceding the production was a victim of abuse Danielle who married at 16 who recounted her ordeal at the hands of her abusive husband. The abuse landed her in hospital after being burned on her face with boiling water. She appealed to women to take a stand. "When I was in hospital, I thought it was the end. Today I stand here and realise there is life after abuse. You need to be bold enough to get out of that situation", said the abuse survivor. Her life

of torment ended in 2016.

Giving her closing remarks, Sizakele Nkosi-Malobane, the MEC for Community Safety in Gauteng said stories shown by the play were real.

"As much as we have used professional actors these stories were real. For instance that woman who was kidnapped and held captive. In most cases these stories are not good as victims are killed. It's a scourge that needs to stop. We need to fight against it. All of us are living with pain. We are here today to share it with those who were abused", said the MEC.

As the cast took a bow at the end of the show they were given a standing ovation by the audience. In attendance were senior members of the South African Police Services in the province, Gauteng Traffic police and officers from the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department.

The day ended with an exhibition by Egress which is supported by Ikhaya Le Themba. Proceeds from the sales of the dresses supported victims of abuse.

The day organised by the Department of Community Safety in Gauteng was emceed by SAfm broadcaster Chriselda Dudumashe.

Pictured: Jobe Sithole

