



Centre for Theatre, Dance & Performance Studies

PRESENTS

4th Year Theatremaking Adaptations

COMPELLED

an adaptation of *Thirteen Cents* by K. Sello Duiker

Production Booklet

Directed by Tshegofatso Mabutla

Dramaturg: Thando Mangcu



BACKGROUND:

CAPE TOWN CITY SCAPE, CHAPTER THIRTEEN: THIRTEEN CENTS AND K. SELLO DUIKER.

Shaun Viljoen in the Thirteen Cents introduction writes about the themes of “violence” and “survival” which predominate Duiker’s semi-autobiographical work. Quiet Violence of Dreams and The Hidden Star highlight the violence of urban “post-Apartheid” South Africa and Cape Town particularly on the vulnerable and on children as main characters. Duiker has said in response to reactions on his violent use of language, “... violence is so much a part of our culture that if I had toned it down it wouldn’t have been authentic”.

The story of Thirteen Cents is centered on Azure's experiences as a child living in the streets of Cape Town. Another theme is his blue eyes that result in further aggression from others and alienation in all spaces.

The adult characters that have betrayed him are interweaved in his subconscious as he takes the readers through Mr. Lebowitz’s apartment. Of these adults are Azure’s murdered parents; Joyce, a friend who has been stealing money from him; Alfred, the security guard at Mr. Lebowitz’s apartment and Gerald, a leader of the Twenty-Eight gang who later in the book abducts and tortures him.

The violence from those in power towards the vulnerable is evident in this selected chapter. This particular chapter follows Azure on one of his sex-work jobs and in its details as a black male body in Cape Town. It is located in Sea Point in Mr. Lebowitz’s apartment; a married man he meets at a park. Within the first few lines of the chapter is the word, “Piel” which is repeated throughout the chapter.

This two-character, male oriented chapter has been adapted for a six-person, all-female cast.



THE PROCESS

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR [15/03/2018 - REHEARSAL WEEK THREE]

How did you develop what you would do with each step; and how did you draw conclusions as to what you would commit to?

Sensing; sculpting.

In the first week, I wanted to familiarize myself with the cast and I wanted them to do that with each other as well. So the way I set up what we did in the rehearsals... I set it up so that I could familiarize myself with them, and they could with each other. So the whole week was just me figuring out the energy of the space and me just playing. And the playing wasn't specific to anything or any kind of goal or achievement besides them just getting more and more comfortable with each other. And we did a lot of talking sessions and feedback and we'd do very very fun, effortless exercises. The second week I wanted to see what they could do and what they are about naturally... And then we started writing. We would have sessions where we worked and we wrote. They [also] read the story and I wanted them to familiarize themselves with the text. So I gave them the story to read and I asked them to pull out themes and images that they picked up from there... We spoke about it a little bit. Just trying to unpack Azure and where he's coming from or how he's feeling. Did a whole lot of that. Towards the end of the second week I started to do very choral, ensemble-specific exercises to get them to be very aware of each others' bodies... and that filtered into the third week.

How much of your process was influenced by what you sensed from the actors?

About ... 50%? If they're doing well on something, I'm not gonna go onto the next exercise, I'm gonna keep going. It's all about what would be most conducive, what would be most productive for the rehearsal considering this thing that they're in.

How do you work with your position of leadership as the director?

I'm very collaborative in that I seek a lot from them in order to bounce off from me. So I see them do something in order for me to be like, "Ah! Ok! This is where I want to go". From the leadership perspective, I'll come with a proposal or I'll come with the idea and then facilitate it.

How did you come to your current aesthetic?

The white cloths [in the rehearsal process] were more because I wanted to create an ambiguous sense of uniformity. I couldn't find white cloths at costume, so I said, "fuck it, I'll get cloth!" And that is how I got to the look that I have now.

And the choices of red and white cloth?

I initially wanted red cloth but ended up with white. The choice of red cloth and white cloth were two very separate decisions but they are now together [in the process]. The white also reflects the light and that's why I have it. The red worked perfectly to absorb the lights and I didn't want to use black.

The use of the voice and the current vocal aesthetic?

It was not a conscious decision.

THE PROCESS [FROM THE DRAMATURG'S PERSPECTIVE]

"You are enough. You are the shit!"



The process started with the supervision of Mark who set us tasks that included finding facts and asking questions about details in the story. From there, we unpacked that the prevailing themes or seed words found within the story were of contempt and hunger. Both main characters (Azure and Mr. Liebowitz)

are both hungry to fulfil two different desires. Azure, we found, is literally hungry and this is noticed in his attention to details, specifically in the kitchen and his evident lived experience of living on the streets and sex work.



Initially, there was a clear distinction envisioned by Tshegofatso between the real and the dream world. Mr. Liebowitz's collection of classical music is prevalent in the story and this bridges the distinction from dream and reality. The other adult characters characterized a chorus that constantly plagued Azure's thoughts.

Another prevalent device was light and colour.

Tshegofatso desired to make a play about "things we don't talk about". These "things" were further articulated as sexuality and particularly homosexuality within the Black community. Words she also used were "discomfort" and "tension". Through further conversation and in investigating these words we found that the story asks the questions she wants to ask.

Firstly, why the content is so uncomfortable for her?

Exploring the social conditioning and chosen morals and values that have followed her to this day. Furthermore, discovering what makes people comfortable or uncomfortable. Or, in her other words, “things that are kept private” and “things that are made explicit”; “The tension in what is suppressed coming out”. Through further interrogation we also found that this comfort/discomfort was rooted in acceptance in spaces, particularly by heavily socially conditioned womxn bodies. “That which is in the dark coming to light”. A sensory tension: touch juxtaposed with sight and sight juxtaposed with sound. With regards to choosing an all-female cast, Tshegofatso articulated the “crisis we’re in with our sexuality and identity”. stly, why the content is so uncomfortable for her? Exploring the social conditioning and chosen morals and values that have followed her to this day. Furthermore, discovering what makes people comfortable or uncomfortable. Or, in her other words, “things that are kept private” and “things that are made explicit”; “The tension in what is suppressed coming out”.



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The proposed ‘first meeting’ with the actors would be one of a sensory, open-ended experience.

The rest of the process

At first it felt quite invasive of me to be an outside body, there in the process but also 'not there' because it is not my process of theatre making but the director's. Over time I became accustomed to being there as another womxn body with similar experiences in Tshogofatso's all-womxn cast. All I could do was ask questions throughout the process based on our shared subjectivity.

The rest of the process consisted of getting the cast to realize themselves as bodies with agency; constantly convincing them to embody themselves. To combine both what they were thinking in their heads to become impulses in the body. "The principle of improv. Listening, being aware of oneself, finding the consistent flow". Repeatedly in the third week of rehearsal Tshogofatso encouraged the actors to, "Take up space!". She further elaborates, "there would be so much I wouldn't do if I was a male director".

The adaptation, I am observing so far is less about the story but about creating a safe space for womxn creatives to create work. I am particularly interested in her use of the chorus device and her process of deconstructing form.

- THANDO MANGCU, DRAMATURG

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY



Tshegofatso Mabutla is in her 4th year deep in the institution. Yes, she is still alive. She is a theatre making major. Besides experimenting with all the ways in which she can dismantle the institution as a creator and performer, she is also desperately on the quest to benefit from it. The latter of course being the reason that has brought you here, to consume these possibilities. So yes she is has this thing commonly referred to as passion for the arts.

Malehu: 2016

Director: Lesego Chauke || Performers : Kgomotso Nkomo, Litha Soci

Wealth: 2016 Director: The cast || Performers: Tshegofatso, Litha, Mariana, Thapelo, Mariana

Love Like Blue: 2017 Director: Puleng Stewart || Performers: Tshegofatso Mabutla & Lukhanyiso Skosana

Until the Silence Comes: 2017 (short film) Producer, Director, Writer: Puleng Stewart & Jannous Aukema

My Skin Again: 2017 Director: Qondiswa James || Performers: Qondiswa James & Tshegofatso Mabutla

Bana Ba Mobu: 2017 Director: Tshegofatso Mabutla || Performers: Lukhanyiso Skosana & Anne bosche

Do you dream in colour: 2017 Director: The Cast || Puppeteers: Thapelo Tharaga, Mariana Kirstein, Tshegofatso Mabutla.

Shwele Bawo!: 2017 Director: Ntombi Makutshi || Performers: Tshegofatso Mabutla, Anathi Godlo

ACTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

Vuyo Joboda

is a charismatic second year student at the University of Cape Town. She is majoring In Theater Making. Vuyo has had training in dance and for the longest amount of time, thought she would study dance. She fell in love with theater when featuring in productions at the Playhouse Theater in Somerset West. She performed in To Kill A Mockingbird and Cinderella Van Die Kaap both directed by Darryl Spijkers.

Other Darryl Spijkers productions Vuyo performed in include Othello, and For Colored Girls just to mention a few. Vuyo is also a MC and has a passion for fashion.



Savannah Steyn

is a Second Year Theatre Maker passionate about exploring the many different ways of communicating with others through the use of theatre. Experimenting with it's potential to help give a voice to the voiceless as well as exploring the underlying issues in society. She is driven and passionate about the theory behind her work as well as how it ties into her other great passions English Literature and History.

She sees all projects and productions as a means of learning not only for the audience members but for those involved in the creating of the performance as well. She believes strongly that in everything we do we learn. Even if, it is the most mundane of tasks. Savannah has been performing from a very young age in many different streams of performance such as singing, dancing and acting which has fuelled her curiosity in removing the masks we all wear in order to see the challenges we face in society. Her personal ambitions and those for the theatre are never ending. She is known to have a critical and logical process to her creative madness. Savannah believes theatre to be both about creative playing and discipline. She sees the realm of performance to be a foundation for further understanding society and our stories as human beings.





Roxanne de Freitas

is a third year student majoring in Theatre Making at UCT. In 2017 she performed in an adaptation of *The Trojan Women* directed by Sara Matchett, a choreography piece entitled *Microbodies*, choreographed by Mariana Del Carmen, and an epic choral poem, *Woolworths*, directed by Juliet Jenkin. In the same year she worked as a lighting and sound

operator and 'idea-giver' for Francesco Nassimbeni's *Masters Production All of it, Everything, Now, Together*. She performed as part of an experimental vocal choir for the 2017 *Edge of Wrong* noise music festival, and in a related vocal trio at *Edge of Wrong's* 2017 side project *The Window*, held at the Theatre Arts Admin Collective. Most recently in 2018 she performed in a real-time composed dance piece in the 4th installation of Manuela Lucia Tessi's *021 Music/Dance* performance series, also at the TAAC. Roxanne's continually expanding and evolving interests currently lie in the fields of dance theatre, voice/sound experiments, and body-based performance art.



Miliswa Mbandazayo

is currently a second year theatre-maker enrolled at the University of Cape Town. This Eastern Cape born talent matriculated from Theodor Herzl High School in Port Elizabeth where her love of Drama was ignited. She was subsequently cast in her school's production of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* as Titania and has since never looked back. She has a passion for

performance and cites Anna Deavere Smith, Viola Davis, Terry Pheto and Mmabatho Montsho as some of her biggest inspirations. Her other interests include procrastination over work and subsequently napping and watching *Law and Order* reruns. She whole heartedly shares Oscar Wilde's *Sentiment "It was only in the theatre that I Lived"*.

2012 *Urinetown* by Carika de Swardt- Little Sally (Woodridge College Production
* *Showtime award nomination for Best Supporting Actress in a Musical*
2014 *Nimbandini* by Olwethu Mdala- Director (PANSA EC theatre project Stage Flight)

Disco Inferno - Maggie (PE G&S Production)

*Showtime Award winner for Best Supporting Actress in a Musical

2015 Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Robin Williams - Titania (Theodor Herzl Production)

2018 *Adaptation* by Tshegofatso Mabutla - ensemble (UCT)

Devon Kampmann

is currently a second year student at UCT who is majoring in Theatre Making. Her mom knew from the moment she was the narrator of her Grade 0 production (and did all the dances and songs simultaneously with everyone else in her class despite this not being her role) that she was destined for some sort of performance career. Devon only realized this much later on, when her debut



performance in high school, a granny responsible for the death of Justin Bieber in a whodunnit House Play, gave her the epiphany that maybe acting was for her. The audience laughed with her performance, and in that laughter Devon realized how much she too was enjoying herself on stage.

Since then, Devon has performed the role of Hecuba in her schools's major production of "*The Trojan Women*" in 2015 and Flo in Russell Untiedt's adaptation of Buckland and Newton's "*The Well Being*" in 2016. In the same year, she also wrote and directed her first play, "*Luister*", which led to her all-female cast being placed in the final 4 out of 52 plays in the Festival of Excellence in Dramatics Arts (FEDA) in Joburg. Her script for "*Luister*" also led to Devon being awarded Best Original Script in the entire competition.

At the moment, Devon is still finding her feet in Drama School, and doing her best to enjoy every moment she has here. However, she also knows that she still has a lot to figure out about performance, and herself, and she hopes to spend the next 3 years here doing so.

Anne Bosch

is an all rounded artist. Having formal training in dance, music and chamber choir, she always thought she'd pursue a career in the arts but after high school she found herself completing a degree in Psychology and Communication science. However, still feeling unfulfilled, she auditioned at Magnet Theatre and completed their two-year course where she gained skills in physical theatre, applied theatre, baby theatre among others.



She has performed in productions such as *Ukhanyo*, directed by Thando Doni, in which many texts were self-written. She also performed in *In the City of Paradise*, written and directed by Mark Fleishman; as well as in *The Trojan Women*, directed by Sara Matchett in which she played the role of Hecuba. Anne has also been part of a collection of short films called *Millennial Love* by Eight Street Films. She is currently studying Theatre making through the University of Cape Town and hopes to acquire skills with which she can create material for and by the marginalised and, therefore, create exposure to gain representation in the arts through transformation via theatre.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Compelled is a workshopped adaptation of Sello Duiker's novel *Thirteen Cents*, particularly Chapter Thirteen of the Novel.

We have created this piece of theatre from working with the explicit images in the story and extracting relevant themes.

Compelled is a provocation in its introductory stage. Grappling with sexuality as explored through the mind, and the body as sexual intercourse.

Narrowed down to the relationship female bodies are subjected to having with it, in tension with the relationship they choose to have with it.

To paint the image simply, womxn are conditioned to sexual subservience.

Society, in the many ways that it manifests, owns your body, and subjects you to abuse from its men and its women.

Using an episodic method of storytelling, *Compelled* asks,

"How do we own our sex?"

...

The pleasures of finally receiving. . .

Giving when you please. . .

An aspiration towards duality . . .

*Production Manager: Luke Ellenbogen

*Head of Workshop: Nicolas Mayer

*Workshop assistants: Mark Miller & Justin Jacobs

*Senior Technician: Marco Frontini

*Head of Costume: Leigh Bishop

*Costume Assistant: Dilshaad Jack

*Costume Interns: Lindiwe Makaba & Michaeline Wessels

*Theatre Administrator: Tabassum Pansari

*Senior Stage Manager: Kei-Ella Loewe

*Financial Administrator: Rob Keith



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