

# **Being Public: Musicians and the Market Theatre Café, 1976 - 1980**

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## **Abstract**

In 1976 the Market Theatre Complex was opened in Newton, Johannesburg by Barney Simon and Mannie Manim. Their vision was to establish a non-discriminatory and inclusive theatre that operated outside the legislated segregation policies of the apartheid system. One of the venues in the complex was a small music entertainment space called the Market Theatre Café. The Café which operated from 1976 to 1978 was run and managed by David Marks and his wife Frances Marks. Throughout its short existence, the venue offered a platform for local and international musicians, English, Afrikaans, Zulu, and Sepedi singers-songwriters, folk musicians, township jazz groups, rock and punk groups, and jazz musicians to perform. While the performances in the Market Theatre Complex are well documented, very little has been written about the Café and the music and musicians who performed there.

Using primary sources, specifically live sound recordings made of the performances at the Café, preserved in the Hidden Years Music Archive at Stellenbosch University, this study will offer an analysis of the concerts staged in the Market Theatre Café. Through investigating the musicians, the music performed and lyrics of songs, as well as the conversations on stage between musicians and/or with the audience - as well as the music productions staged at the venue - this study will explore how such music performances enabled the coming together and the “being public” of a community that sanctioned a space for freedom of expression and political action during times when “publics” and “being public” were highly regulated.

## Opsomming

Die Markteaterkompleks word in 1976 in Newton, Johannesburg, deur Barney Simon en Mannie Manim geopen. Hul visie was om 'n niediskriminerende, inklusiewe teater te vestig wat buite die gewettigde segregasiebeleid van die apartheidsstelsel bedryf word. Een van die venues in die kompleks was 'n klein musiekvermaakruimte, die Market Theatre Café. Dit is van 1976 tot 1978 bedryf en bestuur deur David Marks en sy vrou, Frances Marks. Dwarsdeur sy kort bestaan het dit 'n platform gebied vir plaaslike en internasionale musikante, Engelse, Afrikaanse, Zoeloe- en Sepedi-sangers, liedjieskrywers, folk- en jazzmusikante, townshipjazz-, rock en punkgroepe. Vertonings in die Markteaterkomplek is goed gedokumenteer, maar baie min is nog geskryf oor die Café en die musiek en musikante wat hier gehoor is.

Hierdie studie bied 'n ontleding van die konserte wat aangebied is in die Market Theatre Café deur die gebruik van primêre bronne, spesifiek lewende klankopnames van die optredes hier wat in die Hidden Years Musiekargief by Stellenbosch Universiteit bewaar word. Deur bestudering van die musikante, die musiek wat uitgevoer is en die lirieke wat gesing is, sowel as deur gesprekke op die verhoog tussen musikante en/of met die gehoor en deur die musiekopvoerings wat in hierdie venue aangebied is, wil die studie verken hoe sulke musiekgeleenthede die saamkom en die “in die openbaar wees” van ‘n gemeenskap moontlik gemaak het, 'n gemeenskap wat 'n ruimte vir vryheid van uitdrukking en politieke optrede gesanksioneer het in 'n tyd toe “publiekes” en “publiek wees” hoogs gereguleerd was.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

We were strangers in Africa, we were strangers in our own country...  
David Marks<sup>1</sup>

In 1976, The Market Theatre Complex was opened in Newtown, Johannesburg by Barney Simon and Mannie Manim. The Theatre was opened during a time wherein most urban theatres were either state-owned or state-funded, which ensured, for the most part, that they upheld and reinforced the segregationist ideologies of the apartheid government. In contrast, the founders of the Market Theatre envisioned an “alternative” theatre that was autonomous and multiracial, posing no restrictions in terms of race,<sup>2</sup> class or sexual orientation.<sup>3</sup> Similar to other alternative theatres at the time, such as Theatre Workshop ’71 in Johannesburg (1971), The Space Theatre in Cape Town (1972), the Market was open to performances “as ways of raising the political consciousness of the performers and public.”<sup>4</sup> It also filled a need for more multiracial theatres and entertainment venues at the time.<sup>5</sup> Within the Market Theatre complex, a small music and entertainment venue, The Market Theatre Café was opened and run by David and Frances Marks in August 1976. David Marks’s alternative philosophy was in line with the founders of the Market Theatre, and he wanted to create a music venue unrestricted by the apartheid laws of the time.

With the racial divisions that apartheid perpetuated, the system created “strangers” among its own citizens. Beyers Naudé traces the concept of strangers from a biblical perspective. He reveals that the term strangers in the bible referred to all those residing outside Israel and their categorisation was based on race, ethnic origin, class and religion. This is the same classification that the apartheid government adopted, further strengthened through the establishment of Bantustans or homelands to create not only racial strangers but ethnic

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<sup>1</sup> “Strangers in Africa” is a song that was composed and performed by David Marks and is available in the Hidden Years archive. See sound record: [hymap-dm-reel-brubeck-marks-1984-001](#).

<sup>2</sup> This study acknowledges that racial terminology has been socio-legally constructed. References to racial terms such as black, coloured, white is employed in this study as these categorisations determined movement, organization and access to amenities.

<sup>3</sup> See: Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company: The Story of Johannesburg’s Market Theatre*. (South Africa: AD. Donker, 1988), 43.

<sup>4</sup> [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/South\\_African\\_Theatre/Overview](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/South_African_Theatre/Overview)

<sup>5</sup> This will be explored in Chapter 2.

strangers.<sup>6</sup> That the different racial groups were forced to live in segregated areas, use different public facilities and had limited contact with each other meant that the system deprived its citizens an opportunity to socialise, learn and understand each other's culture, share each other's music and perform together.

From its initiation, the Market Theatre Café functioned as a multi-racial space for music performances, collaborations, and audience members. In addition, it was a space where various musics ranging from folk, jazz, mbaqanga/maskandi and popular music were performed, sometimes at the same event. Such programming established a creative and collaborative environment wherein musicians and musical genres could cross-pollinate. Ingrid Byerly points out how music during the apartheid era could permeate the social and political boundaries set by the apartheid government. She notes that from the 1970s “music became a primary site both physically and creatively, for intercultural collaborations. Physically, the multi-racial club venues [...] provided a meeting place for audiences and musicians to participate in crossover genres.”<sup>7</sup> A number of musicians including Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu (who later formed Juluka), Jeremy Taylor, Allen Kwela, Mike Dickman, Malombo, and Dollar Brand (Abdullah Ibrahim), to mention but a few, graced the stage.<sup>8</sup> Schwartz notes that “there was an idealism, an energy in the Café that made innovation almost inevitable”<sup>9</sup> and shows grew out of ideas circulated at the Café. Marks's intention was to stage and record shows of original South African music.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the venue's apparent emancipatory and empowering role, it was closed two years after its establishment. Schwartz writes that “Marks was told the venture was not carrying its weight financially. It was to be replaced by an entirely different though equally eccentric and creative place.”<sup>11</sup> In 1978, the Café was taken over by Pieter-Dirk Uys and renamed The Laager. After the change, David Marks remained involved at the Café until 1980 producing a number of shows.

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<sup>6</sup> Manuscript from Beyers Naudé Collection by Beyers Naude, "Stranger or Neighbour?", Beyers Naudé Centre for Public Theology, Stellenbosch University, 1983.

<sup>7</sup> Ingrid Bianca Byerly, "Mirror, Mediator, and Prophet: The Music Indaba of Late-Apartheid South Africa." *Ethnomusicology* 42, no. 1 (1998):8. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/852825>, accessed March 11, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 87.

<sup>9</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

<sup>10</sup> See Lizabé Lambrechts, "Letting the Tape Run: The Creation and Preservation of the Hidden Years Music Archive." *South African Journal of Cultural History* 32, no. 2 (2018): 1-23.

<sup>11</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 89.

While much historical significance and scholarly attention has been paid to the Market Theatre, the history of the Café - who performed there, and what was performed - remains largely unknown. This study seeks to explore the history of the Market Theatre Café, documenting the musicians who performed in the venue and the events that took place. As such it aims to show the continuing development of alternative popular music through the workings of the Café and the community that formed around it. Through investigating the musicians, music, and lyrics; the conversations on stage between musicians and/or with the audience<sup>12</sup> - as well as the music productions staged at the venue - this study explores how such music performances enabled the coming together and the “being public” of a community that strove for freedom of expression and political action during times when “publics” and “being public” were highly regulated.

## 1.2 Background and Purpose of the Study

My interest in this study is a result of my work as a Sound Archivist in the Hidden Years Music Archive, an archive collected by David Marks, that documents alternative popular music in South Africa from 1957-2005.

Opening the Café, Marks’s focus was not only on aligning himself with the overarching vision of the Theatre Complex, but also to record and preserve the music performed in the venue. As such, Marks was continuing with his practice of recording all the music events, club performances, and festivals he was involved with in his capacity as a sound engineer, musician, events organiser, and director of the 3rd Ear Music Company.<sup>13</sup> Through his lifelong practice and passion, Marks built a historically rich archive that documents alternative popular music in South Africa from the 1960s to the early 2000s. In 1990, he founded the Hidden Years Music Archive Project to preserve his rich collection.<sup>14</sup> The archive, donated to Stellenbosch University in 2013, documents not only the music performed at the Café, but also other events like festivals that happened outside this venue.

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<sup>12</sup> See Methodology.

<sup>13</sup> The record label was started by Ben Senegal and Aubrey Smith in 1969. Marks was still in America when it was founded. He later took over from Smith. Among the first musicians and groups to record under the label are Malombo, Juluka, Spirits Rejoice and many more. See Muff Andersson, *Music in the Mix: The Story of South African Popular Music* (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1981), 81.

<sup>14</sup> The Hidden Years Music Archive Project was donated to Stellenbosch University in 2013. It contains a variety of sources that document alternative popular music in South Africa. See article by Lizabé Lambrechts, “Letting the Tape Run: The Creation and Preservation of the Hidden Years Music Archive” *South African Journal of Cultural History* 32, no. 2 (2018): 11.

In the process of digitising the sound recordings of this collection, I was struck by the rich history that the archive contains, a history that little has been written about, mainly due to the inaccessibility of the material that was held in private ownership until 2013.<sup>15</sup> With the donation of the Hidden Years Music Archive to Stellenbosch University, a project was launched at the Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation (AOI) to make this vast resource available to scholars. Both my work as a sound archivist and the research proposed here form part of a bigger research project aiming to open this archive through digitisation and research.<sup>16</sup> The Market Theatre Café caught my attention mainly because of the varied musical performances that took place within this space, and the lack of information about these performances.

### 1.3 Literature Review and Theoretical Points of Departure

The implementation of apartheid in 1948 was instrumental in institutionalising segregation in South Africa, including in venues where music, art, and sport were practiced and performed. Paul Maylam points out that segregation in South Africa took three forms, “the segregation of space – residential, commercial, recreational – along racial lines; the restriction of access to urban areas according to racial (and other) criteria; and the racial differentiation of local government.”<sup>17</sup> This meant that any cross-cultural interactions, on a social or artistic level, were discouraged.<sup>18</sup>

A.J. Christopher notes that apartheid “was conceived as a spatial policy,” manifested in three categories: “grand apartheid”, “urban apartheid” and “petty apartheid.”<sup>19</sup> As a system designed to keep the citizens apart, urban apartheid ensured that cities were meant only for the whites while grand apartheid drove the demarcations within the county which resulted in the

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<sup>15</sup> See footnote 14.

<sup>16</sup> My work formed part of two bigger research projects. The one funded by the Mellon, awarded to Stephanus Muller at the Africa Open Institute (2017-2021), and the other funded by Volkswagen Foundation, awarded to Lizabé Lambrechts (2015-2022). For more information, visit <http://www.aoinstitute.ac.za/hiddenyears>; [www.hiddenyears.co.za](http://www.hiddenyears.co.za)

<sup>17</sup> Paul Maylam, *South Africa's Racial Past: The History and Historiography of Racism, Segregation and Apartheid*. (England: Ashgate, 2001), 158.

<sup>18</sup> See: Peter Larlham, *Black Theater, Dance and Ritual in South Africa*. (Michigan: UMI Research Press. 1985, xviii).

<sup>19</sup> A.J. Christopher, *The Atlas of Apartheid*. (USA: Routledge, 1994), 7.

establishment of homelands. The third category, petty apartheid, entailed the segregation of public facilities like restaurants, railway cars, buses, swimming pools and social events.<sup>20</sup>

These divisions ensued from various legislations that governed the country, for example, the *Population Registration Act* (1950) provided foundation for a racially stratified South Africa. Through this racial classification act, citizens were categorised into “Whites, Coloureds, Natives or Blacks and Indians.”<sup>21</sup> The *Group Areas Act* (1953) on the other hand was created to maintain distinct living areas for the various population groups.<sup>22</sup> This resulted in urban areas being occupied by whites while other groups including blacks were moved into the townships and the homelands that were created solely for them. Further to these separations, in 1953, the Union of South Africa passed another law, *The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act* (also known as Separate Amenities Act). The act established a system of separate public facilities by providing “for the reservation of public premises and vehicles for the exclusive use of persons of a particular race or class.”<sup>23</sup> In the act the definition of public premises included “any land, enclosure, building, structure, hall, room, office or convenience to which the public has access, whether on the payment of admission fee or not but does not include a public road or street.”<sup>24</sup> This included use of things like benches, counters, seats and so on. Contravening these laws<sup>25</sup> was deemed a punishable offence resulting in up to three months imprisonment or fines of up to fifty pounds or both.<sup>26</sup> Within the context of theatres, the rationale behind the apartheid ideology was to create a distinction between theatres for blacks

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<sup>20</sup> See works of A.J. Christopher, *The Atlas of Apartheid*. (USA: Routledge. 1994); Saul Dubow, *Apartheid, 1948-1994*. First edition. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Donald L. Sparks, "The Rise, Fall, and Legacy of Apartheid." *African Studies Review* 48, no. 3 (2005): 207-208.

<sup>21</sup> These terms are used within the context of the apartheid history and with extra caution that fully takes into consideration their discriminatory meanings and the impact they had socially and politically. Their use does not imply acceptance of such categorization. See: Geoffrey C. Bowker and Susan Ligh Star, *Classification and its Consequences*. (Cambridge, Mit Press, 1999). [http://mitpress.mit.edu/boo\\_k-home.tcl?isbn=0262024616](http://mitpress.mit.edu/boo_k-home.tcl?isbn=0262024616), accessed May 6, 2020.

<sup>22</sup> Walter Peters, “Apartheid Politics and Architecture in South Africa.” *Social Identities* 10, no. 4 (2004): 538. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1350463042000258953>, accessed July 31, 2020.

<sup>23</sup> See *Reservation of Separate Amenities Act No. 49 of 1953*. <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/files/2015/11/Reservation-of-Separate-Amenities-Act-49-of-1953.pdf>, accessed August 11, 2020.

<sup>24</sup> See *Reservation of Separate Amenities Act No. 49 of 1953*. <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/files/2015/11/Reservation-of-Separate-Amenities-Act-49-of-1953.pdf>, accessed August 11, 2020.

<sup>25</sup> All these laws were gazetted and amended at different intervals. There is a large body of work on the interpretation and implementation of apartheid laws which can be found for example in the works of Melville Festenstein and Claire Pickard-Cambridge, *Land and Race: South Africa's Group Areas and Land Acts* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1987); Leslie Rubin, *Apartheid in Practice*, (New York: United Nations, 1969); Edgar H. Brookes, *Apartheid: A Documentary Study of Modern South Africa*, (London: Routledge & Paul, 1968).

<sup>26</sup> See copy of the act: <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/files/2015/11/Reservation-of-Separate-Amenities-Act-49-of-1953.pdf>, accesses August 11, 2020.



and for whites. What the *Group Areas Act* and *Separate Amenities Act* did was to make it difficult and almost impossible to have racially mixed casts and racially mixed audiences in urban theatres because of the reservations encapsulated in them. Despite these imposed regulations, theatre was a powerful tool during apartheid. Wolfgang Schneider and Lebogang Nawa notes that in the 1970s and 1980s, theatre was one of the key art forms in South Africa that opposition used as struggle grounds against apartheid.<sup>27</sup>

The struggle for freedom against apartheid in South Africa is a widely researched field that includes the contribution of artists through various art forms like theatre, music, and visual art in the struggle. From as early as the 1960s, urban theatre activities in South Africa took place in either state-funded theatre spaces; independent anti-apartheid spaces that focused mainly on so-called “protest” or “struggle” theatre and other independent theatres that focused on staging either commercial or popular entertainment.<sup>28</sup> With the struggle for liberation intensifying in the early 1970s, these art forms were used as voices to confront and challenge the ideologies of the apartheid system. During this time, there was also a concerted move towards alternative theatres, theatres that were defined as radical spaces that opposed the large state-funded mainstream theatres and their agendas.<sup>29</sup>

The book, *The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary South African Theatre*, states that due to the legislated racial segregation policies of the apartheid government, theatres were affected by the laws of separation.<sup>30</sup> To implement this hegemony, the government funded various urban theatre spaces. Organisations like the National Theatre Organisation (NTO) were mandated with the responsibility of ensuring that theatres conform to the law.<sup>31</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch states that the problem with the “national” theatre was that:

[...] it was parochial, extremely elitist and colonialistic [sic] in its mandate and attitudes. More critically, the thinking in the organisation was based on racist principles, since it was intend [sic] to serve the interest of whites only, and was squarely controlled by the

<sup>27</sup> Wolfgang Schneider and Lebogang L. Nawa eds. *Theatre in Transformation: Artistic Processes and Cultural Policy in South Africa*. Vol. 122, 2019, 10.

<sup>28</sup> See: Johann van Heerden, “Theatre in a New Democracy: Some Major Trends in South African Theatre from 1994 to 2003.” (PHD thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 2008), 20.

<sup>29</sup> See work by Temple Hauptfleisch, “The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends.” *Arndt and Berndt*, 2007, [http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch\\_majortrends\\_2007.pdf](http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch_majortrends_2007.pdf) (accessed June 28, 2018).

<sup>30</sup> Martin Middeke et al., (eds.). *The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary South African Theatre*. (London: Bloomsbury, 1995), 2.

<sup>31</sup> The National Theatre Organisation (NTO) was a state funded institution, which was founded in 1947 to promote and produce Afrikaans and English theatre in South Africa.

governmental apparatus... in later years attempts were made to cater for and even involve black needs in the planning, this was very peripheral, cosmetic and extremely patronising.<sup>32</sup>

When the National Theatre Organisation (NTO) dissolved in 1961, it paved the way for regionally based Performing Arts Councils which also “started off with the same segregationist and colonial thinking as fundamental philosophy.”<sup>33</sup> The four regional state subsidised Performing Arts Councils established were the Performing Arts Council of Transvaal (PACT) based in Pretoria; the Cape Performing Arts Council (CAPAB) based in Cape Town; the Performing Arts Council of the Free State (PACOFs) in Bloemfontein and the Natal Performing Arts Council (NAPAC) in Durban.<sup>34</sup>

In opposition, various non-institutionalised performance spaces like *The Rehearsal Room* (1957) at Dorkay House in Johannesburg (run for a while by Athol Fugard), and the *Natal Theatre Council* (1969) in Durban, were opened. Other state funded organisations like the Performing Arts Company of the Transvaal (PACT) were established to reinforce the systematic agenda by “entrenching the status quo.”<sup>35</sup> The situation intensified such that, according to Hauptfleisch, “in 1965, the government banned all racially mixed casts and racially mixed audiences.”<sup>36</sup> This meant that in urban areas, clubs, cinemas, and restaurants were exclusively for whites, and racially mixed casts and audiences were forbidden.

A breakthrough that saw changes in composition of both casts and audiences in urban theatre spaces came in the early 1970s with the opening of “alternative” theatres like Experimental Theatre Workshop in Johannesburg (1971), The Space in Cape Town (1972) and The Market Theatre in Johannesburg (1976). Despite the fact that the ban on segregated audiences in theatres was lifted in 1977, the Market Theatre and its predecessor, The Space in Cape Town had already opened for mixed audiences.<sup>37</sup> The opening of these “alternative” theatres signalled

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<sup>32</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, “The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends.” *Arndt and Berndt*, 2007, [http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch\\_major Trends\\_2007.pdf](http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch_major Trends_2007.pdf) (accessed June 28, 2018).

<sup>33</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, “The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends.” *Arndt and Berndt*, 2007, [http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch\\_major Trends\\_2007.pdf](http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch_major Trends_2007.pdf) (accessed June 28, 2018).

<sup>34</sup> Johann van Heerden, “Theatre in a New Democracy: Some Major Trends in South African Theatre from 1994 to 2003. PHD thesis, 2008.

<sup>35</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, *Theatre and Society in South Africa: Some Reflections in a Fractured Mirror*. (Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik, 1997), 42

<sup>36</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, *Theatre and Society in South Africa*, 41.

<sup>37</sup> See: Peter Larlham, *Black Theater, Dance and Ritual in South Africa*. (Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1985), xviii.

a shift from the then prevalent state-owned urban theatres whose sole mandate was to uphold the ideologies of the ruling government.

Peter Larham, in his book, *Black Theater, Dance and Ritual in South Africa* defines alternative theatre as a “theater concerned with social and political change, transformation and development of the people and the communities where these theater groups come from and operate from.”<sup>38</sup> Larham further notes that these theatres incorporated collaborations between “blacks” and “whites,” working to expose the “long history of discriminatory injustices prevalent in the South African society.”<sup>39</sup> Similarly in his study on alternative theatres in Zimbabwe, Nkululeko Sibanda reveals that alternative theatre spaces “developed as part of the revolution against the exclusionary policies”<sup>40</sup> that came with ‘mainstream’ theatres, a practise that motivated some theatre practitioners into seeking alternatives. He states that alternative theatres were “committed to telling stories of [their] respective communities through contextually relevant cultural performative frames that challenged domination and exclusion.”<sup>41</sup>

According to Timothy Reagan, “alternative theatre developed in opposition to the western dramatic tradition and strove to demystify social relations and their reproduction in South Africa.”<sup>42</sup> Templeton Hauptfleisch states that the movement towards ‘alternative theatres’ in South Africa started in the 1970s.<sup>43</sup> In his analytical study of major trends in theatre development, he notes in a category that he calls *A Rising Consciousness and the Creation of a Form (1956 – 1975)* that it was in these years that “a number of writers began to write actively against the regime and its policies.”<sup>44</sup> When the political, economic and cultural isolation of the country gained momentum in the mid-1970s, theatre practitioners used performance as a weapon to transcend the racial barriers. Rolf Solberg notes that alternative theatre is “another term used to describe black South African theatre.”<sup>45</sup> He further notes that “alternative theatre

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<sup>38</sup> Peter Larham, *Black theater, Dance and Ritual in South Africa*. (Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1985),

<sup>39</sup> Peter Larham, *Black theater, Dance and Ritual in South Africa*, 63.

<sup>40</sup> Nkululeko Sibanda, “Conceptualizing Alternative Theater and Alternative Performance Space in Post-independence Zimbabwe.” *Sage Open* 9, no. 2 (2019), 6. doi:10.1177/2158244019846699, accessed: December 6, 2019

<sup>41</sup> Nkululeko Sibanda, “Conceptualizing Alternative,” 3.

<sup>42</sup> Timothy Reagan, “People’s Education in South Africa Schooling for Liberation.” *Journal of Thought* 24, no. 1/2 (1989): 5. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42589282>, accessed: April 23, 2020.

<sup>43</sup> See: Temple Hauptfleisch, *Theatre and Society in South Africa: Some Reflections in a Fractured Mirror*. (Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik, 1997), 67.

<sup>44</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch. *The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends*

<sup>45</sup> Hauptfleisch, *Introduction*.

was one of the most significant tools in the political conscientisation of the rural population, and of township youths in particular, whereas the established theatre venues in the major cities had catered for the affluent white sector.”<sup>46</sup> While Solberg’s definition seems to link alternative theatre directly to black theatre, he does go on to discuss alternative theatre spaces like The Space, The Workshop and The Market Theatre which were not exclusively black theatres. This study takes alternative theatre to mean that which challenges the “white, heterosexual, culturally exclusive norms and values” of the apartheid government, as defined by Coleen Angove.<sup>47</sup>

How theatres managed to pursue opposing political and social ideologies despite the surveillance from the state and still, to some extent, function as spaces where people could voice their political dissent at the time, is debated. Deon Opperman in his journal article, “Revolution and Conscience: South African Theater, June 1976 to February 1990,” confirms that they were indeed “allowed to continue, when other voices of protest were banned, imprisoned, murdered, exiled, and tortured.”<sup>48</sup> According to him, one reason why multi-racial theatres were not banned could be that “the government used theatre, and Black theatre in particular, as evidence for their argument before world opinion that conditions within South Africa were not truly repressive.”<sup>49</sup>

The idea of opening the Market Theatre was devised by Mannie Manim and Barney Simon, for several reasons. Having witnessed how the inequalities of the apartheid regime had impacted the field of theatre in terms of accessing theatre spaces and what different theatre spaces rendered, they realised there was a need for an alternative theatre in Johannesburg, a theatre that would be open to all races and be unrestricted by the bureaucratic ideologies of the ruling government. A *Rand Daily Mail* article of 1973 states that Mannie Manim’s tenure with the Performing Arts Company of the Transvaal (PACT) and working at the Arena Theatre,

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<sup>46</sup> Rolf Solberg, *South African Theatre in the Melting Pot: Trends and Developments at the Turn of the Millennium*, (South Africa: Rhodes University, 2003), 3.

<sup>47</sup> Coleen Angove, “Alternative Theater: Reflecting a Multi-racial South African Society?” *Theatre Research International* 17, no. 1 (1992): 39.

<sup>48</sup> Deon Opperman, “Revolution and Conscience: South African Theater, June 1976 to February 1990,” *Evanston, IL: Program of African Studies*, 1993:5, 5. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.4761530.0005.012> (accessed February 28, 2019).

<sup>49</sup> Deon Opperman, “Revolution and Conscience: South African Theater, June 1976 to February 1990,” *Evanston, IL: Program of African Studies*, 1993:5, 5 <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.4761530.0005.012> (accessed February 28, 2019).

made him realise that more alternative and experimental theatres were needed.<sup>50</sup> The theatre, while home to mixed races during apartheid, did not have the capacity to accommodate many people or to meet the growing demand.<sup>51</sup>

Secondly, they did not want a theatre that would only stage plays, but an entertainment complex that would cater for a variety of art forms like music, visual art, photography and offer other services like training, seminars, lectures etc, in theatre.<sup>52</sup> It was for this reason that the building plan for the entire complex included two theatres: the main 300-seater theatre and the upstairs 150-seater theatre, a restaurant, a bar and exhibition rooms.<sup>53</sup>

The opening of the Market Café in July 1976 managed by David Marks and his wife Frances Marks, was an opportunity for Marks to bring together musicians from different racial groups whose music was either considered as not commercial enough to win big record contracts, or, perceived as being politically unacceptable at the time.<sup>54</sup>

Marks is a self-trained musician and sound engineer whose musical involvement can be traced back to his early years. Having played in a school band, “The Boys” in high school, Marks continued playing while working in the mines of Johannesburg in the early 1960s, a job that he left in 1969 for America. During this year in America, Marks worked for the Bill Hanley Sound Company as a sound engineer on several tours and festivals such as the Newport Folk and Jazz Festival, and Woodstock Festival. When he returned to South Africa in 1970, Marks organised various folk festivals and concerts, and he ran various music cafes in Durban and Johannesburg. These include Le Chaim, the Chelsea, the Ox Box and the New Troubadour.<sup>55</sup>

As an entertainment space, Schwartz mentions that in the Café, Marks wanted to “put on shows rather than simply have people get up and sing,”<sup>56</sup> pointing towards the careful curation of the events that took place at the Café. In addition, Schwartz notes that there was a recording studio

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<sup>50</sup> Julius Tobias, “New Experimental Theatre?”, *Rand Daily Mail*, November 5, 1973, 20.

<sup>51</sup> Julius Tobias, “New Experimental Theatre?”, *Rand Daily Mail*, November 5, 1973, 20.

<sup>52</sup> SAPA, “Market for Talent,” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 27, 1975, 17.

<sup>53</sup> Staff Reporter, “A New Theatre from Old Market,” *Rand Daily Mail*, November 20, 1975, 5.

<sup>54</sup> See Atiyyah Khan, “Black Music under Apartheid South Africa.” *The Funambulist* 30, June 29, 2020. <https://thefunambulist.net/magazine/reparations/black-music-under-apartheid-south-africa-by-atiyyah-khan>, accessed October 27, 2022.

<sup>55</sup> See: Lambrechts, “Letting the Tape Run,” and Peter Rorvik, “Marks Returns for an Encore,” *Mail and Guardian*, July 7, 1995. <https://mg.co.za/article/1995-07-07-marks-returns-for-an-encore>, accessed June 27, 2018.

<sup>56</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

at the Café.<sup>57</sup> Marks noted in an interview with Lambrechts that he also established the Market Theatre label during this time to release the music he was recording at the Café.<sup>58</sup> However, no mention is made of the musicians who were recorded on this label, if their music was released commercially, or how this played into Marks's vision of the Café as a place that "nurtured" new talent. Marks similarly saw his record label, 3rd Ear Music, as a vehicle to develop new talent and to give performance platforms to musicians who were not welcome on the mainstream performance circuit.

During his time working in South Africa, Marks recorded and photographed most of the events in which he was involved. In 1990, Marks established the Hidden Years Music Archive as a way to make his collection available to others and to raise funds for its preservation. He was bothered that despite people collecting and recording, there was no national archive or museum where such collections could be kept. For him, the Hidden Years project was a way of paying tribute to musicians whose skills and talents had not been openly enjoyed or heard.<sup>59</sup> Iain MacDonald describes it as South Africa's "underground" music that was politically suppressed and banned from the airwaves.<sup>60</sup>

The responsibility of maintaining the collection fell on Marks. Due to a lack of funding and resources, it proved to be a challenge both financially and administratively.<sup>61</sup> His major concern was that the materials were deteriorating. Some photographs were fading, and some magnetic analogue tapes were oxidising. In November 2013, the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS) received the donation as part of a joint project with the Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation (AOI), both at Stellenbosch University. The purpose of relocating the collection from Durban to Stellenbosch was to digitise the material and make it accessible to national as well as international scholars.<sup>62</sup>

This study contemplates certain theoretical points of departure. Marvin Carlson in his book *Places of Performance: The Semantics of Theatre Architecture*, argues that theatres may or

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<sup>57</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

<sup>58</sup> Oral history project, interview David Marks with Lizabé Lambrechts, 7 September 2018.

<sup>59</sup> Estelle Sinkins, "You Can't Stop the Music." *The Witness*, December 5, 2011. <https://www.news24.com/witness/archive/you-cant-stop-the-music-20150430>, accessed April 23, 2022.

<sup>60</sup> Iain MacDonald, "Hidden' Music Plays at Last." *Weekend Argus*, August 25, 1996.

<sup>61</sup> See correspondence between 3rd Ear Music and Robyn Wilson found in the Hidden Years archive, hy-dm-corr-years-trust-2002-001.

<sup>62</sup> Lizabé Lambrechts lead this project as a postdoctoral research fellow at Stellenbosch University. The project was entitled, "*Making Accessible South Africa's Unknown Music History: Sorting, Cataloguing and Curating the Hidden Years Music Archive*" (2013-2015).



may not be traditional buildings but in their entirety, they include other elements like audience, their “other public spaces,” physical appearance and the location within a city.<sup>63</sup> In seeking to understand how the Market Café functioned as a space that brought not only the musicians but also audiences from different racial and class backgrounds, this study relies on Brandon LaBelle’s sonic agency theory as a point of departure.

In this book, *Sonic Agency: Sound and Emergent Forms of Resistance*,<sup>64</sup> LaBelle looks at the role sound can play in political issues by exploring its agentive potentiality. The book presents an attempt at thinking through the emergence of publics and counterpublics – of coming together in a world that isolates us. The apartheid regime, which officially started in 1948 with the election of the National Party,<sup>65</sup> was instrumental in the rigidification of certain repressive policies. James Ngcobo, an artistic director at The Market Theatre wrote:

1976 was the year that saw a wave of anarchy and desperation for things to change [...], there was a group of visionaries who dreamt not only of a theatre, but of a way to escape from the vicious oppressive laws of the apartheid regime to a positive view of humanity. The Market Theatre became that space that said, ‘it doesn’t matter what you look like, where you come from, or who you are, but if you have a story to tell, this is the space where you can come to hone your voice and be given a platform for that voice to be heard.’<sup>66</sup>

One could posit that the Market Theatre Complex was from the outset created as a space where a public could emerge that was different from the one endorsed and enforced by apartheid legislation. These publics, as pointed out by Ngcobo, would not be determined by race, gender, or class restrictions.<sup>67</sup> This study reflects on the ways in which this manifested in the Café space.

Michael Warner defines a public as, “a crowd witnessing itself in [a] visible space,”<sup>68</sup> one that is formed “by the event or by the shared physical space.”<sup>69</sup> Warner points out that that “a public

<sup>63</sup> Marvin Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semantics of Theatre Architecture*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1989), 2.

<sup>64</sup> Brandon LaBelle, *Sonic Agency: Sound and Emergent Forms of Resistance*. London: Goldsmiths Press, 2020.

<sup>65</sup> Saul Dubow, *Apartheid 1948 – 1994*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1. See also Leonard Thomson, *A History of South Africa*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 188.

<sup>66</sup> James Ngcobo, Ngcobo, James. “A Great Legacy Continues at The Market Theatre.” In *The Market Theatre: 40 years of Storytelling 1976 – 2016*, written by The Market Theatre Foundation (Johannesburg: DesLink Media, 2016), 18.

<sup>67</sup> The study will use this term according to how music in the apartheid era was classified, a mandate that was assigned to the South African Broadcasting Cooperation by the government to ensure that music was censored before it went on air. See Michael Drewett. “An Analysis of the Censorship of Popular Music within the Context of Cultural Struggle in South Africa during the 1980s.” (PhD thesis, Rhodes University, South Africa), 2004.

<sup>68</sup> Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*. (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 66.

<sup>69</sup> Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*. (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 66.

organises itself independently of state institutions, laws and formal frameworks of citizenship, or pre-existing institutions.”<sup>70</sup> LaBelle develops this idea further by arguing that during repressive regimes “being public is seen to carry the weight and the meaningfulness of political engagement.”<sup>71</sup>

Within this study, this concept of “being public” is explored in relation to the notion of counterpublics. Jeffrey Wimmer defines counterpublic as “specific publics centred around a specific social discourse or point of view.”<sup>72</sup> He further states that “counterpublics can be regarded as important agents for social and political change as they raise and articulate political, economic, cultural, or social issues in a critical way.”<sup>73</sup> Byerly defines these counterpublics in music during the apartheid era as “unofficial subcultures” whose “practical objective served the purpose of communicating across and within cultural borderlines after decades of enforced segregation.”<sup>74</sup> This study therefore explores how the Café was a space wherein a counterpublic could emerge that was publicly using music as a vehicle to challenge the dominant status-quo.<sup>75</sup>

LaBelle explores how being together in a social space “enable[s] formations of not only public [political] discourse but equally gestures of joining together,” and how that may “become central to reconstituting the political realm.”<sup>76</sup> Scott Baldauf, for example, attests that besides music during the apartheid era being used as a “coping mechanism for oppressed people” and “a mode of free expression of political views,”<sup>77</sup> it gave communities an opportunity to gather. Similarly, Ntombizikhona Valela notes that “for many in the midst of repression, music was the chief means by which joy could be communicated.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*. (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 68.

<sup>71</sup> LaBelle, *Sonic Agency*, 5.

<sup>72</sup> Jeremy Wimmer, *Counterpublic*. January 04, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118541555.wbiepc110> (accessed on September 14, 2018).

<sup>73</sup> Jeremy Wimmer, *Counterpublic*.

<sup>74</sup> Ingrid Bianca Byerly, “Mirror, Mediator, and Prophet: The Music Indaba of Late-Apartheid South Africa,” *Ethnomusicology* 42, no. 1 (1998):8. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/852825>.

<sup>75</sup> Ingrid Bianca Byerly, “Mirror, Mediator, and Prophet.”

<sup>76</sup> LaBelle, *Sonic Agency*, 11.

<sup>77</sup> Scott Baldauf, “South African Jazz after Apartheid: Looking for a New Direction”, *The Christian Science Mentor*, June 22, 2011. <https://hughmasekela.co.za/news/south-african-jazz-after-apartheid-looking-for-a-new-direction/> (accessed September 14, 2018).

<sup>78</sup> Ntombizikhona Valela, “Writing our Blackness into Existence”. Review of Born to Kwaito: Reflections of the Kwaito Generation, by Esinako Ndabeni and Sihle Mthembu. August 6, 2018. <https://johannesburgreviewofbooks.com/2018/08/06/ntombizikhona-valela-reviews-born-to-kwaito-by-esinako-ndabeni-and-sihle-mthembu/> (accessed August 19, 2018).



LaBelle's work traverses historical movements such as the passive resistance of the counterculture in America from the 1960s to contemporary movements such as the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street. Within these movements, LaBelle notes that people came together through sound in ways that could "illuminate [...] a path from the fringes toward hope, citizenship, and vibrancy. In a current climate that has left many feeling they have lost their voices, it may be sound itself that restores it to them."<sup>79</sup> Drawing on these reflections, the study uses LaBelle's work within the South African context wherein sound and listening were similarly used as means "to join together."<sup>80</sup> By exploring the experience of listening and being heard within the Market Café, this study draws on LaBelle's understanding of emerging publics through music performances. The study also explores how songs and poetry (through lyrical content), and the physical space of the Market Café functioned as discursive vehicles for the creation of a counterpublic.

Another theoretical concern in this study is constructing and making sense of the "alternative" archive. In recent decades, archives have been shown as constructed places serving the political, social and economic needs of those choosing to preserve them.<sup>81</sup> How they have been shaped, reflects personal experiences of the collectors. Achille Mbembe points out just how subjective the colonial and apartheid archive is. Acquisition of archival records was manipulated to serve colonial needs and whatever was viewed as threatening to the state was either removed or destroyed.<sup>82</sup> Additionally, the archive represented those in power. Carolyn Hamilton and Xolela Mangcu propose that additional material needs to be collected to supplement the state archive and unearth the histories of those neglected voices.<sup>83</sup>

One such an archive is the Hidden Years Music Archive, collected by David Marks from 1967 until the early 2000's. Since a large part of the work presented in the study is based on research from this archive, it is important to understand its history, how it was recorded and preserved.

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<sup>79</sup> LaBelle, Sonic Agency, book sleeve.

<sup>80</sup> LaBelle, Sonic Agency, 155.

<sup>81</sup> See: Lizabé Lambrechts, "Performing the Aporias of the Archive: Towards a Future for South African Music Archives." *Historia* 61, no. 1 (2016): 132-154. <https://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2309-8392/2016/v61n1a10> and Verne Harris, "The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa." *Archival Science* 2, no. 1 (2002): 63-86. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02435631>.

<sup>82</sup> Achille Mbembe, "The Power of the Archive and its Limits." In *Refiguring the Archive*, edited by Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Jane Taylor, Michele Pickover, Graeme Reid and Razia Saleh. (South Africa: David Philip, 2002), 23.

<sup>83</sup> Carolyn Hamilton and Xolela Mangcu, "Freedom, Public Deliberation and the Archive." *History Association of South Africa* (2006):1-14.

As an archive collected and preserved by an individual for more than 40 years with the limited resources this entailed, the Hidden Years can be construed as a “Do-it-Yourself” archive.<sup>84</sup>

In the book *Preserving Popular Music Heritage: Do-it-Yourself, Do-it-Together*, such personal archives of popular music, also referred to as “Do-It-Yourself” archives<sup>85</sup> are defined as “extensions of musical communities.”<sup>86</sup> Sarah Baker argues that while some of these Do-It-Yourself archives are collected leisurely and out of interest, some were propelled by a “political agenda in which the preservation and use of historical materials might play a role in serving a set of political aims (be they educational, commemorative, empowering, or transformative).”<sup>87</sup> As an individual, Marks’ recording, collecting, and preserving a history outside of the officially sanctioned narratives of the apartheid regime, can be viewed as a practice mode of public history-making.<sup>88</sup>

#### 1.4 Problem Statement and Thesis Question

Andre le Roux-Kemp defines apartheid as a “legally sanctioned system of racial segregation that governed all aspects of South Africans’ lives.”<sup>89</sup> To enforce segregation in South African cities and towns, the Separate Amenities Act was passed in 1953. Enshrined in the Act was the segregation of all urban public facilities including buildings and transport with the purpose of limiting any form of contact between the different races in South Africa.

In contrast to state-imposed restrictions, the Market Theatre Complex, a public recreational space, functioned from its inception as multi-racial space for staging theatre works. To understand how this was made possible, this study examines how the entire complex operated as an “alternative” theatre and traces the space within the socio-political context of urban theatre spaces in the country and urban life in Johannesburg at the time. As an urban theatre space in South Africa during that time, the study investigates how they ran a transformed,

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<sup>84</sup> Lambrechts, “Letting the Tape Run,” 1.

<sup>85</sup> Sarah Baker (ed.), *Preserving Popular Music Heritage: Do-it-Yourself, Do-it-Together*, (New York: Routledge), 1<sup>st</sup> ed. 2015, 10. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315769882>.

<sup>86</sup> Sarah Baker (ed.), *Preserving Popular Music Heritage*. 12.

<sup>87</sup> Sarah Baker (ed.), *Preserving Popular Music Heritage*. 12.

<sup>88</sup> Paul Long, Sarah Baker, Lauren Istvandy & Jez Collins, “A Labour of Love: The Affective Archives of Popular Music Culture.” *Archives and Records* 38, no. 1 (2017): 61-79.  
, DOI: [10.1080/23257962.2017.1282347](https://doi.org/10.1080/23257962.2017.1282347)

<sup>89</sup> See: Andre le Roux-Kemp, “Struggle Music: South African Politics in Song” *Law and Humanities*, 2014:8(2) 247-268.

inclusive, and diverse space which functioned contrary to what the legislation of the time prescribed.

The Market Café, as part of the Complex, similarly catered for multiracial music performances, collaborations, and audience members. The Café was a space where various music genres ranging from folk, jazz, mbaqanga/maskandi and popular music were performed, oftentimes at the same event. Such programming established a creative and collaborative environment wherein musicians and musics could cross-pollinate. Through investigating the musicians, music, and lyrics; the comments made on stage between musicians and/or with the audience; as well as the music productions staged at the venue, the study seeks to understand if this venue enabled an emergence of a “public” and “counterpublic” that used sound as an agent for dissent against the apartheid laws of the time.

The study asks, in what ways was the Market Café an “alternative” space? This is approached by asking a secondary question; did it nurture a spirit of “public” and “counterpublic” in the array of performances between 1976 and 1980?

## 1.5 Methodology

The study uses qualitative research methods. Data was collected through interviews, analysing concerts that took place in the Market Café and scrutinising sound recordings, documents and oral history sources held in the Hidden Years Music Archive. The collection comprises newspaper articles, photographs, audio-visual recordings, and event programmes that document the music and musicians who performed at the Market Theatre Café. I am fluent in a number of local African languages. This proved useful in transcribing and translating songs during performances. I was also able to transpose the cultural meaning attached to the words and symbolism behind the physical displays of these performances.

Sound recordings have for years been treated separately from text documents. Richard Wright points out that libraries only began to collect and classify audio records in the 20th century.<sup>90</sup> Collected by researchers during ethnographic research or the property of record companies, sound recordings are often neglected as sources for historical research. The United Nations

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<sup>90</sup> Richard Wright, “Preserving Moving Pictures and Sound.” *Gran Bretaña: Digital Preservation Coalition. DPC Technology Watch*, 2012, 12-01. Accessed August 22, 2022. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7207/twr12-01>

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has advocated for sound recordings, noting that as “sources of identity, they must be considered as valuable factor[s] for empowering communities with knowledge to engage with aspects pertaining to their social and cultural life.”<sup>91</sup> This study makes in depth use of sound recordings, as primary source material to trace the music and musicians who performed at the Market Café. However, the “construction” of a usable archive was not without its challenges.

The Market Café recordings were made from the mixing desk and are in most cases unedited.<sup>92</sup> Like all live recordings, the quality of sound in some tapes clearly depict challenges with acoustics and noises from the audience. However, due to Marks’s respect for the live event, and keeping the recordings unedited, valuable information can be found through listening to the tapes. On some tapes, for example, announcements made during the show or afterwards can be heard and, in some cases, can be illuminating as will be shown in this study.

However, working with the tapes was not straight forward and Marks’s recording techniques left me with various difficulties. For example, Marks never had a consistent system in how he used the leader tape. When analogue tapes are recorded, a non-magnetic plastic or special paper tape called leader tape is spliced at the beginning and at end of the magnetic tape. The leader acts as a protective cover to the tape and it is used to identify the beginning and the end of tape. It can also be used in between the songs of a recording to create dead silences that mark tracks and thus making it easier to identify where each song starts and ends.<sup>93</sup> Leader tapes have been produced in various colours and how the colours should be assigned in the tape remains unstandardised.<sup>94</sup> Manufacturers of various reel to reel tapes provided guidance on the use of colours. For example, in the 1970s Scotch provided a guide by supplying pre-leader tapes with white used at the beginning and yellow at the end. Both BASF and AGFA, independently, tried to standardise leaders by using green for the beginning and red for the ending although their effort was not sustained by users.<sup>95</sup> David Marks used various colour combinations without any consistency. In some tapes white indicated the beginning while in some cases it was used at the end. Similarly, with the green and red combination, the same

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<sup>91</sup> See: UNESCO website: <https://en.unesco.org/content/preserving-our-heritage>

<sup>92</sup> Lambrechts, “Letting the Tape Run,” 15.

<sup>93</sup> <https://www.sweetwater.com/insync/leader-tape/>

<sup>94</sup> The International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA) whose standards the Hidden Years archive has been following does not provide guidelines or standards on how the available leader tape colours should be used. See: <https://www.iasa-web.org/tc04/magnetic-tapes-cleaning-and-carrier-restoration>

<sup>95</sup> See: <https://www.tapeheads.net/threads/does-leader-color-matter-beginning-and-end-of-tape.55278/>

inconsistent use applied. In some instances, a tape will have the same colour for both the beginning and end.

Reel to reel tapes, depending on the speed that the tapes were recorded at can run for anything from 2 minutes to 2 hours. Various brands indicate the running time although that does not confirm the actual time of the recording on the tape. Marks would sometimes start recording from the beginning and leave a long unrecorded space before recording again. These gaps would sometimes last as long as 30 minutes or more. In both these cases the tapes had to be tested first before spooling and digitising them. As an archivist, I had to constantly remind myself to play the tape to the end and avoid the temptation of stopping it because of the long silence because it did not always signal the end.

Listening was the primary tool used during digitising to gather as much metadata as possible for the catalogue and it also proved an invaluable research tool for this study. With tapes not labelled or partly labelled, I listened, and sometimes relistened, to the introduction of the tapes and in between tracks to gather the names of musicians and track names. In some cases no mention was made of the artists and I could deduce from the other recordings I listened to identify who the musicians were. Some of the tape covers did document a track list but the tape case will contain a different tape. In cases where the list corresponds with the tape, there will be scenarios where the tape will not run according to the list as some of the listed tracks were removed, something that I would hear when the splice hits the tape head or when the splice breaks completely.

When the university received the archive in 2013, preliminary accession lists were compiled as part of the inventory. These lists have been used as primary information sources during the process of digitising. Any information gathered from listening and working with the physical tape was added to the spreadsheets including the tape numbers that Marks assigned to the recordings, composer/s, names of performing artist/s, the venue where the performance took place, the contributors (usually names of instrumentalists) and more. New data fields like tape number, digital formats created, date of digitisation and others were added to the existing preliminary lists.

Some of the tapes also show signs of degradation, for example “sticky tape” and “vinegar syndrome.” The tapes are made from a plastic ribbon with a glued in-layer of magnetic

coating. The coating consists of iron oxide or ferric oxide particles.<sup>96</sup> With degradation either from age or storage conditions, the binder that holds the oxide particles breaks. This results in sticky tapes (see image on the left). Moisture absorption also results in mouldy tapes, many with vinegar syndrome (see image on the right). These syndromes cause tapes to produce screeching or squeaking sounds or even shedding the information layer completely.



*Figure 1 & 2: Two photographs showing deteriorating tapes (2019). Photographs taken by Pakama Ncume.*

Since mould is induced by humidity/lack of ventilation, treating it depends on its severity. For less mouldy tapes, where there are no visible signs that moisture has permeated between the layers of the tape, running the tape through the reel machine without touching the heads removes dead mould spores. Another recommended method is baking the tapes with recommended high-precision equipment for exact temperature control or treating it. Due to limited resources to buy baking equipment, the archive has used sealed plastic bags to put the tapes and drop silica gel to absorb the moisture from the tapes (see the method below). A close examination of the tape condition and proper care before playing it has always ensured that sound is not impacted. During use, tapes shed tiny particles of oxide leading to a build-up of deposits. Oxide build-up on the tape guides and heads of a playback machine can damage the machine's tension sensors and ultimately lead to a machine malfunction. Dirty heads also affect

<sup>96</sup> For further information, see: John W.C. van Bogart, "Magnetic Tape Storage and Handling: A Guide for Libraries and Archives." *Commission on Preservation and Access*, Washington, 1995.



the sound quality as the residue builds up on the tape and damages it. The build-up on the machine can be cleaned with a cotton bud and alcohol.



*Figure 3: Photographs of method to reduce moisture (2021). Photograph by Pakama Ncume.*

In addition to these listening challenges, Marks's recordkeeping proves challenging to researcher and archivist alike. While he kept records of his collection in various spreadsheets, working with these lists proved to be very challenging. Not only is information captured in shorthand that is sometimes unclear, but updates to the lists were done at random so finding the final list to work with is difficult.<sup>97</sup>

The political climate of apartheid censors and fears for the Security Police, also impacted Marks's recordkeeping. In order to protect his collection from censors and other threats at the time, he was not consistent on his record management systems, oftentimes mislabelling material or hiding tapes amongst other material.<sup>98</sup> Some tapes subsequently have no metadata while he kept others in differently labelled boxes.

Some errors in numbering have been identified in the lists as they were manually developed and without any electronic system or online application to detect errors like duplicate numbers for different sound records and so on. This meant that even though I worked through most of the reel-to-reel tapes in the collection, some tapes containing material of the Market Café might have been missed.

<sup>97</sup> See also Lizabé Lambrechts. "Ethnography and the Archive: Power and Politics in Five South African Music Archives," (PHD thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 2012), <https://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/71685>.

<sup>98</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, August 24, 2022.

Using the photographs, programmes, newspaper cuttings and notes in the archive, as well as the live music recordings made by David Marks on reel-to-reel and cassette tapes, a list of performers and concerts has been drawn up. This study analysed concerts where live music recordings are available.<sup>99</sup> This methodology relies on the information David Marks noted on the covers of the tapes and in some cases only the year is indicated and not the exact date. In other cases, recordings are marked “Market Café” with no more detail to go on. In these cases, I drew on my experience as the sound archivist who, from digitising the sound recordings of the tapes in the Hidden Years Music Archive, could identify the musicians and the songs based on previously digitised tapes. While as comprehensive a list as possible is drawn from this source, there may be more tapes that are found or that were marked incorrectly.

Due to the amount of concerts Marks recorded at the Market Café, and later at The Laager, it was necessary to make a selection from the 68 tapes to include in the thesis for detailed analysis. This selection is a representational sample of the year and was made to illustrate the broad trends and movements over the year. The concerts not described in detail are listed in an Appendix at the end of this thesis.

Interviews were conducted with David Marks, Mike Dickman, Rod Dry, and Roger Lucey. During the interviews the musician’s personal histories, and experiences of the venue and performances were gathered. Due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, the interviews were telephonic, and where necessary followed up by email correspondence. The interviews will, with the permission of the interviewees, be preserved as part of the Oral History Project of the Hidden Years archive. I was aware that the distance between events and the interview reflections and recollections necessitated a level of caution. As far as possible, corroborating evidence tested the validity of statements made. This was not always possible due to the lack of contemporaneous alternative sources created during the period under investigation.

The Oral History Project consists of interviews conducted with musicians who were active in South Africa during the 1960s – 2000s. These documents now serve, in many cases, as the only documentary sources of the musicians who performed at these events and offer rich contextual information about the events that took place in the Market Theatre Café. There is an unavoidable bias of the primary interviewer presence and construction of the interview process.

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<sup>99</sup> Refer to Methodology section on selection criteria followed.



Another valuable resource that contains information on musicians that performed in the Café is the website maintained by David Marks from 1990 to 2022, after which it was preserved as part of the Hidden Years Music Archive (<https://hiddenyears.co.za/dave-marks-third-ear-website-archive/>). *The Rand Daily Mail*, a Johannesburg newspaper, that covered notable events at the theatre complex, was consulted in attempt to counterbalance the sole perspective displayed on the website. The *RDM* was established in 1902 and shutdown in 1985 because of its anti-apartheid ideological stance. Therefore, it was more amenable to publishing on events that were anti-establishment and is considered a valuable source of “public” information outside of the Café itself. Other secondary sources like books, journal articles and other publications provided context and at times, reflections which could counterbalance the archive.

Lastly, it is important to note that the study takes full cognisance of the bias nature of the material consulted for this thesis. The archival material has been produced and preserved by one individual and similarly the interviews contain life stories created by their narrators. Wherever possible, facts were verified with other sources and newspaper articles.

## **1.6 Chapter Synopsis**

The first chapter introduces the literature pertinent to theatre and music performances of the Market Theatre and Market Café within the context of apartheid South Africa. Through examining the existing literature, the chapter sets out the theoretical points of departure, problem statement and methodology of this study.

The second chapter explores the creation of the Market Theatre Complex and the Market Café within the political and historical context of the time. Since its inception, the Market Theatre has been known as an alternative urban theatre. To provide an understanding of what it meant to be alternative, the chapter looks at the types of works staged, the artists that performed and type of audience/patrons as a way of exploring how these components distinguished it from the state-owned, conservative, and discriminatory urban theatres of the time. The chapter further seeks to understand the Café as an alternative space and how its recordings in the Hidden Years Music Archive contributed to the creation of an archive of alternative popular music.

Chapter Three documents the musicians, performances, and songs at the Market Theatre Café in its opening year, 1976. The purpose of the chapter is to inscribe these musicians into the historical narrative and understand what their contribution was in advancing or undermining the Café's vision of being a non-racial alternative live music performance venue. Locating these within the context of 1976, a period known for political unrest resulting from the Soweto uprising (16-18 June 1976) and its aftermath, an analysis of the sampled concerts, the songs performed, the jokes musicians and poets told, and the audience participation was conducted.

The fourth chapter investigates the musicians, performances, songs, and events that took place in the Market Café from 1977 to 1980. A detailed analysis of the sampled concerts for these years, investigate whether there were any shifts in the realisation of the Café's vision and the extent to which such changes were realised.

The last chapter presents findings from the analysed concerts and presents alternative expressions that have been identified from the Café; from the programming of concerts, the music genres to the themes from songs and poetry performed that did not subscribe to the conventions of the time.

## Chapter 2: “Somebody must know something”: The Opening of the Market Theatre Complex (1975) and Market Theatre Café (1976)

### 2.1 Introduction

Somebody must know something  
The writing is on the wall  
Somebody must know something  
And that someone knows it all...

- Song by Colin Shamley.<sup>1</sup>

On 20 November 1975, the news of the opening of a new theatre at the Johannesburg’s old Indian citrus market made headlines in the newspaper, the *Rand Daily Mail*. It was a realisation of the vision of its founding members, Mannie Manim and Barney Simon, to turn “the vast octagonal citrus market”<sup>2</sup> into a big theatre that would accommodate about 500 people along with a smaller theatre that would seat about 150. The complex would include a restaurant, a coffee bar, an art gallery and a bookshop.<sup>3</sup> Manim realised that there was a demand for theatres that would present the type of works that the Arena Theatre was offering.<sup>4</sup>

The song “Somebody Must Know Something” written and sung by Colin Shamley, epitomises the vision of establishing the Market Theatre, an alternative theatre that would stage performances which would make public people’s lived experiences under the duress of apartheid. As a space that staged some performances that exposed the ills of the apartheid system and commemorated its victims, this song echoed the same sentiments. “Somebody Must Know Something” was dedicated to Dr Robert van Schalkwyk Smith, a National Party MP. Dr Smith and his wife Jeanne-Cora were murdered on 22 November 1977. He was a rising star within the National Party. In 1967, he was appointed as deputy secretary of finance and later served as South Africa’s ambassador to the International Monetary Fund (1971-1975). He was expected to win his seat in the town of Springs and be appointed to a high position within the cabinet, possibly as finance minister. Both him and his wife were repeatedly stabbed and shot. It remains one of the greatest political assassination mysteries in the country. Several theories

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<sup>1</sup> The story behind the song is from interview with David Marks, August 24, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Staff Reporter, “A New Theatre from Old Market. *Rand Daily Mail*, November 20, 1975, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Viv Prince, “Now There’s a Theatre in the Market Place.” *Rand Daily Mail*. May 19, 1976, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Jeanette Keill, “New Experimental Theatre?” *Rand Daily Mail*. November 5, 1973, 20

have circulated about the motive. Some argue that he was about to uncover a major foreign currency scandal that would have blemished the Party image.<sup>5</sup> The Market Theatre provided a platform for artists to perform works that expressed their discontent towards forms of discrimination imposed by the apartheid state through using a variety of artistic forms like plays, songs, poetry readings and others.

This chapter unpacks the establishing of the Market Theatre Complex through its three main driving concepts, namely as an alternative, experimental and collaborative space. It is within this context that the Market Café was envisioned and established as a site for public and counterpublic expression.

## 2.2. The Market Theatre Complex

Manim and Simon had extensive experience with experimental and alternative theatre making. Their vision for the Market was access to cultural expression including plays, music, and artworks, for all. This meant finding an easily accessible space and charging reasonable and affordable entry fees.<sup>6</sup> These noble intentions, however, had to be financially lucrative. This was, after all, a business.

Manim noted in an interview after resigning from the Arena Theatre that he wanted to “establish an alternative theatre unfettered by bureaucracy and ideology.”<sup>7</sup> Pat Schwartz indicates that the Market Theatre was to be a place where new works by South African playwrights could be performed in a “laboratory atmosphere.”<sup>8</sup> The Company was established at the beginning of 1973. It consisted of twelve gender-inclusive founding members namely Barney Simon, Mannie Manim, Aletta Bezuidenhout, Vanessa Cooke, Judith Cornell, David Eppel, Leonnie Hofmeyer, Janice Honeyman, Danny Keogh, Sue Kiel, Lindsay Reardon and John Oakley-Smith.<sup>9</sup> The Company was described as Johannesburg’s most dynamic experimental group.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> James Myburgh, “The Smit murders: Re-examined”, *Politicsweb*, 7 June 2010. <https://www.politicsweb.co.za/news-and-analysis/the-smit-murders-reexamined> (accessed 25 October 2022)

<sup>6</sup> See newspaper articles: Staff Reporter, “Five Resign from Pact”. *Rand Daily Mail*. November 5, 1973, 2 and Syd Duval, “New Gold in Old Market”. *Rand Daily Mail*. October 15, 1976, 8.

<sup>7</sup> Syd Duval, “New Gold in Old Market?” 8.

<sup>8</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 24.

<sup>9</sup> See report [hmap-dm-prog-holy-moses-and-all-that-jazz.pdf](#) found in the Hidden Years archive and Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 19.

<sup>10</sup> Staff Reporter, “A New Theatre from Old Market. *Rand Daily Mail*. November 20, 1975, 5.

Since its inception, the Market Theatre has remained a renowned theatre. Over the past 40 years, it has received both national and international recognition and more than 300 awards.<sup>11</sup> Despite all the changes it has undergone - structurally, administratively and operationally - the theatre claims to have persistently continued to honour its commitment to providing a space for a diverse artistic community, something that can be attributed to the founding principles of the establishment.<sup>12</sup> The annual reports further indicate that apart from successfully opening a non-segregated and inclusive theatre during apartheid, it continues to educate and nurture rising talent. Operationally, it has throughout its four decades of existence, “evolved into a cultural complex for theatre, music, dance and the allied arts.”<sup>13</sup>



*Figure 4: The Market Theatre (no date). Photograph by William Nkosi.*<sup>14</sup>

The Market Theatre was opened on the 21st of June 1976, only five days after one of South Africa’s biggest student demonstration and protest, the Soweto Uprisings. The country was still adjusting to the killings and the volatility brought about by the protest. The uprisings triggered widespread violence throughout South Africa that spread to areas such as Thokoza and Daveyton near Benoni, Natalspruit and Katlehong near Germiston and Vosloorus near Boksburg; and a week later into Atteridgeville, Mabapone and Mamelodi near Pretoria, Ga-Rankuwa in the northwest of Pretoria, to Nelspruit, East Rand, Transvaal, the Orange Free State

<sup>11</sup> See: Market Theatre, “The 2018 – 2019 Market Theatre Foundation Annual Report.”, <https://markettheatre.co.za/>, accessed April 22, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> The Market Theatre annual reports provide details of these changes that have been implemented throughout the years of the theatres’ operations. See: Market Theatre, “The 2018 – 2019 Market Theatre Foundation Annual Report.”, <https://markettheatre.co.za/>, accessed April 22, 2020.

<sup>13</sup> See the Market Theatre website: <https://markettheatre.co.za/>, accessed April 22, 2020.

<sup>14</sup> See: <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/2016-06-12-joburgs-market-theatre-turns-40/>

and Natal. In August, after a short pause, serious unrests broke out among schoolchildren in the Cape Peninsula.<sup>15</sup> As the demonstrations intensified, so too did state repression including additional security legislation, police raids and the detention of activists without trial. As hostile as the situation was, the Market Theatre went ahead and opened its doors after years of planning.<sup>16</sup>

### 2.2.1. The Ambition of the Two Founding Members

Prompted by the ever-present reality of racial segregation in South Africa, Manim and Simon realised that there was a need to open an alternative theatre in South Africa that could host large audiences, in contrast to the sporadic and/or more clandestine establishments in the townships. In *The Market Theatre: 40 Years of Storytelling 1976 – 2016*, Manim reveals that working for PACT was no longer viable because the state-subsidised institutions were “not interested in new South African work in English and certainly not interested in anything that challenged apartheid.”<sup>17</sup> Moreover, Manim “had a real burning passion for all the people of South Africa to be able to see the talent of all the people of South Africa.”<sup>18</sup>

Both Manin and Simon wanted to work with multiracial artists, black actors in particular, and wanted to take their productions to black audiences.<sup>19</sup> In 1973, Manim gathered a group of actors and presented his idea to “establish an alternative theatre unfettered by bureaucracy and ideology,”<sup>20</sup> a space where they could “do real work, work that is pertinent here and now, to South Africa today.”<sup>21</sup> The same year, Manim tendered his resignation at PACT to start the Market Theatre venture in 1974. Other actors such as Sue Kiel, Danny Keogh, Jud Cornell also resigned in order to work with Manim. The fifth member to resign was the artistic director Francois Swartz who wanted to do freelance film and stage directing.<sup>22</sup> Simon’s motivation to work with Manim on the other hand, having worked in a multiracial theatre in Dorkay House,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>15</sup> See detailed account in an article by Archie Mafeje, “Soweto and Its Aftermath.” *Review of African Political Economy* 11 (1978): 17–30.

. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3997962>.

<sup>16</sup> The motive for why the venues opened within this hostile political environment is reflected upon in the next chapter.

<sup>17</sup> See: <https://www.brandsouthafrica.com/people-culture/culture/theatre>.

<sup>18</sup> Syd Duval, “New Gold in Old Market”. *Rand Daily Mail*. October 15, 1976, 8.

<sup>19</sup> Syd Duval, “New Gold in Old Market”. *Rand Daily Mail*. October 15, 1976, 8.

<sup>20</sup> Syd Duval, “New Gold in Old Market”. *Rand Daily Mail*. October 15, 1976, 8.

<sup>21</sup> Jeanette Keill, “New Experimental Theatre?” *Rand Daily Mail*. November 5, 1973, 20.

<sup>22</sup> Staff Reporter, “Five Resign From PACT.” *Rand Daily Mail*. November 5, 1973, 2.

<sup>23</sup> See newspaper article by Syd Duval, “New Gold in Old Market”. *Rand Daily Mail*. October 15, 1976, 8 and journal article by Ed Charlton, “From Liberation to Liberalization: Newtown, the Market Theatre, and

was that they both shared the same vision: “to do strong theatre dealing with the problems of White society.”<sup>24</sup> By exposing whites to the talent of black people and also staging works exposing the hardships of black people at the time, it was an awareness campaign for whites about the realities of what was happening around them.”<sup>25</sup> In reality, they did much more, as will be unpacked in the next two chapters. Armed with a joint vision, they set about searching for an appropriate location.

### 2.2.2. Identifying and Procuring the Space

The Market Theatre is located in downtown Johannesburg, just south of the railway station that bisects the city. It is strategically positioned providing access to a wide cross-section of locals. The idea of using the old marketplace for the theatre was first presented to Manim in October 1972 by Morris Norton of the Johannesburg City Council. The old Indian Fruit Market, “once a thriving market building,” closed in 1974, although the exact details have been contested in the secondary literature.<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, the municipal council issued a tender to lease the building and Manim and Simon applied for a lease with the support of people both inside and outside the city council, most notably people like Selma Browde and Maurice Norton who were officials from the council. However, their initial tender was rejected. Des and Dawn Lindberg (notable theatre makers from Johannesburg) had bid higher but The Market Theatre Foundation finally managed to secure the tender by April 1975.

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Johannesburg's Relics of Meaning”. *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 2005, 17 (6), 831. ISSN 1369-801. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2014.998263>, accessed May 7, 2020.

<sup>24</sup> Syd Duval, “New Gold in Old Market”. *Rand Daily Mail*. October 15, 1976, 8.

<sup>25</sup> Syd Duval, “New Gold in Old Market”. *Rand Daily Mail*. October 15, 1976, 8.

<sup>26</sup> It is uncertain as to when exactly the Indian Fruit Market ceased to function as a marketplace as various literature sources reveal different dates but it remains evident that when The Company took over, the market was disused. See: <https://showme.co.za/events-entertainment/the-market-theatre-newtown-johannesburg/>, accessed April 8, 2020. The Newton Tourism report indicates that in the 1970s the market was relocated to other premises. Schwartz wrote that in 1975, the place was unused and as such the city threatened to demolish it but it was saved by some councilors led by Dr Selma Browde who advocated for preservation and restoration of the structure, see: Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company: The Story of Johannesburg's Market Theatre* (South Africa: AD. Donker, 1988), 13. The South African History Online wrote that the Indian Fruit Market closed down in 1973, after 60 years. See: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/place/market-theatre>, accessed April 9, 2020 while an article by Ed Charlton reveals that the market building closed in 1974. See: Ed Charlton. “From Liberation to Liberalization: Newtown, the Market Theatre, and Johannesburg's Relics of Meaning.” *Interventions: Interventions* 17, no. 6 (2015): 831.



Unlike The Space in Cape Town, which was in a segregated urban area, the Market Theatre opened in a former marketplace that was not racially designated. Zoned as an industrial site, one of the board members of the Market Theatre, J. Brooks Spector anticipated that the Group Areas Act “probably would not apply to what they did on stage.” Carlos Amato states that a sympathetic policeman at the time confirmed that “because the building had been a multiracial workplace for practical reasons, it could remain so.”<sup>27</sup> While these loopholes did not warrant full exemption from the apartheid legislation, it did help foster multi-racial productions.<sup>28</sup> Armed with a venue, discussions unfolded on how to fund the venture.

### 2.2.3. Funding the Venture

As an independent entity, The Market Theatre was not funded by the State. To maintain their autonomy Rolf C. Hemke states that “they deliberately rejected any form of direct state aid”<sup>29</sup> and instead “signed a lease agreement with the City Council of Johannesburg at a price well below the market price.”<sup>30</sup> This rejection was important in order not to have to conform to apartheid legislation and state ideologies. Theatres like the Johannesburg Civic Theatre that was subsidised by the State, remained under its total control. Constructed in 1959, the Civic Theatre was granted initial funding of R100 000, one million rand in today’s value, by the Johannesburg City Council. It was funded because its proponents believed that the theatre was going to serve the interests of the ruling party as noted in a report by J. Brooks Spector.<sup>31</sup> The offer was a political move as it marked the 50th anniversary of the Union of South Africa. The report further reveals that its advocates saw it as a place that was going to function as “a repository of European high culture”<sup>32</sup> hence it secured government aid. In stark contrast, the Market Theatre Foundation was awarded a rental exemption for the first three months after

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<sup>27</sup> Carlos Amato, “Joburg’s Market Theatre Turns 40.” Cape Times, June 12, 2016. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/2016-06-12-joburgs-market-theatre-turns-40/>, accessed October 5, 2019. Further confirmations on status of the area can be found in the works of Wolfgang Schneider and Lebogang L. Nawa (eds.) *Theatre in Transformation: Artistic Processes and Cultural Policy in South Africa*, 10 and Janet Suzman, “Stage Directions in South Africa: Post-Apartheid Theatre.” *Index on Censorship* 43, no. 2 (2014): 158-163.

. doi:10.1177/0306422014534578, (accessed November 20, 2019).

<sup>28</sup> J. Brooks Spector, “Dreams of Rebuilding the Old Market.” In *The Market Theatre: 40 years of Storytelling 1976 – 2016*, written by The Market Theatre Foundation (Johannesburg: DesLink Media, 2016), 52.

<sup>29</sup> See chapter by Rolf C. Hemke, “Prologue: Time to take stock?” in Wolfgang Schneider and Lebogang L. Nawa, (eds.) *Theatre in Transformation: Artistic Processes and Cultural Policy in South Africa*, 18.

<sup>30</sup> Rolf C. Hemke, “Prologue: Time to take stock?” in Wolfgang Schneider *et al*, 18.

<sup>31</sup> J. Brooks Spector, “1962 to 2007: the First 45 years – Johannesburg City Theatres.” *Johannesburg Civic Theatre*, 2007, 5. [www.joburgcitytheatres.com](http://www.joburgcitytheatres.com), accessed July 18, 2020.

<sup>32</sup> J. Brooks Spector, “1962 to 2007: the First 45 years – Johannesburg City Theatres.” *Johannesburg Civic Theatre*, 2007, 5. [www.joburgcitytheatres.com](http://www.joburgcitytheatres.com), accessed July 18, 2020.



which the contractual monthly rental was R800.00 (equivalent to R37 000 today). Schwartz points out that despite the exhilaration of being awarded the tender, raising the money to start the project remained a challenge.<sup>33</sup>

The cost of altering the space was a huge undertaking; structurally, the site was big, old and derelict. Converting the eastern part of the market area into the big theatre<sup>34</sup> had significant financial implications. The founders and members of The Company (the Theatre's residential group), all had to make financial sacrifices. Barney Simon for example, had to sell his house while dedicating his time to the establishment of the theatre.<sup>35</sup> While they sought local support, of the 20 000 potential patrons signed up before starting the project, only 1000 made a financial contribution.<sup>36</sup> It was the involvement of a high-powered businessman, Murray McLeon of Abercom Investments, that offered the solutions needed to start renovating the old market.

The renovations cost between R250 000 to R300 000.<sup>37</sup> In order to raise the capital needed, McLeon proposed that they form a board that he was willing to chair. They invited some of their loyal supporters to become board members, including Ben Trisk, Cyril Fisher (an accountant), PPB Breytenbach (the previous director of PACT) and Raymond Tucker (a lawyer).<sup>38</sup> With the board in place, they embarked on fundraising efforts with donations from as little as fifty cents,<sup>39</sup> to selling theatre seats with the name of the donor. These were sold at R100.00 each (R5000 in today's value) and they offered flexible payment terms.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, as the chairman of the Foundation, Murray McLeon showed his commitment and support towards the project through his substantial donation that saw the completion of the studio space. With the studio completed, Simon was able to stage a version of Anton Chekhov's play, *The Seagull*, in June 1976, thereby raising more funds for the remainder of the project.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 19.

<sup>34</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 79.

<sup>35</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 19.

<sup>36</sup> Syd Duval, "New Gold in Old Market". *Rand Daily Mail*. October 15, 1976, 8.

<sup>37</sup> Mannie Manim, "Getting over the Birth Pains." *Rand Daily Mail*. November 12, 1981, 3.

<sup>38</sup> DesLink Media and The Market Theatre Foundation, "One Night on a: In Lenasia..." *The Market Theatre: 40 Years of Storytelling 1976 – 2016*, (Johannesburg: DesLink Media, 2016), 24.

<sup>39</sup> Viv Prince, "Now There's a Theatre in the Market Place." *Rand Daily Mail*. May 19, 1976, 7.

<sup>40</sup> Sidney Duval, "R180 000 needed." *Rand Daily Mail*. February 8, 1977, 6.

<sup>41</sup> Ed Charlton. "From Liberation to Liberalization: Newtown, the Market Theatre, and Johannesburg's Relics of Meaning." *Interventions* 17, no. 6 (2015): 832. ISSN 1369-801. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2014.998263>, accessed May 13, 2020.

#### 2.2.4. The Restoration of the Old Market

The Market Theatre is located in Newtown, Johannesburg. According to Ed Charlton, from as early as the 1920s, Newtown started to show signs of neglect by the government and severe degradation.<sup>42</sup> He attributes the neglect to the fact that the area was excluded from the “capital investment” implemented in the rest of the city of Johannesburg. It functioned as an industrial place that had no “corporate” and “property” holding elites of the city and thus it was never prioritised in the 20th century.<sup>43</sup> The decline led to the closure of various electrical plants and ultimately the tramway in 1961. Without these facilities, it could no longer function as one of the economic hubs of Johannesburg. The buildings, including the Indian Fruit Market, were left abandoned and suffered from structural deterioration.<sup>44</sup> The state of the building required modifications to restore and convert it to its new purpose.

The Indian Market was housed in an Edwardian, octagonal building completed in 1916. Previously a brickfield site, the city of Johannesburg cleared the area in 1904 to make way for a fruit and vegetable market. The old market was a large building with internal three-pin arches and a gabled front that were shipped from Britain. The structure itself was still sturdy. By retaining some architectural features of the old structure, Jeannette Keill, a reporter for the *Rand Daily Mail* described this as a way to preserve the architecture of the place, which forms part of our cultural heritage.<sup>45</sup> Even though the steel frame structure of the market was going to be repurposed, the space needed significant infrastructural upgrades. Tom McGinn, an Irish builder and his team of 15 was contracted for the job.<sup>46</sup> Obstacles, such as a lack of capital, meant that the theatre had to open before all the structural alterations were completed. Mannie Manim was quoted in the *Rand Daily Mail* as saying that “the weight of the undertaking initially bore down on us...”<sup>47</sup> With large debts incurred, they had to raise money to ensure the completion of the project, and this meant a premature opening of the Complex.

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<sup>42</sup> Ed Charlton. “From Liberation to Liberalization”, 829.

<sup>43</sup> Ed Charlton. “From Liberation to Liberalization”, 827.

<sup>44</sup> Ed Charlton. “From Liberation to Liberalization”, 830.

<sup>45</sup> Jeanette Keill, “Sir Michael: A Patron of The Market.” *Rand Daily Mail*. October 22, 1975.

<sup>46</sup> A more detailed account on the structural modification and the renovation process can be found in Pat Schwartz’ book *The Best of Company: The Story of Johannesburg’s Market Theatre* (South Africa: AD. Donker, 1988), 47-59.

<sup>47</sup> Mannie Manim. “Getting Over the Birth Pains.” *Rand Daily Mail*. November 12, 1981, 3.

### 2.2.5 The Opening of the Theatre Complex

By opening the space again, Manim and Simon were determined to bring back the hustle and bustle that the space was once known for, but in a rather different way. Ismael Mahomed recounts that “when the voices of the traders in the halls of the old Indian Fruit and Vegetable Market in Newton had subsided, the Market Theatre was founded in its place to become one of South Africa’s most iconic art institutions.”<sup>48</sup>

The opening of the Market Theatre Complex received both national and international attention through significant personalities such as renowned British actor, Sir Michael Redgrave who raised international awareness. According to journalist Jeanette Keill,<sup>49</sup> it was the first time that Sir Michael Redgrave had given patronage to a theatre outside of England. He was enticed by the prospect that the Market Theatre was going to be a multi-racial theatre.<sup>50</sup>

The theatre’s first stage performance of 21 June 1976 was a stage version of the highly acclaimed Anton Chekhov play, *The Seagull*. It deals with lost opportunities and the clash between generations. While the play is a conventional romantic story, it depicts what Annette Kramer describes as “character’s struggles with themselves, other characters, and the world.”<sup>51</sup> The play was performed in the smaller theatre studio that was renovated as part of the fundraising initiatives to complete the refurbishment project of the complex itself. Directed by Barney Simon, the cast included Erica Rogers, Vanessa Cooke,<sup>52</sup> Sandra Prinsloo, Bill Brewer, Marius Weyers, Danny Keogh, Lindsay Reardon and Bess Finney. The choice of productions was not accidental and had themes that not only critiqued social conditions but also the place of artists in the country. People could relate to real life struggles, political flaws and scandals.<sup>53</sup> Subsequent plays staged in the Studio or Upstairs Theatre included *The Crucible* (Arthur Miller), *The Bloodknot* (Athol Fugard), *God’s Forgotten* (Pieter Dirk-Uys), *Waiting for Godot* (Samuel Becket) and *Strike Up the Banned* (Pieter Dirk Uys).<sup>54</sup> Clearly these fund-raising initiatives were successful.

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<sup>48</sup> Ismael Mahomed, “The Architecture of our Social Consciousness.” In *The Market Theatre: 40 years of Storytelling 1976 – 2016*, written by The Market Theatre Foundation (Johannesburg: DesLink Media, 2016), 16.

<sup>49</sup> Jeanette Keill, “Sir Michael: A Patron of The Market.” *Rand Daily Mail*. October 22, 1975.

<sup>50</sup> Jeanette Keill, “Sir Michael: A Patron of The Market.” *Rand Daily Mail*. October 22, 1975.

<sup>51</sup> Annette Kramer, “The Seagull.” *Theatre Journal* 45, no. 3 (1993): 387.

<sup>52</sup> Cooke was not only an actress but a member of The Company as well.

<sup>53</sup> Becca Johnson, “A Director’s Approach to Anton Chekov’s *The Seagull*”. MA Thesis, Baylor University. 2010.

<sup>54</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 79

The main theatre opened on 19 October 1976 with a staging of *Marat/Sade*.<sup>55</sup>



Figure 5: The cast from *Marat/Sade* (1976). Hidden Years Music Archive.

Four months after the opening of the Studio, the play *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean Paul Marat*, also known as just *Marat/Sade*<sup>56</sup> was staged. This is a political critique of the wrangling which occurred during the radical phase of the French Revolution (1799-1802).

The play was translated from German in 1964 by Geoffrey Skelton, a British author and translator who specialised in German music and biography writing. It was staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1967 under the directorship of Peter Brook, an English theatre and film director.<sup>57</sup>

The play dramatises the death of the French revolutionary, Jean-Paul Marat, who was murdered in his bath. As a therapeutic exercise, patients were allowed to take part in plays. The cast therefore comprised of “sociopaths”, “schizophrenics”, and “narcoleptics” in “a wild celebration of insanity and a carnival of colour and music.”<sup>58</sup> Described as “theatre of cruelty”<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 79.

<sup>56</sup> [https://www.artlink.co.za/news\\_article.htm?contentID=15794](https://www.artlink.co.za/news_article.htm?contentID=15794).

<sup>57</sup> See Evan M. Torner, “The Cinematic Defeat of Brecht by Artaud in Peter Brook’s *Marat/Sade*.” *EDGE-A Graduate Journal for German and Scandinavian Studies* 1, no.1 (2009): 1-28.

<sup>58</sup> Ruby Cohn, “*Marat/Sade*”: An Education in Theatre.” *Educational Theatre Journal* (1967): 478-485.

John J. White, “History and Cruelty in Peter Weiss’s *Marat/Sade*.” *The Modern Language Review* 63, no.2 (1968): 437-448; Anne Beggs, “Revisiting *Marat/Sade*: Philosophy in the Asylum, Asylum in the Theatre.” *Modern Drama* 56, no. 1 (2013): 60-79.

<sup>59</sup> John J. White, “History and Cruelty in Peter Weiss’s “*Marat Sade*”, 437.

by John White, this historical play portrays societal cruelties and other struggles related to class which emanated from social and political injustices of the French government. The play portrays the brutality and violence perpetrated by the French government, an action that he described as “depriving men of their free will.”<sup>60</sup> The likeness to events unfolding in South Africa at the time was uncanny.

This performance was followed by *The Me Nobody Knows*, on 10 May 1977.

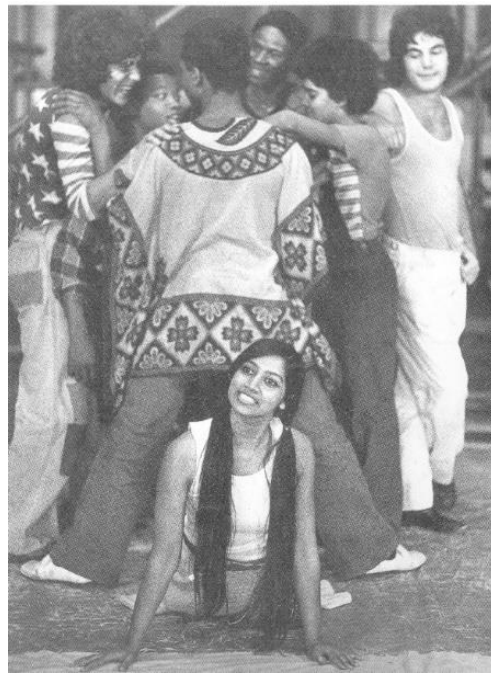


Figure 6: The cast of the *Me Nobody Knows* at the Market Theatre (1977). Hidden Years Music Archive.

The play was a local version of an American musical written by Herb Schapiro, Robert Livingstone, and Stephen Joseph. This version was adapted and directed by Benjy Francis and starred Nomsa Nene, Ruth Masilo, Leonie Hofmeyr, Leslie Mongezi, Barrie Shah, and Jonathan Taylor, amongst others.<sup>61</sup> This production featured the first large-scale racially inclusive cast to appear in the Market Theatre complex. The musical poetically examines the aspirations and fears of multiracial students in New York city public schools.<sup>62</sup> Various stories of eight black and four white children living in low-income areas of New York City are weaved into the production. One such story is about a 13-year-old boy who takes heroin for the first

<sup>60</sup> John J. White, “History and Cruelty in Peter Weiss’s “Marat Sade”, 447.

<sup>61</sup> See: [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/The\\_Me\\_Nobody\\_Knows](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/The_Me_Nobody_Knows).

<sup>62</sup> See: <https://www.concordtheatricals.com/p/531/the-me-nobody-knows>.

time. In one of the songs, “If I Had a Million Dollars,” the “ghetto” children contemplate what they would do with such a large sum of money. Again, the underlying message was not simply one of racial disparity but echoed the gross levels of inequality and social ills that spiralled after the forced removals in South Africa.

The musical attracted a large audience into the complex. But its social critique prompted police intervention. According to Sabine Cessou, the police filed a report claiming that the organisers had contravened some of the racial laws. This included allowing the multi-racial audience to sit randomly in undesignated racial zones as well as allowing different races to share facilities like toilets and dressing rooms, spaces that were meant to be segregated.<sup>63</sup>

Some of the works staged in 1978 in the main theatre include a revival of *Long Day’s Journey into Night*, *Sizwe Banzi is Dead*, starring John Kani and Winston Ntshona, Woody Allen’s *Play it Again*, and Athol Fugard’s *A Lesson from Aloes* in November 1978.<sup>64</sup> What is witnessed here is that the visionaries for the Complex, after much planning and investment, were able to establish and open a multicultural centre. They carefully staged productions which could point to political and social problems in the country by cleverly relying on external productions which spoke to these themes. It is worth considering how the Complex is situated amongst similar Theatres across the country as well as how it is positioned within the theoretical discussion on “alternative” space.

### 2.3. The Alternative Theatre Scene of the 1970s

As early as the 1960s, urban theatre activities in South Africa took place in either state-funded theatre spaces or so-called alternative spaces. The 1970s saw an emergence of independent anti-apartheid spaces like The Workshop Theatre (1971) in Johannesburg, The Space Theatre (1972) in Cape Town, and The People’s Experimental Theatre (1973) in Johannesburg.<sup>65</sup> Some focused on staging either commercial or popular entertainment while others, on “protest” or “struggle”

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<sup>63</sup> Sabine Cessou, “The Market Theatre Isn’t What It Used to Be.” *Africultures*, <http://africultures.com/the-market-theatre-isnt-what-it-used-to-be-5529>. Accessed July 18, 2020.

<sup>64</sup> See more works on: [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Market\\_Theatre](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Market_Theatre).

<sup>65</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, “The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends.” *Arndt and Berndt*, 2007, [http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch\\_major Trends\\_2007.pdf](http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch_major Trends_2007.pdf). Accessed June 28, 2018.



theatre.<sup>66</sup> The former, despite being performed in an alternative space, and perhaps with good intentions, have been heavily criticised.

The Windmill Theatre, for example, was an experimental theatre built in 1955 and located in Bree Street, Johannesburg. Originally a shop and basement, the converted theatre could accommodate 300 people. This theatre run by Margaret Inglis and Ruth Oppenheim, was known for staging off-Broadway type of productions at the time like Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of An Author* in April 1955. They staged Albert Camus' *Caligula* and Christopher Isherwood's *I Am a Camera*.<sup>67</sup> The musical *Ipi Tombi* (Where is the girl?) also ran in this theatre for two years from 1974.<sup>68</sup> *Ipi Ntombi*, written and directed by South African Bertha Egnos, had an all "black" cast. It tells a story of a young man leaving his home to work in the mines of Johannesburg and depicts the exploitative working conditions in the mines.<sup>69</sup> Following its premiere in South Africa in 1974, it played seasons in London's West End at Her Majesty's Theatre in late 1975,<sup>70</sup> where it was nominated for an Olivier Award as best new musical and had a short Broadway run at the Harkness Theatre<sup>71</sup> from 12 January to 13 February 1977.<sup>72</sup> It enjoyed major success in South Africa and Nigeria, and toured Europe, the United States, Canada and Australia.

Patrick J. Ebewo reveals that black South Africans condemned and dismissed the musical for portraying a false impression of life in South Africa,<sup>73</sup> and it was thus perceived as promoting

<sup>66</sup> See: Johann van Heerden. "Theatre in a New Democracy: Some Major Trends in South African Theatre from 1994 to 2003." PHD thesis, 2008, 20.

<sup>67</sup> See: [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Windmill\\_Theatre](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Windmill_Theatre)

<sup>68</sup> See article that traces theatres in Johannesburg from as early as 1912 titled "Johannesburg 1912 – Suburb by Suburb Research." <https://johannesburg1912.wordpress.com/2013/07/29/theatres-in-early-johannesburg/>, accessed May 25, 2020.

<sup>69</sup> Tayo Jolaosho, "Anti-apartheid Freedom Songs Then and Now." *Smithsonian Folkways Magazine*, 2014.

<sup>70</sup> Her Majesty's Theatre was devoted to Italian opera and served the social elites. The theatre is thought to be the only theatre in the United Kingdom whose name changed with the sex of the British monarch, for example it was first named Queen's Theatre in honour of Queen Anne. Upon the Queen's death in 1714, it was renamed the King's Theatre, honouring George I who ascended the throne. It was later renamed to Her Majesty's Theatre, Italian Opera House in 1837 upon Queen Victoria's accession to the throne. See: <https://lwtheatres.co.uk/theatres/her-majestys/about-her-majestys-theatre/> and <http://www.arthurlloyd.co.uk/HerMajestysTheatre.htm>.

<sup>71</sup> This theatre was built to offer popular entertainment to the new residents of upper Broadway. From the early 1930s to 1971, it was used for movies and, later, TV (NBC and ABC). *Ipi Tombi* ran in the theatre from 12 January until 13 February 1977. Later the same year, the theatre was razed to the ground. See: <https://www.ibdb.com/theatre/harkness-theatre-1412>

<sup>72</sup> See Bob Eveleigh, "Westerling High School to revive 'Ipi Tombi'." *Herald Live*, July 25, 2016. <https://www.heraldlive.co.za/lifestyle/leisure/2016-07-25-westerling-high-school-to-revive-ipi-tombi/> and <https://www.ibdb.com/theatre/harkness-theatre-1412>, accessed April 4, 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Patrick J. Ebewo, *Explorations in Southern African Drama, Theatre and Performance*. (United Kingdom: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), 1.

the apartheid government's propaganda of depicting South Africa as a happy country.<sup>74</sup> Keyan G. Tomaselli's critique of the musical was that it was encouraged by white businesses merely for the lucrative income it earned from marketing of records and tapes and sophisticated advertising campaigns. In his view, the musical performed an ideological function of reinforcing the myths held by the dominant white group and transmitting to white audiences the ruling class's own image of the black group.<sup>75</sup>

The establishment of the Market Theatre Complex should be understood in the context of similar establishments of the time. The Workshop Theatre was founded in March 1971 by the South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR) in Johannesburg. Robert McLaren (who is also known as Mshengu or Kavanagh) was approached by SAIRR to run the theatre. Despite the prevailing racial barriers, the theatre's aim was mainly focused on providing theatre access to especially "disadvantaged" groups and to provide performance space for black performers.<sup>76</sup> The theatre started as a training workshop. Although the facility grew into a professional space, it remained an experimental theatre aimed at engaging with, and exposing of, prevalent South African social and political atrocities at the time.<sup>77</sup> Myles Holloway argues that Workshop '71 (as it was also called), was the forerunner in the field of local alternative and collaborative theatre.<sup>78</sup> It "pioneered the re-instatement of racially mixed theatre audiences and casts banned since the early 1960s."<sup>79</sup> This inclusiveness helped to introduce artists like John Kani, Winston Ntshona and others to the theatre industry.<sup>80</sup>

The Workshop Theatre "provided many skills and opened up theatre to the masses whilst offering new democratic and inclusive methods of theatre production."<sup>81</sup> Local language productions in *IsiZulu*, *IsiXhosa*, and *SeSotho* entered the "western" spaces. This was an

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<sup>74</sup> Pedzisai Maedza, "Sarafina! The Children's Revolution from Soweto to Broadway." *South African Theatre Journal* 32, no. 3 (2019): 244. See works by Nomazengele A. Mangaliso, "Cultural Boycotts and Political Change." *How Sanctions Work* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999) and Yael Farber, *Theatre as Witness* (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017).

<sup>75</sup> Keyan G. Tomaselli, "Black South African Theatre: Text and Context." *English in Africa* 8, no. 1 (1981): 53.

<sup>76</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, "The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends." *Arndt and Berndt*, 2007. [http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch\\_majortrends\\_2007.pdf](http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch_majortrends_2007.pdf) (accessed May 04, 2020).

<sup>77</sup> See: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/workshop-71>.

<sup>78</sup> Myles Holloway, "Creative Co-operation: a Critical Survey of Workshop Theatre in South Africa." *South African Theatre Journal* 7, no. 1 (1993): 18. DOI: 10.1080/10137548.1993.9688075.

<sup>79</sup> Geoffrey Davis and Anne Fuchs, *Theatre and Change in South Africa* (Australia: Harwood Academic, 2006), 30.

<sup>80</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, "The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends." *Arndt and Berndt*, 2007, [http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch\\_majortrends\\_2007.pdf](http://wiki.lib.sun.ac.za/images/8/8c/Hauptfleisch_majortrends_2007.pdf) (accessed May 04, 2020).

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/workshop-71>.



important intervention. Various authors have traced how censorship was used as a legal instrument for control and providing cultural tutelage for society. Language, as a marker of social identity, was used to determine power and status. The mixing of languages was frowned upon hence the establishment of different language stations by the state run South African Broadcasting Cooperation.<sup>82</sup> Productions in vernacular languages justifiably challenged this hegemony.

Like the Market Theatre, productions also depicted “real life issues” and encounters as experienced by the black people of South Africa at the time. The first play performed at Workshop ’71 was *Crossroads* (1972), which Kavanagh himself adapted from *Everyman* (author unknown).<sup>83</sup> It depicts the social challenges faced by black people, such as crime, poverty and gangsterism. The plot is set in White City Jabavu, one of the poorest areas of Soweto, Johannesburg. Based on true events, it portrays the life of the main character, Lefty Mthembu, and his gang, The Spoilers, who claimed responsibility for causing anarchy in Alexandra Township during the 1970s.<sup>84</sup> Much like the Market Complex, Workshop ’71 was also self-funded and this eventually led to their closure after six years of operation.<sup>85</sup>

One year after Workshop ’71 opened, Brian Astbury, his wife, Yvonne Bryceland and Athol Fugard opened The Space in Cape Town as a theatre that would cater for multiracial performers and audiences. The Space, opened in March 1972, and it soon became an important initiative towards locally produced oppositional and experimental theatre.<sup>86</sup> Hauptfleisch asserts that The Space became “something akin to a clearinghouse for all the pent-up frustration and anger in the country, as well as a training ground for some of the most influential performers, directors and later playwrights.”<sup>87</sup> The very first staged production on 28 May 1972 was a play by Athol Fugard entitled *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act*. The play is a love story between a coloured man and a white woman who secretly meet in the library where the woman works. The two were caught on camera making love by a neighbour and were reported to the

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<sup>82</sup> See the works of Drewett and Martin Cloonan, *Popular Music Censorship in Africa* (England: Ashgate, 2006); Michael Drewett, “Satirical Opposition in Popular Music Within Apartheid and Post-Apartheid South Africa.” *Society in Transition* 33, no. 1 (2002): 80-95.; and Philemon T. Wakashe, “Pula’: An Example of Black Protest Theatre in South Africa.” *The Drama Review*, 1986, 30, 4, 36–47. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1145780>.

<sup>83</sup> See: <https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Crossroads>, accessed July 23, 2020.

<sup>84</sup> Myles, Holloway, “Creative Co-operation: a Critical Survey of Workshop Theatre in South Africa.” *South African Theatre Journal* 7, no. 1 (1993):18. DOI: 10.1080/10137548.1993.9688075.

<sup>85</sup> See: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/workshop-71>.

<sup>86</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, “The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends,” 15.

<sup>87</sup> Temple Hauptfleisch, “The Shaping of South African Theatre: An Overview of Major Trends,” 15.

police and eventually arrested under the *Immorality Act*. In 1972, when relationships across racial lines were deemed a criminal offence and forbidden by law under the *Immorality Amendment Act* of 1950 and The *Sexual Offences (Immorality) Act* of 1957, Fugard wrote this play in defiance of the apartheid legislation.

Such undertakings were subject to scrutiny and the political pressures of the time. Robyn Cohen reveals that Astbury established The Space Club, cleverly negotiating prohibitive legislation by making the theatre a private club.<sup>88</sup> It quickly became a home to artists like John Kani,<sup>89</sup> Athol Fugard,<sup>90</sup> Winston Ntshona,<sup>91</sup> Fatima Dike,<sup>92</sup> Thoko Ntshinga,<sup>93</sup> Pieter-Dirk Uys<sup>94</sup> and many

<sup>88</sup> Robyn Cohen, "Tribute: Brian Astbury – Founder of South Africa's Iconic Space Theatre." *Cape Robyn*, March 9, 2020. <https://thecaperobyn.co.za/tribute-brian-astbury-founder-of-south-africas-iconic-space-theatre/>, accessed March 9, 2020.

<sup>89</sup> John Kani is a renowned actor, director, playwright and theatre administrator. One of his legacies was co-founding the Market Theatre Laboratory with Barney Simon which gave young actors a firm grounding in theatre training. His collaboration with Winston Ntshona and Athol Fugard in the plays *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (1972) and *The Island* (1973) won him a Tony Award for Best Actor from New York in 1975. His other awards include an Obie award (2003) from America, the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver in 2005. See: <https://markettheatre.co.za/the-john-kani-theatre/>.

<sup>90</sup> As a South African director, actor, and writer, Athol Fugard is best known for his works that confronted the racial segregation of apartheid. With more than thirty plays, some of his famous works include *The Cell* (1956), *No-Good Friday* (1958), *Nongogo* (1959), *Boesman and Lena* (1969), *Orestes* (1971) *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act* (1972), *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (1972), and many more. His career boasts a number of local and international accolades. For further biographical details see: [tps://profiletheatre.org/12-13/about-fugard/](https://profiletheatre.org/12-13/about-fugard/) and [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Athol\\_Fugard](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Athol_Fugard)

<sup>91</sup> Winston Ntshona was an actor, director and playwright. His first "real" theatre experience was *The Terrorists* at The Space in the 1970s, where he later also performed in *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*. His contribution in theatre won him both national and international recognition as a best actor for *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *The Island*, a Naledi Lifetime Achiever Award in February 2005 and The Order of Ikhamanga in Silver for "His excellent contribution to theatre and the arts scene in South Africa" on 27 April 2010. See: [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Winston\\_Ntshona](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Winston_Ntshona) and <https://www.sahistory.org.za/place/space-theatre>.

<sup>92</sup> Fatima Dike is an actress, stage manager, storyteller and playwright. In 1972, she worked as an assistant stage manager and later stage manager at The Space Theatre in Cape Town. One of the plays she wrote, *The Sacrifice of Kreli* was staged at The Market Theatre in 1976. Her contribution in theatre has won her a Life-Long Achievement Award (2009) from the Black Theatre Festival in North Carolina and a local Naledi's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014. See: [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Fatima\\_Dike](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Fatima_Dike) and Stephen Gray, "The Theatre of Fatima Dike." *The English Academy Review* 2, no. 1 (1984): 55-60.

<sup>93</sup> Thokozile Ntshinga is a well-known actress, director, translator, community theatre facilitator and arts activist. She started acting at the Space Theatre in the 1970s in plays like *A Flea in her Ear*, *Four Twins*, *The Incredible Vanishing*, *Nongogo*, *Patty Hearst*, *Rape – A Revue* and *The Sacrifice of Kreli*. She also founded and directed Nants'ingqayi Arts Development Association, a community development project, based in Langa, Cape Town. One of accolades include The Golden Horn Award for Lifetime Achievement that she received in 2018 from The South African Film and Television Awards (SAFTA). See: [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Thokozile\\_Ntshinga](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Thokozile_Ntshinga) and <https://www.jetclub.co.za/2021/04/thoko-ntshinga-life-of-giving.html>.

<sup>94</sup> Pieter-Dirk Uys is a South African actor, director, dramatist, impersonator, comedian, political satirist and author. He started his career as a freelance playwright, actor and stage director in Cape Town in the 1970s. His early plays, like *Popcorn* (1973), *Selle Ou Storie* (1974), *Pity About People* (1974), *God's Forgotten* (1975) and *Karnaval* (1975) were all premiered at the Space Theatre in Cape Town. He is well-known in for the character Evita Bezuidenhout (also known as Tannie Evita), a white Afrikaner socialite and political activist, which he created and plays himself on stage, television and film. He has won various local and international awards for his works with over 20 plays and over 30 revues. See: [https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Pieter-Dirk\\_Uys](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Pieter-Dirk_Uys); <https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/pieter-dirk-uys>.

more.<sup>95</sup> It was in The Space Theatre that multiracial collaborative productions like *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (15 October 15th 1972) and *The Island* (July 1973), and works written by John Kani, Athol Fugard and Winston Ntshona, were staged. In 1979, after running The Space for eight years, it closed its doors due to long-term financial challenges and declining audiences.<sup>96</sup>

The Workshop '71 and The Space paved the way for the establishment of The Market Theatre Complex, an alternative theatre still running today. There are many similarities between these various alternative theatres. They were not state funded and were thus subject to their own income-generating strategies. While the Market Theatre Complex continues to exist, one of its defining, and arguable most impactful sub-sections, The Market Theatre Café had an even shorter lifespan because of financial difficulties.

#### **2.4. The Vision of the Market Theatre Café**

The Market Theatre Café (also known as the Market Café) is described by Schwartz as a “minute, eccentric and airless entertainment venue” within the Market Theatre complex.<sup>97</sup> As a second entertainment venue to open after The Studio, Mannie Manim and Barney Simon collaborated with David Marks who ran it. Together with his wife, Frances Marks, they officially opened on the first of August 1976 with a performance by Alan Kwela and Colin Shamley.<sup>98</sup> Later Marks added a small recording studio to the venue under the label of Third Ear Music, a small independent record company run by Marks. Within the Café, David and Frances did everything themselves: from building the stage, making the curtains to setting up the sound and running the kitchen.

By 1978, quoting Mannie Manim, “financial problems killed the Café”, “for some reason [...] it all faded.”<sup>99</sup> Two years after its establishment, “Marks was told the venture was not carrying its weight financially. The Market Café was shut down on 17 July 1978. It was to be replaced by an entirely different though equally eccentric and creative place.”<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Robert Greig, “Tribute to Brian Astbury who Co-founded the First Non-racial Theatre in SA.” March 13, 2020. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2020-03-13-tribute-to-brian-astbury-who-co-founded-the-first-non-racial-theatre-in-sa/>, accessed June 11, 2020.

<sup>96</sup> See: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/place/space-theatre>

<sup>97</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 83.

<sup>98</sup> Details of the concert will be provided in Chapter 3.

<sup>99</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 89.

<sup>100</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 89.

When Pieter-Dirk Uys took over the Market Theatre café in 1978, his intention was to create a café-theatre named The Laager. The focus therefore changed from using the venue as a music space into an experimental and performance space for plays. Under Uys's direction, the venue continued to run in the same "do-it-yourself" manner. Schwartz notes that The Laager was a space created by and for the people. "It was the most exciting thing, the birth of this little baby theatre."<sup>101</sup> Although the club kept on going as The Laager, certain practices and concepts at The Laager that were established and nurtured under Marks' tenure, persisted and Marks continued to host and record shows in the venue until he left for Durban in 1980.

It is unclear when The Laager closed down. Pieter-Dirk Uys, in his book *Between the Devil and the Deep: A Memoir of Acting and Reacting* (2005), only mentions that they too ran into financial difficulties, and he left for London within a few days of the Royal Wedding in 1981. On his return, the political climate was so intense that he pursued other interests.<sup>102</sup>

The Market Theatre Café operated during a coffee culture boom in Hillbrow and Newtown, Johannesburg (roughly between the mid-1960s to the late 1980s). Pat Schwartz notes that when the Market Theatre Café opened, the city of Johannesburg was accustomed to American style clubs and when "it thought club it thought elegant nightclubs and the brash American – style discotheques which abounded at the time."<sup>103</sup> During the 1970s and 1980s, a number of coffee shops and small music clubs in Hillbrow like The Troubadour, L'Chaim, Chelsea, and the Market Theatre Café were popular places to listen to live music and socialise. Chris Marais, a photojournalist, wrote about Hillbrow of the late 1970s and 80s as:

[...] the most cosmopolitan piece of real estate in South Africa. You had your excellent Hillbrow Records, your Mi-Vami shwarma place, Estoril Books, your globe-trotting tattoo artist down in the basement shopping area on Pretoria Street and your Chelsea Hotel, where newcomer musicians like David Kramer and Roger Lucey used to launch their latest songs. You had folk clubs and late-night hangouts like L'Chaim on Kotze [street].<sup>104</sup>

A number of these clubs were either established or managed by David Marks.<sup>105</sup> Marks spent a year in America (1969) which predisposed him to the culture of coffee clubs. Upon his return to South Africa, Marks was determined to establish similar public environments for listening to

<sup>101</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 89.

<sup>102</sup> For more detailed account on this see: Pieter-Dirk Uys, *Between the Devil and the Deep: A Memoir of Acting and Reacting*. (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2005), 87.

<sup>103</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 88-89.

<sup>104</sup> Chris Marais, "The Journey Man' Extracts – We Remember Hillbrow," *SA People*, June 20, 2015, <https://www.sapeople.com/2015/06/20/the-journey-man-extracts-we-remember-hillbrow-south-africa/> (accessed June 27, 2018).

<sup>105</sup> Oral history project, interview David Marks with Lizabé Lambrechts, 7 September 2018.

original/local South African music.<sup>106</sup> While various authors have engaged with the Market Theatre, little attention is paid to the music performed at the Market Theatre Café.<sup>107</sup>

In one of the most informative historical works on the Market Theatre, Pat Schwartz fleetingly writes about the establishment and running of the Market Theatre, the plays and various performances that were staged, as well as the Market Theatre Café.<sup>108</sup> Schwartz describes the Café as a popular alternative space that “epitomised much of what the Market complex was striving to be.”<sup>109</sup> In spite of this strong statement, the book does not move beyond briefly noting Marks’s vision and plans for the venue and mentioning the names of a few musicians who performed there. Very little time is spent on exploring the management or running of the Café or engaging with either the music productions or music that was staged at the venue, or the public who attended these shows. However, in the five pages dedicated to the Market Theatre Café, she does indicate the importance of the venue. It was a vibrant and innovative space for music making and performance in the complex. Importantly, she notes, “South Africa’s audio boom had its origins in The Market. It provided a central point where people involved with sound could come and test equipment, experiment with miking systems.”<sup>110</sup>

In aligning itself with the vision of the complex, the Café also shared the ambitions of being a space to discover and advance both new and established talent. Schwartz notes that “Marks saw the Café as a nursery in which the bud of a truly South African music could be nurtured” and where the “audience could hear musicians before they hit the headlines.”<sup>111</sup> However, due to the isolation of South African musicians from the American and European mainstream as a result of the cultural boycott and the censorship practices of the South African Broadcasting Corporation,<sup>112</sup> Marks sought to expose musicians to international trends. For example, four television screens were mounted in the venue that screened music videos. Marks notes that here

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<sup>106</sup> Musicians who were active on the coffee club circuit performed regularly at these venues and the artists who performed at the Market Theatre Café for example also performed at other coffee clubs in Hillbrow.

<sup>107</sup> See: Rolf Solberg, *Alternative Theatre in South Africa: Talks with Prime Movers Since the 1970s*. (Pietermaritzburg: Haded Books, 1999); Temple Hauptfleisch, *Theatre and Society in South Africa: Some Reflections in a Fractured Mirror*. (Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik, 1997); Geoffrey V. Davis and Anne Fuchs (eds.), *Theatre and Change in South Africa*. (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1996) and Robert Kavanagh, *Theatre and the Cultural Struggle in South Africa*. (London: Zed Books, 1985).

<sup>108</sup> The book *Playing the Market - The Market Theatre, Johannesburg, 1976-1986* by Anne Fuchs also does not go beyond the history of the Market Theatre complex and the plays that were staged in the main hall. See Anne Fuchs, *Playing the Market: The Market Theatre, Johannesburg 1976-1986*. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002).

<sup>109</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

<sup>110</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 86.

<sup>111</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 87.

<sup>112</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 87.

“late night audiences, usually comprising actors, could see the work of David Bowie, Bob Marley, Bob Dylan and so on.” This was “almost totally unknown in South Africa,” where television only arrived in 1976.<sup>113</sup> Schwartz however fails to engage with the fact that the Café also attracted international artists like Rod McKuen, George Hamilton IV, Mungo Jerry, and others, beyond mentioning their names. These musicians performed in South Africa despite the cultural boycott.

This boycott stemmed from a resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1968, whereby “member states and organisations were asked to suspend all cultural, educational and sporting ties with the racist regime.”<sup>114</sup> In 1983, the United Nations General Assembly started publishing a list naming international musicians who performed in South Africa. Some of the listed musicians included Brook Benton, Candi Staton, Percy Sledge, Rod Steward, Phil Ochs, Derek Brimstone, Rod McKuen, Spike Milligan, and many more.<sup>115</sup> Various scholars have engaged with the musicians who came to perform in South Africa after the publication of the list, but little has been written about the musicians who came to perform in South Africa before the publication of this list.<sup>116</sup>

Schwartz further mentions that Marks wanted to “put on shows rather than simply have people get up and sing,”<sup>117</sup> pointing towards the curation of the events that took place at the Café. In addition, Schwartz notes that there was a recording studio at the Café,<sup>118</sup> and Marks noted in an interview with Lambrechts that he also established the Market Theatre label during this time to release the music he was recording at the Café.<sup>119</sup> However, no mention is made of the musicians who were recorded on this label, where their music was released, or how this played into Marks’s vision of the Café as a place that “nurtured” new talent. Schwartz does note that “there was an idealism, an energy in the Café that made innovation almost inevitable” and

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<sup>113</sup> David Marks, <http://www.3rdear.com/hyarchive/hyarchive/markettheater2.html> (accessed July 10, 2018).

<sup>114</sup> Hein Willemsse, “Censorship or Strategy?” *In The Purple Shall Govern: a South African A to Z of Nonviolent Action*, edited by Dene Smuts and Shauna Westcott, (South Africa: Oxford University Press, 1991), 24.

<sup>115</sup> Ashrudeen Wagge, “It’s Just a Matter of Time: African American Musicians and the Cultural Boycott in South Africa, 1968-1983.” Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 2020,9.

<sup>116</sup> See research papers by S. Stevens, “Boycotts and Sanctions against South Africa: An International History, 1946-1970,” PhD thesis, Columbia University, 2016 and M. Drewett, “An Analysis of the Censorship of Popular Music within the Context of Cultural Struggle in South Africa during the 1980s.” (PhD thesis, Rhodes University, South Africa), 2004.

<sup>117</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

<sup>118</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

<sup>119</sup> Oral history project, interview David Marks with Lizabé Lambrechts, 7 September 2018.



shows grew out of ideas circulated at the Café.<sup>120</sup> Marks's intention was to stage and record shows of original South African music.<sup>121</sup>

## 2.5. Conclusion

Theoretically, “alternative” theatres in South Africa have largely been defined in terms of their ability to adequately advertise or commercialise marginalised artists or serve as a protest space. The establishment and workings of the Market Theatre Complex show how curators of performances managed in either discreet or sometimes outright ways to defy the State. These ranged from classic productions which offered a political or social critique being imported to South Africa, allowing audiences to draw parallels to their own lived conditions, such as the works of Chekov, or they served to educate audiences on the lived experiences of the vast majority of people, living in inhospitable environments. These productions served two purposes, either public education or as a means to outwardly criticise the apartheid state. The more subtle approaches attracted less State intervention.

There is, however, a shared experience amongst alternative theatres such as the Workshop, the Space and the Market Theatre Complex. What the last section of this chapter points to, is the way in which the Market Theatre Complex becomes quite unique. With the opening of the Café, this marks not only the continued vision of practitioners wanting to open up artistic spaces to all, but one also sees that there is a sharing of space between international and local artists. There is an element of cross-cultural fertilisation. More importantly, David Marks establishes an alternative recording studio which Schwartz refers to as “South Africa's audio boom.”<sup>122</sup>

The overarching categorisation of these spaces as alternative, can only fully be appreciated through a deeper analysis of what transpired in these spaces. While the Café is clearly of some significance, existing literature has paid scant attention to it. As such, the next chapter reflects on what unfolded and how this reflects the idea of the “alternative”.

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<sup>120</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

<sup>121</sup> See: Lambrechts, “Letting the Tape Run”.

<sup>122</sup> Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 86.

## Chapter 3: “Beautiful strangers over the rainbow”: Performances at the Market Theatre Café, 1976

While apartheid ideology stressed the separateness and incompatibility of different South African cultures, musically or otherwise, musicians challenged and undermined this premise, first in subtle ways and then in an explicit, direct manner – Anne Schumann, 2008.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.1. Introduction

The Market Café hosted a wide range of artists such as poets and musicians. The vast majority were musicians. The involvement of musicians in the fight against apartheid is well-documented.<sup>2</sup> These musicians were mostly outspoken individuals and many of them such as Hugh Masekela, Lefifi Tladi, and Miriam Makeba went into exile. For the musicians who stayed, various live music venues offered conventional performance spaces.<sup>3</sup> However, venues where less mainstream and political performances could be staged, were not readily available. The Market Café was one of a handful of live music venues in Johannesburg, along with Chelsea and Le Chaim in Hillbrow and Mangles in Braamfontein, that offered a platform for local and international musicians, English and Afrikaans singer-songwriters, folk musicians, township jazz groups, rockers, jazz musicians and upcoming musicians from the mid-70s to perform.<sup>4</sup>

As discussed in Chapter Two, the Café was set-up outside of the apartheid government’s regulation of public spaces based on race, gender, and class, instead it aligned with the multi-racial vision of the complex and its managers.<sup>5</sup> This multi-racial vision was made possible

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<sup>1</sup> Anne Schumann, “The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance Against Apartheid in South Africa,” *Stichproben* 8, no. 14 (2008): 20. [https://stichproben.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/p\\_stichproben/Artikel/Nummer14/Nr14\\_Schumann.pdf](https://stichproben.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/p_stichproben/Artikel/Nummer14/Nr14_Schumann.pdf), accessed February 28, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> See for example the works of Christopher Ballantine, Ray Pratt, Muff Anderson, Ingrid Byerly, Anne Schumann, Michela E. Vershbow.

<sup>3</sup> See for example Roxy Rhythm Bar in Melville, Johannesburg – a venue catering to white rock fans, and Fountain Lounge at Tollman Towers Hotel in Kerk Street and the Copper Lounge at Moulin Rouge Hotel in Claim Street. Christopher Ballantine, “Re-Thinking ‘Whiteness’? Identity, Change and ‘White’ Popular Music in Post-Apartheid South Africa.” *Popular Music* 23, no. 2 (2004): 111. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3877483>. <http://johannesburg1912.com/2015/09/26/hillbrows-revolving-restaurant-and-disco/>

<sup>4</sup> Many of these venues were either set-up or managed from time to time by David Marks before he became involved at the Market Café. See: Lizabé Lambrechts and Schalk Merwe. “Ghosts of the Popular: The Hidden Years Music Archive and the Interstices of South African Popular Music History.” *The Journal of Popular Culture* 53, no. 6 (2020): 1316-1334.

<sup>5</sup> The founders took advantage of the fact that the former Indian Fruit Market was not only designated for whites only. See more detail in Chapter 2.



because the space was located on an industrial site in a non-racially zoned area (see chapter two). It had to comply with state sanctions and legislation,<sup>6</sup> but the Complex, including the Café, managed to present works and concerts that did not ascribe to the apartheid rules and regulations. The artists and patrons who visited the Café therefore gained some exposure to music and people that they might not otherwise have encountered.

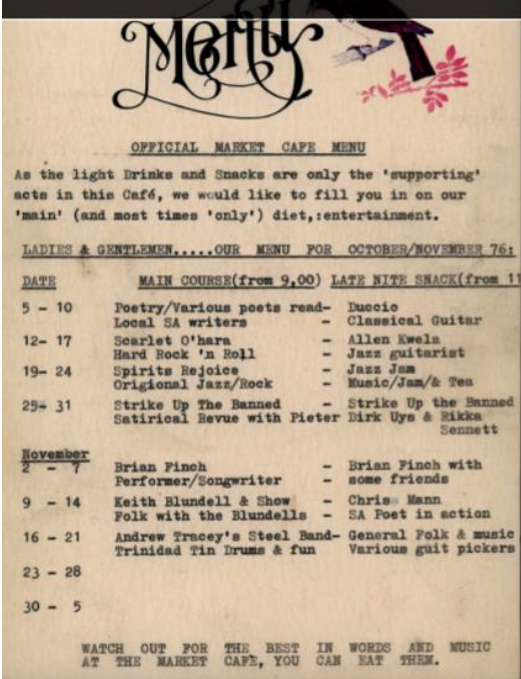
This chapter focuses on the artists who performed in the Market Theatre Café in its opening year, 1976, with the following chapter exploring the last two years, 1977-1978. The purpose of these two chapters is to locate the artists who performed at this venue historically, and to understand what their contribution was to develop or undermine the prerogative of the Café as a non-racial alternative live music performance venue. The focus is on the performances, the songs performed, the jokes musicians and poets told and the audience participation.

The analysis of the musicians and the performances has been guided by the available primary sources held at the Hidden Years archive. Using the photographs, programmes, newspaper cuttings and notes in the archive, as well as the live music recordings made by David Marks on reel-to-reel and cassette tapes, a list of performers and concerts has been drawn up, and the study engages in depth with concerts where live music recordings are available for analysis.<sup>7</sup> This methodology relies on the information David Marks noted on the covers of the tapes and in some cases only the year is indicated and not the exact date. In other cases, recordings are marked “Market Café” with no more detail to go on. In these cases, I drew on my experience as the sound archivist who, from digitising the sound recordings of the tapes in the Hidden Years Music Archive, could identify the musicians and the songs based on previously digitised tapes. While as comprehensive a list as possible is drawn from this source, there may be more tapes that are found or that were marked incorrectly. For more detail about this, please refer to Chapter 1. Additional information was gathered during interviews with David Marks, who managed the Café, Mike Dickman who performed the opening ritual,<sup>8</sup> Roger Lucey and Rod Dry, two musicians who regularly performed in the Café.

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<sup>6</sup> Pat Schwartz indicates that in 1977, an inspection was carried out by the Group Areas Board as the theatre was questioned for its racially mixed toilet facilities and change rooms. See: Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company: The Story of Johannesburg's Market Theatre* (South Africa: A.D. Donker, 1988), 83.

### 3.2. Preparing the Café and Planning its Performance Menu, 1976



**OFFICIAL MARKET CAFE MENU**

As the light Drinks and Snacks are only the 'supporting' acts in this Café, we would like to fill you in on our 'main' (and most times 'only') diet, entertainment.

**LADIES & GENTLEMEN.....OUR MENU FOR OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 76:**

DATE	MAIN COURSE(from 9,00)	LATE NITE SNACK(from 11)
5 - 10	Poetry/Various poets read- Local SA writers	Duccio Classical Guitar
12- 17	Scarlet O'hara Hard Rock 'n Roll	Allen Kwela Jazz guitarist
19- 24	Spirits Rejoice Original Jazz/Rock	Jazz Jam Music/Jam/& Tea
25- 31	Strike Up The Banned Satirical Revue with Pieter	Strike Up the Banned Dirk Uyn & Rikka Sennett
<b>November</b>		
2 - 7	Brian Finch Performer/Songwriter	Brian Finch with some friends
9 - 14	Keith Blundell & Show Folk with the Blundells	Chris Mann SA Poet in action
16 - 21	Andrew Tracey's Steel Band- Trinidad Tin Drums & fun	General Folk & music Various guit pickers
23 - 28		
30 - 5		

WATCH OUT FOR THE BEST IN WORDS AND MUSIC  
AT THE MARKET CAFE, YOU CAN EAT THEM.

Figure 7: The Café's Performance Menu, indicating some of the musicians who performed in 1976. Hidden Years Music Archive.

In early July, Marks sets to work to turn the space allocated to the Café in the Market Theatre Complex into the venue they required. Working with actors, musicians and friends, Marks and his team altered, painted, and created the space he envisaged.<sup>9</sup> While it was not an elaborate place, it was enough to practically serve its purpose. It was a small venue with a little stage brought to life with Marks's vision to showcase and nurture local talent.

As part of the preparations for the opening, a 'blessing' ritual by musician Mike Dickman was performed in July 1976.<sup>10</sup> Dickman, a practicing Buddhist, recalls that the blessing involved the burning of incense sticks and a recital of a Tibetan visualisation text and mantra, most probably that of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. Avalokiteshvar is a goddess of compassion believed to bring liberating energy of compassion. She is the embodiment of selfless love, the supreme symbol of radical compassion, and, for more than a millennium

<sup>9</sup> See Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

<sup>10</sup> There is no available source that provides a precise date for the opening ritual and neither Marks nor Dickman could recall the exact date.

throughout Asia, she has been revered as “The One Who Harkens to the Cries of the World.”<sup>11</sup> Dickman’s recital of the mantra, which was aligned to his Buddhist spirituality, was indicative of a space whose vision to be multi-racial extended beyond race to include different spiritual beliefs as well.

During apartheid, various Christian denominations operated in South Africa, the largest of those being the Dutch Reformed Church (Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk). Leepo Modise noted how the church supported and justified the apartheid policy becoming the “official religion” of the National Party during the apartheid era.<sup>12</sup> With Christianity holding an “official” status in the country, a performance that represents different religious beliefs offered an alternative to Christianity.



Figure 8: The flooded Café one week before opening (1976). *Hidden Years Music Archive*.

While the team was working hard to ensure that the venue was ready for the opening night, they encountered an enormous set-back one week before the opening. Burst municipal water pipes flooded the venue causing structural damages (see figure 2 above). The massive clean-up and repairs to the space were expedited by the assistance from volunteer musicians and

<sup>11</sup> Mike Dickman, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, June 24, 2022. See abstract of the book: John Eaton Calthorpe Blofeld, *Bodhisattva of Compassion: The Mystical Tradition of Kuan Yin* (United States: Shambhala Publications, 2009).

<sup>12</sup>See Leepo Modise, “Faith and Politics in South Africa: Should Christians Participate in Politics?” *Journal of Culture and Religious Studies* 1, (2013): 27-43. 10.17265/2328-2177/2013.01.004 and <http://countrystudies.us/south-africa/53.htm>.

friends, everybody jumped in to help, and beyond expectation they managed to open on the scheduled day.<sup>13</sup>

The small and intimate concert venue had a lifted stage for performers. It was so small that the microphone stands had to be arranged on the floor in front of the stage.<sup>14</sup> Seating was arranged informally in rows starting right in front of the stage. Sound monitors were placed on stands to save space and to balance the acoustics. Curtains were hung behind the stage, and it gave the space a warm and welcoming look. The closeness of the audience to the performers on stage allowed for comments and engagements between audience members and performers. Many of these interactions were captured on the recordings David Marks made of performances in the space. These interactions were possible because the Café offered an intimate space where the performers and audience could engage with each other in almost conversational ways. As such, the Café set-up itself was part of the discursive nature of the venue, and not just the songs, plays and poetry that were performed in the space.

Several local musicians performing in different genres appeared in the Market Café in 1976. The year's concert series started with a performance by Colin Shamley and Alan Kwela in two different musical styles, folk music and jazz that would become a regular programming tool at the venue. Amongst the artists who made appearance in the Café's first year, it is worth noting artists like John Oakley-Smith, an artist described by *Stylus* as one of the best English South African singer songwriters,<sup>15</sup> poet Chris Mann, folksinger Keith Blundell, and Andrew Tracey, an avid promoter of African music. The multi-racial collaboration between Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu was another highlight for the year. Other musicians like Brian Finch, Kenny Henson, Ramsay McKay, Ronnie Domp, Sol Rachid and Dollar Brand (later Abdullah Ibrahim) graced the stage. Various bands like Malombo, Elastic Headband, Spirits Rejoice, Flibbertigibbet also performed in 1976.<sup>16</sup> Music performances were complemented by poetry recitations, film screenings, and the performance of a satirical revue.

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<sup>13</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, July 08, 2022.

<sup>14</sup> See for example the photograph of the Café, Figure 20, p.115.

<sup>15</sup> See newspaper cutting by Stylus on Record Corner titled "John Oakley, Roger Lucey" from the Hidden Years archive, [hy-dm-news-star-oakley-lucey-1979-001.pdf](#) (34.59Mb).

<sup>16</sup> See list of all musicians in Appendix A.

### 3.3. Opening Night, 1 August 1976

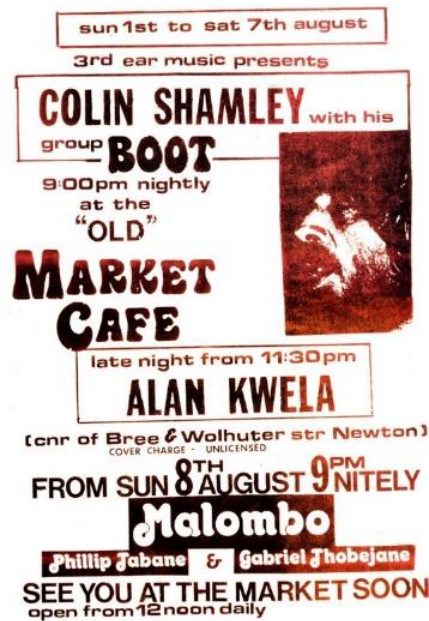


Figure 9: Concert programme (1976). Hidden Years Music Archive.

The Market Café officially opened on 1 August 1976 with a live performance by the legendary jazz guitar maestro, Allen Kwela, and ‘contemporary folk’ singer songwriter, Colin Shamley, and his band the Boot. The two musicians from different cultural and musical backgrounds were scheduled to render different music genres, folk music, and jazz to the diverse audience that the Café aimed to attract. Although it was not the first time that the two musicians had shared a stage, this was going to be their first performance in the Café.<sup>17</sup>

Marks initially booked the band Spirits Rejoice for the opening concert as a reflection of the envisioned multiracial space and diverse genres that the space intended to offer.<sup>18</sup> Spirits Rejoice was a multiracial group that featured a mix of musicians from various ethnolinguistic groups.<sup>19</sup> The band however cancelled their performance in the Café and all their appearances and recording obligations after the Soweto Uprisings broke out on 16 June 1976, little over a

<sup>17</sup> On the 6th and 7th of October 1972, the two musicians performed together in the Flea Market in Marshall Street, Johannesburg.

<sup>18</sup> Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company*, 85.

<sup>19</sup> The core members of the band, Mervyn Africa, Russell Herman and Gilbert Matthews were mixed-race English speakers from Cape Town and were thus classified, under apartheid’s strict racial laws, as Cape Coloureds. Sipho Gumede was a Zulu from Durban; others were Xhosa speakers from the Cape, Sotho speakers from the Orange Free State and isiZulu speakers from Durban and the Natal. See: John Lewis, “Spirits Rejoice – African Spaces: Rare South African Jazz-rock Majesty From 1977,” *Uncut*, July 2, 2021. <https://www.uncut.co.uk/reviews/album/spirits-rejoice-african-spaces-131823/>.

month before the opening of the Café. In an interview Marks explained that for some musicians, the uprising was the beginning of the revolution.<sup>20</sup> It was a very emotional time for those who sympathised with the struggle. The killing of students caused disruptions and uncertainties. The aftermath of the bloodbath received mixed emotions from different people, from mourning to feelings of anger and fear. In an interview with Roger Lucey, he could not hide his disgust and anger towards what he called “merciless killings of students fighting for basic human rights.”<sup>21</sup> His indignation is shared by millions in the post-apartheid era, but he was one of the few who displayed his disgust through his artistic medium of music.

While the Market Theatre Complex management debated whether to continue with the preparations to open the theatre as planned, they decided that they could not halt. Already facing severe financial constraints to launch the complex, they decided to use their artistic skills as a way to honour and support the cause. Marks then opted to open the Café featuring Colin Shamley and Allen Kwela for the opening night.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.3.1. Featured musicians

#### 3.3.1.1. Colin Shamley and the Boot



*Figure 10: Colin Shamley (no date). Hidden Years Music Archive.*

Colin Shamley was a renowned folk singer who, from the late 1960s, appeared on the Johannesburg folk scene. As a vocalist, Terry Herbst states that Colin had a polished voice

<sup>20</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch. August 21, 2022.

<sup>21</sup> Roger Lucey, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch. August 5, 2022.

<sup>22</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, June 25, 2022.



quality ideal for folk singing.<sup>23</sup> Roger Lucey describes him as “one of the great musical commentators on life, love and politics in South Africa.”<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Andrew Knapp states that Shamley’s lyrics revealed the sad tragedies of the times,<sup>25</sup> his songs “reflect[ing] and examine[ing] the dreams, aspirations and disillusionment of people [...] grounded in our South African way of life.”<sup>26</sup>

In an interview with Raeford Daniel for the *Rand Daily Mail*, Shamley noted that it was never his intention to sing protest music, but that it was difficult to hide his views. “The important thing is to just say what you think. That’s really talking. The battle is almost won if you bring things out to the open.”<sup>27</sup> He is described as a musician who wrote about aspects that were not openly talked about at the time. One such song was “Judy Marigold,” (1980) a song about lesbianism which was then banned locally.<sup>28</sup> Under the apartheid state that regulated and controlled racial identities and sexuality,<sup>29</sup> a song on homosexuality challenged the prescribed ‘social norms.’<sup>30</sup>

In 1968, Shamley released a duet “Johnny’s Gun” with Cornelia. Between 1960 and 1977, he recorded several demos but only had his recording breakthrough in 1980 when 3rd Ear Music recorded and released *Born Guilty*.<sup>31</sup> The album, Shamley’s first solo album, was released to critical acclaim but it did not sell well. Some of the songs on this album including “Born Guilty” and “Colonial Man” mirror the political situation of the time. They also reflect on being a white man and a product of a colonial background living in a racially segregated country.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Terry Herbst, “Talent in Large Doses.” *Rand Daily Mail*, September 18, 1973, 13.

<sup>24</sup> See Roger Lucey’s blog on <https://blog.sugarman.org/2021/05/13/colin-shamley-dies/>

<sup>25</sup> Andrew Knapp, “A Tribute to Colin Shamley.” *Loving the Music*, 2021, <https://lovingthemusiccoza.wordpress.com/2021/05/16/a-tribute-to-colin-shamley>.

<sup>26</sup> Staff Reporter, “Poetry and Music Night,” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 4, 1976, 16.

<sup>27</sup> Raeford Daniel, “The Singer as an Individual.” *Rand Daily Mail*, February 18, 1975, 10.

<sup>28</sup> Helen Lunn, “‘Hippies, Radicals and the Sounds of Silence’: Cultural Dialectics at two South African Universities 1966-1976.” PhD diss., University of KwaZulu Natal, 2010, 90. <http://hdl.handle.net/10413/2662>.

<sup>29</sup> Emily Craven, “Racial Identity and Racism in the Gay and Lesbian Community in Post-Apartheid South Africa.” MA thesis, University of Witwatersrand, 2011, 20.

<sup>30</sup> Homosexuality was prohibited in South Africa under the common law crime of “sodomy” and “unnatural sexual offence.” This was inherited from the Roman-Dutch law. In 1969, an amendment to the *Sexual Offences Act 23* of 1957 (originally named the Immorality Act) professed homosexuality as a punishable crime of up to seven years in prison. See Alisha Naik, “The Progression of LGBTIQ+ rights in South Africa (Part 1).” *Schindlers Attorneys*, June 15, 2021. <https://www.schindlers.co.za/news/the-progression-of-lgbtqi-rights-in-south-africa-part-1/>

<sup>31</sup> Rina Minervini, “At Long Last: Shamley on Disc.” *Rand Daily Mail*, October 22, 1980, 9.

<sup>32</sup> Helen Lunn, “‘Hippies, Radicals and the Sounds of Silence’: Cultural Dialectics at two South African Universities 1966-1976.” PhD diss., University of KwaZulu Natal, 2010, 86. <http://hdl.handle.net/10413/2662>.

In January 1970, soon after David Marks's return from the USA, Shamley was featured in a concert held at the Troubador in Johannesburg with musicians Ian Lawrence, Mike Dickman, David Marks, Flood, and other performers. They were featured again in February and in March 1970 in the same venue.<sup>33</sup> In October 1970, he was the opening artist in South Africa's "Woodstock' Folk Festival,"<sup>34</sup> an event that was reported to have attracted about 1000 music enthusiasts.<sup>35</sup> He also performed in various other folk clubs and concerts with his band the Boot such as The Bandbox, The Arena, and Nite Beat in Yeoville. Boot consisted of guitarist Barry Langton and drummer Les Kemsley.

Considered an innovative and creative artist, Shamley also performed in The Arena (Johannesburg) in 1972. The Arena was an experimental theatre,<sup>36</sup> which saw this performance as a way of creating a platform for folk music and establishing a rapport with its audience.<sup>37</sup>

Amongst the songs that he composed, Shamley was prominent for writing themes for two movies that were considered highly political at the time, *Antigone* and *Katrina*. Barney Simon adapted the Greek tragedy *Antigone* by Sophocles into English for a performance that The Company staged in 1975.<sup>38</sup> Kevin Wetmore argues that to stage a Greek tragedy at the time in South Africa was a 'safe' act of defiance. With political drama prohibited, permission was granted for the staging of European classics.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> See also Rand Daily Mail advertisements on paper of January 29, 1970.

<sup>34</sup> The concept of the Woodstock Music Festival began on 15 August 1969 in a dairy farm in Bethel, New York. Although the festival was meant to be an investment opportunity by its founders John Roberts, Joel Rosenman, Artie Kornfeld and Michael Lang, it turned out to be a free concert that attracted more than 400, 000 people. Artists that performed included Joe Cocker, Santana, Crosby Stills, Jimi Hendrix and many more. The event later became synonymous with the counterculture movement of the 1960s. Valerie states that the impact of Woodstock on United States culture was giving hippies a voice to legitimize the anti-war sentiment they were experiencing. For her, hippies symbolized counterculture. David Marks was also a member of the Bill Hanley Woodstock sound crew. South African born producer, engineer, musician and photographer Eddie Kramer, through his connections with Jimi Hendrix brought the concept to South Africa. See: Lizabe Lambrechts, "The Woodstock Sound System and South African Sound Reinforcement", *herri*, Issue 4, [https:// herri.org.za/4/lizabe-lambrechts/](https://herri.org.za/4/lizabe-lambrechts/); Judi Davis, "Local Muso David Marks Was Part of the Woodstock Experience." *South Coast Herald*, August 18, 2017, [https:// southcoastherald.co.za/225481/local-muso-was-part-of-the-woodstockexperience](https://southcoastherald.co.za/225481/local-muso-was-part-of-the-woodstockexperience), accessed May 21, 2022 and Valeria Ramos, "How Woodstock Became a Symbol of U.S. Counterculture." *Madame Blue*. <https://themadameblue.com/blog/black-people-will-swim>, accessed May 21, 2022.

<sup>35</sup> See inset on page 2 of the Rand Daily Mail of 10 October 1970.

<sup>36</sup> While experimental theatres functioned as spaces that allowed creative works that were judged as being 'undesirable,' they offered artists a platform to explore their creativity by performing their chosen music and to develop their skills fully. Refer to Chapter 2 and see work of Bhekizizwe Peterson, "Apartheid and the Political Imagination in Black South African Theatre." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 16, no. 2 (1990): 229-245. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2637076>.

<sup>37</sup> Raeford Daniel, "Too Little Projection." *Rand Daily Mail*, September 22, 1972, 14.

<sup>38</sup> Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company of Company*, 211.

<sup>39</sup> Kevin J. Wetmore Jr., *The Athenian Sun in an African Sky: Modern African Adaptations of Classical Greek Tragedy* (Jefferson: MacFarland, 2002), 35.



The film *Katrina* written by Emil Nofal-Jans Rautenbach in 1969 was considered ground-breaking in the film industry at the time.<sup>40</sup> Centred on the theme of cultural identity, Rautenbach portrays the effect of racial classification within families during apartheid, where members of the same family would be placed in different racial categories. Trying to escape lifestyle realities of being ‘coloured’ and live a ‘white’ privileged life, Katrina, who was classified white tried to marry a white man, but she could not escape her ‘coloured’ roots. After the release of the film, Rautenbach received death threats from right-wing elements in South Africa. Martin Botha states that the then chief censor, Jannie Kruger, wanted to ban the film or cut several controversial scenes from it.<sup>41</sup>

When the South African Folk Music Association launched the Singer-Songwriter Project in 1972, Shamley was among the musicians who participated in the project. In the mid-1970s, Shamley travelled to America where his manager, Randall Spear, organised several concerts and recording opportunities for him in New York and New Jersey in 1975.<sup>42</sup> The limited opportunities to secure better contracts in New York compelled him to return to South Africa.<sup>43</sup>

During his career, Shamley shared the stage with several national and international musicians and poets, including the guitarist and vocalist, Mike Dickman; singer-songwriter, David Marks; Dashiki, a jazz band including poets Lefifi Tladi, Rantobeng Mokou, Gilbert Mabale, and Laurence Moloisi; Derek Brimstone, folk guitarist, singer and banjo player from the United Kingdom, and many more.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Martin P. Botha, “The Cinema of Jans Rautenbach.” *Kinema*, 2015, 1.

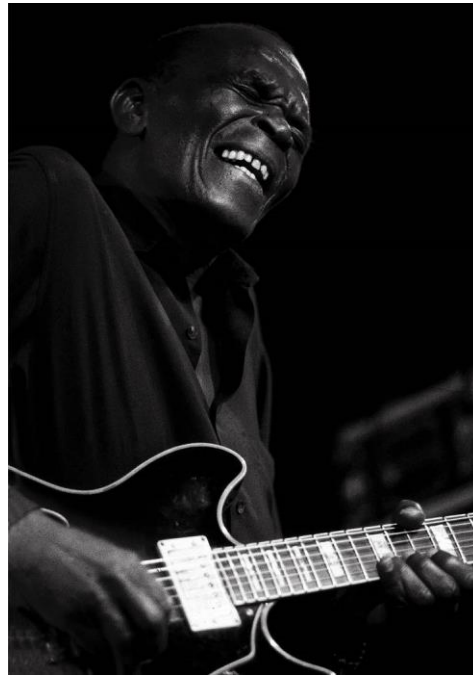
<sup>41</sup> Martin P. Botha, “The Cinema of Jans Rautenbach.” *Kinema*, 2015, 3.

<sup>42</sup> Alvon Collison, “Shamley at the Blue Fox.” *Rand Daily Mail*, April 28, 1975, 11.

<sup>43</sup> Jeannette Keill, “Shamley gets the Boot.” *Rand Daily Mail*, April 16, 1977, 4.

<sup>44</sup> See among others works of David B. Coplan, *In Township Tonight: South Africa’s Black City Music and Theatre*. 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Christopher John Ballantine, *Marabi Nights: Jazz, “Race” and Society in Early Apartheid South Africa* (South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2012); Muff Andersson, *Music in the Mix: The Story of South African Popular Music* (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1981) and Lefifi Tladi, *Lefifi Tladi: Artist, Poet & Musician: “Xedzedze”* (Pretoria: Unisa Art Gallery, 1995).

### 3.3.1.2. Allen Duma Kwela



*Figure 11: Allen Kwela (no date).*<sup>45</sup>

Kwela was a Zulu jazz guitarist born on 11 September 1939 in Chesterville, Durban. Growing up in the rural South Coast, he led a normal life of being a schoolboy and looking after his father's herd. As someone born in a musical family, from a very young age he realised he had a passion for music and in particular, the guitar. He learned to play the guitar on a self-made tin guitar by listening to his brothers playing guitar and violin. In 1954, he bought his first guitar and started to perform in concerts.

During the mid-20th century, Johannesburg was the preferred city for aspiring musicians who wanted to find their niche in the music industry. As an economic centre at the time, major recording studios, film industries and the major magazines had established themselves there.<sup>46</sup> It was for this reason that in 1958 Kwela moved to Johannesburg with the hope of meeting other musicians and hopefully cutting a record deal. However, for a black freelancer, jobs were scarce because black musicians were barred from performing in white nightclubs,<sup>47</sup> and so he found a job as a cleaner in a white school. The first musician he met in Johannesburg was

<sup>45</sup> <https://iamtranscriptions.org/performers/allen-kwela/>

<sup>46</sup> Lindy van der Meulen, "From Rock 'n' Roll to Hard Core Punk: An Introduction to Rock Music in Durban 1963 – 1985." Masters' thesis, University of Natal, 1995, 51.

<sup>47</sup> Martin Mahlaba, "On-off Offers Bug Artists." *Rand Daily Mail*, May 4, 1974, 12.

Spokes Mashiyane, who heard his guitar sounds while he visited a place near the school where Kwela was working. Together they composed, arranged, and played their own brand of music in local nightspots. This came as a musical breakthrough as it brought opportunities for him to meet other musicians, perform in concerts and play on *mbaqanga* recordings. Kwela became the main composer for Mashiyane and they are considered as the musicians who popularised the kwela music genre.<sup>48</sup> Mashiyane was signed to the Gallo record label and in 1959, they released Mashiyane's album *Spokes of Africa* under Gallo Records.

Travelling to and from concerts and meetings, Kwela was arrested for not having a work seeker's permit, an act that landed him in Delmas prison in 1958.<sup>49</sup> Kwela started performing serious jazz from the early 1960s winning him the Best Guitar Award at the Mamelodi Jazz Festival in 1967.<sup>50</sup> He also taught guitar at Dorkay House in 1969. A significant symbol of black artists' resistance to apartheid, Dorkay House was the incubator of many talented South African musicians like Miriam Makeba, Jonas Gwangwa, Kippie Moeketsi, African Jazz Pioneers, Hugh Masekela, Abdullah Ibrahim and actor John Kani. It was opened in January 1924 under the auspices of the Bantu Dramatic Society<sup>51</sup> to provide recreational activities for black youth like sport, debates, writers' conferences, musical sessions and plays. The African National Congress Youth League was launched in Dorkay House in February 1944 by its first

<sup>48</sup> Matthew Wilhelm Solomon, "Stringing Together a Life from Music." *Mail & Guardian*, July 10, 2003, <https://mg.co.za/article/2003-07-10-stringing-together-a-life-from-music>, accessed April 17, 2021.

<sup>49</sup> *The Natives Act* No. 67 of 1952, also known as the Pass Laws Act, required all black persons over the age of 16 in all provinces to carry an identification book (passbook, or *dompas*) with them at all times. The pass contained a photograph, details of place of origin, employment record, tax payments, and encounters with the police. Failure to produce the identification when requested was a criminal offence that could result in fines, imprisonment, or deportation. See Ralph, Glücksmann. "Apartheid Legislation in South Africa." Hamburg [online], 2010. Available at: <http://ra.smixx.de/media/files/Apartheid-Legislation-in-South-Africa-2010-2.Pdf>, accessed September 23, 2022. See details of his arrest by Sonny Boy, "Sonny Boy's Jazz Column." *Rand Daily Mail*, October 9, 1971, 5.

<sup>50</sup> Although I could not find a specific source referring to the Mamelodi Jazz Festival, Brett Pyper argues that in the apartheid era, jazz festivals played a distinctive role in establishing an oppositional public sphere. He states that these festivals became a notable feature of public culture across the country and especially around Johannesburg. With the tightening of laws in the 1950s and 1960s, a few sites of interracial and black cultural self-expression were demolished (like Sophiatown in Johannesburg, District Six in Cape Town, and many unsung places like them), and venues associated with jazz performance were closed, leaving mainly the big concerts and outdoor jazz festivals in Soweto and its counterparts. See: Brett Pyper, "Jazz Festivals and the Post-Apartheid Public Sphere: Historical Precedents and the Contemporary Limits of Freedom." *The World of Music* 5, no. 2 (2016): 110. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44651151>.

<sup>51</sup> The Bantu Dramatic Society was founded in 1933 in Johannesburg by literary dramatist H. I. E. Dhlomo to create African theatre. For Dhlomo, a man proud of his Zulu heritage, the purpose of the society was not only to develop popular black drama but also to combat the sense of cultural inferiority of black theatre among the Westernized elite. See David B. Coplan, "Ideology and Tradition in South African Black Popular Theater." *Journal of American Folklore* (1986): 151-176. <https://doi.org/10.2307/539971>.

members; Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Anton Lembede and Oliver Tambo under the presidency of Sisulu.<sup>52</sup>

Kwela was an active musician, performing in various coffee clubs in the city as well as big music events organised by Marks, including the Free People's concert of 1975 held at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg where he shared the stage with musicians like Paul Clingman, Jeram Bhana, Colin Shapiro, Colin Shamley and many more.

Whilst regarded as one of the greatest jazz music guitarists at the time, political conditions sabotaged his aspirations of making a living as a musician. It took him years of struggling before his music could be recorded commercially. He released his first album, *Allen's Soul Bag*, in 1972 on the Atlantic City label. Unfortunately, it was so badly produced that it could not be advertised.<sup>53</sup> According to Kwela, the title of the album came from the treatment that blacks received in the apartheid era.<sup>54</sup> A *Rand Daily Mail* report reveals that in 1970, Kwela became disillusioned because of political interference in his music resulting in missed opportunities that could have made him famous. Kwela shared his frustrations with *Mail & Guardian* on how the political state of the country hindered him from realising his potential. "Maybe I should've exiled myself, but I didn't. The people who stayed overseas, in exile, seemed to be benefiting more than we did. They got chances of being recorded more than we did."<sup>55</sup> When he was interviewed in October 1980 by Martin Mahlaba, a *Soweto News* journalist, Kwela continued to air his unceasing frustrations and misfortunes on the lack of opportunities for his career. On those misfortunes that the article cites was a missed opportunity to go to Greece because the club that he was booked to perform in burnt down before he left for the show. Kwela also would have had to pay his own fare to tour Greece, something that was not possible for someone of his financial standing. He was later offered a tour to Holland and another possibility to England.

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<sup>52</sup> See: Steve Gordon. *Beyond the Blues: Township Jazz in the '60s and '70s* (South Africa: New Africa Books, 1997); Abbey, Maine, "An African Theater in South Africa." *African Arts* 3, no.4 (1970): 42-44. and Lucille Davie, "Dorkay House Hangs On." *The Heritage Portal*, April 3, 2018. <https://www.theheritageportal.co.za/article/dorkay-house-hangs>.

<sup>53</sup> See article by Staff Reporter, "The Many Faces of Allen Kwela." *Rand Daily Mail*, August 25, 1975.

<sup>54</sup> Matthew Wilhelm Solomon, "Stringing Together a Life from Music." *Mail & Guardian*, July 10, 2003, <https://mg.co.za/article/2003-07-10-stringing-together-a-life-from-music>, accessed April 17, 2021.

<sup>55</sup> Matthew Wilhelm Solomon, "Stringing Together a Life from Music." *Mail & Guardian*, July 10, 2003, <https://mg.co.za/article/2003-07-10-stringing-together-a-life-from-music>, accessed April 17, 2021.

Despite that his music was well received and enjoyed in concerts, he struggled to get studio producers who wanted to record his music style, jazz. He felt that record labels at the time were frightened by the genre and were not keen to associate themselves with it. His second album was recorded in 1975 by SATBEL called *Black Beauty*.<sup>56</sup> The album featured four songs “Black Beauty”, “Mild Storm”, “Qaphela” and “Willow Vale.” He performed all these songs with a band that was rehearsing with Kippie Moeketsi at Dorkay House.<sup>57</sup> Martin Mahlaba regards *Black Beauty* as Kwela’s finest composition. The album was dedicated to all the black beauties that Kwela had known throughout his life.<sup>58</sup>

In February 1982, with funding from Albany Cigarettes, Kwela travelled to Stockholm, Sweden. With an intention to expand his musical ideas and broaden his horizons, he performed with various Swedish musicians and South African exiled musicians like Gilbert Mathews, Bheki Mseleku and John Dyani.<sup>59</sup> Voted as South Africa’s best African jazz guitarist in 1972 at the Umgababa Festival,<sup>60</sup> by working with Shamley, Kwela was keen to explore new sounds in his own compositions.<sup>61</sup> His guitar skills afforded him an invitation from the well-known jazz musician, Darius Brubeck in 1984 to teach music at the University of Natal as a guest lecturer, an assignment that he did for several months.<sup>62</sup>

### 3.3.2. The Concert

The two performers were scheduled to perform every night for the entire week from 1-7 August 1976. While the sound recording of the first concert could not be traced in the archival collection, Marks confirmed in an interview that despite the opening being a very busy night for him and his team, he did record the show. He pointed out that this tape could have been misplaced because being the first concert, he feared reprisals from the state. This concert took

<sup>56</sup> See article by Martin Mahlaba, “Kwela Takes a Sad Trip to the Old Country.” *Soweto News*, October 24, 1980, 8.

<sup>57</sup> Martin Mahlaba, “Disco talk.” *Rand Daily Mail*, December 19, 1975, 25.

<sup>58</sup> See notes on the vinyl sleeve of the album *Black Beauty*, record SWA 14013.

<sup>59</sup> Doc Bikitsha, “They care for the youth.” *Rand Daily Mail*, March 26, 1982, 18.

<sup>60</sup> The Umgababa Festival, also known as Pina-Culo, is described as one of the pop and jazz festivals in South Africa that were influenced by Black Consciousness ideologies. They are described as festivals that openly demonstrated ‘black power’ signs and with crowds openly shouting ‘black power’ slogans. Anna Schuman states that live shows at the time were important platforms for disseminating musical protest. In cases where the word ‘power’ incidentally occurred in the lyrics of a love ballad, there would be a female vocalist raising her fist in a ‘Black Power’ salute. This would lead to a responsive chorus of ‘amandla [ngawethu]’ and raised fists from the audience. See Page 46 of *Spread of Black Consciousness*, <https://www.sahistory.org.za/sites/default/files/archive-files/Br1972.0376.4354.000.000.1972.8.pdf> and Anne Schumann, “The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance Against Apartheid in South Africa,” *Stichproben*, 2008, 8 (14), 8.

<sup>61</sup> Joe Sack, “Shamley and Kwela.” *Rand Daily Mail*, October 5, 1972, 10.

<sup>62</sup> Highlife Music, “Mammoth Jazz Festival for Soweto.” *Rand Daily Mail*, September 28, 1984, 5.

place in the aftermath of the Soweto riots and the security police were on high alert. Any public gathering considered controversial was heavily scrutinised. He claims that whenever he felt uncertain, he would purposely mislabel and make a little note in his diary.<sup>63</sup>

Marks confirmed in an interview with Iain MacDonald of the *Weekend Argus* that white English singers were more targeted by the security police than Afrikaans musicians.<sup>64</sup> They had to endure forms of harassment from the state ranging from police raids, having their tapes confiscated and tear gassed during performances. An example of such brutal experience is of Roger Lucey, who after releasing the song “Lungile Tabalaza,”<sup>65</sup> got in trouble with the law. The Security Branch confiscated his albums and tapes from music shops and armed policemen were sent to raid his house at night.<sup>66</sup> This police brutality was confirmed by musician Sipho ‘Hotstix’ Mabuse, that it was tougher for white musicians than black musicians because for them as black artists, if they sang struggle songs, their communities would be fully supportive and back them.<sup>67</sup> Alternative white musicians had to avoid both the state forces as well as a large majority of their own communities. In the book *Back in From the Anger*, musician Roger Lucey writes about the ways in which the apartheid system was inculcated among white pupils in schools. According to this dogma, associations between white pupils and blacks, hippies and communists were regarded as forms of subversion.<sup>68</sup> White musicians and other artists who performed songs which challenged the system were perceived as traitors and thus regarded as more of a threat to the apartheid state than black artists and musicians.

In the absence of a tape of the opening night, a close estimate of the songs that Colin Shamley and his group Boot performed can be found on a demo tape that Marks compiled in November 1976, less than three months after their show at the Café.<sup>69</sup> According to Marks, the demo tape contained a selection of songs from the concert that they intended to release.<sup>70</sup> The four songs

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<sup>63</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, August 21, 2022.

<sup>64</sup> Iain MacDonald, “‘Hidden’ Music Plays at Last.” *Weekend Argus*, August 25, 1996.

<sup>65</sup> The song “Lungile Tabalaza” tells of a young black man, Lungile, who died mysteriously in police detention. See both works of Drewett and Schumann.

<sup>66</sup> Schumann, *The Beat that Beat Apartheid*, 30.

<sup>67</sup> Ole Reitov, “Encounters with a South African Censor: Confrontation and Reconciliation.” In: *Shoot the Singer!: Music Censorship Today*, edited by Marie Korpe (London: Zed Books, 2004), 87.

<sup>68</sup> Roger Lucey, *Back In From the Anger* (South Africa: Jacana Media, 2012), 64.

<sup>69</sup> The tape is available in the Hidden Years archive, hymap-dm-reel-shamley-1976-001.

<sup>70</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, August 25, 2021.



on the demo are “Too Little Love”, “The DJ’s Song”, “Pool Room Regret” and “Colonial Man.”<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately no record of the songs performed by Allan Kwela have yet been found.

The song “Too Little Love,” composed by Shamley, clearly projects Shamley’s brilliant vocal capabilities. His smooth, pleasant and attractive tone captures the sombreness of the story line. It narrates a story of a broken love affair. The chorus transcribed below summarises the extent of pain and heartbreak that the two lovers faced in their loveless relationship resulting in the breakup and lost hope on finding love again. Martin Chilton’s argument that “love songs bridge age, gender and nationality gaps [by] satisfying a never-ending need to create and listen to music,”<sup>72</sup> could provide a reason for their appeal to a wider audience.

When you were still with me  
I had too little love  
For the price, it’s so much pain  
And I don’t maybe know  
If I will ever love again

She had too little love  
For the price, it’s so much pain  
And I don’t really know  
If she will ever love again<sup>73</sup>

“Colonial Man” is a song that musically combines a vibrant dance verse and slow beats. Shamley’s smooth vocals lead the main verses and the band renders backing vocals of female voices. It is in the chorus that the beats slow down thus highlighting the solemn sounds of the backing music. The song is Shamley’s way of confronting the systematic exploitation brought by colonisation, how people were deprived of their resources (land and economy) and how the system enabled colonisers to incessantly enrich themselves. This anti-capitalist idea expressed in the song exposes the destructive impact of capitalism in the country. He implores for an end to the callousness. He further pleads for change and expresses his yearning for “the land that used to be,” a land in which, before the bloodbaths (“The blood is on our wagon wheels”) and displacements that these brought, people used to live together harmoniously. This could be a reference to the Great Trek, understood as a defining moment for white South Africans in terms

<sup>71</sup> See appendix 2.1 from the Hidden Years archive document, Stellenbosch University: <http://digital.lib.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.2/18327/hy-dm-docs-shamley-demo-001.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>72</sup> Martin Chilton, “Deconstructing the Love Song: How and Why Love Songs Work.” *UDiscoverMusic*, February 13, 2022. <https://www.udiscovermusic.com/in-depth-features/deconstructing-the-love-song-how-they-work/>.

<sup>73</sup> Transcribed from reel-to-reel tape (hymap-dm-reel-shamley-1976-001) held in the Hidden Years archive.

of ethnic, cultural, and political identity. A large number of Afrikaners left the Cape Colony in 1838 driven by their belief in self-rule. It created tension between the settlers, British colonial authorities, and African communities already occupying the land the Afrikaners claimed as their own.<sup>74</sup>

Hey Colonial man, what's your hurry  
 Hey Colonial man, don't move now  
 Colonial man, you've made your money  
 Colonial man, take a look ahead

Saddle up and ride with me  
 Through the land that used to be  
 From the mountains to the sea  
 You don't have to be afraid of me

Saddle up and ride with me  
 The blood is on our wagon wheels  
 Through the land that used to be  
 From the mountains to the sea  
 You don't have to be afraid of me

Hey Colonial man, look across the river  
 Colonial man, tell me what you see  
 Colonial man, look across the river  
 Colonial man, are you as scared as me<sup>75</sup>

After the opening night, the Café featured various musicians and bands including the Malombo jazz band on 8 August, folk singer songwriter, John Oakley Smith from 15-30 August, the jazz band Spirit Rejoice with John Oakley-Smith, Russel Herman and Mervyn Africa on 29 August, and from 14-26 September the jazz pianist, Dollar Brand (Abdullah Ibrahim), Colin Shamley, Roy Bulkin and the Robert Schroeder Band performed.

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<sup>74</sup> Robert Vosloo. "Dealing with Division: Some Responses to World War II within the Dutch Reformed Church on Synodical and Congregational Level (1936-1944)." *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 40, no. 2 (2014): 57-70. Retrieved September 26, 2022, from [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1017-04992014000300005&lng=en&tlng=en](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1017-04992014000300005&lng=en&tlng=en). For further reading on Great Trek, see: Thomas V. Bulpin, *The Great Trek*. Cape Town: Books of Africa, 1969; Chris Venter, *The Great Trek*. First edition. ed. Cape Town: Don Nelson, 2013; R. Binckes, *The Great Trek Uncut: Escape from British Rule: The Boer Exodus from the Cape Colony, 1836*. Pinetown: 30° South, 2013 and others.

<sup>75</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-shamley-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.



### 3.4 Sol Rachid, Spirits Rejoice and Abdullah Ibrahim on 21 September 1976

On 21 September 1976 a concert was held combining jazz by Spirits Rejoice and Dollar Brand (later Abdullah Ibrahim) and poetry by Sol Rachid. From the archive tape of the concert, Sol Rachid comes across as an outspoken anti-apartheid poet. However, no biographical information including date of birth or occupation, about him has yet been found.

#### 3.4.1. Featured musicians

##### 3.4.1.1. Spirits Rejoice

Spirits Rejoice was formed by drummer, Gilbert Matthews and saxophonist, Duke Makasi. The band consisted of members from different parts of the country including Cape Town, Johannesburg, Gqeberha (then Port Elizabeth) and Durban. It featured various musicians in its performances and some of the band members were bassist, Sipho Gumede; guitarists, Russell Herman and Enoch Mthlane; reedmen Duku Makasi and Robbie Jansen; brass players, George Tyefumani and Themba Mehlomakhulu and in some shows, they included Bheki Mseleku and Mervyn Afrika on keyboard.

It was one of the culturally mixed jazz bands at the time and was regarded as one of South Africa's leading jazz fusion band of the 1970s.<sup>76</sup> With Liam Brickhill viewing their music as a South African response to the international call for modern jazz, she points out that some of their songs contain elements of popular music with implicit and politically charged lyrics. These elements are clearly portrayed in their song "Makes Me Wonder Why" which they recorded shortly after the 1976 Soweto uprising. The song reflects on how mundane existence can be and the lack of opportunities to pursue better prospects and improve situations.<sup>77</sup> Brickhill's description of the band's music as "progressive, radical and ahead of their time" hindered the band to find a South African label who would release their music.<sup>78</sup> The band recorded their album *African Spaces* during October 1976, but no South African label was willing to risk investing in the album as it would not have been played on the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) radio stations. The band's multilingual music would not

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<sup>76</sup> See article by Liam Brickhill, "It's Never Just About the Music." *Buala*, August 21, 2021. <https://www.buala.org/en/games-without-borders/it-s-never-just-about-the-music> and <https://www.newframe.com/gilbert-matthews-pioneer-and-visionary-of-sa-jazz/>.

<sup>77</sup> Transcribed by the author from <https://matsulimusic.bandcamp.com/track/makes-me-wonder-why>

<sup>78</sup> Liam Brickhill, "It's Never Just About the Music." *Buala*, August 21, 2021. <https://www.buala.org/en/games-without-borders/it-s-never-just-about-the-music> and <https://www.newframe.com/gilbert-matthews-pioneer-and-visionary-of-sa-jazz/>.

fit any of the ethnically segregated radio stations of the SABC and would subsequently never be aired. It was through Warner/Elektra/Atlantic (WEA)<sup>79</sup> Records' intervention that they managed to release the album in 1977 under the Atlantic label. David Marks assisted by signing the band to WEA Records so that it could be marketed and promoted by this established label.<sup>80</sup>



*Figure 12: Spirits Rejoice with George Tyfumani, Duke Makasi, Thabo Mashishi, Gilbrt Mathews, Mervyn Afrika, Robbie Jansen, Sipho Gumede, and Russel Herman (1976). Photograph by Tony Campbell. Hidden Years Music Archive.*

Three prominent elements about the group aggravated the apartheid system, namely its cultural mix, being a jazz band, and using saxophone as one of the instruments.<sup>81</sup> Jazz was perceived by the apartheid state as music that brought together and celebrated the different African cultures and thus it challenged the apartheid state's efforts to reinforce racial and ethnic divisions. Further to that, the association of saxophone with jazz and black musicians, intimidated the system.<sup>82</sup> Michael Drewett states that the use of saxophone was considered

<sup>79</sup> WEA is a subsidiary of Warner Music Group; an American multinational entertainment and record label conglomerate whose headquarters are in New York City. WEA was an early champion of heavy metal rock music. The invitation to the launch of the record label in South Africa on the 5 March 1975 in the Hidden Years archive reveals that the international President Nesuhi Ertegün and Vice President Phil Rose were in attendance. See document: [hy-dm-invitation-wea-launch-001.pdf](#) (1.553Mb).

<sup>80</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, October 21, 2022.

<sup>81</sup> See: John Lewis, "Spirits Rejoice – African Spaces: Rare South African jazz-rock majesty from 1977." *Uncut*, July 2, 2020. <https://www.uncut.co.uk/reviews/album/spirits-rejoice-african-spaces-131823/>.

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/abdullah-ibrahim-and-politics-jazz-south-africa>.

inciteful for it was regarded as an instrument that propels blacks to violence.<sup>83</sup> This reputation that the instrument gained was not unique to South Africa. Adrianne Honnold notes that saxophone and its performers in America were stigmatised because of unfavourable connotations of the instrument. The reputation resulted from it featuring prominently in music regarded as being of low social class and from its connection to black musicians who played the instrument.<sup>84</sup> The same sentiment about the instrument prevailed in Germany when the Nazis took over the power in 1933. For them the instrument was a symbol of jazz music, a genre that was intricately interwoven with African American culture, and thus undesirable.<sup>85</sup> Katherine Power points out that similarly in South Africa, jazz facilitated hybridity and that it had the ability to promote cultural mixing, therefore rising the ire of the apartheid government.<sup>86</sup>

### 3.4.1.2. Abdullah Ibrahim



Figure 13: Abdullah Ibrahim (no date).<sup>87</sup>

Cape town born jazz pianist, Abdullah Ibrahim was born in 1934 and was baptized Adolph Johannes Brand. A renowned musician, he started piano lessons at the age of seven. Growing

<sup>83</sup> Michael Drewett, "An Analysis of the Censorship of Popular Music Within the Context of Cultural Struggle in South Africa During the 1980s." (PhD diss., Rhodes University, 2004), 290.

<sup>84</sup> Adrianne Lee Honnold, "*Unacknowledged Ubiquity: The Saxophone in Popular Music.*" PHD thesis, University of Birmingham, 2021, 4.

<sup>85</sup> Anna Kelsey-Sugg, "It was Banned by the Nazis, Stalin and the Vatican. This is the Surprising History of the Saxophone." *The History Listen*, February 24, 2020. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-02-25/saxophone-history-of-musical-instrument-brutal-and-beautiful/11960922>.

<sup>86</sup> Katherine D. Power, "Musical Influence on Apartheid and the Civil Rights Movement." *Student Publication* 229, (2014), 1.

<sup>87</sup> See: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/biography-abdullah-ibrahim-chance-overby>

up, he was exposed to traditional African KhoiSan songs, Christian hymns and gospel music. Cultural influences of the city exposed him to American jazz, township jive, Cape Malay music and classical music. His bebop playing led to the formation of the Dollar Brand Trio in 1958, a name that later became his stage name. In 1959, Ibrahim formed a septet, The Jazz Epistles, with saxophonist Kippie Moeketsi, trumpeter Hugh Masekela, trombonist Jonas Gwanga, bassist Johnny Gertze and drummer Makaya Ntshoko. The group recorded the album *Jazz Epistle, Verse 1*, a first jazz album by South African musicians. It was in the same year that he met and first performed with vocalist Sathima Bea Benjamin whom he married six years later.<sup>88</sup>

In 1965, he left South Africa for New York. During his years abroad, he appeared in various festivals like Newport Jazz Festival and Carnegie Hall. Being in the USA also afforded him the opportunity to interact with many progressive musicians, including Don Cherry, Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Pharaoh Sanders, Cecil Taylor and Archie Shepp.<sup>89</sup>

Ibrahim returned to Cape Town in 1973, and soon after recorded “Mannenberg – ‘Is where it’s happening’” in 1974. The song was so popular that it was regarded as an unofficial national anthem for black South Africans. He is also known for organising an illegal ANC benefit concert in 1976, shortly after the Soweto student uprising.<sup>90</sup>

### 3.4.2. The Concert

The first part of the concert is a poetry recital by Sol Rachid. He opens with a thought-provoking message, “Everything that has a beginning must eventually have an end. And who are we to reason and why...”<sup>91</sup> Rachid then recites a poem, *Weekend in Soweto*. The narration describes the hardships that township people endure living in Soweto. In his poem, this is attributed to either poverty or work-related traumas and in trying to escape these realities, people used alcohol as a coping mechanism. His recitation opens with an instrumental section where the poet shouts and recites *SeSotho* lines, reflecting the anticipation people had for Friday nights, bustling in the streets of Soweto for the entire night. Although Friday nights

<sup>88</sup> See detailed biographical details on his website, <https://abdullahibrahim.co.za/biography/>.

<sup>89</sup> More biographical information on Ibrahim is available in his website: <https://abdullahibrahim.co.za/biography/>. See also: Christine Lucia, “Abdullah Ibrahim and the Uses of Memory.” *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*, 2002:11(2), 125–143.

<sup>90</sup> See work of Christine Lucia, “Abdullah Ibrahim and the Uses of Memory.” *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 11, no. 2 (2002): 125-143.

and Abdullah Ibrahim’s website: <https://abdullahibrahim.co.za/biography/>.

<sup>91</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hmap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

were exciting nights for the residents, they often brought unpleasant consequences such as deaths from excessive drinking or “cosmopolitan crime,” as he refers to it. The lingering sorrow and pain from weekend incidents will not only be felt on Sundays when the news reaches the affected families, but the impact is a lifelong one. Rachid’s use of a high-pitched voice and Sesotho lines draw one’s attention and emphasis on the consequences which include broken marriages:

Come Sunday afternoon  
 Lenyalo ngwana abhuti  
 (The marriage my child)  
 Yho dikgatatso, hedile  
 (Oh! the trouble, it’s over)<sup>92</sup>

For those who escaped the harshness of the weekend, Mondays were a nightmare as they were reeling from the aftermath of drinking. The recital ends with a line that reveals that despite the weekend break that presented them with an opportunity to enjoy themselves and escape from work traumas, the excitement was short-lived.

I have to go back to work  
 To be just one more black man at my employment  
 And forget to be my own boss until next weekend maybe<sup>93</sup>

The events in this poem align with the opening message he used to set the tone in that they all show how mundane and repetitive their existence has been with little prospect for change.

The poem *My Black Children* is another story about life in Soweto. It recounts the plight of children living in dire poverty who, in their search for food, could be seen roaming around the streets of Soweto. Their only hope is a man called Madevu (meaning a bearded man). Madevu delivered food (bread and milk) to the destitute every morning. Children would shout his name in excitement when he arrives, “Madevu, nangu uMadevu (Madevu, here comes Madevu).”<sup>94</sup> Residents, old and young, would come out of their houses “like bees let out of the beehive”<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>93</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>94</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>95</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

when they heard their children yelling his name. The poem reflects the appalling conditions in which people in townships were living in. The poverty that Rachid addresses is a cycle that would prevail in Soweto and other black townships as long as the system remained unchanged. While the government's policy of enforcing the use of Afrikaans as a language of instruction in secondary schools was highlighted during the Soweto uprisings, the protest also fought against political and economic injustices brought by the state monopoly. These include unfair distribution of funds whereby the government was spending more on White education than on Black education, a shortage of classrooms for Black children, lack of teachers and other challenges. These crippling conditions produced inferior education for blacks.<sup>96</sup>

He ends his session with a poem *I Am the Grave* by Dylan Thomas, a Welsh poet from the 20th century. Thomas is arguably one of the most well-known Welsh poets. While Thomas is projected by Evelyn Broy as religious drawing from Christianity, he was also described as controversial because of his excessive drinking and preoccupation with sex. This resulted in him writing not only poetry that was religious but also lines and sometimes entire poems that rejected and rebelled against God. These are some reasons why in poems, such as *Do not Go Gentle into that Good Night*, he insists on fighting death and suggests refusal to mourn after death.<sup>97</sup> Paul Jackson describes him as a man who was politically aligned to the radical left and a Marxist or a communist. As part of an anti-fascist culture, Dylan used his writing abilities to advance political points. The anti-fascists incorporated his essays, fiction, plays, and other cultural forms against the destructive impact of Nazism and the Holocaust.<sup>98</sup> Here in South Africa, a reading from a "communist" would have sent shockwaves during the apartheid era. One of the many preoccupations of the state was that of the *rooi gevaar*, the threat of the spread of communism which led to the banning of many anti-apartheid political parties such as the ANC.<sup>99</sup>

The next group to perform was Spirits Rejoice. The group performed a combination of recited poetry backed by jazz melodies, including a song called "The Anonymous House Boy." The poem draws a picture of the working conditions of a black man working in the white suburbs

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<sup>96</sup> <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/june-16-soweto-youth-uprising>

<sup>97</sup> See article by Evelyn J. Broy, "The Enigma of Dylan Thomas." *The Dalhousie Review* 45, no. 3 (1966): 498.

<sup>98</sup> Paul Jackson, "Dylan Thomas: the Anti-fascist Propagandist." In *Dylan Thomas: A Centenary Celebration*, ed. Ellis, Hannah. (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014), 88.

<sup>99</sup> Adam Haupt, "Race, Audience, Multitude: Afrikaans Arts Festivals and the Politics of Inclusion." *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa* 3, no. 1 (2006): 21.

of Johannesburg. It zooms in on the employer-employee relationships and the type of treatment some employees received in the white homes. It narrates the way that this employee had to dress, showing that uniforms were not only a way to clearly distinguish the power differential between employers and employees, but also a reflection on their unequal financial status, something that did not concern the employers according to the poem. The use of sombre musical notes from the saxophone and drums provide accompaniment to the narration and it draws the listeners attention on the lyrics. Drums are used to accentuate certain lines of the poem, such as “there’s a big fight in the flat, and madam runs...”<sup>100</sup> This reflects that life amongst the employers was not always as “perfect” as they may have wanted outsiders to think, and that some of the “madams” were too subjected to a power struggle within their own homes. Here there is a vague hint of the gender differentials within families.

The madam won’t worry about shoes for me  
No genuine cow hide needed  
The soles of my feet are hard and sturdy  
So why bother

But for a vintage collection  
Let me ride home for *izimbadada*<sup>101</sup>  
The white tennis shoes  
Neat and slightly oversized  
Are my everyday footwear

In them, and inside my incredible kitchen boy’s suit  
That never fits too well  
I prefer mine white  
It makes me look like a circus clown  
But all the same, I’m happy  
A free suit from the Mrs<sup>102</sup>

What is offered here is a social critique of the parallel universe to which those employed in domestic service are subjected to on a daily basis. As appalling as the conditions may seem, as

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<sup>100</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>101</sup> *Izimbadada* are sandals that originated from Zulu migrant workers who lived in hostels in Johannesburg and Durban. They were mainly crafted from leather (cow hide) or recycled motor car tyres. For people who mostly grew up walking barefooted, having “shoes” was to them a symbol of modernity. *Izimbadada* were later synonymous with the dances of the Zulu migrant workers who brought the sturdy sandals to the cities during apartheid. Maskanda and mbaqanga musicians popularised *izimbadada* for the sound the rubber soles make when performing traditional Zulu dances. See: Daisy Pillay, Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan, and Inbanathan Naicker, eds. *Object Medleys: Interpretive Possibilities for Educational Research* (Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2017), vii and <https://twyg.co.za/qa-ifele-founder-reggie-xaba-has-given-a-traditional-sandal-a-new-look>.

<sup>102</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.



breadwinners for their families, these employees were expected to forget about their own problems and serve their masters with unrelenting gratitude. They had to perform any type of task: “I bath poodles and take fox terriers for walks in the suburbia.” This points to the differentiated priorities between employer and employee as well as the way in which pets were better nurtured than black staff.

This life came with many sacrifices on their side as well, the separation and loneliness of being away from family and loved ones, “nobody knows me here.... I occasionally meet home boys emptying the ashes into dustbins.”<sup>103</sup> The closest of the people they have in these ‘foreign’ suburbs remain distant for they are denied an opportunity to meet with these other employees and socialise (“It’s just a salutation, how’s home”<sup>104</sup>). Migrant labourers found themselves isolated from their homes when they arrived in an urban city. They were separated from their families and led a fairly solitary life. They were here, so they were told, to work and little opportunity existed for those going through the same feeling of isolation and solitude to meet in these urban spaces. The deterrence of social contact between white employers and their employees was also a government’s strategy to ensure that black workers remained in perpetual subordination to their ‘masters.’<sup>105</sup> Keeping the boundaries clear, as depicted in this poem *The Anonymous House Boy* is about the ironies of being within the intimate space of an employer yet being treated with suspicion and coldness. Despite all the commitment and subservience to their ‘masters (“I stick to my strict duties”<sup>106</sup>), there remained no job security (“there’s a fight at the flat and the white bass fires me”<sup>107</sup>). They had to accept their plight in order to pay their bills.

The next poem *The Convict* exposes life behind prison walls. It is a story about the life of a criminal, the hiding, the fear of getting caught, the consequences if caught:

He pulls out the curtain  
The cricking door, slowly  
It stands ajar, nothing

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<sup>103</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>104</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>105</sup> For further reading see: Jacklyn Cock, *Maids and Madams: Domestic Workers Under Apartheid*. Revised edition. (London: Women’s Press, 1989).

<sup>106</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>107</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

He hides behind the curtain  
 His fears mount, with his heart in his hand  
 He looks around cautiously  
 Nobody  
 [...]
 He rushes to the balcony  
 A policeman on the bench waving his baton  
 He runs back<sup>108</sup>

The group ends their session with *Refugees Welcome*, a poem that shows sympathy to all those who came to the country as refugees. The poem extends a welcoming and a plea to fellow citizens to embrace the refugees. More contemporaneous issues such as migrant labour and xenophobia,<sup>109</sup> overshadow the long history of migrant labour movements not just within the country but also from neighbouring states.

Next to take the stage is Dollar Brand, who performs three jazz pieces. The songs consist of simple melodic lines and scale-like harmonies. Also prominent in the songs is how he makes use of high register notes. Anne Schumann writes that jazz in the apartheid era delivered messages without words. Despite that Ibrahim did not perform one of his well-known songs “Mannenberg” in this concert, its significance is described by Schumann as a song referring to a series of styles of music that were influenced by black culture and church organ music, *marabi*, jazz and the blues.<sup>110</sup>

Shortly after these jazz performances, Roy Bulkin and Duccio performed on 5-10 October followed by Scarlet O’Hara from 12-17 October. Spirits Rejoice were booked again to perform from 19-24 October 1976.

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<sup>108</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>109</sup> See works of Hashi Kenneth Tafira, *Xenophobia in South Africa: A History* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

); S. B. Bekker and David Carlton, *Racism, Xenophobia and Ethnic Conflict* (South Africa: Indicator Press, 1996) and Emily Bridger, “Bridger, Emily. “Xenophobia in South Africa: Historical Legacies of Exclusion and Violence.” *Imperial & Global Forum*, (May 6, 2015): 1-2.

See also articles on migrant labour: Colin Murray, “Migrant Labour and Changing Family Structure in the Rural Periphery of Southern Africa.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 6, no. 2 (1980): 139-156.

and Schiel, Reinhard. “Migrant labour in contemporary South Africa.” Master’s thesis, University of Cape Town, 2014.

<sup>110</sup> Anne Schumann, “The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance Against Apartheid in South Africa,” *Stichproben* 8, no. 14 (2008): 29. [https://stichproben.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/p\\_stichproben/Artikel/Nummer14/Nr14\\_Schumann.pdf](https://stichproben.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/p_stichproben/Artikel/Nummer14/Nr14_Schumann.pdf)

### 3.5 Strike Up the Banned, 25 October 1976

Not only music performances were hosted at the Café, but also poetry recitations, film screenings and musical revues. These were commonly staged after music shows, towards the end and the beginning of the year. One possible explanation for this programming could be that the beginning and end of the year were periods when most musicians were on tour performing in the coastal towns during the holiday season. One such performance staged in the Café was the satirical music revue called *Strike up the Banned*, staged by Pieter Dirk Uys

#### 3.5.1 Featured performers

Pieter Dirk Uys was born in Cape Town on 28 September 1945. He studied drama at the University of Cape Town before moving to London Film School in England to pursue his studies. A well-known South African writer and performer, Uys has written many plays that were produced around the world. Some of the plays he wrote in his career as a playwright, an actor, comedian, a director and designer include *Selle Ou Storie* (1974), *Snow White and the Special Branch* (1974), *God's Forgotten* (1975), *Karnaval* (1975), *Kitsch*, *Die Van Aardes van Grootoor* (1977), *Hell is for Whites Only* (1982) and many more. His revues like *Strike up the Banned* (1975), *Info Scandal* (1979), *Uyscreams with Hot Chocolate Sauce* (1980) and *Total Onslaught* (1984) were staged in the Market Theatre complex.<sup>111</sup>

From the early 1970s, Uys was active in several South African theatre companies like The Space in Cape Town. Throughout this time he became well known for personifying a character named Evita Bezuidenhout. Uys describes Evita as “the most famous white woman in South Africa”<sup>112</sup> who, through satire, addressed social and political issues. Some of his plays were banned by the Publications Control Board,<sup>113</sup> because the language was considered obscene, blasphemous and his themes could be “setting the racial groups in disharmony against each other.”<sup>114</sup>

<sup>111</sup> [pdu.co.za/articles%20about%202006-1.html](https://pdu.co.za/articles%20about%202006-1.html).

<sup>112</sup> Calvin Trillin, “The Satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys Adjusts to the New South Africa.” *The New Yorker*, May 10, 2004. <http://pdu.co.za/gadfly.html>, accessed June 3, 2022.

<sup>113</sup> Pieter-Dirk Uys, *Elections and Erections: A memoir of Fear and Fun* (South Africa: Zebra Press, 2002).

<sup>114</sup> “Strike Up the Banned.” *News24*, June 29, 2014. <https://www.news24.com/news24/strike-up-the-banned-20150430>.

The Market Theatre became Uys' home-base from 1976 to 1990. It was in the Market Theatre that he premiered his new plays like *Paradise is Closing Down* (1977), *Karnava* (1975), *God's Forgotten* (1975), *Just like Home* (1989) and *Scorched Earth* (1989).

The award-winning novelist and playwright has written more than 20 plays and over 30 revues in the 40 years that he has been in the theatre industry. Some of his books are *Trekking to Teema* (2001), *Between the Devil and the Deep: A Memoir of Acting and Reacting* (2005), *Never Too Naked: A Thrilling Tale of Love, Lust and Life* (2011) and many more.

### 3.5.2 The Performance

Strike up the Banned, an anti-censorship revue, was first performed at the Space Theatre, Cape Town in 1972. Its next staging was as a late-night revue in the Grahamstown Festival in 1976, weeks after the Soweto massacre.<sup>115</sup> In the Market Theatre, the revue made its first appearance at the Upstairs Theatre on 6 October 1976 and later that same year it was staged in the Market Café from 25 to 31 October. Written and directed by Uys, the cast included over the years Vincent Ebrahim, Jacqui Delhaye, and Maria Jensen. In the Market Café he performed it with Rika Sennet.<sup>116</sup>

In this bilingual work (Afrikaans and English) satire is used to project the “South African way of life.” Using the inclusive pronoun ‘we’, Uys describes it as “living in [a] paradise” where as citizens “we braai vleis,<sup>117</sup> we transplant hearts, we watch tevee<sup>118</sup> and we ban.”<sup>119</sup> The mockery lies on the understanding of how such indulgences were an exclusive privilege to whites and those in power. It was the same power to ban that was exerted through censorship laws and its implementing institutions like the SABC that the revue was addressing. Having had some of his Afrikaans works banned, Uys has always been critical of the absurdity of some

<sup>115</sup> “Strike Up the Banned.” *News24*, June 29, 2014. <https://www.news24.com/news24/strike-up-the-banned-20150430>, accessed September 19, 2022.

<sup>116</sup> Rika Sennett is a veteran South African actress who became famous in her role as Rissiepit in the film *Snip and Rissiepit* in the 1970s. She appeared in the television movie *Mrs. Mandela* as Helen Joseph and also landed the role of Liz in the television series *Bentley* and others. See Joseph Nkosi, “Rika Sennett Biography: Age, Profile, Background, Shows.” *The Nation*, September 20, 2021. <https://thenation.co.za/bio/rika-sennett-biography/>, accessed June 7, 2022.

<sup>117</sup> Vleis is an Afrikaans word meaning meat. According to Massod Boomgard, Afrikaner cuisine includes braaivleis, boerewors, vleis and koeksiusters. See Massod Boomgard, “Family, Religion and Tradition Big Part of Afrikaner Culture.” *Sunday Tribune*, September 21, 2014. <https://www.pressreader.com/south-africa/sunday-tribune-south-africa/20140921/281878706586424>, accessed September 2, 2022.

<sup>118</sup> Referring to television.

<sup>119</sup> Jeanette Keill, “Beating the Banned.” *Rand Daily Mail*, September 28, 1976.

of the imposed restrictions because when the same works were translated into English, they were allowed to be staged.<sup>120</sup>

Uys' revue was followed by a solo concert featuring folk singer Brian Finch. The concert took place from 2-7 November. From 9-14 November, Keith Blundell performed in the venue, a concert the folk musician shared with poet Chris Mann. Andrew Tracey's Steel Band took the stage from 16-21 November followed by the performance discussed below on 28 November.

### **3.6. Brian Finch, Kenny Henson, Colin Shamley and Ramsay McKay, 28 November 1976**

On 28 November 1976, four musicians namely; Brian Finch, Kenny Henson, Colin Shamley and Ramsay McKay took the stage at the Market Café. The Durban born musicians Brian Finch and Kenneth Edward Henson were both singers, guitarists and songwriters. With the Scottish Ramsay McKay, the three musicians were well known in the rock circles of South Africa.



*Figure 14: Brian Finch and Kenny Henson (no date). Hidden Years Music Archive.*

Brian Finch, Kenny Henson and Ramsay McKay not only performed rock music, but they collaborated in various music projects including performing together in the bands Freedoms

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<sup>120</sup> Daniel Lieberfeld and Pieter-Dirk Uys, "Pieter-Dirk Uys: Crossing Apartheid Lines. An Interview." *TDR* (1988) 41, no. 1 (1997): 61-71.

Children and Abstract Truth.<sup>121</sup> Rock as a genre was adopted by South African youth not only as a musical style but also as a social culture. In Lindy Van der Meulen's view, the genre granted South Africans an opportunity to identify with other cultures besides their own. The collaborative works of Finch, Henson and McKay infused styles from different genres (jazz, folk and classical music) bridging the musical divides that existed at the time. Infusing various stylistic traits not only resulted in new musical blends but also brought together musicians from different backgrounds and cultures.

Brian Finch was a singer and entertainer, described as a musician that sings about living, and his daily life's experiences.<sup>122</sup> He started performing in the mid-60s. In 1973, Finch toured Europe and got an opportunity to work as a singer in London and Amsterdam.<sup>123</sup> Upon his return, he released his first album, *Bringing Back the Good Times*, an eleven-track album released in 1974.

Kenneth Edward Henson was born in Durban on 8 March 1947 and died on 24 May 2007.<sup>124</sup> He was a guitarist and composer who performed for many of South Africa's top bands in the 1960s and 70s, as well as a session musician for recordings. He found Freedoms Children with bassist Ramsay Mackay and drummer Colin Pratley in late 1966.<sup>125</sup> Some of their songs like "Orang Outang," were received with controversy because the tracks included Afro beats.<sup>126</sup> Their progressive rock infused with African influences was considered anti-apartheid and banned from being aired by most radio stations.<sup>127</sup> Henson was also a founding member of the band Abstract Truth, a band that introduced cross-cultural sounds by incorporating bongo drums which evoked an African influence in their music, Indian scales and sounds<sup>128</sup> and the

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<sup>121</sup> Freedom's Children is considered as one of the bands that performed original music and making a conscious effort to create an original sound. The band's interest was more than just entertainment but also positioned itself as one of first South African rock bands to write songs with socio-political lyrics.

<sup>122</sup> See: <https://brianfinch.bandcamp.com>

<sup>123</sup> Press Release from the Market Café in the Hidden Years archive, "Brian Finch with Kenny Henson." (hy-dm-docs-finch-henson-001.pdf (40.14Mb)).

<sup>124</sup> See his obituary in the Hidden Years archive ([hy-dm-brochure-henson-1947-2007-001.pdf \(101.1Mb\)](#))

<sup>125</sup> See Lindy Van der Meulen, "From Rock 'n' Roll to Hard Core Punk: An Introduction to Rock Music in Durban 1963 – 1985." Masters' thesis, University of Natal, 1995, 106. See also newspaper cutting from the Hidden Years archive by Peter Feldman, "Birth of a Dynamic Band." ([hy-dm-news-feldman-finch-001.pdf \(21.25Mb\)](#)).

<sup>126</sup> See newspaper clipping by Peter Feldman, "Birth of a Dynamic Band." Hidden Years archive ([hy-dm-news-feldman-finch-001.pdf \(21.25Mb\)](#))

<sup>127</sup> Nick Warburton, "Freedom's Children." [www.rock.co.za/files/fc\\_index.html](http://www.rock.co.za/files/fc_index.html)

<sup>128</sup> See Lindy Van der Meulen, "From Rock 'n' Roll to Hard Core Punk: An Introduction to Rock Music in Durban 1963 – 1985." Masters' thesis, University of Natal, 1995, 106. See also Press Release from the Market Café in the Hidden Years archive, "Brian Finch with Kenny Henson." (hy-dm-docs-finch-henson-001.pdf (40.14Mb)).



inclusion of a sitar.<sup>129</sup> As a Durban based band, the approach was inspired by the large Indian population of the area. It was through this alternative and multicultural approach that the band managed to outwit the censors and reach out to wider audiences. Van der Meulen regards the lyrics of the band as implicitly political.<sup>130</sup>

Ramsay Mackay was born in Scotland on 15 August 1945. He moved to South Africa with his family in 1953 and they settled in Graskop in the then Eastern Transvaal. He played bass in his early teenage years with a Zululand band, *The Stilettos* later to be renamed *The Beathovens*. Nick Warburton states that the group was the first South African band to specialise in R&B.<sup>131</sup> In October 1965, MacKay and his fellow band members, Angelo Minietti and Gary Demmer moved to Pretoria and formed a new group, *The Lehman Limited*, alongside keyboard player Nic Martens and drummer Colin Pratley. When *The Lehman Limited* dissolved in 1966, MacKay and Pratley joined singer Mick Jade in *The Seven Faces*, a project which despite its name had six musicians. The two musicians later moved to Durban and MacKay became active in the Afro-rock scene, playing bass with Paul Clingman and his band. During this time, MacKay wrote a socio-political rock opera, *Orang Outang*. In 1982, he released a solo album, *Suburbs of Ur*, a twelve-track album released under the Principal label. He relocated to Europe and returned to South Africa in 1996. Upon his return, he collaborated on an album *Mummies (Back from The Dead)* with Brian Davidson and Ken E. Henson but it was never released.

As a singer, songwriter, poet and musician, Mackay was highly regarded in South African rock. His songs have been performed by a variety of artists including Freedoms Children, Hawk, Wildebeest, Margaret Singana, Piet Botha, Jack Hammer, Rabbitt, Harambee, the Brian Davidson Band and others.<sup>132</sup> He died on 4 December 2018.

Although the first part of the recording has a very low signal that makes it inaudible to understand exactly what was happening, one could gather from the applause that followed that

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<sup>129</sup> Sitar is a plucked stringed instrument that originated in medieval India, with its present form shaped around the 18th century. See Sadjad Siddiq, "A Physical Model of the Nonlinear Sitar String." *Archives of Acoustics* 37, no. 1 (2012): 73.

<sup>130</sup> Lindy Van der Meulen, "From Rock'n'Roll to Hard Core Punk: An Introduction to Rock Music in Durban, 1963-1985." PhD diss., University of Natal, 1995, 107.

<sup>131</sup> Nick Warburton, "The Kid He Came from Nazareth." Marq Vas's Southern African Music Collectibles, 2007. Rhythm and Blues or R&B music, was originally termed "race music" and basically included anything intended for African American audiences. A combination of jazz, gospel, and blues, the term "R&B" was coined in the late 1940s in the United States. See: <https://www.musicaexpert.org/what-is-rb-music.htm>.

<sup>132</sup> See: [https://www.rock.co.za/files/fc\\_index.html](https://www.rock.co.za/files/fc_index.html).



some form of musician- audience engagement took place. Having worked on digitising the sound recordings, it did not feel strange that some parts of the tapes were not audible. These were the results of either challenges during recording; lack of amplification for some instruments including vocals, lack of adjustments or sound balancing made afterwards as tapes were not edited and sometimes the tape deterioration resulting from either the age or storage conditions of the tapes.

The music that is performed in this concert once again reveals how musicians were telling real life stories and sharing their personal lives with the audience. In the songs, “Love Is Hard to Find”, “Our Love Is on the Rocks,” and “Pretty Easy,” they sing about love. Brian Finch introduces the songs by talking about three of his experiences in Johannesburg - his car being stolen and losing all his tapes, his wife leaving him and at some point, losing his voice and making a joke about losing all his hair. He then sings a song “Long-haired Country Boy,” a title that bears folk and counter-culture references.<sup>133</sup>

While they kept the audience entertained with the music and many jests, the concert did not end without reflecting on what was happening in the country. They sing about disappearances, noting that “in South Africa, it is tradition that you disappear for a while.”<sup>134</sup> This is a jibe at frequent arrests and detention without trial under the apartheid regime. In some instances, people were arrested and brutally tortured, many dying in detention. These include Ahmed Timol, a South African Communist Party anti-apartheid activist who allegedly committed suicide by jumping out of a 10th floor window in John Vorster Square in 1971; Steve Biko, a Black Consciousness Movement leader and anti-apartheid activist who died in 1977 from sustained brain injuries after being tortured; Lungile Tabalaza, a black anti-apartheid student activist who allegedly committed suicide and jumped from the 5th floor window of Port Elizabeth Prison in 1978, and many more.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Any guitar strumming musician with long hair and jeans was associated with folk culture with which the system linked to subversion at the time, an appearance that was regarded as not aligning with the “traditional” South African way of living. See: Raeford Daniel, “Folk still on the Scene.” *Rand Daily Mail*, May 16, 1970, 12 and Muff Andersson, *Music in the Mix: The Story of South African Popular Music* (Johannesburg: Ravan, 1981), 115.

<sup>134</sup> Transcribed by the author from the tape, hymap-dm-reel-finch-henson-mckay-1976-001, Hidden Years Music Archive.

<sup>135</sup> See compiled list of detainees who died during apartheid era. [tps://www.ahmedtimol.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/G64.-Tables-of-deaths-in-detention.pdf](https://www.ahmedtimol.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/G64.-Tables-of-deaths-in-detention.pdf).

This song is introduced by Finch, saying that “this one is about the selfish world we’re living in.”<sup>136</sup> In the song, they sing about the realities of living in South Africa and the false picture painted by the state, seen in some of the lines transcribed below from listening:

We’ve been through it all, ...  
 Now the time has come for us to make the change....  
 I like the things that you hear, you believe they are true  
  
 But they take a [little lot] that they know is due to you  
 The time has come for us to make the change....<sup>137</sup>

The text not only acknowledges the challenges faced in the country but conveys hope and willingness to act and bring change.

Among artists who made appearances in the last two months of 1976, John Oakley-Smith on (15-30 August), poet Chris Mann (9-14 November), folksinger Keith Blundell and his family (9-14 November), and promoter of African music and folk singer Andrew Tracey and his Steel Band (16-21 November) Also performing was folk singer Ronnie Domp (no specific date). Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu (no specific date) and bands like Malombo (8 August and in September) also made an appearance. Other groups that graced the stage were Flibbertigibbet (no specific date) and the Elastic Headband (16-19 December).<sup>138</sup> While records do not reveal the exact date in which the film *Don’t Look Back* was screened in the venue, it featured in the list of what Marks offered to the audience. The film was a music travelogue released in 1967 directed by D.A. Pennebaker. It covers Bob Dylan’s tour of Europe in 1965.<sup>139</sup> The last concert series of the year before the Café was closed for the Christmas period was held from 16-19 December 1976.

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<sup>136</sup> Transcribed by the author from the tape, hymap-dm-reel-finch-henson-mckay-1976-001, Hidden Years Music Archive.

<sup>137</sup> Transcribed by the author from the tape, hymap-dm-reel-finch-henson-mckay-1976-001, Hidden Years Music Archive.

<sup>138</sup> See list of all musicians in Appendix A.

<sup>139</sup> Charles Bonnot, "No Direction Home: When Dylan Does Look Back." In *21st-Century Dylan: Late and Timely* ed. Laurence Estanove, Adrian Grafe, Andrew McKeown and Claire Hélie (New York, Bloomsbury Academic), 2021, 57-70.

### 3.7 The Elastic Head Band with Caroline Blundell, 16 December 1976

This concert forms part of a series that took place in the Café from 16 to 19 December 1976. It was entitled, *Music Revue with Elastic Band: Words and Music by Bob Dylan*.

#### 3.7.1 Featured musicians



Figure 15: The Elastic Head Band with David Marks, Neil Mac McCallum, John Oakley-Smith, Caroline Blundell, John von Nierop, and Richard Heyns (1977). Hidden Years Music Archive.

The Elastic Head Band used different members in its performances. For this concert, the group consisted of musicians John Oakley-Smith (vocals, piano and guitar), Neil Mac McCallum (vocals and bass), David Marks (vocals, guitar and bass), Gikas Markantonatos (drums), Mike Dickman (vocals and guitar), Caroline Blundell (vocals and guitar), John von Nierop (guitar) and Richard Heyns (narrator).<sup>140</sup> Other musicians that they worked with in the past included Edi Niederlander (vocals and guitar), Michelle Maxwell, Maureen Mo England and Assie O'Donnell (vocals and harmonies), and Howard Sachs (saxophone).<sup>141</sup>

<sup>140</sup> Interview with David Marks, July 12, 2022. See also the cartoon of members that were part of this Market Café tribute concert in the Hidden Years archive ([hy-dm-cartoon-words-music-001.pdf](#) (21.28Mb))

<sup>141</sup> What connected some of these musicians was not only their sharing of skills and passion for music but some were related, married, or friends. Gikas Markantonatos is David's stepbrother, Caroline Blundell and John von Nierop were a couple and Neil Mac McCallum was David Marks's best friend.

### 3.7.2 The Concert

The concert opens with an instrumental jazz piece that receives a big round of applause. The captured sounds and applauses were Marks's way of keeping his live recordings original and "raw." For him, live shows were not only about music but also about capturing the ambience of the space. The intimate size of the space and the proximity between the stage and audience sitting area (see Figure 20) enabled close interaction between performers and the audience. Marks was able to capture many of the comments and jokes made during the show. It is for this reason that he did not edit his recordings.<sup>142</sup>

In between the songs, the narrator not only shares jokes with the audience but also takes on the persona of Bob Dylan, sharing his life story. He recounts his (Dylan's) childhood stories growing up in Hibbing, Minnesota, his behaviour and the troubles he got himself into growing up. Born in Duluth, Minnesota on 24 May 1941, Dylan spent most of his childhood in Hibbing. He is a self-taught pianist and guitarist performing American folk music and blues. After attending the University of Minnesota for one year in 1959, he moved to New York in 1961 and started performing in folk clubs, an interest that was influenced by his love for Woody Guthrie and other American folk artists.<sup>143</sup> Dylan's music is politically charged and revolves around topics like the social conditions of man, religion, politics, and love,<sup>144</sup> topics that resonated with folk musicians in South Africa.

After the introduction, the band performs "Walkin' Down the Line," written and recorded in November 1962 for Broadside Magazine by Dylan.<sup>145</sup>

[Chorus]  
Well, I'm walking down the line  
I'm walking down the line  
An' I'm walking down the line

<sup>142</sup> In a podcast by David Marks and Lizabé Lambrechts, Marks briefly describes his recording process. The podcast is Episode 3 of podcast series *Sounds of Southern Africa. Music, Empowerment, Freedom* by Dulucq Sophie, "The Hidden Years Music Archive: (Re)discovering Underground South African Jazz, Rock, and Pop Music from the 1950s-1980s." March 9, 2022. <https://networks.h-net.org/node/28765/discussions/9893582/podcasts-series-sounds-southern-africa-music-empowerment-freedom>.

<sup>143</sup> His biography is available in his official website: <https://bobdylancenter.com/about/biography/>.

<sup>144</sup> See: Bob Dylan – Biographical. NobelPrize.org. Nobel Prize Outreach AB 2022. Accessed Sep 26, 2022. <<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2016/dylan/biographical/>.

<sup>145</sup> Broadside was a magazine devoted to topical music. It was founded by Agnes Cunningham, a New York musician and publisher with her husband Gordon Friesen in the early 1960s. The magazine focused on publishing works of folksingers of the folk revival. See: <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/20289/>.

My feet'll be a-flying  
To tell about my troubled mind

I got a heavy-headed gal (x3)  
She aint a-feelin' well  
When she's better only time will tell

My money comes and goes (x3)  
And rolls and flows and rolls and flows  
Through the holes in the pockets in my clothes

I see the morning light (x2)  
Well, it's not because  
I'm an early riser  
I didn't go to sleep last night

I got my walking shoes (x3)  
An' I ain't a-gonna lose  
I believe I got the walking blues<sup>146</sup>

Whilst the lyrics tell of his troubled life, the music with its strumming guitar and lively dance beats drifts the listener away from the distress depicted in the song. The music creates some form of disconnection from life's realities and troubles, a way to cope when in distress.

The narrator further shares how Dylan's musical career started, from hitchhiking from Minnesota to Florida - about 2 696 kilometres and travelling to New York to try his luck in music. He also mentions the rejection he received from friends in the process and how people judged his lifestyle choices. The stories not only reveal Dylan's real-life struggles but some of the struggles that other musicians faced in their journey to succeed. Sharing such stories exposed musicians and patrons to the American counterculture and to universal shared life experiences.

Before Marks leads the song "Hey Guthrie, I Wrote You a Song," a recital of the poem *Last Thoughts on Woody Guthrie* is performed. Dylan wrote the poem in honour of his idol Woody Guthrie, who at the time was dying from Huntington's disease. It was first recited at New York City's Town Hall in 1963.<sup>147</sup> The narrator briefly explains how Dylan idolised Guthrie and

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<sup>146</sup> Transcribed from reel-to-reel tape hymap-dm-reel-dylan-elastic-headband-1976-001 in the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>147</sup> Christopher Hooton, "Bob Dylan was asked to give 25 words on Woody Guthrie, he wrote 1,705 beautiful ones." *Independent*, October 13, 2016. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/bob->

how his life was influenced by him. Below are some of the lines in the poem that are clearly indicative of how influential Guthrie was to Dylan:

Woody Guthrie was my last idol  
 He was the last idol because he was the first idol I'd ever met  
 That taught me face to face that man to man  
 Shuddering even himself as an idol  
 And men have reasons for what they say or do

Every action can be questioned  
 Leaving no comment untouched  
 And took for granted [...]  
 Woody never made me fear  
 Or trample any hopes when busted  
 He just carried a book of man  
 And gave me to read

The most important thing I know I learnt from Woody Guthrie  
 I am my own person  
 I've got basic common rights whether I am here in this country  
 Or in any other place  
 You can either go to the church of your choice  
 Or you can go to Brooklyn State Hospital  
 You'll find God in the church of your choice  
 You'll find Woody Guthrie in Brooklyn State Hospital...<sup>148</sup>

Woodrow Wilson Guthrie was born on July 14, 1912, in Okemah, Oklahoma and died on 3 October 1967. According to Jonathan Mason, Woody was the first known protest singer who was very vocal in claiming and fighting for his rights. This is indeed a questionable observation considering the music created by those enslaved persons in America. Although Woody had initially lived a very comfortable life as a child of a musical and moderately wealthy family, a slew of tragedies and bad luck brought them hard times, and by his late teens he was on his own and penniless. The situation left him a wanderer and he also suffered from depression. He wrote songs that reflected the hardships and the injustice of his situation. It was through this that he developed clearer and stronger left-wing views.<sup>149</sup>

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dylan-nobel-prize-for-literature-2016-asked-to-give-25-words-on-woody-guthrie-he-wrote-1-705-beautiful-ones-a7359241.html.

<sup>148</sup> Transcribed from reel-to-reel tape hymap-dm-reel-dylan-elastic-headband-1976-001 in the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>149</sup> Jonathan Mason, "Remembering Woody Guthrie: A Century After His Birth, the influence of 'the first protest singer' lives on through contemporary music of dissent." *Aljazeera*, [www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2012/7/14/remembering-woody-guthrie](http://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2012/7/14/remembering-woody-guthrie).

The poem is followed by Marks' performance of Dylan's song "Hey Guthrie, I Wrote You a Song" composed by Dylan in 1962. Originally titled "Song to Woody," it was released on his first album *Bob Dylan* in 1962. In 1970, he recorded it again at Columbia in New York with his friend George Harrison.<sup>150</sup>

I'm out here a thousand miles from my home  
Walking down a road many men have gone down  
I'm seeing your world of people and things  
Your peasants, your paupers, your princes and kings

Hey, hey, Woody Guthrie, I wrote you a song  
About a funny old world that keeps going wrong  
It's sick and it's hungry, it's tired an' it's torn  
It looks like it's dying and it's hardly been born

Well here's to Cisco, to Sonny and Leadbelly too  
And to all the good people that travelled with you  
Here's to all the hearts and the minds of the men  
Who come with the dust and go with the wind

I'm leaving tomorrow, but it could be today  
Somewhere down the road someday  
And the very last thing that I want to do  
Is to say I've been hitting some hard travelling too.<sup>151</sup>

Tracing back the lives of Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan, the book *Political Folk Music in America from Its Origins to Bob Dylan* (2010) reveals that the connection between the two folk singers was not only musical but also political. They both sang about homelessness, abandonment, brutal attacks and racial hatred. Lawrence J. Epstein argues that because folk singers "saw themselves as vanguards of a changing society,"<sup>152</sup> that "they sang with fierce moral voices as they sought to relieve human suffering [in America] and what they saw as an uncaring society."<sup>153</sup> Guthrie and Dylan not only performed in concerts but also in civil rights rallies, benefit concerts and were part of organising unions and supporting striking workers.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Paul Zollo, "Behind the Song: 'Song to Woody' by Bob Dylan." *American Songwriter*, October 12, 2020. <https://americansongwriter.com/behind-the-song-song-to-woody-by-bob-dylan/>, accessed April 3, 2022.

<sup>151</sup> Transcribed by the author from the tape, hymap-dm-reel-dylan-elastic-headband-1976-001, Hidden Years Music Archive.

<sup>152</sup> Lawrence J. Epstein. *Political Folk Music in America from Its Origins to Bob Dylan* (USA: McFarland & Company, 2010), 2.

<sup>153</sup> Epstein. *Political Folk Music in America from Its Origins to Bob Dylan*, 1.

<sup>154</sup> Epstein. *Political Folk...*, 2.



Sharing such stories on the Café's stage painted Dylan and Guthrie not only as musicians, but also as ordinary people, vulnerable to life's challenges. Despite the seriousness of this topic, they kept the audience entertained through satirical comments, for example, making fun of picnics as a waste of money. This atmosphere is gleamed from the live recordings of the concerts illustrating connections that would not have been experienced in commercial recordings, focused on clean-cut music records.

Other songs that were performed on the night include John Oakley-Smith's song, "The Lady from the Odeon." This is a love song that tells a story of a beautiful young lady whose dream was to live a happy and luxurious life that included limousines and "drinking matinees on Saturdays." She envisioned her dream lover, Maxie, treating her like a queen. Oakley-Smith released the song in 1976 under the WEA label. A solo performance of "It Ain't Me" by Caroline Blundell, one of the female musicians that performed with the Elastic Head Band followed. The lyrics tell a story of someone turning down love, accompanied by beautiful melodic lines with piano and guitar accompaniment.

I'm' not the one you are looking for,  
It ain't me you're looking for,  
You said you're looking for someone  
Someone to close his eyes for you

You said you looking for someone  
To pick you up each time you fall  
To gather you flowers constantly  
And come each time you call

It ain't me baby  
No, no, no  
It ain't me baby  
It ain't me you're looking for.<sup>155</sup>

The concert year of 1976 was closed on 19 December by the Elastic Head Band.

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<sup>155</sup> Transcribed from reel-to-reel tape hymap-dm-reel-dylan-elastic-headband-1976-001 in the Hidden Years archive.

### 3.8 Conclusion

An investigation into the various music genres that were performed in the Café shows that it included jazz, folk music, bluegrass, and country. It is unique for a venue to programme such a diverse range of styles as venues were more regularly focused on one genre and one particular audience demographic.

While the study views race as a social construct, it is difficult to dissociate race from the consumption practises of music as discussed by Julian Schaap and Pauwke Berkers.<sup>156</sup> Similarly, various other scholars have identified connections between music genres and classificatory practices based on race, ethnicity and gender.<sup>157</sup> They reflect on how race-ethnicity and gender can become entrenched in genre conventions, for example noting that hip-hop has been associated with blackness; while country, heavy metal and rock music has been associated with whiteness and masculinity.<sup>158</sup> The diversity in genres offered in the Café provides evidence of a space whose interest was to present and attract diverse musicians and audiences.

Folk musician Colin Shamley had the most appearances in the Café with at least five concerts that have been documented. The other musicians and bands that performed twice in the year were John Oakley-Smith (folk), Abdullah Ibrahim (jazz), Spirits Rejoice (jazz), Elastic Headband (folk) and Malombo (Afro-jazz). What this programming reveals is the balance achieved between the genres. While there is no balance in race-ethnicity and gender representation, evidence of multiracialism could be witnessed. The study understands

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<sup>156</sup> For further information, see: Julian Schaap and Pauwke Berkers (2020) “Maybe It’s ... Skin Colour?” How Race, Ethnicity and Gender Function in Consumers’ Formation of Classification Styles of Cultural Content.” *Consumption Markets & Culture* 23, no. 6 (2020): 599-615., DOI: 10.1080/10253866.2019.1650741

<sup>157</sup> See works of Julian Schaap and Pauwke Berkers (2020) “Maybe It’s ... Skin Colour?” How Race, Ethnicity and Gender Function in Consumers’ Formation of Classification Styles of Cultural Content.” *Consumption Markets & Culture* 23, no. 6 (2020): 599-615. DOI: 10.1080/10253866.2019.1650741; Julian Schaap, Jeroen Waal and Willem Koster, “Black Rap, White Rock: Non-Declarative Culture and the Racialization of Cultural Categories. *Sociological Inquiry*, 2021, 13; H. Winant, “Race, Ethnicity and Social Science.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2015: 38 (13): 2176–2185 and others.

<sup>158</sup> See works of Julian Schaap and Pauwke Berkers (2020) “Maybe It’s ... Skin Colour?” How Race, Ethnicity and Gender Function in Consumers’ Formation of Classification Styles of Cultural Content.” *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 2020: 23:6 (599-661), DOI: 10.1080/10253866.2019.1650741; Julian Schaap, Jeroen Waal and Willem Koster, “Black Rap, White Rock: Non-Declarative Culture and the Racialization of Cultural Categories. *Sociological Inquiry* 92, no.4 (November 2022): 1293; H. Winant, “Race, Ethnicity and Social Science.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38, no. 13 (2015): 2176-2185. and others.

multiracialism as a tool to transcend racial barriers and promote interracial interactions through dismantling the racial categorisation of the apartheid state.<sup>159</sup>

The investigation further provided insights into the variety of themes that the musicians sang about from unrequited love to politics. Satire was used by performers like Colin Shamley, Sol Rachid, Spirits Rejoice, Elastic Head Band and Pieter Dirk-Uys to expose the economic and socio-political injustices of the apartheid regime. Song lyrics, commentary and references that showed their political sentiments towards what was happening in the country are made by Sol Rachid, Spirits Rejoice and Pieter Dirk-Uys. These sentiments ranged from subtle lyrics and remarks to overt songs that all exposed the government's injustices. Songs such as *The Anonymous House Boy* by Spirits Rejoice, the poems by Sol Rachid, and the songs of Brian Finch, revealed the pervasiveness of apartheid in upholding the ideology of white superiority and the ways in which this socially moulded whites, as exhibited in the ironies of working in a white home.

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<sup>159</sup> See article by: Stephen Clingman, "Multi-Racialism, or A World of Strangers." *Salmagundi* 62 (1984): 32-61. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40547637>.

## Chapter 4: “Everything that has a beginning must eventually have an end:”<sup>1</sup> The Market Café, 1977 – 1980

### 4.1. Introduction

In the aftermath of the Soweto uprisings, armed struggle against the regime increased quite dramatically. Armed resistance from the African National Congress (ANC), uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) resulted among others in the formation of underground structures and using new recruits to sabotage key infrastructure points in South Africa.<sup>2</sup> With resistance and defiance continuing to rise, the death of Steve Biko, leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, in police custody on 12 September 1977, increased tension in the political landscape of the country.

After a year-end break in 1976, Marks resumed his work at the Café with a show held on 16 January 1977. This was going to be the first full year for the Café. This first concert featured Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu. Other performances that took place in the year included those of folk singer songwriter Paul Clingman, folk musicians John Oakley-Smith, Brian Finch and Kenny Henson, hard rock and punk bands like Raven and Radio Rats, and Celtic folk music from the Silvercreek Mountain Band among others. Artists and bands including Abdullah Ibrahim, Colin Shamley, Malombo, and Spirits Rejoice who performed in the previous year, made their reappearance in the Café.

This chapter investigates the performances that took place in the Market Café from 1977 to 1980. By exploring the sonic agency in the space, the chapter examines how, according to Brandon LaBelle sound enabled a “public” whose expressions contributed to “emancipatory practises.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The title is taken from a poem recited by Sol Rachid during a concert held in the Market Café on 21 September 1976. It is transcribed by the author from reel-to-reel tape (hymap-dm-reel-rachid-spirits-rejoice-ibrahim-1976-001) held in the Hidden Years Music Archive.

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://omalley.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/> and <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/mass-democratic-movements-1976-1983>

<sup>3</sup> Brandon LaBelle, *Sonic Agency: Sound and Emergent Forms of Resistance* (London: Goldsmith Press, 2018), 4.

## 4.2 Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu, 16 January 1977

In 1977, the Café's first performance featured Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu. This was not their first appearance in the Café, having performed the previous year.<sup>4</sup> Whereas other concert programmes in 1976 saw a multi-racial line-up, the collaboration between Clegg and Mchunu was the first multiracial group to perform together in the Café. Clegg and Mchunu combined Zulu and Western musical idioms. This was a demonstration of two cultures coexisting and thus contradicting principles of cultural segregation that the apartheid regime upheld.<sup>5</sup>

### 4.2.1 Featured musicians

#### 4.2.1.1 Johnny Clegg



*Figure 16. Sipho Mchunu and Johnny Clegg (no date). City Press*

Jonathan Clegg was born near Manchester, England, in 1953 and grew up in Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa. He was a singer, songwriter, dancer, anthropologist and a musical activist whose music blended Western pop with African Zulu rhythms. When his mother Muriel, a cabaret singer, moved to Johannesburg, she married Dan Pienaar, an anti-apartheid crime reporter interested in Black African culture. During his assignments, his stepfather took

<sup>4</sup> The exact date of their previous concert could not be established. It has not been noted on the reel-to-reel sound recording in the Hidden Years archive and only give the year. The tape has been digitized, hymap-dm-reel-clegg-mchunu-1976-001.

<sup>5</sup> Caleb Mutch, "'Something Else Is Possible': Transcultural Collaboration as Anti-apartheid Activism in the Music of Juluka." *Popular Music* 40, no. 3-4 (2021): 450. doi:10.1017/S026114302100043X.

him to the townships of Johannesburg. It was in these segregated black townships where Clegg met migrant Zulu workers exposing him to a different culture from his own.<sup>6</sup>

In 1967 when he was fourteen and living in the working-class white suburb of Bellevue, Johannesburg, he was sent by his mother to a local corner café to buy milk and bread. Outside the café, he met a young black street musician, Charles Mzila. The young Mzila, who was a Zulu migrant cleaner by day and guitarist by night, taught Clegg the Zulu language and the *maskandi* guitar and dance styles of the migrants.<sup>7</sup> His involvement with black artists landed him in jail several times. The first time he was arrested was when he was 15 years old.<sup>8</sup>

At the age of 16, Clegg met Sipho Mchunu, a maskandi musician who was working as a gardener. In 1970, the two started performing together as a duo in a partnership that would last many years.<sup>9</sup> Mchunu taught Clegg about the Zulu culture including stick fighting.<sup>10</sup> In the 1970s, he studied anthropology at the University of Witwatersrand where he later took up a position as a lecturer. His study of anthropology, in particular, Zulu culture, helped him develop more interest in Zulu music. This inspired him to form the multiracial band Juluka (Zulu for sweat) in 1979 with Sipho Mchunu.<sup>11</sup> Juluka grew to six members, three white and three black. As a multiracial group, the political conditions at the time hindered them from performing in South Africa because their music and their mixed grouping did not conform to the apartheid ideology.<sup>12</sup> They could only perform in private venues such as universities, clubs and homes. In 1976, they released their first single *Woza Friday*. It was in 1979 that the band finally released its first album *Universal Men* amid harassment and discrimination.<sup>13</sup>

Clegg built a large following in France and his mastery of the *IsiZulu* language, its culture and dance earned him his nickname “Le Zoulou Blanc” (The White Zulu).<sup>14</sup> His fame in France

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<sup>6</sup> See: <https://www.johnnyclegg.com/biog.html>.

<sup>7</sup> See: <https://www.panmacmillan.co.za/blogs/news/the-man-behind-the-story-seven-moving-stories-to-look-forward-to-in-johnny-clegg-s-memoir>.

<sup>8</sup> See: <https://briefly.co.za/33732-johnny-clegg-biography-age-son-wife-family-songs-illness-death.html>

<sup>9</sup> Jedidah Tabalia, “Johnny Clegg Biography: Age, Son, Wife, Family, Songs, Illness and Death.” *Briefly*, July 17, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2019/jul/19/johnny-clegg-obituary>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.panmacmillan.co.za/blogs/news/the-man-behind-the-story-seven-moving-stories-to-look-forward-to-in-johnny-clegg-s-memoir>.

<sup>11</sup> Tabalia, “Johnny Clegg Biography.”

<sup>12</sup> See: <https://www.johnnyclegg.com/biog.html>.

<sup>13</sup> See: <https://www.johnnyclegg.com/biog.html>.

<sup>14</sup> Rodger Bosch, “Johnny Clegg, South Africa’s ‘White Zulu’ Rocker, Dies Aged 66.” *France 24*, July 16, 2019. <https://www.france24.com/en/20190716-south-africa-musician-johnny-clegg-white-zulu-dies-66>, accessed October 2, 2022.

also won him the “Victoire French Music Industry Award” for the biggest-selling world music album in France on two separate occasions in the late '80s and early '90s.<sup>15</sup> In 1988 Clegg took part in the “Human Rights Now!” world tour with Sting and Bruce Springsteen.<sup>16</sup> In the 2000s, Clegg embarked on a solo career and released a number of albums like *New World Survivor* (2002), *A South African Story* (2003), and *One Life* (2007).<sup>17</sup>

Throughout his life, Clegg received many musical accolades including the Best World Music Album for *Heat, Dust and Dreams* (1993) at the 1994 Billboard Music Awards and Best African Group at the 1998 KORA All Africa Music Awards,<sup>18</sup> several honorary doctorates and South Africa’s Order of Ikhamanga, Silver in 2012.<sup>19</sup>

#### 4.2.1.2 Sipho Mchunu

Sipho Mchunu was born in 1951 in Kranskop, outside Greytown, in Kwazulu-Natal. He learned to play guitar as a teenager and in 1969, he went to Johannesburg where he found work as a gardener. It was the same year that he met Clegg who was infatuated with Zulu culture and challenged him to a guitar duet in his kitchen. This was the beginning of their friendship and the two started as a duo under the name of “Johnny and Sipho.” They started performing in public in the 1970s and at times appearing with their impressive 32-member *indlamu*<sup>20</sup> dance group called WaMadhlebe. The group consisted of Zulu migrant workers and hostel dwellers. They also performed in folk gatherings as “Johnny and Sipho” before changing their name to Juluka in 1979.<sup>21</sup>

When Juluka was disbanded in June 1985, Mchunu returned to his five wives in KwaZulu-Natal to become a livestock farmer looking after the family cattle. At home, Mchunu embarked on a solo career which was financed and promoted by Clegg.<sup>22</sup> In 1989, he recorded the solo

<sup>15</sup> Bosch, “Johnny Clegg, South Africa’s ‘White Zulu’ Rocker”.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Pooley, “Sikeyi: In Memoriam–Johnny Clegg (1953–2019).” *Muziki Journal of Music Research in Africa* 17, no.1 (2020):133.

<sup>17</sup> See: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Johnny-Clegg#ref1084096>.

<sup>18</sup> The KORA All Africa Music Awards are awarded annually for musical achievement in sub-Saharan Africa. For a list of Clegg’s accolades, see Toni Jaye Singer, “8 Things You Might Not Know About Late Music Icon Johnny Clegg.” *Sunday Times*, July 17, 2019. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/2019-07-17-8-things-you-might-not-know-about-late-music-icon-johnny-clegg/>, accessed October 7, 2022.

<sup>19</sup> See: [https://www.gcis.gov.za/sites/default/files/docs/resourcecentre/multimedia/national\\_orders2012.pdf](https://www.gcis.gov.za/sites/default/files/docs/resourcecentre/multimedia/national_orders2012.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> *Indlamu* is a late nineteenth century Zulu dance style. See: Christopher Ballantine, “A Brief History of South African Popular Music.” *Popular Music* 8, no. 3 (1989): 305-310.

<sup>21</sup> See: <https://www.discogs.com/artist/407356-Sipho-Mchunu>.

<sup>22</sup> See: <https://www.discogs.com/artist/407356-Sipho-Mchunu>.



album *Yithi Esavimba* released in France and followed by the album *Umhlaba Uzobuya* in 1990 with 3rd Ear Music.<sup>23</sup> The two albums were not marketed well and as such, sales were poor.<sup>24</sup>

In 2021, after a 24-year break from the music industry, Mchunu went back to the studio to release a new album titled *Iselula* (The cell phone). Andile Sithole states that the album has ten IsiZulu songs and a music video with English subtitles. It features some of the former members of the Juluka band including Mandisa Dlanga and Khanyo Maphumulo on backing vocals.<sup>25</sup>

Mchunu's accolades include an honorary doctorate in visual and performing arts awarded by the Durban University of Technology on 7 September 2018.<sup>26</sup>

#### 4.2.2 The Concert

The show on 16 January 1977 was one of the concerts that exposed patrons who were not Zulu or familiar with the Zulu culture, to its language and traditions. Clegg and Mchunu wore traditional regalia and demonstrated a traditional Zulu stick fight. Some of the songs that they performed included: "Uyishaleni Lengane Isencane" (Why are you hitting the child); "Thula Mntanami - Umama Uzokuphathel' Amaswiti" (Hush my child, mother will bring you sweets), a song that was composed by Sipho Mchunu; "Emadlozini" (In the place of the ancestors), a song communicating IsiZulu cultural beliefs and how they acknowledged and honoured their ancestors through rituals; and "Unkosi Bomvu" (The Red King), a song about leadership and the respect that was bestowed upon them by their subjects. Before every song, Clegg gives a background and explanation of what each song is about (see analysed songs below).<sup>27</sup> By doing this, he was involving any musician and audience member that did not understand the language and the *AmaZulu* culture. It was a teachable moment.

The recording captures the energy and vivacity of Clegg's voice as he greets the audience during the opening of the concert. He greets the audience in IsiZulu, "sanibona,

<sup>23</sup> See the two reel to reel tapes in the Hidden Years Music Archive: hymap-dm-reel-mchunu-1990-001 and hymap-dm-reel-mchunu-1990-002.

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.mixtapes.org.za/encyclopedia/sipho-mchunu/>

<sup>25</sup> Andile Sithole, "Maskandi Legend Sipho Mchunu Back in the Studio." *The Witness*, May 8, 2021. <https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/kzn/maskandi-legend-sipho-mchunu-back-in-the-studio-20210508/>, accessed July 8, 2022.

<sup>26</sup> Sithole, "Maskandi Legend Sipho Mchunu Back in the Studio."

<sup>27</sup> Tape named reel-to-reel tape hymap-dm-reel-dylan-elastic-headband-1976-001 from the Hidden Years archive will be transcribed for background information that the musicians share.

siyanibingelela ”<sup>28</sup> before switching over to English “good morning, greetings!” Before Clegg’s greeting, some other interactions with the audience can also be heard. One is of Clegg immediately correcting Marks’s pronunciation of Mchunu as “Mtshunu” after he introduced the two performers. This can be viewed as a way of showing respect to his fellow musician and his name, or as his way of showing his linguistic prowess.

In their first song of the night, “Uyishaleni Lengane Isencane,” the audience can be heard debating a phrase that Clegg used during his introduction of the song. Clegg used the phrase “ye bathong” but pronounced it as “di bakhong.” The phrase is used in SeSotho to express surprise, which could be aligned to the fact that the audience laughed when he jokingly greeted them with a “good morning” while the concert took place in the evening. His attempt of speaking another language could be viewed as a way to reach out to other language speakers in the venue. Johannesburg’s black population consisted of SeSotho, IsiXhosa, SeTswana, IsuZulu and other language speakers. These conversations and engagements create a vibrant and energetic atmosphere in the venue, one wherein the audience is drawn into the events on stage and eager to participate.

According to the introduction that Clegg provides in the concert, the first song is a “walking song,” walking as a primary means of transport for most black people. Titled “Thula Mntanami - Umama Uzokuphathel’ Amaswiti” (Hush my child, your mother will bring you sweets), it is a lullaby composed by Sipho Mchunu. Mchunu leads the song and also performs a guitar improvisation that accompanies and enhances the melody of his vocal lines.

While the lullaby provides comfort to the baby who is crying in his mother’s absence, it expresses the immense responsibility that women had to endure while their husbands were away for work. South Africa has a long history of migrant labour where black men were drawn into urban spaces as cheap labour during the mineral revolution placing undue pressure on black women to take on the role of breadwinner and single caregiver.<sup>29</sup> The responsibilities ranged from domestic chores such as taking care of the in-laws, fetching water, chopping wood for cooking, to raising children. The repetitive stanzas throughout the song provide emphasis

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<sup>28</sup> Transcribed from reel-to-reel tape hymap-dm-reel-clegg-mchunu-1977-001 in the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>29</sup> See Bianca Rochelle Parry, “Eating Burnt Toast: The Lived Experiences of Female Breadwinners in South Africa.” Master’s thesis, University of South Africa, 2014.

on the message, that of providing comfort to the distressed baby and a reflection of the general mundane monotony of life.

The next song they perform “Emadlozini” (In the place of the ancestors) shares AmaZulu cultural beliefs about deceased family members. Clegg describes it as a lament from a man who lost both his parents simultaneously and expresses his wish that they have been well received by other ancestors so that they may protect the family from any misfortunes.<sup>30</sup> This song is significant, not just in how it shares Zulu culture but also in how it explores universal themes of death and loss. Loss can also be viewed as euphemism for loss of political, social, and economic freedom.

Oobaba sebengibikile emadlozini bandla  
 (My fathers have announced me to the ancestors)  
 Angisenalutho  
 (I own nothing/ I am an orphan)  
 Angisenababa, anginesamamalo  
 (I have lost my father; I have lost my mother)  
 Kudlala amavolontiya, amagwal’ ankosi  
 (The home is deserted)<sup>31</sup>

Contrary to the Christian belief in the superiority of God as a protector and of people ascending to heaven after death, Zulu tradionalists believe that the dead become ancestors and have power.<sup>32</sup> The ancestral spirits protect homes, maintain harmony, and can sometimes cause misfortune and illness if family members err. Although they invoke God for healing, God is believed to work through the ancestors.<sup>33</sup> Clegg shares this knowledge in his introduction of the song. This exchange of cultures plays an important role in exposing his audience to Zulu beliefs, values, norms, and language, something that segregation policies stifled.

Another song that was included in their performance “Unkosi Bomvu” (“The Red King”), further speaks to Zulu beliefs and customs. In it, Clegg describes the unequivocal feelings that Zulus had about the leadership of the early, arguably contentious, kings Dingaan and Shaka

<sup>30</sup> Transcribed from reel-to-reel tape hymap-dm-reel-clegg-mchunu-1977-001 in the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>31</sup> Transcribed from reel-to-reel tape hymap-dm-reel-clegg-mchunu-1977-001 in the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>32</sup> Stephen Edwards, N Makunga, J. Thwala and B. Mbele define ancestors in Southern African Nguni context as deceased, very elderly and/or living dead persons who continue to communicate with their children. See: Stephen Edwards, N Makunga, J. Thwala & B. Mbele, “The Role of The Ancestors in Healing.” *Indilinga African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems* 8, no. 1 (2009): 3. 10.4314/indilinga.v8i1.48234.

<sup>33</sup> Stephen Edwards et al., “The Role of The Ancestors in Healing,” 5.

Zulu. With the then reigning king, King Goodwill Zwelithini,<sup>34</sup> there was an ambivalence among the people on his leadership and some believed that to turn around the situation, the nation needed to appease the ancestors. In this belief however, it seems that the brutality of the Zulu monarchy towards its own people is neglected.<sup>35</sup> This could reflect a nostalgic and misremembered past to appeal to Zulu chiefs to help solve contemporary politics. Slaughtering a bull and performing a ritual was needed to bring back the spirit of the old leaders. With the feeling that the pre-colonial African kingdoms had lost all its power, the proposed cleansing ritual would bring back the lost warriorship.

The sharing of culture also transpired through sound techniques and physical performance. The pair performed a guitar and *umrhubhe* duet.<sup>36</sup> The incorporation of *umrhubhe*, originally an IsiXhosa mouth bow instrument, and pairing it with a western instrument, the guitar, depicts the eclectic and multicultural idioms they drew on for their musical inspiration. The musicians also give a demonstration of stick-fighting for the audience. Clegg teaches the audience about the objects used in stick-fighting, *isikhwili* (attacking stick), *ubhoko* (defending stick) and *ihawu* (defending shield).<sup>37</sup> The mock battle establishes who is the dominant warrior when facing the enemy or to establish “the bull” amongst the herd during factional fights. He explains that this performance teaches *ukuqina*, how to be strong. The strength is not simply physical but requires mental agility to overcome the many obstacles faced in life. Stick fighting not only provides Zulu men with skill, but also builds courage, something they believed distinguished them as notorious warriors. It employs the same techniques during traditional Zulu warfare.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu was groomed to become king from a young age. He was officially installed on the throne on 3 December 1971. He was the longest-reigning Zulu monarch on record. See: Jill E. Kelly, Jabulani Sithole & Liz Timbs, “King Zwelithini and the Historians.” *South African Historical Journal* 73, no. 2 (2021): 533-544.

. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02582473.2021.1937300>.

<sup>35</sup> For a history on Zulu monarchy and its subjects, see John Laband, *The Eight Zulu Kings: From Shaka to Goodwill Zwelithini* (South Africa: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2018).

<sup>36</sup> *Umrhubhe* is a musical bow instrument often made with a brass wire. It is played by rubbing the string with a reed or scraped stick, using the mouth as a resonator. It was mainly played by women and its origins can be traced to the San people. It is common among the isiXhosa, amaZulu and Mpondo people. For more details, see Dave Dargie, “The Xhosa Umrhubhe Mouthbow: An Extraordinary Musical Instrument.” *African Music: Journal of the International Library of African Music* 9, no. 1 (2011): 33-55 and Luvuyo, Dontsa, “From the Museum to the Music Classroom: Teaching the Umrhubhe as An Ensemble Instrument.” *International Journal of Music Education* 26, no. 2 (2008): 177-190.

<sup>37</sup> Notes transcribed from reel-to-reel tape hymap-dm-reel-clegg-mchunu-1977-001 in the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>38</sup> Marié-Heleen Coetzee, “Zulu Stick Fighting: A Socio-Historical Overview.” *Electronic Journal of Martial Arts and Sciences*. Available: [http://ejmas.com/jalt/jaltart\\_Coetzee\\_0902.htm](http://ejmas.com/jalt/jaltart_Coetzee_0902.htm). Electronic Journal of Martial Arts and Sciences INYO. See also: Marie-Heleen Coetzee, “Playing Sticks: An Exploration of Zulu Stick Fighting as Performance.” *South African Theatre Journal* 14, no. 1 (2000): 97-113.

Clegg fully emerges himself in the performance. He is heard breathing heavily at the end of the staged production.

Other songs performed include “Inkunzi Ayihlabi Ngakumisa”, “E-Africa Kukhal’ Abangcwele”, “Uyishayelani Ingane Isencane”, “Woza Friday”, “Sibon’ Isoka Limemeza” and others. Some of these songs were later released as part of their Juluka album *Universal Men* (1979) under Satbel Recording Studios.<sup>39</sup>

Marks’ intention of keeping the ambience of the live performance is evident in this recording. The jokes that Clegg shares with the audience, the audience’s response through laughter and applause, the sounds of the musicians testing and tuning their instruments have all been captured. In the jokes, Clegg combines languages (English, IsiZulu, Sesotho), something that accommodated the multi-racial audience that attended the concert.

The prevalent moments of humour in the concert supports Jonathon Rose’s argument that humour was used not only as a coping mechanism during apartheid but also as a tool to seek meaningful social and political change.<sup>40</sup> While humour was not necessarily contained in the lyrics of the songs, the interactions elicited between songs created moments of collective laughter between the musicians and the audience, creating a sense of community and camaraderie during the event. Those moments when mixed-race performers and audiences collectively laughed signified their commonalities and a sense of momentary unity was created amongst them, one that undermined the prevailing divisions. Even if this sense of unity was created only for the duration of the concert, it would have created an important moment of contestation to the inhumane actions of the apartheid government.<sup>41</sup>

The following concert at the Café was held on 22 January 1977, featuring Kenny Henson, Ray Perkel and Paul Clingmant. On the 12th and 19th of February 1977, a cabaret Boogie Woogie Bubble and Squeak by Leonie Hofmeyer, Michele Maxwell and Sarah McNair was performed. This was followed by a solo performance by Paul Clingman (no exact date). During March,

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; and Benedict Carton and Morrell Robert, "Zulu Masculinities, Warrior Culture and Stick Fighting: Reassessing Male Violence and Virtue in South Africa." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 38, no. 1 (2012): 31-53.

<sup>39</sup> The album includes nine tracks: “Sky People”, “Universal Men”, “Thula 'Mntanami”, “Deliwe”, “Unkosibomvu”, “Africa”, “Uthando Luphelile”, “Old Eyes”, and “Inkunzi Ayihlabi Ngokumisa”.

<sup>40</sup> Jonathon Coplen Russell Rose, “National Crises and Moments of Laughter in ‘Second Interregnum’ South African Drama, 2001-2014.” PHD thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2016, 15.

<sup>41</sup> Rose, “National Crises and Moments of Laughter,” 15.



concerts by Spirits Rejoice (2 March 1977), Malombo, Brian Finch with Kenny Henson and a solo concert by Ray Perkel (no exact dates) were staged. In April, two bands performed - Band of Gypsies (no exact date) and the Elastic Head Band (9 April 1977).

#### 4.3. Silver Creek Mountain Band, 10 -11 June 1977.

This concert is one of a number of concerts that the Silver Creek Mountain Band performed at the Café from 11 May to 16 June 1977. This concert featured Roger Cumming (instrumentalist), Dennis Schultz (lead vocalist), Plod Tarr (instrumentalist), and Rod Dry (vocals, double bass and cello).<sup>42</sup>



*Figure 17. The Silver Creek Mountain Band with Rod Dry, Dennis Schultz, Roger Cumming and Dave 'Plod' Tarr (No date). Hidden Years Music Archive.*

##### 4.3.1 Featured musicians

The Silver Creek Mountain Band is a bluegrass band formed in East London, South Africa in the early 1970s by Rod Dry (vocals and double bass), Dennis Schultz (vocals, guitar, resonator guitar, banjo, and harmonica), Roger Cumming (vocals, guitar, mandolin, fiddle, mouth harp, tenor banjo, accordion, sitar, and hand drums), and Dave 'Plod' Tarr (vocals, violin, guitar,

<sup>42</sup> The musicians were introduced by Rod Dry at the start of the concert. See: Hidden Years Music Archive tape, hymap-dm-reel-silver-creek-mountain-band-1977-001.

flute, recorder, alto saxophone, tin whistle and clarinet).<sup>43</sup> Bluegrass music is also sometimes referred to as “hillbilly”<sup>44</sup> music predominantly played by white musicians from the southern states of America. Bluegrass bands were made up of four to seven male musicians who played non-electrified stringed instruments, a banjo and included vocalists.<sup>45</sup>

Dennis Schultz was born in East London. His involvement in folk music started when he was 16. Starting his career as a vocalist, Schultz later taught himself guitar, banjo, resonating guitar (also known as dobro) and harmonica. His versatility enabled him to perform in a number of groups and eventually he became part of the Silver Creek Mountain Band.

Rod Dry was born in Bloemfontein in 1944. He later moved to East London where he learned to play guitar when he was 17 years old. His encounter with Dennis Schultz’s music in a music café in 1965, stirred his interest in folk music. One year later, in 1966, he joined Schultz and his folk group. Since the group already had many guitarists, he switched to bass, an instrument he ended playing throughout his career.

East London born Roger Cumming started playing guitar when he was 15 years old and later learnt other instruments as well. While Cummings initially played rock music, he was introduced to folk music by Rod Dry and Dennis Schultz after he moved back to East London from Cape Town. The three musicians later ventured into bluegrass and country music.

Dave 'Plod' Tarr acquired his violin and clarinet skills while he was a student in East London. After he left school equipped with cello and flute skills in 1971, he joined a band called the South Country Band. He furthered his violin studies at the Rhodesian Academy of Music in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), and he was part of a television programme on country music called *HoeDown*. This programme enabled him to tour South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana. On completion of the tour, he moved back to South Africa and joined the Silver Creek Mountain

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<sup>43</sup> See their website: <https://silvercreekmountainband.co.za/about-us/> and the concert programme available on SUNDigital: <https://digital.lib.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.2/18578>.

<sup>44</sup> Hillbilly music is a derogatory term used to refer to folk music from the rural mountain regions of southern America. It contains elements of popular music in which the banjo, fiddle, and guitar are principal instruments. See: Patrick Jeremiah Salmons, "Hip Hop, Bluegrass, Banjos, and Solidarity: Race and Class Histories in Appalachia USA." PhD diss., Virginia Tech, 2021.

<sup>45</sup> See: Mayne L. Smith, "An Introduction to Bluegrass." *The Journal of American Folklore* 78, no. 309 (1965): 245. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/538358.pdf>.



Band in August 1976 playing violin, guitar, flute, recorder, alto saxophone, tin whistle and clarinet.<sup>46</sup>

#### 4.3.2. The concert

The concert on 10 June 1977 begins with Rod Dry introducing the band members and the instruments that each member plays. He shared with the audience the obstacles he encountered with the law for being a bluegrass musician, especially in Durban. The police were not sympathetic towards bluegrass music.<sup>47</sup> He joked that they were probably suspicious that bluegrass was a form of “something smoked.” Prejudice arising from the music genre and his long hair, made him stand out as a troublemaker in the eyes of the law.<sup>48</sup>

Before playing the first song, “Cosmic Cowboy,” Dry points out that although they are labelled a bluegrass band, they were slight imposters as they were not accustomed to the cowboy lifestyle, synonymous with artists who performed this type of music.<sup>49</sup> However, their music was about the cowboy lifestyle.<sup>50</sup> This is reflected in “That’s What Makes the Cowboy Sing the Blues,” written by Jack Clement.

The audience’s applause in between the performances keeps the spirit of the show alive, something that Dry openly appreciates during their performance pointing out that, “it is nice to hear people clapping along with the music especially when it is in time. We very seldom ask people to clap along because it is just an embarrassment to ask people to clap along and they don’t join with us but if you do it, any time you feel like clapping, feel free to.”<sup>51</sup> It is strategies such as this which allows one, even at times involuntarily, to become part of the performance. After this, Dry introduces the next song, “There Is a Time,” a song recorded by The Dillards in 1963. The song illustrates that life is not static. Just like the seasons change, so too do

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<sup>46</sup> See concert programme, Hidden Years Music Archive, [hy-dm-prog-silver-creek-001.pdf](#) (96.71Mb).

<sup>47</sup> This anecdote is shared during the live performance. Hidden Years Music Archive tape (hymap-dm-reel-silver-creek-mountain-band-1977-001).

<sup>48</sup> Anecdote shared live during the performance (Hidden Years Music Archive tape, hymap-dm-reel-silver-creek-mountain-band-1977-001). Dry confirmed during a telephone interview on 20 October 2022, that he was never arrested or had his music confiscated. But being a hippie with long hair who preferred walking bare footed, he attracted the attention of law enforcement officials (Rod Dry, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, 20 October 2022).

<sup>49</sup> Hollywood movies popularized the cowboy lifestyle with Westerns from the 1920s to the 1940s. They occasionally developed a bad reputation for being lawless, and some were banned from certain establishments. See: <https://www.history.com/topics/westward-expansion/cowboys>.

<sup>50</sup> See: Hidden Years Music Archive tape, hymap-dm-reel-silver-creek-mountain-band-1977-001.

<sup>51</sup> See: Hidden Years Music Archive tape, hymap-dm-reel-silver-creek-mountain-band-1977-001.

people's experiences and circumstances. It encourages people to seize every opportunity, understand that there is beauty in the angst of impermanence and find ways to survive.

Following this song, the band performs Wyland Jennings' song, "Bob Wills is Still the King." Bob Wills (1905-1970) was a musician who created an innovative variety of jazz-infused country music called Western swing.<sup>52</sup> This new sound fused the old-fashioned sounds of a string band with notes of blues, jazz and big band horn ensembles. It is associated with the blue-collar workers, farmers and ranchers of the Great Depression era.<sup>53</sup> Introducing the song, Dry explains that Wills was a fan of South Africa, and his ambition was to wear Springbok colours.<sup>54</sup> According to him, this ambition could be heard in most of his music which sounded like *boeremusiek*.<sup>55</sup>

Two of the songs they performed before going on a 15-minute break were, "Louisiana Man," a song originally written and recorded by American country musician Doug Kershaw in 1961, and "Mama's Got the Know-How." Dry explains that Kershaw wrote the latter song in commemoration of the hard times his mother had to endure, something that he claims resonated with his upbringing as the son of a "prostitute."

Before the break, Dry urges people to support the cafeteria which was serving an eclectic menu. Marks' recollection of the menu is that besides the sandwiches, coffee and milkshakes that his wife, Frances Marks was famous for in the Café, they sometimes hosted special events.<sup>56</sup> This shows a venue that not only provided music entertainment to its clientele but also offered a space to dine and socialise, much in the spirit of the Coffee Café culture proliferating around the city.

After the break they performed bluegrass songs by various American musicians including Bill Monroe, The Dillards, Earl Scruggs and others. The songs included "Somebody Touched Me" (a spiritual song), "Old Man at the Mill", "Same Old Man Sitting at the Mill", "Raw Hide", "Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms", "Buy Them Cabbage Down Boys" and others.

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<sup>52</sup> See: <https://www.rockhall.com/inductees/bob-wills-and-his-texas-playboys>

<sup>53</sup> See: <https://www.travelok.com/music-trail/artists/bob-wills>

<sup>54</sup> See: Hidden Years Music Archive tape, hymap-dm-reel-silver-creek-mountain-band-1977-001.

<sup>55</sup> Willemien Froneman defines *boeremusiek* as a form of indigenous, predominantly white folk music in South Africa. It is a genre whose historically political character and hybrid racial beginnings opens a view on Afrikaner popular culture. For further detail see: Willemien Froneman, "Pleasure Beyond the Call of Duty: Perspectives, Retrospectives and Speculations on Boeremusiek." (Stellenbosch University: PhD diss., 2012), 1.

<sup>56</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, August 11, 2022.

The interactions during these concerts, like most, are personalised. However, it is sometimes the nature of these human interactions in context, which point to the extent to which these performances challenged, not just the state, but also prevailing social conventions. During this concert, Dry makes a witty request for accommodation for the band in Pretoria. He says, “incidentally should anybody know spare rooms going in Pretoria, please let us know. We were all going to be sleeping in Dennis’s truck which is rather confined. I am homosexual and that embarrasses the other guys when I bring my boyfriends home.”<sup>57</sup> His open talk about homosexuality should be read in the context of the stereotyping and the stigma around homosexuality during apartheid. Robert Kaplan indicates that from 1969 to 1987, homosexuality was vehemently policed, and severe penalties were prescribed. Homosexuality was regarded as a psychiatric illness that had to be cured through, amongst other things, electric shock therapy.<sup>58</sup> Dry in a recent interview, however, has no recollection of making this statement. He rather declares his heterosexuality.<sup>59</sup> In light of this, his request can be read in a variety of ways. Either he made use of homosexuality to elicit a laugh or, as he contemporaneously suggests, it was a conscious act in defiance against the state and its laws. He suggests that many young artists at the time, were simply anti-establishment.<sup>60</sup> One should also keep in mind the fluid nature of sexuality in general, but also how alternative artists - and hippie culture comes to mind - tended to experiment on a variety of levels. Irrespective of the motive, the subject of homosexuality was brought on stage by this bluegrass band.

Closing the show, Dry expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to perform in the Café and for the kind of audience that the Café had. He also acknowledged the patrons’ interest in the music, something he claimed was different from other spaces he had performed in, where alcohol seemed to be the main motivation for attending music concerts. This was a *dry* space.

The Silver Creek Band was followed by the Elastic Headband (no exact date) and on 9 July a solo concert by Mike Dickman. During August Roger Lucey, Les Downing, Ronnie Domp, Guillome and Colin Shamley (all with no exact dates) performed. On 11 September 1977 a

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<sup>57</sup> See: Hidden Years Music Archive tape, hymap-dm-reel-silver-creek-mountain-band-1977-001.

<sup>58</sup> Robert M. Kaplan, "Treatment of Homosexuality During Apartheid." *BMJ*, 2004;329(7480), 1415-1416.

<sup>59</sup> Rod Dry, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, October 20, 2022.

<sup>60</sup> Rod Dry, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, October 20, 2022.

concert, Music for Africa, took place in the Café.<sup>61</sup> This was the second instalment of this series, the first concerts taking place in 1971.

Music for Africa was an idea started by Marks in 1968 while working for Hugh Tracey at the International Library of African Music (ILAM). The goal was to raise money for ILAM.<sup>62</sup> ILAM's objective was to preserve Tracey's collection of music and indigenous musical instruments of sub-Saharan Africa that he had collected and recorded.<sup>63</sup> In 1971, the first concert was held. The opening of the Café presented an opportunity for the Music for Africa project to be revived, and the second concert was held in 1977.<sup>64</sup> It featured musicians Paul Clingman, Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu, Bra Sello, *isicathamiya*<sup>65</sup> groups Abafana BaseQhudeneni and Ladysmith Black Mambazo. This multi-racial concert also featured an international artist, Rod McKuen who gave a solo concert after Music for Africa on 17 September 1977.

#### 4.4. Rod McKuen, 17 September 1977

During his visit to South Africa, the American poet, musician and writer Rod McKuen performed in two venues, namely the Colosseum and the Market Theatre Café. McKuen visited South Africa during the cultural boycott instituted by the United Nations General Assembly to “prevented the country from having regular cultural, educational, and sporting ties with the rest of the world”.<sup>66</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2, this did not prevent musicians from travelling to South Africa. A select number of recordings of some of the international musicians who visited South Africa from the early 1970s form part of the Hidden Years Music Archive, recorded live

<sup>61</sup> Author Unknown, “To Market, to Market to Hear Jon, Sipho, Paul, Bra, Abafana...” Hidden Years Music Archive ([hy-dm-news-star-clegg-mchunu-1977-001.pdf](https://www.hiddenyears.org/recordings/hy-dm-news-star-clegg-mchunu-1977-001.pdf) (27.94Mb)).

<sup>62</sup> The library is now at Rhodes University in Grahamstown.

<sup>63</sup> See Diane Thram (ed.), *For Future Generations: Hugh Tracey and the International Library of African Music*. (Rhodes: International Library of African Music, 2010).

<sup>64</sup> David Marks, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, July 22, 2022.

<sup>65</sup> *Isicathamiya* is defined by Veit Erlmann as a traditional, competitive dance song of Zulu migrant workers in South Africa. See [Veit Erlmann](#), “The Past is Far and the Future is Far: Power and Performance Among Zulu Migrant Workers.” *American Ethnologist* 19, no. 4 (1992): 688-709. See also: Liz Gunner, “Soft Masculinities, *Isicathamiya* and Radio.” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 40, no. 2 (2014): 343-360. DOI: [10.1080/03057070.2014.901711](https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070.2014.901711) and Joseph Shabalala and Veit Erlmann, “A Conversation with Joseph Shabalala of Ladysmith Black Mambazo: Aspects of African Performers' Life Stories.” *The World of Music* 31, no. 1 (1989): 31-58.

<sup>66</sup> Ashrudeen Waggie, “It’s Just a Matter of Time: African American Musicians and the Cultural Boycott in South Africa, 1968-1983.” Master’s thesis, Stellenbosch University, 2020, 8.

by David Marks while sitting behind the mixing desk. These includes the concerts by Rod McKuen in the Café.<sup>67</sup>



Figure 18. Rod McKuen (no date). *New York Times*.

Singer-songwriter-poet Rod McKuen was born in a home for unwed mothers in Oakland, California on 29 April 1933. He grew up not knowing the identity of his father who had abandoned his mother before he was born, something that haunted him for most of his life. That led to his book, *Finding My Father* published in 1977. McKuen spent his childhood in rural Far West labour camps during the Great Depression. Running away from repeated physical and sexual abuse, he was placed into a reform school. He ultimately re-joined his mother in Oakland, California, and landed a job as a radio show host on a local station in 1950.<sup>68</sup>

As a songwriter, he recorded international hits with songs like “Jean” (1969), “If You Go Away” (1966) and “Seasons in the Sun” (1964). He is also known for his vast contribution to classical music compositions that include symphonies, concertos, suites, and songs. One of his compositions, *The City: A Suite for Narrator and Orchestra*, commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra in 1972 received a nomination for the Pulitzer Prize in Music. As a poet, he broke

<sup>67</sup> Other concerts that were recorded include a concert by Brook Benton with Judith Tlagane, Thandi Klaasen, Rony Madonsela, Winston Mankunku Ngozi and Cocky Tholemanje on 1 October 1971; a concert by Spike Milligan from 4-6 December 1975 with Nina, Des Lindberg and Jeremy Taylor; Stephanie Grappelli who performed in a show titled Jo’burg Show of 12-30 May 1976; and a concert where Sir Donald Swann performed in the Market Theatre on 27 January 1980 with Laurika Rauch and Mara Louw.

<sup>68</sup> Barry Alfonso, “Rod McKuen: Poet, Songwriter; Gay Activist.” *The Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide*, 2019. <https://glreview.org/article/rod-mckuen-poet-songwriter-gay%E2%80%88activist/>.

sales records with books like *Stanyan Street & Other Sorrows* (1966) and *Listen to the Warm* (1967). His works which earned him massive readership depicted his personal struggles and focused on love and loneliness.<sup>69</sup> David Marks released McKuen's album *The Concert Collection* featuring songs that McKuen performed during his South African performances in 1975.<sup>70</sup>

As a musician and poet, McKuen was outspoken about the injustices of society. Barry Alfonso noted that McKuen was "a visionary on issues of sexual fluidity" and that he refused to accept any label meant to describe his identity. He is however celebrated as an acclaimed gay activist, a role he had already taken on before coming to South Africa.<sup>71</sup>

The tape opens with David Marks welcoming McKuen to a big round of applause from the audience. During his performance, McKuen shares jokes with the audience before singing and expresses his delight to be performing in front of an "African audience."

McKuen opens his show with a light dance version of the song "Mr Bojangles," a performance that portrays not just a troubled Mr Bojangles but a man "jumping so high" despite his troubled life.<sup>72</sup> This song, composed by Jerry Jeff Walker, was first recorded by Walker for the Atco label in 1968 and its folk-rock version became a top hit that reached the pop US Top 10 in 1971.<sup>73</sup> It was subsequently performed by a wide range of artists like the jazz arrangement performed by Nina Simone, the country pop version by Neil Diamond and the folk style by Bob Dylan.

I knew a man "Bojangles", and he danced for you  
In worn out shoes  
Silver hair, a ragged shirt and baggy pants  
The old soft shoe

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<sup>69</sup> See Alfonso, "Rod McKuen: Poet, Songwriter; Gay Activist."

<sup>70</sup> The original recording was produced by David Marks and Rod McKuen and engineered by Peter J. Oliff, David Marks and Nino Rivera. See Hidden Years Music Archive tapes: hymap-dm-reel-mckuen-1975-002 (Side 1) and hymap-dm-reel-mckuen-1975-004 (Side 2). Also available on discogs (<https://www.discogs.com/release/7257401-Rod-McKuen-The-Concert-Collection>) and other platforms.

<sup>71</sup> See Alfonso, "Rod McKuen: Poet, Songwriter; Gay Activist."

<sup>72</sup> This song has not only been sung by Rod McKuen but by a wide range of artists like the jazz arrangement performed by Nina Simone, the country pop version by Neil Diamond and the folk style by Bob Dylan. (Matt Schudel, "Jerry Jeff Walker, Who Wrote and Sang 'Mr. Bojangles,' Dies at 78." *The Washington Post*, October 24, 2020. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/jerry-jeff-walker-texas-troubadour-who-wrote-mr-bojangles-dies-at-78/2020/10/24/aeef3e92-1606-11eb-ba42-ec6a580836ed\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/jerry-jeff-walker-texas-troubadour-who-wrote-mr-bojangles-dies-at-78/2020/10/24/aeef3e92-1606-11eb-ba42-ec6a580836ed_story.html), accessed June 3, 2020.

<sup>73</sup> Schudel, "Jerry Jeff Walker, Who Wrote and Sang 'Mr. Bojangles,' Dies at 78."

He jumped so high  
He jumped so high  
And then he'd lightly touch down

I met him in a cell in New Orleans, I was  
Down and out  
He looked to me to be the eyes of age  
As the smoke ran out

He talked of life  
He talked of life  
He laughed, clicked his heels and stepped<sup>74</sup>

The song was inspired by a meeting in a crowded jail cell. After being arrested for drunkenness,<sup>75</sup> Walker was approached by a homeless old man who shared stories of his life including a story of his dog, 'Mr. Bo-jangles,' who had been run-over. When someone in the cell suggested for something to lighten the mood, the man obliged with a tap dance.<sup>76</sup> The song provides a way to escape from the hardships by "dancing" through the sorrows.

After "Mr Bojangles," McKuen introduces the next song, "What I did for Love" from the musical *The Chorus Line* by Marvin Hamlisch with lyrics by Edward Kleban. After singing this song, McKuen reflects on the beauty of love and the importance of nurturing it. On the tape, McKuen can be heard saying, "I believe it doesn't matter who you love or how you love but that you love." This sentence clearly struck a chord as it is also reprinted in a review of the concert in the *Rand Daily Mail*.<sup>77</sup> Again, the space broaches the subject of "the love that dare not speak its name" but also challenges the immorality laws which prohibits love across the racial barrier.

Whilst the first half of the concert was light and filled with love songs, the atmosphere becomes more serious when McKuen starts reading his poetry. In between reading poems like "Often I Wonder", "The Art of Catching Trains" and "Ode to Idiom", McKuen engages with the audience through comments and jokes that receives thundering applause and laughter. In an "Ode to Idiom," McKuen makes a mockery of Christianity by equating Christian ideologies with the political ideologies of countries such as Uganda and Rome.

<sup>74</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hmap-dm-reel-mckuen-1977-003 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>75</sup> Schudel, "Jerry Jeff Walker, Texas Troubadour Who Wrote 'Mr. Bojangles,' Dies at 78."

<sup>76</sup> See: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=mr.%20Bo-Jangles>

<sup>77</sup> See: Kate's Column, "Let's Be More Sentimental." *Rand Daily Mail*, June 11, 1975, 16.



Ode to idiom  
 Oh defender of the faith  
 Maker of heaven and earth  
 Holy commander in chief of the great Uganda air force  
 Queen of the Rome  
 President for life and thereafter  
 Dada, father, brother, sister, holy mother  
 Fuck off<sup>78</sup>

Challenging Christianity was taboo in the apartheid-era, making use of expletives was also not exactly welcomed.<sup>79</sup> After reciting the poem, McKuen comments that “it occurs to me that all of our various continents have certain individuals that we cannot do a whole lot about but we can only get frustrated.” This is a vague reference to the political leaders driving the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Next, McKuen read one of his poems called “A Cat Named Sloopy,” an account of losing a beloved pet.<sup>80</sup> This poem became one of McKuen’s most popular poems, “quickly ascended him to the heights of celebrity and millionaire status.”<sup>81</sup> Barry Alfonso pointed out that through works like these McKuen had an ability to connect with the heartaches and longings of “ordinary” people.<sup>82</sup>

In closing the concert, McKuen invited audience members to call out poems that they wanted him to recite. A female voice can be heard requesting “Stanyan Street,” a poem written by McKuen. The audibility of the request attests to the proximity of the audience to the performance stage, an intimate and discursive feature about the Café. This interaction not only draws the crowd into the performance but also shows that he was a known artist, at least by those who attended. His presence, rather than any other motive, may have encouraged individuals to come to the Market Café. This was a wise move by Marks. He starts by reciting the poem and finishes by singing the last three stanzas below:

<sup>78</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hmap-dm-reel-mckuen-1977-003 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>79</sup> Elelwani Farisani provides detailed information on how Christianity and the bible were used to legitimize apartheid ideologies in Africa, from justifying ethnicity to oppression of women. See Elelwani Farisani, “Interpreting the Bible in the Context of Apartheid and Beyond: An African Perspective. *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 40, no. 2 (2014): 207-225. Retrieved July 21, 2022, from [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1017-04992014000300014&lng=en&tlng=en](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1017-04992014000300014&lng=en&tlng=en).

<sup>80</sup> An American writer took five lines from it for his book and adapted it to produce. This poem was later released as a song in 1968 under the RCA Victor label.

<sup>81</sup> See Alfonso, “Rod McKuen: Poet, Songwriter; Gay Activist,” and <https://glreview.org/article/rod-mckuen-poet-songwriter-gay%E2%80%88activist/>

<sup>82</sup> See Alfonso, “Rod McKuen: Poet, Songwriter; Gay Activist,” and <https://glreview.org/article/rod-mckuen-poet-songwriter-gay%E2%80%88activist/>

There are golden apples to be picked  
And green hills to climb  
And meadows to run when you're young

There are roaring rivers to be crossed  
And bridges to build  
And wild oats to sow as you grow

But later on the other side of time  
The apples no longer taste sweet  
Bridges fall down  
Meadows turn brown  
As life falls apart  
In a little room on Stanyan Street.<sup>83</sup>

The poem was recorded and released in 1966 in a similar manner (first reciting then singing the words). A poem about love, losing love, aging, and time passing by, was perhaps a fittingly nostalgic end to his concert.

In October 1977, three solo concerts and three joint concerts were staged. Mike Dickman and John Oakley-Smith (no exact dates) performed solo concerts and on the 6th of October, Sol Rachid, Spirits Rejoice and Abdullah Ibrahim shared the stage. Spirits Rejoice made their second appearance on 17 October 1977. The last concert of the month was a performance by Paul Bura and Len Downing on 30 October 1977. The following concert was given by Malombo.

#### **4.5. Malombo, 12 November 1977**

The last concert of the year was by Malombo. Philip Tabane and Abbey Cindi started their music career in 1959 as a vocal group called the Lullaby Landers. When the group disbanded in 1962, Abbey started performing with the flute and harmonica while Julian Bahula started playing *malombo* drums.<sup>84</sup> Philip Tabane joined them as a guitarist to form Malombo Jazz Men. The group name was derived from the word *malombo* meaning spirit in Tshivenda.<sup>85</sup> They did not consider their music as jazz but as music of the ancestral spirits. In 1964, the group performed at South Africa's biggest annual jazz event, the Castle Lager Jazz Festival.

<sup>83</sup> Transcribed by the author from tape hmap-dm-reel-mckuen-1977-003 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>84</sup> *Malombo* drumming forms part of the "Malombo ritual healing practice" of the VhaVenda people. This practice "involves the use of music (including singing and the use of drums and shakers for rhythm". See Mudzunga Junniah Davhula. "Malombo Musical Arts in Vhavenda Indigenous Healing Practices," (PHD thesis, University of Pretoria, 2015), p.iii. <https://www.repository.up.ac.za/handle/2263/64353?show=full>

<sup>85</sup> See: [https://www.flatinternational.org/template\\_volume.php?volume\\_id=171](https://www.flatinternational.org/template_volume.php?volume_id=171).

The festival, organised by Union Artists, attracted 40,000 jazz lovers to the Orlando Stadium in Soweto, Johannesburg, on 26 September 1964. The Malombo Jazz Men performed to great acclaim at the festival.<sup>86</sup>

In 1966, Philip Tabane left the group and Lucky Ranku joined the band that were now called the Malombo Jazz Makers. By the end of the 1960s, the Malombo Jazz Makers had established themselves as South Africa's foremost afro-centric jazz group.<sup>87</sup>



*Figure 19. Malombo with David Coplan, Gabriel Thobejane and Philip Tabane (1977) Hidden Years Music Archive.*

In the 1970s, Tabane performed with David Coplan<sup>88</sup> and Gabriel Thobejane in concerts around South Africa including the Market Café. In 1971, they toured South Africa with Steve Biko and the Theatre Council of Natal Players (TECON), promoting black awareness and the Black Consciousness Movement. Soon hereafter, Bahula went into exile to the United Kingdom due to pressures by the apartheid government that impacted his life and his music-making.<sup>89</sup> The move ushered in a new era in his life. He immediately joined the African National Congress working under the chief-representative, Reggie September. He also got to work with musicians

<sup>86</sup> [https://www.flatinternational.org/template\\_volume.php?volume\\_id=168](https://www.flatinternational.org/template_volume.php?volume_id=168)

<sup>87</sup> David Marks. "The Township Blues Crews & a Farm Boys Rock – A Theory!", 2004, from <https://hiddenyears.co.za/3rdEar/hyarchive/hyarchive/malombo.html>

<sup>88</sup> David Coplan is a cultural anthropologist known for, among other works, his investigations of the lives of Basotho migrant workers, as well as producing other writings such as the much-cited book *In Township Tonight* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008.) which examines South African urban black culture.

<sup>89</sup> See <https://nextstopsoweto.bandcamp.com/album/spirit-of-malombo-malombo-jabula-jazz-afrika-1966-1984>

around Europe, and formed a band called Jabula with fellow exiled South African musicians.<sup>90</sup> He also toured Europe with anti-apartheid movements raising funds to advance awareness of the struggle.<sup>91</sup>

Tabane was adamant that their music was not jazz but *malombo*, the music that he learnt from his mother who was a *sangoma* (traditional healer). The concept of *malombo* among the Vhavenda people of Limpopo is defined as a ritual that integrates music, dance, performance, and healing. It is done to appease the ancestors who will in turn deliver physical, spiritual, and cultural healing.<sup>92</sup> Despite other musicians such as Simiso Asher Gamedze also advocating against their music being classified as jazz as it would obscure its TshiVenda and IsiNdebele roots and spiritual purpose, it has repeatedly been classified as such.<sup>93</sup>

In this concert on 12 November, Phillip Tabane performs with David Rupudi 'Fish' Phale and Frans Monareng on drums and Bigboy Koloti on flute.<sup>94</sup> This concert took place shortly after his breakup with Gabriel Thobejane, who was a percussionist and drummer in the group. A *Rand Daily Mail* reporter noted that the reason for their separation was that Thobejane was not happy with the new musical direction that Tabane was envisioning, a style that he described will be incorporating new sounds with deeper African sounds.<sup>95</sup>

Malombo opens the concert with a slow drum introduction that gradually develops into a heavy and loud beat as if creating a moment of awakening and invitation to listen to the music. Contrary to most Western music pieces where drums often play a subordinate role to the melody, drums are used in Malombo as a leading instrument. Other instruments like harmonica and flute are later introduced as accompaniment while drums continue to dominate the track. Tabane later adds vocal lines maintaining a balance with the pitch of the instruments thus producing well-blended sounds.

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<sup>90</sup> The band Jabula (meaning rejoice) consisted of South African musicians exiled in England during the apartheid era and included Julian Bahula (lead vocalist), Ernest Mothle (bass guitar), Lucky Ranku (guitar and percussion) and Eddie Tatane (percussion). See <https://www.discogs.com/artist/210657-Jabula>

<sup>91</sup> See <https://www.thepresidency.gov.za/national-orders/recipient/julian-sebothane-bahula>

<sup>92</sup> Mudzungu Junniah Davhula, "Malombo Musical Arts in Vhavenda Indigenous Healing Practices." (PHD thesis, University of Pretoria, 2015), 1.

<sup>93</sup> Simiso Asher Gamedze, "It's in the Out Sides: An Investigation into the Cosmological Contexts of South African Jazz." (Master thesis, University of Cape Town, 2018), 29.

<sup>94</sup> See Charlie Mogale's column in *The Rand Daily Mail*, November 5, 1977, 7.

<sup>95</sup> Staff Reporter, "Malombo Break Up." *Rand Daily Mail*, October 6, 1977, 2.

The second track “Sangoma” introduces percussion sounds; shakers and rattles. Before playing the song, Tabane asks the audience if they know what a *sangoma* is. Born in a family of *sangomas*,<sup>96</sup> the song pays homage to their drumming style and it is a reflection of Tabane’s background. The music is set to a more solemn rhythm that provides a feeling of worship. The song is structured as a musical dialogue between the flute, pennywhistle, and drums, with the drums providing dance-like beats.

The last piece that they played “Pelepele,” was requested by the audience. Tabane introduces the song by pointing out that he composed the song to prove that there was still Philip Tabane, a testament of the existence of his musical style.<sup>97</sup> The dominant use of drums in their songs align their music with spirituality. Various African traditions use drums to evoke and communicate with the spirits as drums are considered to be the “voice” of the ancestral spirits.<sup>98</sup> Malombo and the songs they performed conveyed the philosophy that the band followed, namely viewing music as a spiritual practice connected to the ancestors. Sello Galane notes that “Malombo evokes a deep sense of spirituality while regular popular music evokes a sense of fun and enjoyment.”<sup>99</sup> The group’s performance exposed the Café’s audience to a spiritual belief, a sacred ritual practice of indigenous people of the Mapungubwe, an ancient and once prosperous kingdom in southern Africa.<sup>100</sup>

Despite the array of exceptional performances which took place at the Market Theatre Café during these years, financially, the space was no longer viable – in name, not necessarily in function.

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<sup>96</sup> Malombo reveals that most of his family members were *sangomas*. As Sangoma healers, *malombo* drums were used to heal, an influence that is found in his music. See Simiso Asher Gamedze, “It’s in the Out Sides: An Investigation into the Cosmological Contexts of South African Jazz.” (Master thesis, University of Cape Town, 2018), 33.

<sup>97</sup> See tape hymap-dm-reel-malombo-19770-002 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>98</sup> See works of Benjamin Wilson, “The Drumming of Traditional Ashanti Healing Ceremonies.” *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology* 11, (2006): 1-17.

and Robert Thornton, *Healing the Exposed Being: The Ngoma Healing Tradition in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University, 2017).

<sup>99</sup> Sello Edwin Galane, “The Music of Philip Tabane – an Historical Analytical Study of Malombo Music of South Africa.” PHD thesis, University of Pretoria. 2009, 11-9.

<sup>100</sup> The city of Mapungubwe is an area where the Shase River flows into the Limpopo River. It sits on a farm called Greefswald, in the Central Limpopo River Valley.

## 4.6 The Closure of the Market Café, 1978

The last official year of the Café was a short year with the Café officially closing in July 1978. Within this period, a number of performances were staged, including concerts by Ian McDonald (folk), Flippertiggibbert (traditional Irish band), Maureen England (folk-singer), The Radio Rats (punk), Sipho Sephamla (poet) and many others. Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu performed at the official closing concert on 7 May 1978. After the Café was closed it was turned into a small theatre space managed by Peter Dirk-Uys called The Laager. Marks was allowed to continue using the space beyond the conversion of the Market Café, which he did until he moved on to manage another music cafe, Mangles in 1980.<sup>101</sup> The next section will discuss these concerts.

### 4.6.1. The Soshanguve Dolls with Anna Nkosi and Amabhubesi, 16 April 1978

The concert featured three bands that were performing contemporary music and *isithamiya*. While information could be retrieved on the Soshanguve Dolls, no biographical information could be found on Anna Nkosi or on Amabhubesi. Hopefully the findings of the study will prompt future research into these figures.

The band included the lead singer Anna Danile Nkosi, female vocalists Lulu Sithole, Nelisiwe Sangweni, Jabulile Sithole, Nobesuthu Simelane, and Sibongile Twala, the guitarist Khesoyi Manyule Mchunu and a dancer, Msholozzi Zuma. According to a *Rand Daily Mail* reporter, the group was first “discovered” by Jack Aaron “Mambazo” Lerole,<sup>102</sup> who was a singer, penny-whistle player, composer, and a leading Kwela music performer.<sup>103</sup> Lerole secured them a recording deal with Gallo Records through whom they managed to release three albums; *Moletlane*, *Thotela Bogolo* and *Qaphela Mngane Wami*. John Miller Chernoff describes their style as incorporating traditional and modern choreography.<sup>104</sup>

The concert opened with an introduction and welcoming of the Soshanguve Dolls by David Marks. He announces the line-up for the show. After the sounds of testing and tuning the instruments, the band performs two jazz songs with *mbaqanga* beats. A saxophone is included

<sup>101</sup> See list of concerts in Appendix 3. See also book by Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company: The Story of Johannesburg's Market Theatre*. South Africa: AD. Donker, 1988.

<sup>102</sup> Staff Reporter, “Dolls Are a New Find.” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 17, 1977, 13.

<sup>103</sup> <https://artubuntu.org/saapp-aaron-big-voice-jack-lerole/>.

<sup>104</sup> Staff Reporter, “Dolls Are a New Find.” *Rand Daily Mail*, June 17, 1977, 13.

in the accompaniment of the song and a lot of drumming can be heard. Drums are central in the music of various African cultures, either to provide beats and rhythms, enhance the texture of the song by providing accompaniment, or used to illicit spiritual connections.<sup>105</sup>

The third song, led by Anna Nkosi is a *mbaqanga* love story song. The song is in SiSwati, a Nguni language that is dominantly spoken in Swaziland.<sup>106</sup> The song recounts the story of a disappointed woman whose fiancé promised to visit her family and pay *lobola* (bride price) but never honoured the promise. She tells of how disappointed her parents were and how she felt humiliated. The song reflects on unsettled romantic relations stemming from the migrant labour system that took men far away from their villages and upset family units. Many men would abandon their families and start a new life in the urban area.

The opening section of the next song is used to introduce the band. They do this with a recital of clan names, a typical Nguni cultural practice. This recital not only announces the band, but it also draws the attention of the audience. The band requests permission to perform by asking “Ake nisidzedzeleni bakithi, singene kulelive” (“Please grant us an opportunity to perform in this country”<sup>107</sup>).

Badzedzeleni bo,  
(Please grant them)  
Tintfombi taKaNgwane  
(The Ngwane maidens)  
Idla ngonyawo lakudala hayi lolu lwesimanje  
(With old rhythms)

Ake nisidzedzeleni bakitsi,  
(Please give us a platform)  
Singene kulelive  
(To perform in this country)  
Sesifikile tsine  
(We have arrived)  
Tintfombi taKaNgwane

<sup>105</sup> John Miller Chernoff, “The Artistic Challenge of African Music: Thoughts on the Absence of Drum Orchestras in Black American Music.” *Black Music Research Journal* (1985):8. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/779493>.

<sup>106</sup> Nguni-speakers most lived in a broad belt extending from Swaziland south through KwaZulu-Natal to the Fish River. Within this broad zone, the Mtamvuma River conventionally separates the Cape, or Southern Nguni (e.g. Xhosa and Mpondo) from Natal, or Northern Nguni (e.g. Zulu and Swazi). For more on the language, see: Thomas Huffman, “The Archaeology of the Nguni Past. *Southern African Humanities* 16, no. 1 (2004): 79.

<sup>107</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-rock-soshanguve-dolls-nkosi-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.



(The Ngwane maidens)<sup>108</sup>

With language and politics intertwined, the apartheid government's strategy to make Afrikaans and English the only two official languages were exclusionary practices that led to further separation between the various ethnic and language groups in South Africa.<sup>109</sup> The inclusion of other languages in the Café was exposing different cultural groups to each other's languages and culture. In addition, at a time when gender roles among Nguni tribes were prescribed, pursuing a music career as a woman performing on stage, challenged many traditionalist stereotypes.<sup>110</sup>

The next song they performed is called, "Sisendleleni Madoda Singadinwa" ("We are on a journey, let us not get weary") encourages unity and resilience. Although the lyrics do not reveal much about the journey, the song pleads for the Ngwane people to rally behind the mythical figure of Sobhuza, the King of Swaziland. Although there is no biographical information available on Anna Nkosi, both this song and the first song may indicate that she was Swati from Swaziland. Swati people are also referred to as Ngwanes since Sobhuza was the son of *Ngwane* III.<sup>111</sup> These chiefs managed to stave off full British colonisation of their territories, as did their Sotho counterparts.

The information found on the back of a vinyl record, *Varitone Jump* (1977), also revealed that Anna Nkosi worked with Susan Goldberg. In a letter to Mr Belafonte, Goldberg writes:

Dear Mr. Belafonte,<sup>112</sup>

I want to thank you for your diligent fight against Apartheid. I was a member of an Umbaklanga [sic] [mbaganga] band in South Africa. Headed by Aaron Lerole and Anna Nkosi we have suffered, my brothers and sisters from this disgusting and immoral imposed government. I treasure these two records as they were given to me when I left South Africa, by my band. I know they would want you to have one. I have lost contact with my

<sup>108</sup> Transcribed from tape hmap-dm-reel-rock-soshanguve-dolls-nkosi-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>109</sup> See newspaper article by Bhaso Ndzendze, "The Irony of Apartheid." *News24*, February 24, 2015. <https://www.news24.com/news24/the-irony-of-apartheid-20150224>, accessed September 19, 2022.

<sup>110</sup> See: Puseletso Precious Mofokeng, "Changing Gender Roles in the Household: A Case Study of Lamontville in KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa." PhD diss., University of KwaZulu Natal, 2021.

<sup>111</sup> See: <https://www.un.int/eswatini/swaziland/country-facts>.

<sup>112</sup> Harold George 'Harry' Belafonte Jr was born on 1 March 1927 in Harlem, New York, United States of America. He is described as a remarkable actor, a humanitarian and a political activist with a knack of speaking his mind on matters of principle. See: <https://www.thepresidency.gov.za/national-orders/recipient/harold-george-%E2%80%98harry%E2%80%99-belafonte-1927>

friends due to all the tumult going on there, I worry for their safety.  
Nkosi Sikela iAfrika  
Nkosi Sikela Mr. Belafonte

My fondest regards,  
Susan (Magidson) Goldeberg <sup>113</sup>

Nkosi is here presented by Goldberg as someone who was a victim of the system and opposed to apartheid and its oppressive hierarchical structures.

Ending off their concert, the Soshanguve Dolls perform three dance pieces in English and IsiXhosa – “Don’t Leave Me Alone”, “Ntombentle” (“Beautiful Lady”) and “Sokhala Sizithulise” (“We Will Cry and Comfort Ourselves”). In “Sokhala Sizithulise,” the group sings:

Sokhala sizithulise thina  
(We will cry and comfort ourselves)  
Ngoba lomculo unzima  
(The music industry is full of challenges)<sup>114</sup>

The song foregrounds the musicians’ struggles in the music industry. Musicians were struggling under apartheid legislation to find concert venues, to get their music aired on the state-controlled radio, and to sell enough records despite censorship and racial restrictions. In addition, some of those who won record deals, were regularly exploited by the record companies.<sup>115</sup>

#### 4.6.2. The “Final” Concert: Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu, 7 May 1978

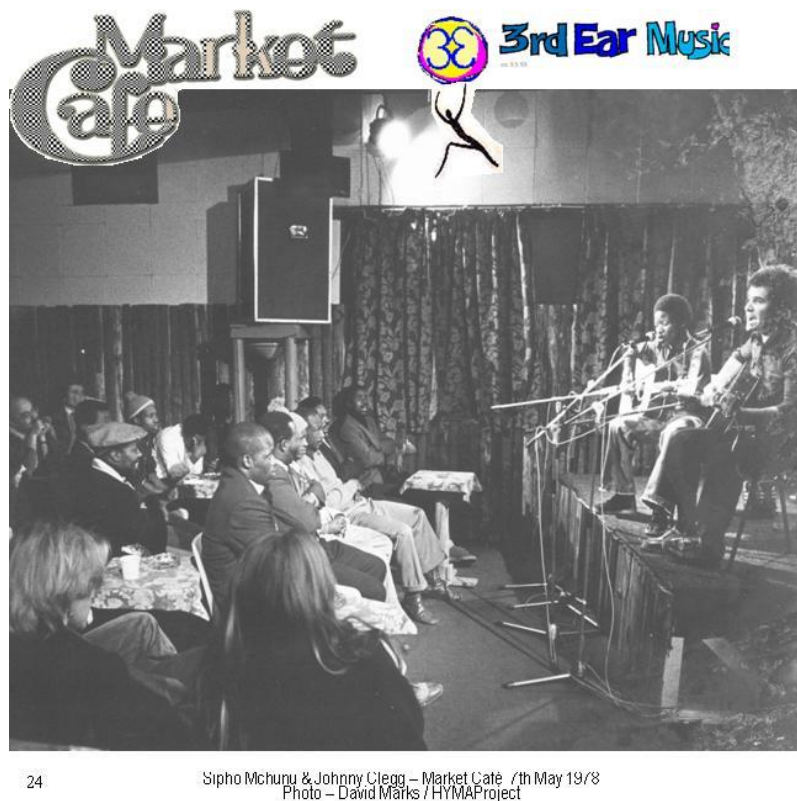
Due to financial constraints, the Market Café had to close as a music venue. It was to be converted into a small theatre, The Laager. Although the programmes and sound recordings in the Hidden Years Music Archive reveal that the Café was staging concerts throughout its existence, it remained financially unstable. Various factors could have contributed to the space not making enough money to sustain its operations. The venue itself was small and unable to accommodate a big audience which would have meant more revenue. This lack of income from patrons could have resulted in the Café not making enough money from the performances to

<sup>113</sup> These additional notes appear in a vinyl record *Varitone Jump*, listed by South African Audio Archive that Anna Nkosi & Friends released in 1977 under Gallo Records, [http://www.flatinternational.org/template\\_volume.php?volume\\_id=353](http://www.flatinternational.org/template_volume.php?volume_id=353).

<sup>114</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-rock-soshanguve-dolls-nkosi-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>115</sup> See: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/archive/melody-freedom>

sustain itself. A small venue such as this would have had to be funded or cross-subsidised, but David Marks pointed out that the Market Theatre Foundation was not supporting the Café.<sup>116</sup> In addition to these factors, the spatial demarcations of apartheid that moved black people out of urban areas could have hindered black patrons from accessing the venue with ease. Black townships like Alexandra and Soweto were approximately 17 to 25 kilometres away from Newtown, and transport for evening concerts would have been another challenge. The last *official* concert in the Café was on 7 May 1978 with Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu. However, there were many *encores*.



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Sipho Mchunu & Johnny Clegg – Market Café / 7th May 1978  
Photo – David Marks / HYMAP Project

Figure 20. Sipho Mchunu and Johnny Clegg (1978). *Hidden Years Music Archive*

Almost two years after its opening the Café was to close down, despite seemingly reaching the goals it set out in 1976. The photograph above taken during the last official concert at the Café not only shows a multi-racial collaboration between two artists, but it also shows a racially mixed audience.

<sup>116</sup> Pat Schwartz, *The Best of Company: The Story of Johannesburg's Market Theatre*. South Africa: AD. Donker, 1988, 87.

Clegg and Mchunu open their performance with the song, “Thula Mntanami - Umama Uzokuphathel’Amaswiti” (“Hush my child, mother will bring you sweets”), analysed in 4.2.2 above. In both performances of the song (17 January 1977 and 7 May 1978), it is striking to listen to Clegg providing the same narration of the song, illustrating his rich IsiZulu vocabulary and knowledge of Zulu customs.

Clegg introduced the second song, “Yensizwa Ubalekelani” (“Why Are You Running Away Young Man?”) as a retreat song, a song that Zulus sang before going into battle. He explains that the purpose of the song was to prepare the warriors psychologically for the battle through preparing them about what they may have to face. The song was sung to inspire the warriors and an emphasis is placed that even if the situation in the war field called for retreat, it must be done with rage. Rage, according to Clegg, was perceived as a form of courage. Historically, Zulu warriors are known as some of the most effective and disciplined fighting forces. Their king and leader in the 1800s, Sigidi kaSenzangakhona, commonly known as Shaka, was a fierce warrior and brilliant commander. His warriors were famed for their lack of fear in the face of death.<sup>117</sup>

Before performing an *umrhubhe* adaptation of the next song, Clegg shares his views of the song “Inkunzi Ayihlani Ngokumisa” (Don’t judge a bull by his horns). The title is taken from a Zulu idiom loosely meaning that the strength of the bull is not determined by the size of his horns. In the introduction, he states how bull fighting was not determined by the strength of the bulls’ horns (the weapons) but by the “mind.” This fighting song suggests that physical weapons should not distract and intimidate the fighters in battle as they do not guarantee victory. Triumph is achieved from proper strategies employed in the battle. This also reveals that not all battles need to be fought physically but that alternative strategies can also be employed. The song starts as an instrumental piece with the vocal lines added later. In the process of adding the vocals for the song, Mchunu missed the cue from Clegg and could be heard singing a different song instead of continuing with the one they were performing. With Clegg acknowledging both the error and correcting Mchunu and the laughter from the audience distinctly captured, it is easy to detect the accommodating mood of the Café. This candidness in acknowledging such errors in front of an audience depicts a relaxed atmosphere.

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<sup>117</sup> See: Adrian Greaves and Xolani Mkhize, *The Tribe That Washed Its Spears: the Zulus at War* (United Kingdom: Pen & S word Military, an imprint of Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2020).

Another song “Deliwe” is mainly in English with an IsiZulu chorus. It is a love song sung by Clegg dedicated to a lady Deliwe. According to Richard Pithouse’s analysis of the song, Deliwe was contemplating to leave South Africa for a country in the north, which is not named.<sup>118</sup> Although the song starts with love messages, it gradually changes from verse six and shifts to addressing life’s challenges and realities. She is warned of possible challenges she may have to face in a foreign land, and how she will be haunted by the melodies of Africa, something that has haunted other South African expatriates and has persuaded them to return home and live in hope.<sup>119</sup> While the song does not directly address migrant labourer experiences and its impacts, it does reflect on separation and movement of people fleeing the apartheid regime in search of better opportunities.

The fourth song “Asimbonanga” was dedicated to the then Prime Minister of the former Transkei homeland, Kaiser Daliwonga Mathanzima. Mathanzima was sworn in as Prime Minister in 1976 when Transkei became the first Bantustan to gain independence. The lines “Hey nina nani, sizofika nini la' siyakhona, la' siyakhona” (“Hey you, when will we reach the destination”) offered a criticism of certain individuals who worked with the exclusionary policies of the apartheid regime.

Asimbonanga  
 (We haven't seen him)  
 Asimbonang' uMathanzima  
 (We haven't seen Mathanzima)  
 Laph'ekhona  
 (We don't know where he is)  
 Laph'ehleli khona x 2  
 (We don't know his whereabouts)

Sithi hey wena  
 (Hey you)  
 Hey nina nani  
 (Hey you and you)  
 Sizofika nini la' siyakhona, la' siyakhona x 2  
 (When will we reach our destination)<sup>120</sup>

<sup>118</sup> Richard Pithouse, “Johnny Clegg in Retrospect: It All Began with Juluka.” *Mail & Guardian*, July 19, 2019. <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-07-19-00-johnny-clegg-in-retrospect-it-all-began-with-juluka/>, accessed May 3, 2022.

<sup>119</sup> Richard Pithouse, “Johnny Clegg in Retrospect: It All Began with Juluka.” *Mail & Guardian*, July 19, 2019. <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-07-19-00-johnny-clegg-in-retrospect-it-all-began-with-juluka/>, accessed May 3, 2022.

<sup>120</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-clegg-mchunu-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.

The regime's logic behind the creation of the Bantustans in the 1950s was to safeguard white rule. This policy altered South African society. Blacks living in the Bantustans were no longer South African citizens and were dispossessed of all rights and claims in the Republic. Freddie Khunou argues that the leaders of the Bantustan states "sold" their subjects out by accepting and endorsing the so-called idea of independence which, in essence, arbitrarily divided black South Africans along ethnic lines.<sup>121</sup> Jenny Gross points out that this song, considered subversive, was immediately banned after its release.<sup>122</sup> It was later dedicated to Nelson Mandela in 1986 by Clegg.

The fifth song "Ndaze Ndalusa Amanxiwa" ("Men, I'm now watching the ruins – the decay of the old order") was essentially a call to reflect on outdated traditional Zulu practices. Clegg notes before singing the song that some parents were still stuck in the traditional belief of assigning gender roles to children, for example, that boys should inherit and look after their father's wealth and livestock. Puseletso Precious Mofokeng's investigation confirms how this patriarchal practise promoted gender imbalances and social inequalities.<sup>123</sup> Education, which was essential in overcoming oppression, was still paid too little attention. Clegg points out that this could change, for example explaining how certain members of the Inkatha Freedom Party were persuading families to allow their children to go to school. Although education may be viewed as a form of enlightenment, for traditional Zulus at the time, it seemed pointless. They believed in the "old order" and strict adherence to old traditions.<sup>124</sup>

"Mamkhize's Brew" is a nostalgic song reminiscing about home and the traditional beer that Mamkhize brews. The song details day-to-day activities at home like visiting drinking places and listening to the sounds of animals and children playing freely in the open. It reflects the

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<sup>121</sup> See works of Deon Geldenhuys, Geldenhuys, Deon. *South Africa's Black Homelands: Past Objectives, Present Realities and Future Developments*. (Braamfontein: The South African Institute of International Affairs, 1981). <https://www.africaportal.org/publications/south-africas-black-homelands-past-objectives-present-realities-and-future-developments/> and Freddie S. Khunou, "Traditional Leadership and Independent Bantustans of South Africa: Some Milestones of Transformative Constitutionalism Beyond Apartheid." *Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal/Potchefstroomse Elektroniese Regsblad* 12, no. 4 (2009), 81-122. Accessed August 05, 2022, [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1727-37812009000400005&lng=en&tlng=en](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1727-37812009000400005&lng=en&tlng=en).

<sup>122</sup> Jenny Gross, "White Father of African Rock Marks Anniversary." *Mail & Guardian*, November 7, 2010. <https://mg.co.za/article/2019-07-19-00-johnny-clegg-in-retrospect-it-all-began-with-julukula/>, accessed January 29, 2022.

<sup>123</sup> Puseletso Precious Mofokeng, "Changing gender roles in the household: a case study of Lamontville in KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa." PhD diss., University of KwaZulu Natal, 2021.

<sup>124</sup> Nokuzola Cele traces the roles played by members of a household and how these were nurtured in order to build solid foundations and a better nation. See Nokuzola Christina Cele (Kamadikizela) "A Tradition in Transition: The Consequences of the Introduction of Literacy Among Zulu People in Umbumbulu." Master's thesis, University of Natal, 1997.



difficulties of life as a migrant worker in Johannesburg and the impact of being separated from ones' lifestyle. The consequences of these disconnections were enormous with families split up and people uprooted from their customs and beliefs.<sup>125</sup> The themes in this concert, resonate with those of the previous year's concert. It marked a period of self-reflection, shifting attention away from being a victim of oppression to one in which one could overcome these obstacles through a rejuvenated approach to communal identity, purpose, and belonging.

Other songs performed in the concert include "Sojabula Uma Nisaphila", "Nkosi Bomvu," and "Africa." They close the concert with the song "Africa/ E-Afrika Kukhal' Abangwele" ("In Africa, it is the innocent that weep"). As part of engaging the audience, Clegg enquires whether the audience knew the song and if they preferred it sung in IsiZulu or in English. While the audience's response is overshadowed by their laughter, the conversation among the members reflects the intimate atmosphere of the space. The audience's choice of having it sung in IsiZulu is audible and Clegg repeatedly checks with the audience to confirm their choice. The duo then performs the song in IsiZulu.

After their performance, Marks not only thanked the two musicians but also shared his hopes to have them perform again in the Café. This either shows that Marks was unaware that this would be the last concert, or that he knew that there will still be the possibility of staging concerts, irrespective of any change in management. It seems the later would be true as Marks also made two other announcements: After a fifteen-minute break, a recording of Al Jarreau at Montrose<sup>126</sup> was aired and it was announced that the group Raven, a hard-rock group from Pretoria, was going to perform in the Café the following week.

Raven was formed in 1977 with Dino Salvatori (vocals), Doc Barendse (lead guitar), Gabby le Roux (keyboards), Derek Riley (drums) and Piet Botha (bass).<sup>127</sup> Piet Botha was the son of Pik Botha, former South African Minister of Foreign Affairs (1977-1994) in the National Party

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<sup>125</sup> See works of Thomas M. Pooley, "'Never the Twain Shall Meet': Africanist Art Music and the End of Apartheid." *SAMUS: South African Music Studies* 30, no. 1 (2010): 45-69; and Ingrid Bianca Byerly, "Mirror, Mediator, and Prophet: The Music Indaba of Late Apartheid South Africa." *Ethnomusicology* 42, no. 1 (1998):1-44.

<sup>126</sup> Al Jarreau (Alwyn Lopez Jarrea) was an American singer and songwriter born on the 12 March 1940 in the United States and died on the 12 February 2017. His music contained influences of jazz, rhythm and blues, soul, and gospel. Al Jarreau won seven Grammy Awards across three different musical categories. See <https://aaregistry.org/story/al-jarreau-born/>

<sup>127</sup> Garth Chilvers & Tom Jasiukowicz. *History of Contemporary Music of South Africa*, (Cape Town: Toga Publishing, 1994), 107-108.



government.<sup>128</sup> Piet Botha has been described as a wild child who had his own perspectives on moral righteousness.<sup>129</sup> In high school, this attitude led to his expulsion after he painted a peace sign on the Magaliesberg.<sup>130</sup> While Robyn Sassen does not specify where in Magaliesburg the sign was painted, the very act, despite being from a child, was unsettling for the custodians of the system.

After the appearance of Raven, the Radio Rats performed in the Café on 6 June 1978. The Radio Rats was a South African punk group formed in 1977 in Springs, Gauteng, by Jonathan Handley (lead guitar and background vocals), Dave Davies on lead vocals and Herbie Parkin on bass, with various drummers.<sup>131</sup> On 10-11 June, Radio Rats shared a stage with Colin Shamley in the Café.

This was followed by the final concert series that featured Roger Lucey, Colin Shamley and Mike Dickman (7-9 July).

#### **4.6.3. The Encore: Roger Lucey, Colin Shamley, and Mike Dickman, 7 – 9 July 1978**

Before The Laager took over in August 1978, Marks staged a final concert with Roger Lucey, Colin Shamley, and Mike Dickman from 7-9 July 1978.

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<sup>128</sup> See: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/roelof-frederik-pik-botha>.

<sup>129</sup> Piet Botha later became the front man for the local band Jack Hammer. Some of his well-known songs were “Suitcase Vol Winter” and “Goeienag Generaal”. See newspaper article: “Local rocker Piet Botha, 63, Dies – Reports.” *New24*, June 9, 2019. <https://www.news24.com/Channel/local-rocker-piet-botha-63-dies-reports-20190602>, accessed September 23, 2022.

<sup>130</sup> Robyn Sassen, “Gentle Man with a Bag of Winter: RIP Piet Botha.” <https://robynsassenmyview.com/2019/11/19/gentle-man-with-a-bag-of-winter-rip-piet-botha/>.

<sup>131</sup> See <https://shifty.co.za/records/radio-rats/>.

#### 4.6.3.1. Featured Musicians

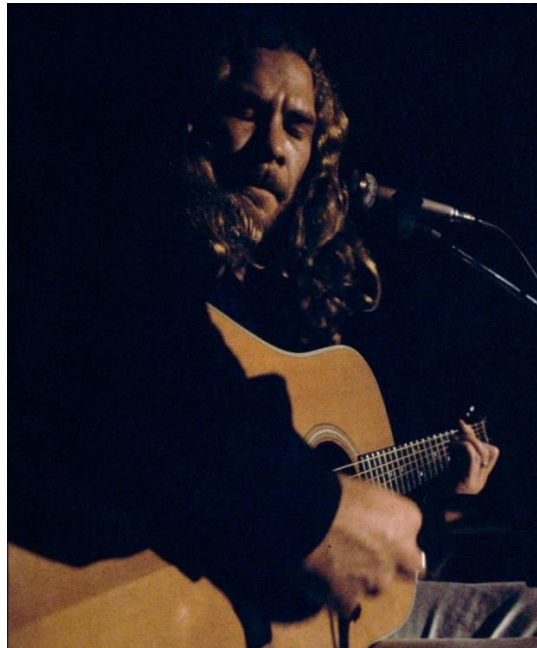


Figure 21. Roger Lucey (no date). Hidden Years Music Archive

Roger Lucey was born on 21 January 1954. He is a guitarist, singer, and songwriter known for songs that openly criticised the apartheid government and advocated for political or social change. Some of these songs include “Thabane” (1979), a song wherein he urges his son Thabane to fight for justice when he grows up,<sup>132</sup> “Lungile Tabalaza” (1979), a song exposing police brutality, “The Road Is Much Longer” (1979), “No Easy Walk to Freedom” (1991), and others. In an interview with Michael Drewett, Lucey admitted that he found it difficult to hide behind “soft” and symbolic lyrics like “woodcutter felling the tree while meaning that the axe was the arm of the law and the tree was the people,” something various other folk musicians did.<sup>133</sup> He was influenced by what he witnessed in South Africa and could not ignore what was happening on his doorstep.<sup>134</sup> The protest songs of Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs and others influenced his musical style and straightforward lyrics.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Michael Drewett, “Stop this Filth': the Censorship of Roger Lucey's Music in Apartheid South Africa. *SAMUS: South African Journal of Musicology* 25, no. 1 (2005): 55.

<sup>133</sup> Michael Drewett, “Stop this Filth': the Censorship of Roger Lucey's Music, 54.

<sup>134</sup> Hidden Years archive newspaper clipping: Muff Andersson, “All Roger Wants is Satisfaction.” *Sunday Times Magazine*, April 13, 1980. <http://digital.lib.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.2/18736/hy-dm-news-sunday-times-roger-political-1980-001.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>135</sup> Roger Lucey, *Back In From the Anger* (South Africa: Jacana Media, 2012), 90.

Lucey faced various repercussions for his outspoken politics. His album, *Long Walk to Freedom* (1979) was banned and shortly after the release of this album, efforts by the South African Bureau of State Security (also known as BOSS) to stop him from performing was heightened. Paul Erasmus, an agent for BOSS was assigned to Lucey (and other musicians including Johnny Clegg) to sabotage his concerts including throwing tear gas down the air vents at Lucey's concerts and threatening club owners if they allowed him to perform.<sup>136</sup> During an interview, Lucey also revealed how he was ostracised by his own family. This did not deter him. He noted that "I may have been alienated by some people, but I still had the support from others. I believed strongly in what I was doing, and we had great role models."<sup>137</sup>

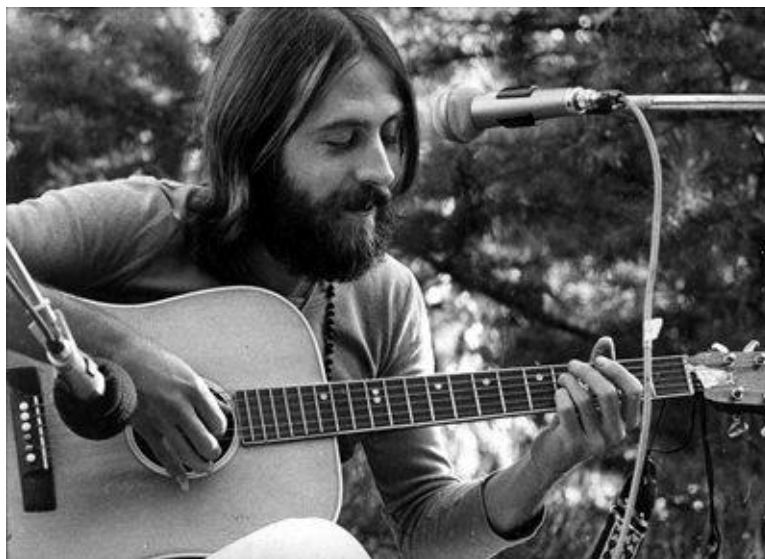


Figure 22. Mike Dickman (no date). Hidden Years Music Archive<sup>138</sup>

Mike Dickman started playing guitar when he was 12 and started writing his own songs by the age of 15. He has been described as one of "South Africa's most erudite, and most unacclaimed, musicians".<sup>139</sup> While Dickman is known as a folk musician, appearing regularly in concerts of the South African Folk Music Association, he is also accomplished in performing blues, bluegrass, rock and experimental music. He is a writer and vocalist and also plays a number of instruments including guitar, sitar, banjo, and swazi-whistle.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>136</sup> See Paul Erasmus, *Confessions of a Stratcom Hitman* (Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2021); and Michael Drewett, "'Stop This Filth': The Censorship of Roger Lucey's Music in Apartheid South Africa." *SAMUS: South African Journal of Musicology* 25, no. 1 (2005): 53-70.

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Roger Lucey, August 01, 2022.

<sup>138</sup> See: <https://hiddenyears.co.za/3rdEar/hyarchive/mikedickman.html>.

<sup>139</sup> Chilvers and Jasiukowicz. "History of Contemporary Music of South Africa," 29.

<sup>140</sup> Chilvers and Jasiukowicz. "History of Contemporary Music of South Africa," 29

Dickman has released two albums, *Yesterday's Papers* (1971) and *Mike Dickman* (SAFMA) and wrote the music for Barney Simon's production of "Medea". He has worked as a session musician on several albums, including Hobo Dave Weston's album *You'll Never Find Me in One Place for Too Long*. While mostly performing as a solo musician, he has played with numerous bands including Abstract Truth, Flood, Antithesis, and The Elastic Head Band.<sup>141</sup>

Dickman studied Indian and Japanese music, as well as Tibetan Liturgical chant, Arabian Magam, and Sanskrit. In 1981, Dickman moved to Paris, France, where he taught English and T'Ai Chi Ch'uan, as well as translate Tibetan philosophical and liturgical texts.<sup>142</sup>

#### 4.6.3.2. The Concert

The concert is opened by Roger Lucey singing a light-hearted song, "Apple Pie at the Market Café." Lucey could not remember what the song was about but does remember that at some point he used to assist in the Café at the restaurant counter selling slices of apple pie.<sup>143</sup>

The song is an instrumental song, with high-pitched guitar strumming and heavy rock beats. After having listened to the song during our interview, Lucey admitted that it could be understood as the "intemperate rants of an outraged youth."<sup>144</sup> This performance is followed by the song "No Pain, No Gain" - a song about the upcoming general elections on 29 September 1978.<sup>145</sup> Lucey introduces the song by acknowledging people's right to vote. Yet the same song criticizes the effort of standing in queues to cast votes that will not improve any of the harsh conditions. The lyrics convey sarcastic remarks on soldiers carrying guns while manning the queues and yet assuring voters that "things will be alright now."<sup>146</sup>

Next, Colin Shamley took to the stage greeting the audience before performing, "South African Dream." Shamley sings,

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<sup>141</sup> Chilvers and Jasiukowicz. "History of Contemporary Music of South Africa," 29; Mike Dickman, "Mike Dickman by Mike Dickman," See: <https://hiddenyears.co.za/3rdEar/hyarchive/mikedickman.html>

<sup>142</sup> Mike Dickman, "Mike Dickman by Mike Dickman," See: <https://hiddenyears.co.za/3rdEar/hyarchive/mikedickman.html>

<sup>143</sup> Roger Lucey was not only a musician in the Café but was a cousin to David Mark's wife, Frances. Roger Lucey, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, August 28, 2022.

<sup>144</sup> Roger Lucey, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, August 28, 2022.

<sup>145</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-lucey-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>146</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-lucey-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.

Yellow and green  
South African dream

And the hazy streetlamps  
In the cozy suburban dream  
Blue grey man, turn it on again  
Separating dark from the light  
In the black African night<sup>147</sup>

Singing about the colours yellow and green is worth noting as it was synonymous with the colours of the African National Congress;<sup>148</sup> green (for land), black (for people), and yellow or gold (for wealth).<sup>149</sup> The referencing of the colours of the apartheid governments' opposition movement, the ANC, was a risky undertaking at the time, and many artists' works were banned or censored because of it. Some of the songs by South Africans which openly opposed apartheid that were banned include: "Beware Verwoerd" (1965) by Harry Belafonte and Miriam Makeba, "Nonqoongqo" (1972) by Harry Belafonte and Letta Mbulu, "Thabane" (1979) by Roger Lucey and many more.<sup>150</sup>

This is followed by two love songs, "Missing You" and "The End." Both these songs express loneliness and longing to go home to his loved ones. After Shamley's performance, the musicians invite audience members to tinkle with instruments on stage. They then performed a song based on a true-life story of a young man who went to the city to look for a job. City life was so different for him, he felt awkward and thought that people must be thinking that he was crazy.

Next, Roger Lucey performs "Thabane," a song he dedicated to his son, Thabane.<sup>151</sup> This track was released on his album *The Road is Much Longer* in 1979 by 3rd Ear Records. Lucey pointed out that this song was to warn his son of the atrocities awaiting him, but it is also spoke

<sup>147</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-lucey-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>148</sup> The African National Congress was founded on the 8 January 1912 as a nonviolent civil rights organization whose mandate was to promote the interests of Black Africans. Its membership greatly increased in the 1950s after South Africa's white-minority government began to implement apartheid, a racial segregation policy in 1948. Since its formation, the ANC remained as one of the political organizations that actively opposed apartheid and increased its political fight with the government.

<sup>149</sup> See work of Arlene Archer and Stacey Stent, "Red Socks and Purple Rain: The Political Uses of Colour in Late Apartheid South Africa." *Visual Communication* 10, no. 2 (2011): 115-128.

<sup>150</sup> <http://mixtapes.org.za/category/apartheid-censorship-of-popular-music/#>:

<sup>151</sup> In an interview, Lucey stated that the name of his son was partially influenced by his love for Philip Tabane's music. Firstly, it was its meaning – peace and happiness. Secondly, he wanted to break away from the traditions of naming children according to one's culture. For him, using another South African language was more of identifying him as a South African. (Roger Lucey interview, August 1, 2022).

about his own bitterness towards the socio-political system.<sup>152</sup> This is partly due to the fact that he could not be there for his son when he was born because he was arrested after being stopped at a roadblock. In his book, *Back In From the Anger* (2012), Lucey provides a detailed account of what happened. Being the only white member in the van, his baggage attracted special attention from the police: “There was a sudden whoop, and the young constable emerged triumphant with four *kaartjies of zol*. I was locked in the back of their van while Steve and the band were sent on their way.”<sup>153</sup> This was an arguably illegal offence. He was taken to Ubombo Prison, close to the border of Swaziland and Mozambique. During the process of charging him, Lucey was subjected to questions around his behaviour; being in the company of blacks, degrading himself by smoking dagga, and wearing earrings.

In the song, Lucey sings about political and social challenges that the country faced. He sings about the disappearance of Steve Biko and other politicians who vanished into police custody.<sup>154</sup>

Hey Thabane  
I'm going to tell you a tale  
About the land into which you have been born  
And you will be raised  
I tell you what I see of your brothers  
I tell you of some places that I have seen

I saw a child in there, he was crying  
And souls of men, old men wasted  
And dying  
Even Biko has just been taken  
But you know that he's one of many

But the pain has been rearing  
Children prepared for battle

Son, I hope you'll never feel the sickness  
Now destroying your land  
I hope for you that we've paid our dues

<sup>152</sup> Roger Lucey, interview by Pakama Ncume. Telephone Interview, Stellenbosch, August 28, 2022.

<sup>153</sup> Roger Lucey, *Back in From the Anger* (South Africa: Jacana Media, 2012), 112.

<sup>154</sup> The apartheid government deemed Biko a terrorist and was arrested in a police roadblock in August of 1977. On 12 September 1977, he died mysteriously in custody. Following investigations and an autopsy revealed that he died from brain haemorrhage due to blunt trauma on the left side of his head. For further reading, see Lindy Wilson, *Steve Biko* (Ohio University Press, 2012); Shannen Hill, "Iconic Autopsy: Postmortem Portraits of Bantu Stephen Biko." *African Arts* 38, no. 3 (2005): 14 and <https://newsone.com/2168992/steve-biko-biography/>. Derya Emir also provides a detailed account of detainees who died in police custody. See by Derya Emir, "Torture, Violence and Apartheid in André P. Brink's *A Dry White Season*." *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education Research* 1, no. 4 (2015): 1070-1077.

By the time you reach your moving years  
The price is high

I cannot run so I have to face this battleground before me

I hope for you it's just history  
This crisis we are living  
You know we've taken so much  
And we never thought of giving  
And now I wonder will you ever see the freedom  
And I hope for you that the war is dead and gone  
I may be blind but I hope that it's over  
I may be blind but I hope that it's dead and gone  
Oh Oh, I hope that it's over<sup>155</sup>

While the song expresses the wish that the next generation would not have to live through such a crisis, his generation will continue to fight. The song receives a big applause from the audience.

After this powerful song, Marks introduces Mike Dickman who closes the concert with the love song, the "Devil Got My Woman."

I'd rather be the devil in my baby's mind  
From the west, from the west  
The woman I love, woman that I loved  
Woman I loved, stolen her from my best friend  
But he got lucky, stole her back again  
And he got lucky, stole her back again.<sup>156</sup>

The blues song features a lot of guitar strumming showcasing Dickman's proficiency on the guitar. This is, indeed, the final performance under the banner of the Café. Yet, the music continued...

#### **4.7 The Afterlife of the Market Café, 1979-1980**

The conversion of the Market Café into The Laager did not bring an abrupt end to the concerts. Marks continued hosting in the theatre complex. He continued to stage concerts and movie nights either in The Laager or in the main theatre hall from 1979 until he moved to Mangles and the Chelsea Theatre in 1980.

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<sup>155</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-lucey-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>156</sup> Transcribed from tape hymap-dm-reel-lucey-1978-001 available from the Hidden Years archive.



One of these concerts held in The Laager featured Roger Lucey, Paul Clingman and Abafana Besishingishane on 29 June 1979. This was an eclectic programme with folk singers, rock and *isicathamiya*. Lucey's repertoire included some of his politically provocative songs like "The Road is Much Longer" (1979) and "Lungile Tabalaza" (1979). The song "Lungile Tabalaza" is included on Lucey's album, *The Road is Much Longer* (1979), recorded and produced by David Marks.<sup>157</sup> In "Lungile Tabalaza," Lucey accuses the government of abducting and murdering Lungile Tabalaza, a student activist from Port Elizabeth. An article by Aiden Erasmus states that the Directorate of Publications deemed the album dangerous and in February, shortly after its release, it was banned.<sup>158</sup>

One notable concert that took place in 1979 was Stompie Mavi's performance in the Market Theatre.<sup>159</sup> Mavi is well-known for not only popularising the Xhosa traditional songs, but also for transforming them into universal hits,<sup>160</sup> including "Somagwaza" (1999), "Nomnganga" (1992), "Umbongo" (1992), "Nozamile" (1982) and others. Born in the Eastern Cape, the Afro-jazz maestro performed a combination of English and IsiXhosa songs including "Umbongo" (1992), "KwaXhosa" (1982), "Mother Africa" (1982), "Era of Africa" (no date), "Fame Is Not an Easy Thing to Handle" (no date), "Manyano" (2000) and others.<sup>161</sup>

In 1980, Marks organised a number of concerts in the theatre, including Donald Swann (folk musician),<sup>162</sup> Mara Louw (jazz, blues and traditional singer),<sup>163</sup> and Laurika Rauch (Afrikaans singer-songwriter) on 27 January 1980.<sup>164</sup> Rauch recorded and released her first hit single,

<sup>157</sup> The master copy is available in the Hidden Years archive (hymap-dm-reel-lucey-1979-001).

<sup>158</sup> Aidan Erasmus, "A Sinister Resonance." *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature/Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée* 45, no. 4 (2018): 586.

<sup>159</sup> See tape hymap-dm-reel-mavi-1979-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>160</sup> Unknown Author, "Mavi Plays His Last Tune." *Sowetan Live*, January 18, 2008. <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2008-01-18-mavi-plays-his-last-tune/>, accessed September 11, 2022.

<sup>161</sup> See tape hymap-dm-reel-mavi-1979-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>162</sup> Donald Swann was a Russian folk singer who in the 1970s performed his solo show of peace and protest songs in South Africa. See: [www.donaldswann.co.uk/biog.html](http://www.donaldswann.co.uk/biog.html)

<sup>163</sup> Mara Louw is a well-established professional singer whose singing started at the age of 10 with Imilonji Kantu Choral Society. She toured Asia with the choir. Her role in Gibson Kente's *Sikhalo* in 1970 saw her touring Japan, Britain and the Philippines. While in London with the musical, she had the honour to perform for the Queen. In 1976, she went solo and performed in countries like former South West Africa (Namibia) in cabaret. She also had a lead role in the musical *African Odyssey*. The revival of the play *King Kong* in 1979 by American Joe Walker resulted in her playing a leading role. See: <https://www.joburg.org.za/play/Pages/Play%20in%20Joburg/Joburg%20Vibe/links/Why%20I%20love%20Joburg/links/Mara-Louw.aspx>. The information has been gathered from the metadata of the tapes that Marks recorded in these other spaces. See Appendix 4 for reference.

<sup>164</sup> See tape hymap-dm-reel-swann-1980-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

“*Kinders van die Wind*,” (1979) on the Stanyan Africa label, a label created by David Marks and Rod McKuen. As a singer and actress, she was a member of the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal (PACT) and she performed in the first Afrikaans cabaret in, *Met Permissie Gesê* (1980), and many more.<sup>165</sup> On 22 March 1980, another concert was staged with Juluka, Mel Miller and Paul Clingman in the main theatre.<sup>166</sup> Paul Clingman performed several songs, including “Kroonstad Prison,” “Song about Exiles,” “Song about Going away and Man Running Away.” As the song titles suggest, Clingman was clearly commenting on the political situation in South Africa. In “Kroonstad Prison,” he sings about the prison located in the Free State Province.<sup>167</sup> It was a prison for black female political prisoners during apartheid, a female equivalent of Robben Island. This prison was notorious for ill-treatment of political prisoners.<sup>168</sup>

#### 4.8. Conclusion

Despite the plethora of restrictions, laws and acts, the censorship and banning of music and musicians set up to ensure that the various cultures in South Africa did not mix, the Café offered a safe alternative performance platform, where music, poetry and dance could exist unrestricted and free. It became increasingly outwardly critical of the apartheid regime.

There is an exponential growth in the number of musicians and bands from different racial groups, multiracial performances, and gender performing in the last two years of the Café (see appendix 1 and 2). In line with this growth, there is a shift from a space staging diverse genres in 1976 to a celebration of South African heritage and African heritage with the Siswati, IsiZulu, and TshaVenda culture and traditions welcomed into the space, as well as more international exposure with the performances of Rod McKuen. There is also a call towards remembering the proud fighting Zulu heritage, and critique against Africans who have negotiated with the South African government to establish the Bantustans. Musicians are more fearless and outspoken in their critique of the apartheid government, openly singing about political prisoners, death in detention, and the Black Consciousness Movement.

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<sup>165</sup> See: <https://laurikarauch.com/short-biography/>

<sup>166</sup> Juluka was a music band formed in 1969 by Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu. See tapes hymap-dm-reel-juluka-clingman-1980-001 and hymap-dm-reel-juluka-miller-1980-001 from the Hidden Years archive.

<sup>167</sup> On the 16 April 2014, Kroonstad Correctional Centre was renamed Bizzah Makhate Correctional Centre.

<sup>168</sup> N.P.Z. Mbatha, “Narratives of Women Detained in the Kroonstad Prison During the Apartheid Era: A Socio-Political Exploration, 1960-1990.” *Southern Journal for Contemporary History* 43, no. 1 (2018): 91. <https://doi.org/10.18820/24150509/JCH43.v1.5>.

Even after the Café closed, concerts in the complex continued – both in The Laager and in the main theatre. While Marks was no longer in charge, the artistic endeavour continued, and the artists continued to take their messages to other audiences in different spaces. The message and the community were never restricted by space, but the Café allowed Marks to establish a stage and also recording studio for artists where their music could be recorded. These very same recordings are the reason why this study has been possible.

The recordings revealed for example how Johnny Clegg explained the music and Zulu culture to the audience before performing the songs with Sipho Mchunu. This exposed audiences in the Café to the Zulu culture and, in the words of Thamm, “opened the door and a window for many white South Africans to engage with, celebrate and respect lives they had been taught to view as “inferior” or simply not to consider.”<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Marianne Thamm, “End of an Era: Johnny Clegg Pioneer and National Treasure, Bids Farewell to Friends.” *Daily Maverick*, May 9, 2017. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-05-09-end-of-an-era-johnny-clegg-pioneer-and-national-treasure-bids-farewell-to-fans/>.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study set out to tell the story of the Market Theatre Café, an intimate music venue within the Market Theatre Complex. Particular attention was paid to identify and inscribe the performances that took place from 1976-1980 in the Café, and later in The Laager, into popular music historical narratives. While the focus was on music concerts, the performances included other artistic forms of expression such as poetry recitals, film screenings, theatre performances, and satirical revues. By providing a comprehensive list of performances at the venue and analysing select concerts that were recorded and preserved within the Hidden Years Music Archive, the study aimed to provide a detailed account of who performed in each year, the genres they performed in, and explored the messages that was being conveyed through the music, banter, and announcements between songs. The small venue enabled interactions, interjections, comments, and reflections as the audience was close to the performers, an element that distinguished it from other more conventional spaces of the time. While many of the artists were popular in the music circles of Johannesburg and Durban at the time, this study has shown that most have fallen into obscurity and are relatively unknown today, for example Sol Rachid and Anna Nkosi, the lead singer of the Soshanguve Dolls.

The Market Theatre Complex is situated in a broader context of alternative theatres in South Africa, including The Space, and The Workshop (Chapter 2). Founded by Mannie Manim and Barney Simon in 1976, both avid alternative theatre makers in South Africa, the Complex was managed by a team of actors known as The Company. While the focus on theatre productions continued, David Marks and his wife, Frances Marks envisaged what a music venue would look like and set about establishing a music venue. The addition of the Café in June 1976 as a music venue, coffee shop, and recording studio set the Complex apart from other theatre spaces. The Market Café was inspired by Marks's travels in America and his exposure to its coffee club culture, and also the coffee club culture of Newtown and Hillbrow in Johannesburg. The official closure of the Café in 1978 could be attributed to a declining coffee culture in Johannesburg by the late 1970s. One could also posit that because the Café was not supported by the Market Theatre Complex, as well as not selling alcohol, its revenue was significantly slimmer compared to other venues. Financial unsustainability not only led to the closure of the Café but also other, similar kind of places like The Workshop.

During the years of its short existence, the Café hosted numerous events that illustrate a wide variety of musical genres ranging from folk, rock, country, *mbaqanga*, *isicathamiya*, jazz, rock and punk. Further to the variety of genres, was the plethora of languages included in these concerts from English and Afrikaans, to IsiZulu, TshiVenda, IsiXhosa, SeSotho and SiSwati.

These performances were made possible by the fact that the space was not racially designated due to its previous use as an industrial site. While the Complex was monitored by the government, performances were able to take place relatively undisturbed by state mechanisms set up to sabotage or disrupts similar performances at other venues. An example would be Roger Lucey's performance at Mangles in 1979 that was sabotaged with tear gas, amongst other things.<sup>1</sup>

Poetry readings during concerts and poetry nights was also a regular occurrence at the Café. While the venue presented a wide spectrum of local and international musicians, some musicians like Colin Shamley, John Oakley-Smith, Mike Dickman, Brian Finch, Kenny Henson and Malombo were regularly featured.

In Chapter 3 we see the preparations for the opening concert including the performance of a Tibetan Buddhist ritual and the untimely flooding of the venue. Despite many setbacks the Café launched its first performance on the 21st of June 1976 against the backdrop of the Soweto Uprisings. While some musicians such as Roger Lucey and Paul Clingman were outspoken about the events of the Soweto Uprising during interviews for example, very few musicians commented about this on stage during their performances. The heightened police presence and surveillance after a State of Emergency was declared could have persuaded musicians to be more cautious. While some musicians cancelled their performances that were to take place at the Café soon after the Uprising such as Spirits Rejoice, others did opt to perform.

Themes that were explored during these performances included love, alternative love, exploitation brought about by colonialism, systemic exploitation, poverty, the irony of the parallel existence of employee/employer, feelings of isolation, the use of alcohol as a coping mechanism, crime, monotonous existence for black South Africans, lamenting people's hardships living in townships such as Soweto, and the American counterculture. While the

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Drewett, "'Stop this Filth': The Censorship of Roger Lucey's Music in Apartheid South Africa," *SAMUS* 25 (2005), 59.

majority of concerts in 1976 indirectly critiqued the apartheid government by reflecting on the lived experiences of the performers, the artists performing on 28 November directly spoke out against the government, singing about deaths in detention and political disappearances.

Chapter 4 shows how artists continued to use satire, metaphors, and symbols, in opposition to the political dispensation. However, it is abundantly clear that an important aspect of the venue became teaching the audience and musicians about other cultures. This included the use of language, spirituality, traditional instruments, rituals, and dances. The first multi-racial performance at the Café was by Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu on 16 January 1977 combining Western and Zulu musical idioms. Various other groups also explored the fusion of musical techniques. Malombo, for example, uses drums as the leading instrument in songs and not as accompaniment, as is per usual, in Western compositions.

Some themes that were explored included the living conditions of black woman, migrancy, veiled critique about the decline of African Kingdoms, and outspoken critique against people who negotiated with the apartheid state in establishing the Bantustans. There was also a call for people to rejuvenate their fighting spirit as displayed in the Zulu warrior performance. There was also a critique of masculinities and the continued oppression of black women. Other forms of discrimination were also approached including poverty and class. In this chapter we see that there is a need to make people culturally and linguistically aware, but also a call on people to self-reflect and find strategies to overcome their plight and bring about change. The last official concert in the Café was given by Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu on 7 May 1978.

Even though the Café became The Laager after this concert, managed by Pieter Dirk-Uys, there is a continuation of themes and performances under the direction of David Marks beyond the change of name. While there were similar music venues like the Market Café where music events were staged outside of the popular mainstream, the location and impetus behind the Market Theatre Complex offered Marks a unique opportunity to develop an alternative popular music venue unencumbered by the apartheid legislation of the time. The location of the Theatre in a racially non-designated area, coupled with the fact that the Café was not selling alcohol, meant that the space was not regularly targeted by the security police as one would have expected of such a venue.

Muff Anderson noted that many of the musicians who performed at the Café were regarded by the government as advancing the communist agenda through folk singing, including Des Lindberg, Keith Blundell, Nick Taylor, David Marks, Mel Green, and Edi Niederlander.<sup>2</sup> This was similar to how folk music and the counterculture was perceived in America and the United Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> However, not all the musicians who performed in the Café were radical in their approach to politics. While some sang about politics, others sang love songs, made silly jokes, and commented on their daily lives in South Africa. Anne Schumann points out that music in apartheid South Africa was not only used to reflect people's concerns about the social ills of the system but also as a medium to create an alternative political and social reality.<sup>4</sup> In the Café they were promoting awareness of others, awareness of self, and creating a space for people to experience something different through music. A space was therefore developed by David Marks and by the musicians and the audience members, where an alternative music community could be nurtured, and where new and established musicians could perform irrespective of their race, class, gender, performance style, or genre.

With the addition of a small recording studio in the venue Marks was able to make live recordings of all the concerts and events with relative ease. Some of these recordings were later released as albums or given to the musicians as demo tracks that they could use to secure recording contracts. As such the Café was unique in how it created a platform for alternative music and how that nurtured and developed musicians and educated audiences in the process.

Marks's work as a musician, producer, and collector gave rise to an alternative archive, the Hidden Years Music Archive. From his collection methods to his management systems, the archive has been run contrary to most national and international standards of archiving. As a personal archive, Marks's autonomy is not only reflected in his recording techniques and classification systems but also through the type of content he preserved, including the live recordings made in the Market Café. Due to the political system and Marks's fear of exposing the musicians and what they were singing about should the security police raid his house,

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<sup>2</sup> Andersson, Muff. *Music in the Mix: The Story of South African Popular Music*. Johannesburg: Ravan, 1981, 112.

<sup>3</sup> Jonathan Mason, "Remembering Woody Guthrie: A Century After His birth, the Influence of 'the First Protest Singer' Lives on Through Contemporary Music of Dissent." *Aljazeera*, [www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2012/7/14/remembering-woody-guthrie](http://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2012/7/14/remembering-woody-guthrie); and See: Raeford Daniel, "Folk still on the Scene." *Rand Daily Mail*, May 16, 1970, 12 and Andersson, Muff. *Music in the Mix: The Story of South African Popular Music*. Johannesburg: Ravan, 1981, 115.

<sup>4</sup> Anne Schumann, "The Beat that Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance Against Apartheid in South Africa," 17.



Marks partially labelled, and in some cases did not label, material. Some tapes were switched around and placed into different sleeves. In spite of these obstacles, working with the live sound recordings both as an archivist and as a researcher has been invaluable. Sound, as a medium that captures time and what spaces may have sounded like, how people spoke, what they sang about, how they clapped and what comments made them laugh, have been the backbone of this study in telling the story of the Market Café. This analysis is enhanced through the way that the events were recorded. Without these recordings, and without David Marks's concerted efforts to preserve them, the documentation of the events in the Café, especially the performers hitherto absent in the literature would have remained silent.

What is of equal significance are the recordings of performances in vernacular languages. Through transcribing and transposing these to English, these transcriptions will now be available as resources for future studies. Apart from some of the music of Johnny Clegg, Sipho Mchunu, Roger Lucey, and the international songs, which have lyrics available online, this study has also provided written lyrics of the many performances that took place at the Café between 1976 - 1980.

While the available body of knowledge by authors including Muff Anderson, Ingrid Byerly, Anne Schumann, Michael Drewett, Helena Lunn, and Lizabé Lambrechts, have paved the way for the process of identifying and understanding some of these musicians and the music they performed, there is scope for much more research into this field. While the authors mentioned focus on musicians as alternative contributors in the struggle for resistance against apartheid, this study showed how an in-depth reading of a space and the performances that took place there could reveal musicians and practices that might be otherwise missed in broader projects which reflect on overarching themes. It thus forms part of a growing corpus studying alternative popular music in South Africa.

Going back to the words of Michael Warner used in Chapter 1 of this thesis where he describes a public as “a crowd witnessing itself in [a] visible space,”<sup>5</sup> one that is formed “by the event or by the shared physical space,”<sup>6</sup> we can argue that the Market Café functioned as such a space. The Café, managed and maintained by Marks, the musicians, and the audience, can be construed as a social space that enabled the emergence of a public that constituted itself around

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<sup>5</sup> Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*. (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 66.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*. (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 66.

an alternative political discourse, a discourse enabled and activated through “gestures of joining together.”<sup>7</sup> This public is different from the one propagated by the apartheid ideologies of the time, where alternative lifestyles, sexualities and spiritualities could be shared and lived. It was a public made up out of people from different races, cultures, and classes, one that would rarely have spent leisure time together. It was a political public in the sense that being together in this way went against the publics made possible under apartheid legislation. It was a public of joy, where pleasure was shared through the music and culture of others during one of the most repressive times in South African history.

This study has shown that despite restrictions and threats of censorship and banning, that musicians used sound and songs to transgress boundaries and establish a public, even if only for the duration of each concert, where freedom of expression could thrive.

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<sup>7</sup> LaBelle, *Sonic Agency*, 11.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: 1976 Concerts

Performance date	Artists / Bands
1-7 August 1976	Allen Kwela
	Colin Shamley
8 August 1976	Malombo
15 - 30 August 1976	John Oakley-Smith
29 August 1976	John Oakley-Smith
	Russel Herman and Mervyn Africa
	Spirits Rejoice
September 1976	Malombo
14-26 September 1976	Boot with Colin Shamley
	Dollar Brand/Abdullah Ibrahim
	Roy Bulkin and Robert Schroeder Band
21 September 1976	Sol Rachid
	Spirits Rejoice
	Abdulah Ibrahim
5 -10 October 1976	Roy Bulkin
	Duccio
12-17 October 1976	Scarlet O'Hara
19-24 October 1976	Spirits Rejoice
25-31 October 1976	Strike Up the Banned
2-7 November	Brian Finch
9-14 November 1976	Keith Blundell
	Chris Mann
16-21 November 1976	Andrew Tracey Steel Band
28 November 1976	Brian Finch
	Kenny Henson
	Ramsey McKay
	Colin Shamley
November 1976	Brian Finch

	Kenny Henson
November 1976	Colin Shamley
16 December 1976	Elastic Headband
19 December 1976	Elastic Head Band
1976 (no specific date)	Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu
1976 (no specific date)	Flibbertigibbet
1976 (no specific date)	Tony
1976 (no specific date)	George (Late night with George)
1976 (no specific date)	Colin Shamley (demo)
1976 (no specific date)	Keith Blundell
1976 (no specific date)	Andrew Tracey's Steel Band
1976 (no specific date)	Don't Look Back
1976 (no specific date)	Ronnie Domp

**Appendix 2: 1977 Concerts**

<b>Performance date</b>	<b>Musician/s</b>
16 January 1977	Johnny Clegg
	Sipho Mchunu
22 January 1977	Ken E. Henson
	Ray Perkel
	Paul Clingman
12 February 1977	Boogie Woogie Bubble and Squek (A cabaret by Leonie Hofmeyer, Michele Maxwell and Sarah McNair)
19 February 1977	Boogie Woogie Bubble and Squek
February 1977	Paul Clingman
2 March 1977	Spirits Rejoice
March 1977	Malombo
March 1977	Brian Finch
	Ken E. Henson
March 1977	Ray Perkel
April 1977	Band o' Gypsies
9 April 1977	Elastic Head Band
11 May 1977	Silver Creek Mountain Band
10-16 June 1977	Silver Creek Mountain Band
	Silver Creek Mountain Band
	Silver Creek Mountain Band
	Silver Creek Mountain Band
June 1977	Elastic Head Band
9 July 1977	Mike Dickman
August 1977	Roger Lucey
August 1977	Les Downing
August 1977	Ronnie Domp
August 1977	Guillome
August 1977	Colin Shamley
11 September 1977	Paul Clingman
	Johnny Clegg
	Sipho Mchunu
	Bra Sello
	Abafana baseQhudeni
	Ladysmith Black Mambazo
	Rod McKuen
17 September 1977	Rod McKuen
17 September 1977	Colin Shamley
September 1977	Spirits Rejoice
October 1977	Mike Dickman
October 1977	John Oakley-Smith



6 October 1977	Sol Rachid
	Spirits Rejoice
	Abdullah Ibrahim
17 October 1977	Spirits Rejoice
30 October 1977	Paul Bura
	Len Downing
5-12 November 1977	Malombo
1977 (no specific date)	Radio Rats
1977 (no specific date)	Spirits Rejoice
1977 (no specific date)	Raven
1977 (no specific date)	Colin Shamley
1977 (no specific date)	Merry Madcap

**Appendix 3: 1978 Concerts**

<b>Performance date</b>	<b>Musician/s</b>
January 1978	Ian MacDonald
January 1978	Flippertiggibbert
January 1978	Afrika
8 February 1978	Colin Shamley
12 March 1978	Larry/Rob/Viv
16 April 1978	The Rock
	Jake and Kid
	Soshanguve Dolls
	Anna Nkosi
	Amabhubesi
7 May 1978	Johnny Clegg
	Sipho Mchunu
6 June 1978	Radio Rats
10 June 1978	Radio Rats
	Colin Shamley
11 June 1978	Radio Rats
	Colin Shamley
9 July 1978	Mike Dickman
7 September 1978	Roger Lucey
	Colin Shamley
	Mike Dickman
9 September 1978	Roger Lucey
	Colin Shamley
	Mike Dickman
1978 (no specific date)	Steve Fataar
1978 (no specific date)	Edi Niederlander
1978 (no specific date)	Maureen England
1978 (no specific date)	Spirits Rejoice
1978 (no specific date)	Raven
1978 (no specific date)	Malombo
1978 (no specific date)	Bruce Scott
1978 (no specific date)	Silver Creek Mountain Band
1978 (no specific date)	Radio Rats
1978 (no specific date)	Sipho Sephamla
1978 (no specific date)	Tommy Masemola

**Appendix 4: 1979-1980 Concerts**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Performers</b>
29 June 1979	The Laager	Roger Lucey
1979 (no specific date)	Market Theatre	Stompi Mavi
1980-01-27	Market Theatre	Donald Swann, Laurika Rauch and Mara Louw
1980-01-27	Market Theatre	Donald Swann and Soweto Teacher's Choir
1980-03-22	Market Theatre	Juluka and Paul Clingman
1980-03-22	Market Theatre	Juluka and Mel Miller