

## THEATRE

MATTHEW KROUSE

**\* Arena, State Theatre, Pretoria.** Mphahlele Paul Grootboom's *Foreplay* is an adaptation of the European drama *Reigen* by Arthur Schnitzler. It deals with sexual encounters between interconnected individuals. The work debuted at last year's Afrovibes Festival in Amsterdam. Until April 2. From April 21 see *Zenzo* by Zozo and Harriet Maramela in Kees Ma's *The Hill*, directed by Kees Ngodoo. Book at Compupicket. Tel: 012 392 4000.

**\* Barney Simon Theatre, Marikel Theatre Complex, Newtown.** Qamla Adams returns in Nadia Davids's enormously successful and hilariously funny book at the lives of Muslim women in Alheret. Opens on April 15. Book at Compupicket. Tel: 011 832 1641.

**\* The Fringe, Joburg Theatre Complex, Braamfontein.** In the venue once known as the Tes-son Theatre catch Robert Barker Haines' *Whitehead* and Fiona Ramsay in the hilarious *Sodas Musical Fings Ain't wit they used Tbe*. Until May 3. Book at Compupicket. Tel: 011 877 6800.

**\* Laager Theatre, Market Theatre Complex, Newtown.** *Loviso* Gola for President: *The Final Run* is presented by Kaya FM and DSTV and is this comedian's take on upcoming and current political events. Get into the election spirit as he launches the Gola Administration party (Gapi). Until April 26. Book at Compupicket. Tel: 011 832 1641.

**\* Market Theatre, Newtown.** MacBeki, penned and directed by workaholic satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys and inspired by the writing of William Shakespeare, runs until May 3. It is the story of the rise and fall of MacBeki, a talented and gifted

leader who is corrupted by the silver tongues of three witches, an over-reaching wife and a crown that seems there for the taking. With Fezile Mpele, Arthur Molepo, Luzz Mering and Coco Merkel. See *Pick of the Week*. Book at Compupicket. Tel: 011 832 1641.

**\* Parker's Comedy and Jive.** Montecasino, Gauteng's newest full-time stand-up venue hosts improvisational comedy on Wednesday nights marshalled by top dog John Wisnias. Check the website for upcoming local and international names. Visit [www.parkerscomedy.com](http://www.parkerscomedy.com). Tel: 083 652 7713.

**Pieter Toerien's Montecasino Theatre, Fourways.** Until April 26 Tim Plewman, Jonathan Rands and Jennifer Steyn appear in *The Insa-tibles*, in which two old friends compete for the same high-powered job. Directed by Clare Stopford. In the Studio catch the drama *Dear Lar* until April 12, with Gary Raymond and Delena Kidd. Book at Compupicket. Tel: 011 511 1818.

**\* Teatro, Montecasino.** Four ways, the public were called on to choose the stars of *High School Musical* in a long-running reality show. Now you can catch David Schachter, Christel Mulombo and Carmen Pretorius in this rebash of the blockbusting international craze. Now extended until April 13. Book at Compupicket. Tel: 011 510 7777.

**\* Theatre on the Square.** Nelson Mandela Square, Sandton. Until April 18 wacky character performers Kate Liquorish and Deborah Vyera do a camp kitchen demo in *The Cooksisters*. Until April 18. Book at Strictly Tickets. Tel: 011 883 8606.

## ★ Recommended

Details to Matthew Krouse. Email: [matthewk@mg.co.za](mailto:matthewk@mg.co.za)

## Satire to the Macs

**MacBeki** is Pieter-Dirk Uys's new satire about power, intrigue and betrayal running at the Market Theatre.

Set in Luthuli Castle, the play presents an old Madiba whose reign is about to end. The production features Fezile Mpele as the scheming MacBeki, *Scandal* actress Nthathi Moshesh as Lady Mantia, *Isidingo's* Sello Seotlase as MacZum, Coco Merkel as MacTrev and Mpho Osei-Tutu as Ramabangu.

MacBeki is based on Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth*, but Uys's play has nothing of the blood and tragedy that defines Shakespeare's. Even though dark, slightly menacing storm clouds are always gathering on the horizon, Uys doesn't stick to *Macbeth's* tragic template.

The star of the play is Moshesh, whose portrayal of the alcoholic Lady M is superb. She is faintly coquettish, swimming in alcohol, but her drunken gestures never completely obscure her scheming nature and the possibility of tragedy. In some ways the tragedy is in Lady M watching the imposition of her dreams for MacBeki as she lies in a hospital bed with her liver failing, overwhelmed by too much gin and vodka.

Osei-Tutu's portrayal of the duality of Ramabangu, first as a serious contender for the throne and

then as a bloated, comical figure shorn of leadership skills, shows the banality of wealth. He is a tragic figure, forever lost to the business world, not the same person of whom MacBeki was, at some point, reputably afraid.

Having read the text before watching the play, somewhat spoiled it for me. But I found the first half riveting, in part because of the solid performances by Mpele, Moshesh and Osei-Tutu.

The last quarter has nothing of the portending doom the play initially suggested. But that is as it should be — after all, this is comedy. However, I dare say it lost part of its force because of the artistic disorderliness and lack of control at the end of the narrative. New characters from Harriet (Guidenstern and Rosencrantz) are introduced even though they don't add a lot to an already developed narrative.

In a play in which no one is really identified by their proper names, an ever-present porter answering to the name of Pieter-Dirk Uys felt like needless self-referencing.

Nevertheless, MacBeki shows, that the local drama of politics is a rich source material for gentle comedy. If only the subtext weren't so real. — Percy Zwomuya

At the Market Theatre until May 3



The cast of Pieter-Dirk Uys's new political satire

Go to the hidden place

## VISUAL ART

David Brown Fine Art, 39 Keyes Avenue, Rosebank. An exhibition of perfect-for-the-

William Kentridge and Jeremy Water, among others. Website: [www.mfoxarts.com](http://www.mfoxarts.com).