

ANOTHER FEATHER FOR TUTU IN UYS' MACBEEKI

Edward Tsumele

Pieter Dirk Uys' new political satire, *MacBeki*, which started playing this week at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, has a well-selected and polished cast.

One of them is Mpho Osei Tutu, who plays Lord Ramabangu, a seasoned actor who is set to shine in this production.

"It has been incredible working with such an experienced cast, and it has not been as daunting as I expected because they have made it easy to work with me as a junior actor compared to them.

"Working with Uys has also been inspirational as he is an extremely humorous person, something you need - especially since we had little time to work on the show," he said.

Tutu has been acting since the tender age of eight. With firm roots in theatre, he has also appeared in commercials, TV series and films.

He holds a BA (Hons) degree in Dramatic Art from Wits University, where he majored in performance, television and screen-writing.

On stage, his acting roles include being Tumi in Paul Slabolepsky's *For Your Ears Only*, Creon in *Medea*, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, The Father in *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, Jimmy in *Long Legs*, Mangane in the musical *Love, Crime and Johannesburg*, and Winston in the classic *The Island*, with which he has toured the UK, US and Greece.

On screen, acting roles include Snorty in *Font, Hot Plate*, Mpho in *Rhythm City*, Shu in *Mzansi 2*, Vuvo in *Molo Fish 2*, Junior in Akin Omotoso's *Rifle Road*, Shanghai in Phillip Noyce's *Catch a Fire*, and Desmond in the international Emmy-nominated *Home Affairs*.

Mpho is also a screenwriter and has penned some episodes of *Rhythm City*, *The Lab*, *A Place Called Home*, the controversial *After Nine*, and

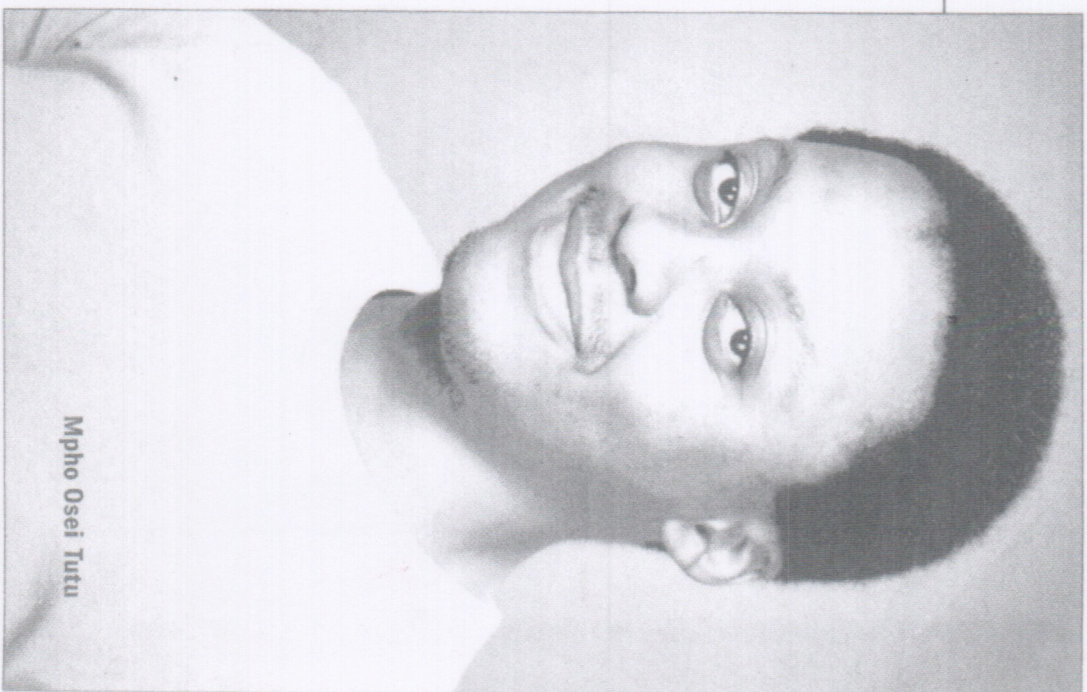
Zone 14, which he also directed.

And while *MacBeki* draws inspiration from Shakespeare's drama *Macbeth* about ambition, power, deceit and greed, it exists independent of it. Written in mid-2008, the comedy takes place in Luthuli Castle where the aging King Maduba (Arthur Molepo) is nearing the end of his reign.

In the wings, successors plot and scheme, including the favourite son Lord Ramabangu (Tutu), Lord MacBeki (Fezile Mpela) and the ambitious alcoholic Lady Manta (Ntshati Moshesh).

A host of other characters, including Lord MacZum (Sello Sebotsane), Prince McTrev (Coco Merckel) and The Porter (Lizz Mering), are drawn into the fray.

And in another flash of inspiration, the three witches from *Macbeth* have been reinvented as journalists (Renate Stuurman, Kenneth Fok and Meme Ditshego).



Mpho Osei Tutu



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