



## CITY OF JOHANNESBURG

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City of Johannesburg Media Statement by  
Executive Mayor, Cllr Mpho Phalatse

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### **Soweto Theatre: 10-years of bringing the arts to the heart of Joburg**

Programme Director

Member of the Mayoral Committee for Community Development, Cllr Ronald Harris

CEO of Joburg City Theatres, Ms Xoliswa Nduneni-Ngema

GM of Soweto Theatre, Mr Vincent Motau

City and Entity Officials

Ntate Sipho "Hotstix" Mabuse and our glorious Legends.

What a beautiful day it is to celebrate the arts with some of the greats who have contributed to its enrichment and empowerment.

Not only are we celebrating Joburg and South Africa's world-renowned artists, but we are doing so while they still stand with us, and doing what they love us through every note they sing and play.

We should give our legends their flowers while they're with us.

Indeed, today we choose to give you your flowers while you live and breathe.

Our kind words should not only be saved for when we stand by your graves, but our expression of gratitude and praise should be done on days like this; and everyday

going forward, while remember legends of the arts that have left us.

Programme Director,

Ten-years of the Soweto Theatre is an amazing achievement, it dispels the idea that South Africans, Joburgers and residents of Soweto are not willing to pay for and support the arts. In fact, today's celebrations affirm the notion that the arts are alive and kicking in the townships and across the City.

People from across the City have converged on Soweto to not only say that the Soweto Theatre has a glorious decade behind it but also to loudly state that there are many more good decades ahead for this hub of the arts.

It is also fitting that we celebrate our legends during Heritage Month.

Heritage is our inheritance; the arts is our inheritance, and it is what we will bequeath to many more generations to come.

The Jabulani Amphitheatre is part of our heritage, it has hosted some of the most historical moments in our quest for a just, free, and fair society.

It was here that the revolution for a democratic South Africa was intensified, when Ambassador Zindzi Mandela, then only 25-years old, read out a letter by the late President Mandela, who rejected P.W Botha's conditions for his release.

The work you are doing here may not necessarily be a political revolution, but it is certainly a cultural revolution that is far from complete.

Programme Director,

In the short period that I have been Executive Mayor of Joburg, I have seen far too many artists, young and old, pass on with very little to their names. These were talented custodians of the arts who were not given their flowers while they were alive.

Your fight – our fight – is to ensure that the arts receive its rightful and fair share, so that the struggles of the Legends we are celebrating here today aren't the same struggles of younger artists. In that fight you have a partner in me and the Joburg Multi-Party Government.

Programme Director,

Sports, Arts and Culture, are to a large extent an unfunded mandate of the City, and we are not getting our rightful and fair share from the other spheres of government, despite the contribution we make; and we are therefore challenging National and Provincial spheres of government to unlock the resources needed so that as the City we can build more Soweto Theatres across Joburg to support and empower the arts.

Programme Director,

I want to thank all The Legends for the contribution they have made and continue to make to the City and country.

I have immeasurable love and respect for you each one of you, and I can safely say that everyone here feels the same.

Happy 10-years to the Soweto Theatre!

Thank you. Ke a leboga. God bless you all.

***ENDS...***

**For media queries, please contact:**

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