

Ukwanda Puppet Company is based in Cape Town, South Africa; the company provides an artistic home and professional base for a core group of performers, designers, theatre artists.

1. Our collective experience ranges from crafting puppets for the National theater of London's WARHORSE; assisting in art exhibitions of sculpture/puppetry with Adrian Kholer; Working on building large scale puppets for Barrydale parade from 2013 to 2016; designing and building the giant puppets for 2017 and 2018 Barrydale parades; and creating our own productions, Qhawe and Warona.

2. Inspired by our experiences with Handspring, we developed our collective in 2010, creating puppets and performing in our community, Masiphumelele. Handspring soon learned of our work and sought to become involved in the development of the company Ukwanda Puppets and Designs Arts Collective.

3. Ukwanda was originally four members. Tragically, in 2016 we lost our and creative partner, Ncedile Daaki. He was returning to his home after a party when he was cruelly gunned down and his car was stolen. Wounded, he ran from his attackers but he succumbed more or less immediately. And he left us just like that. But we are not deterred. We create not just for ourselves, but also to maintain the legacy that Ncedile Daki believed in.

## **PRODUCTIONS**

### **QHAWE**

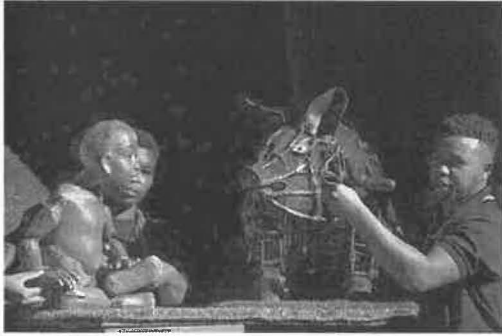
Ukwanda's puppet production, Qhawe was directed by Mongiwekhaya Mthombeni, with the assistance of Gabriel Merchand, and the puppets were designed and build ukwanda, Qhawe is based on a story from Xhosa tradition about how animals once had the power to communicate with people, particularly the Amaqaba, the red people, so-named because of the red ochre they wore on their clothes in order to communicate with the ancestors.

More particularly, Qhawe tells the story of a son of a chief (Qhawe), born to the younger of his two wives (Mamcirha). Because she is jealous, the older wife (Mandlovu), who cannot fall pregnant, steals the child at birth, replacing him with a puppy. Qhawe is then raised by animals far from his home village. As an older person, Qhawe returns to the village of his birth, only to find that it is being terrorised by a snake called 'Great One. On killing the snake he becomes the hero of the village and is also re-united with his father the chief Nxele.



*This image shows Qhawe growing up and learning to walk.*

*The puppeteers are Lyanda nogodlwana on a right side and Zikhona Jan on a left side.*



*In this image, the Pig is giving life lessons to Qhawe*

The puppeteers are Sipho Ngxola on the Pig and on the left side is zikhona assisting hand on the other side.)



*Here Mandluphi the older wife preparing to steal a new born puppy to replace Mamchiras's child that she is about to still.)*

The puppeteers are Sphokazi Mpofu, luyanda nogodlwana assisting an arm and Sipho Ngxola on a dog.)



*(Baby qhawe leraning to crawl)*

The puppeteers are. Sydwell klass, zikhona Jan and sipho ngxola.



*Chief Nxele Qhawe's father calling the meeting in the village, rewarding his chieftaincy to someone who kills the snake that is terrorising the village*

The puppeteer is Sydwele Klaas.

With the support from Handspring and the Centre for Humanities Research at the University of Western Cape, Qhawe went to National Arts Festival in 2014 and won standard bank ovation Prize. It also went to the Montague festival 2014 where it won double gold award, and to the Cape Town fringe festival and to the Farewell Festival for retiring rector of University of Western Cape, Brian O'Connell 25 October 2014.

## WARONA

Over the past 8 months Ukwanda have developed a puppet play, "Warona" which is an exploration of a young girl of talent and ambition who dreams of doing something adventurous and meaningful with her life. The play sketches her life in the township, which is centred on a small social community around a local butchery. Warona has a friendship with the son of the butcher, a young man who deals in drugs. Warona becomes involved in experimental drug taking, and as a result, she watches her dreams disappear. The show recently had a Cape Town school tour which we performed for more than 200 school students. In 2019, Ukwanda are taking it to the National Arts Festival (NAF) and having two more runs in Cape Town and The Eastern Cape. The play is structured in order to engage with question and debate with audiences and at the end of the show, the performers ask the audience to open up discussion with them, about various alternatives for the ending of the play.

The work is directed by Thando Doni and the puppet director was Craig Leo.



*Warona learning how to use drugs influenced by bash the biggest drug addict in community.*

The puppeteers are Siphokazi mpofu and asanda rhilityana assisting the other hand.



*Warona and her mother Vera. Her mother is begging her to come back home and go back to school again, but Warona is already deep in drugs and doesn't want to return home.*

Puppeteers are.

Warona – siphokazi mpofu and sipho mahlatshana assisting the other hand.

Vera – Mandiseli Maseti and asanda rhilityana.



*A local butcher Tito, Bash's father is cleaning his knives to prepare for chopping of his meat.*

Puppeteers are.

Sipho ngxola and luyanda nogodlwana assisting the other hand.



*Introduction of Blacky, Tito's dog, only eats raw meat; he calls him every time when someone is trying to give him trouble in his store.*

Puppeteers are. Luyanda Nogodlwana and sipho ngxola assisting the back legs.



School kids watching warona and taking notes as they going to be given an assignment about the show after watching.

School name – Chris Hani high school.

## **Renesterbos**

The puppets designed and handmade by Ukwanda designs for the 2017 Barrydale parade.



*Mina the Rhino puppet made by ukwanda during the parade in Barry dale 2017.*



*2017 Barrydale Parade.*



*Process of building the Rhinos.*



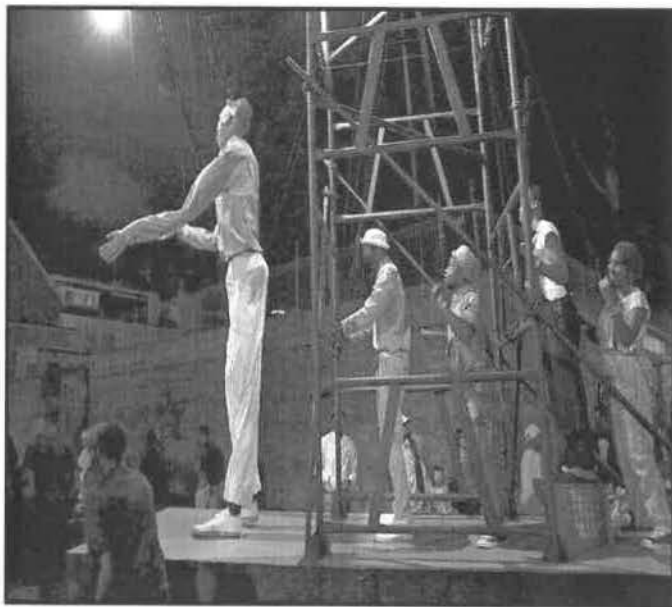
*Elephant's performance during BASA Awards in Johannesburg 2016.*



*BASA awards in Johannesburg 2016.*



*Puppeteers of the Oliphant land.*



*Slyza tsotsi during Cape Town Carnival 2015*



*Puppet that ukwanda designed and built for the Cape Town Opera 2014.*



*Ukwanda and their happy clients.*





*Small sample of tortoise preparing for barrydale parade 2014.*



*Giant puppet of a tortoise made by ukwanda in 2014 for the barrydale parade.*



*Puppet that ukwanda designed and built for Craig Leo's puppet theatre production.*



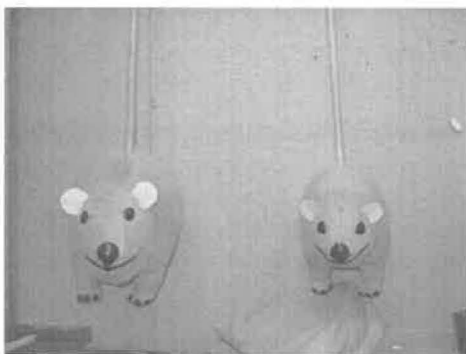
*Phelamona puppet made by ukwanda for barrydale parade in 2014*



*Secretary bird Barry dale parade 2014.*



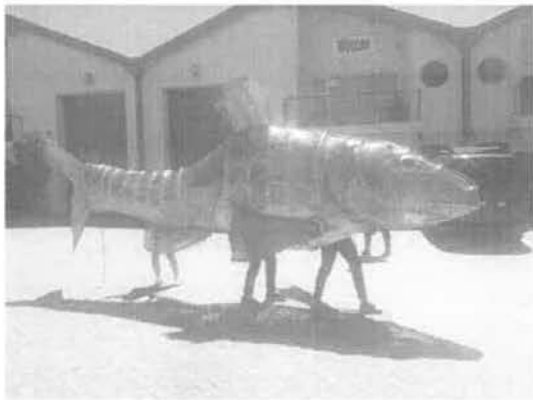
*Ukwanda workshops with the kids.*



*Dais's made by ukwanda in 2013 for Barry dale parade*



*Ukwanda workshops with the kids.*



*Red phin fish for the 2018 Barrydale parade. Puppet designed and made by ukwanda.*



*River puppet. 2018 Barrydale parade.*



*River and Redfin- designed and made by Ukwanda for 2018 Barry dale parade.*

For the 2019 Barrydale annual parade, the theme is **AN ALIEN VISITS BARRYDALE**. Ukwanda will be designing and making the puppets for this production.

Ukwanda also have been invited to collaborate with Staats Theatre Augsburg on a project with working tittle “World Heritage/Sharitage: Water”. Cape Town and Augsburg both have an intense interest in the issue of water: Augsburg because of water scarcity. This project will develop over 2019-2020