

Politics, Slapstick, and Zulus on Tour

Thomas Riccio

Wearing an oversized sombrero and carrying the rhythm with cymbals, Yise Gasa announced to the curious, almost frightened faces that something quite out of the ordinary was about to happen. For the gathering section of our performance I wore a Roman helmet made originally for some forgotten production of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, and oversized hands of white-gloved foam to greet, wave, and attract people to our performance. Gasa and I roamed the outdoor market clowning, shaking hands, patting children's heads, and comically cajoling people to attend our performance.

Crossing the street from the main market—performance adrenaline pumping as I shouted some mad nonsense—I stopped, realizing that it was right there, only days before, that two people had died and scores were injured when a hail of AK47 bullets assaulted a transit bus. The distant abstraction of a front page newspaper report and photos of sprawled bodies in pools of blood was jolted to life with a shock. Across the street was the taxi rank where 50-plus Zulu-owned passenger kombis stood. The kombi owners and the Moslem Indian-owned bus companies were at war, the latter trying to undercut the Zulu taxi business and gain access to a very lucrative and growing market. The situation was reminiscent of the territorial gangsters in Chicago during the 1920s. Such a confluence of images, ideas, and feelings make South Africa a unique complexity. Politics, however, was only one element that blended into the swirl of history, race, greed, money, and power at a time of monumental change.

In December 1993 a group consisting of four Zulu actors, a Danish percussionist, and I performed street theatre in the township of kwaMashu, 35 kilometers outside Durban, in the province of Natal, South Africa. In the southern hemisphere, December is the height of summer, and being near the coast of the Indian Ocean means humidity with temperatures around 90°F—with an unrelenting sun. When we pulled into the kwaMashu bus and train station with our new white “kombi,” a ten-seat Toyota van, we caught the attention of many. Shoppers and merchants alike turned to stare intently, their bodies suddenly still as our kombi passed through the open-air market. But the children—the dozens of smiling faces and excited eyes—paused for only a beat before they trotted alongside the vehicle, jumping to peek into the windows.

The swelter from the heat reflecting off the tarmac created a languid atmosphere that people seemed to swim through—the tropical atmosphere belying

an underlying tension of caution and alertness. Walking around the busy station to determine the best performance area only added to the curiosity and uneasiness of the passing crowds. In kwaMashu, considered one of the most violent townships in South Africa, strangers and unusual activity draw attention and are immediately suspicious. This was especially so during the time of rising fear and uncertainty that preceded the country's first multiracial elections.

KwaMashu, as most other of Natal's townships, is predominantly Zulu. Established under apartheid, townships were set up as racially defined areas—cum-ghettos that geographically isolated nonwhites from the white areas where they served as domestic and industrial laborers. Since the lifting of the last of apartheid's laws in 1990 the situation has, in reality, altered little. Blacks may now travel, work, and live wherever they choose in the "new" South Africa, but few can afford these newfound freedoms. The legacy of apartheid's social, economic, and psychological traumas will take generations to remedy. And, as elsewhere in the world, racial segregation has given way to a "new world order" based on economic stratification.

The population of kwaMashu is 400,000, give or take 100,000; no one is sure, given a system of census-taking that is no match for the unwieldy squatter camps that occupy most open spaces within the township. Rural Zulus seeking urban employment swarmed into urban areas after the Group Areas Act was abolished in 1989. KwaMashu is not an area frequented by whites. Whites who do go there go as government officials, police, or members of the feared paramilitary "Internal Stability Unit."

Many people turned, stopped cold, and stared quizzically as Thubani Ngubane, Eric Hadebe, and I walked through the market. We were lead to the station manager's office by a tall, thin boy who made us his responsibility and kept the small group of cautious but curious children bursting with playful excitement respectful. Seeing a white man was a rare event for the children. My saying "hello" sent some of the children into fits of laughter, while others hid from my glance. Two precocious girls were fascinated by the hair on my legs and arms. As I had done before, I paused and stooped, inviting them to feel my arms and the hair on my head. They giggled with the experience of touching white skin, and we all exchanged close-up smiles. Thubani and Eric waited, chatted, and joked in Zulu with the adult bystanders. After



1. Thomas Riccio and a local resident encourage passersby to attend a performance—one of many created in 1993 by Riccio and his troupe throughout the province of Natal, South Africa. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)

six weeks of performing our traveling show we had come to realize that the show itself was only a part of a larger event.

Everywhere we went, we first secured permission to perform from the person of authority, be it a station master, local chief, magistrate, or rural shop owner. Requesting permission was a matter of respect in terms of the Zulu hierarchy; however, just as importantly, getting permission was a way of assaying or allaying potentially volatile situations. Experience had taught us that it was most effective if a white man and a Zulu went together to ask for permission to perform. It frustrated the Zulu members of our group but was an accepted reality. Even in kwaMashu, one of the more politically conscious townships in postapartheid South Africa, the mere presence of a white man still gave a request credibility and authority.

It was decided that Thubani Ngubane would do the talking. Ngubane was born, raised, and still lives in kwaMashu—a stark, rugged, overpopulated place filled mostly with weather-beaten homes and shacks that sit close to one another. As an actor, singer, and playwright of several years, Ngubane was excited about the prospect of finally performing a show for his community and friends. The manager of the run-down shopping center and adjacent outdoor market across from the bus and train station was welcoming. Wearing a soiled white shirt and tie, he responded with authority and responsibility at our request for a decision. The small manager's office, its paint peeling, contained scarred metal cabinets and a single desk with one phone and a few papers on it. Sitting back in his swivel chair, the manager looked into the distance, apparently deep in thought, as I and about ten others waited in silence for his properly considered decision. Like a Zulu chief giving a decree, he said that he was more than happy to oblige our request to perform even though he was uncertain what "theatre" was. It took us a few minutes to explain, then we struck a chord.

"Zulu dancing! When?" asked the manager in Zulu, with a smile missing teeth.

"Right now, in ten minutes, after we set up," replied Ngubane in Zulu, a language full of clicks and pops and accompanied by physical gestures.

When we got back to the kombi, there was already a crowd of shoeless and mostly shirtless children dressed in rags and dust—their group watching our group from a short distance, knowing that something out of the ordinary was going to happen.

It took us ten minutes to set up our show, *Makanda Mahlanu*—which means "King Five Heads" in Zulu.

A painted canvas went over the kombi to create a colorful green backdrop. We set up our cartoon-inspired props, donned our costumes, and put on our funny hats. With a loud bang of a goatskin Zulu drum and a cymbal crash, the show began. Our ancient Zulu drumbeat created an odd contrast to the sounds of the nearby market and the passing traffic—the drums evoking the rich, hidden rhythms that live deep within the hearts, bodies, and earth of the Zulu people. The rhythms of the drum drew the Zulu near; it is a phenomenon we had witnessed before and that always gave the cast a special delight.

Reactions to us in kwaMashu were extreme, as they always were. Some audience members went into a sort of shock, freezing stock-still with a wide-eyed stare until we coaxed them with our comic antics. I was later told by a Zulu *sangoma* (a traditional diviner/healer) that this frozen expression "was what the Zulu did when they saw a ghost." Others, however, smiled, did a little dance, or laughed with delight. Some, both children and adults alike, would run or huddle in fear, confused by the perplexing sight of a funny-walking, goofy-talking white man with oversized white hands.



Children waved to us with excitement from across the road. As highly theatrical traffic cops, Yise Gasa and I stopped the buses and cars, and with my big hands I ushered the children across. The Indian bus driver and his few passengers waved, bemused and curious, as Gasa and I rushed across the street like crazy clowns. You must be a hopeless idealist, an opportunist, and an unrelenting pragmatist to do this theatre.

The market on the opposite side of the street was not legal, meaning that vendors didn't pay rent for their space. However, neither the kwaZulu government nor the Durban city government had the will or the wherewithal to do anything about it. The market was a warren of helter-skelter shacks made from shipping crates, cardboard boxes, tarpaulin, and metal signs. Many of the makeshift stands doubled as homes—beds, personal clothing, and kitchen utensils mingled with merchandise. The merchants sold fruits and vegetables, candy, cigarettes and matches, used auto parts, pots and pans, cassette tapes, and stationary, among other things. One section was devoted exclusively to the selling of used clothes originally donated by charitable organizations in the U.S. and Europe. One T-shirt was emblazoned with "Ohio University," another with an Italian flag and "Roma" written beneath. It being winter, and cold (by Zulu standards) at night, the most popular items were sport jackets and winter coats, many of which, ironically, had designer labels. The most pungent area of the market was the meat market. Shaded only by makeshift awnings and without refrigeration, flies visited the intestinal meats and pig and cow heads and feet that sat on slabs of dark soaked plywood.

Another area of the market was devoted to the selling of *muti*, Zulu medicines. Blankets spread out on the ground displayed mounts of various herbs, grasses, tree barks, and strips of dried animal parts. The most powerful *muti*, things like snake or monkey parts, were in glass jars. Among the Zulu, tradi-

2. Yise Gasa uses cymbals to gather an audience in rural Inchanga, Natal, South Africa, 1993. For the performances in rural areas it took 20 to 30 minutes of drumming and noisemaking to entice people from their homes. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)

tional medicines and healing are popular, and the open air muti market is their drugstore. Some say the continuing popularity of traditional healing is in direct proportion to the lack of access Zulus have to Western health care.

Thubani Tshanini was another of our cast members who was already working the crowd from the height of his stilts. Wearing an absurdly tall black top hat, he recited, in traditional form, rapid-fire Zulu invitations to the stunned onlookers. Tshanini, Gasa, and I were in improvisational high gear now and the market was our playground where anything could happen—and did. We functioned much like I imagine jesters and minstrels might have functioned in medieval Europe. Gasa and I had several slapstick routines that ranged from babbled arguments to disco dancing to manic games of hide and seek. Sometimes our routines included our “tall brother” Tshanini; we would weave in and around his stilts or perform a song punctuated by Gasa’s cymbals and Tshanini’s huge bicycle horn. None of our routines was very complicated but rather relied heavily on broad comedy and spontaneity. Over time, we developed scenarios that we could apply to any market situation: sneaking up on unsuspecting shoppers as other marketers anticipated their shock; taking over a merchant’s stall and selling his wares; or simply and suddenly standing stock-still as people wondered what was going on. Our routine of being annoyed by an imaginary fly that would eventually get into our pants dates from 16th-century Italy’s *commedia dell’arte*.

Our comic assaults and marketplace performances never failed our objective to gather and please an audience. In the farm village of Harding, we gathered a lunchtime crowd from a nearby market by stopping traffic and leading people to a local post office parking lot for the performance. In rural Ngabeni, we set up and performed at the center of a makeshift market in the middle of a field. The market was held once every three months for traders to sell to elders who were receiving their quarterly pension payment of about \$80 U.S. We just happened to be driving by, saw the crowd, and performed. The audience was readymade and willing; a semicircle of hundreds of people formed as we were setting up.

In humid Durban we performed at Berea station, a sprawling, noisy hive of open-air market stands and the hub of train, taxi, and bus transport for black Natal. Among the vendors and the din of urban activity, we performed for thousands, many of whom were looking down from the second level of the bus station. Shoppers, workers, and sellers created a deep, close, and lively crowd. We improvisationally incorporated workers pushing handcarts as they passed though the narrow passage we occupied as a stage. The many coins thrown by an appreciative audience bought us all a big lunch.

After our crowd-gathering antics, a drum signal to start the show would call Tshanini, Gasa, and me back to our stage area. In kwaMashu, as elsewhere, we led a following of gathered audience members. When we got back across the street, a crowd of about 400 had gathered around the drummers, Thubani Ngubane, Eric Hadebe, and Morten Ilsoe, a Danish percussionist and theatre student doing his internship study with us. This trio had been doing much the same as we had, and their signal meant that audience interest was peaking and the show needed to begin. Timing was everything and, over the course of our tour, the group developed an instinctual sense for the audience and one another.

Our timing would, however, adjust according to circumstances—performing in a township was very different from performing in the rural areas. Once, after 90 minutes of bumpy, twisting, muddy roads, we arrived at the remote rural area of Inchanga. At a country store we found a few blurry-eyed Zulu men sitting and drinking Ijuba beer. The pace of life was slow and unhurried, punctuated by an occasional mooing cow. There were only a few people in sight and the sun was preparing to set. We were tired and discouraged by the



3. Thubani Ngubane, Morten Ilsoe, Thomas Riccio, Thubani Tshanini, and Colin Nhlumayo in Makanda Mahlanu (1993) at Umlazi Centre, South Africa. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)

small number of people, but having come so far we decided to do the show, come what may. Within 15 minutes the amazing beat of the Zulu drums, like ancient magic, gathered nearly 300 people for us. Audiences came from the far distance, over picturesque rolling hills with a late afternoon blue sky backdrop. Across the veld that the Zulu shared with cattle, goats, pigs, and chickens, children and adults came, wondering who was calling them. Approaching, their eyes and ears strained to comprehend our out-of-the-ordinary happening. A relaxed and highly interactive performance followed. On several occasions, audience members entered scenes to dance and participate with us. We directed them through the performance much to the amusement of the crowd.

What distinguished a township audience from rural residents was their reluctance to gather closely around the performance space. Large community gatherings in townships are rare and are approached with hesitation, for fear of violence. What made the situation more suspicious was that our purpose was unclear, in an area where people generally associated public gatherings with politics, protests, or funerals. Only a few years previous, such public gatherings were illegal and caught the immediate attention of security forces. In notoriously violent kwaMashu, with preelection tension running high, we had to work especially hard at persuading, cajoling, clowning, and dancing to encourage people to gather closer. It was the rhythm of the drum, changing into well-known Zulu dance beats, that put our timid audience at some ease. Asked to clap their hands in accompaniment, some finally began to move and dance with the music. We knew we had them then.

The drumming stopped, and like a cheerleader I led the audience through a Zulu welcome with a traditional call requiring audience response. A white man acting crazy and speaking and dancing Zulu was an unusual experience; the audience pulled in closer to get a better look at such a curiosity. Then the audience stilled to hear Eric Hadebe's voice introduce the story of Makanda Mahlanu, the Snake King with five heads. Just then our large Makanda puppet emerged from behind the kombi. I operated the five-headed snake puppet that towered 12 feet high when lifted fully into the air. With the puppet's sudden appearance, children would scatter, point, and cower with amazement and delight. After strutting around the semicircle and intimidating the audi-

4. Thubani Tshanini performs a Zulu warrior dance in a field adjacent to a school building in Stedville township, outside of Ladysmith, Natal, South Africa, 1993. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)



ence, I would operate the puppet from the center of the circle and hold court with the audience as if they were Makanda's subjects. The appearance of the Makanda puppet always served to excite and challenge the audience, for the theatrical puppet was a well-known myth come to life—its aggressiveness, mythologically and by way of our characterization, touched a familiar nerve among the Zulu. The appearance of the Makanda signaled the end of the easy frivolity of our welcoming antics.

The narrator, played with a big smile by Hadebe (a dreadlock Rastafarian who is the well-known lead singer of a local reggae group) applied traditional Zulu methods of rapid-fire storytelling (*ihubo*) to introduce a story we would illustrate with music, dance, slapstick, magic, and much spontaneous improvisation. Banging his traditional cowhide shield with a dance stick, he introduced the snake with five heads in a poetic Zulu that loses greatly when translated into English.

Makanda Mahlanu you're the great king of the snakes
 He who shines his light of wisdom under the water
 Those who caught sight of the king's lamp are enticed to bow down

 He who relocated to curse mother nature
 There's a volcano eruption, thunder and lightning
 And suddenly the entire earth is plunged into extreme darkness

 He who flies high and above the sun and moon to sniff the clouds
 Oh Makanda your kingdom is divine
 It has a magic spell that simply halts the sun from shining

 When thee meditates the water becomes still and clear
 The dark clouds gather and very light rain begins to fall
 All of nature worships his hidden strength

 Thy kingdom has multiple powers
 He who can bring hope where there's despair
 He who can bring belief where there's confusion and pain
 He who can invent the day and make holy
 And take that holiness as he wishes'

Though beginning with a traditional evocation of the well-known story of Makanda Mahlani, our theatrical interpretation, which we rehearsed for eight weeks, early on evolved into a somewhat different tale. Our intent was to reimagine the story to address the realities of contemporary South Africa while reaffirming Zulu traditional culture. No performance like it had been attempted before. Commissioned by the Natal Performing Arts Council (NAPAC), the overarching purpose of the project was to bring theatre to Natal's underserved black majority.

A reactionary minority in white South Africa resisted the specter of a black-rule government. In general, the atmosphere among whites was a blend of uncertainty, anticipation, a little anxiety, and much hope. A cautious optimism prevailed with the government and the private sector, who accepted if not embraced the inevitability of retooling their entrenched ways of operating and thinking in anticipation of a black-rule government after the April 1994 election. NAPAC, one of four national government-funded arts councils—and bastion of traditional, white Western theatre, dance, opera, and music—was no exception. State-funded and institutionalized racist mind-sets, however, are especially resistant to fundamental change.

NAPAC, like most of South Africa, was, and is, trying hard and sometimes frantically to find new ways of working in a quickly emerging multi-cultural/racial reality. It was in this spirit that I was first invited to direct a production for NAPAC in Spring 1992, and why Themí Venturas, their innovative associate director, asked me to return to assist this time in the development of the Hlanganani Project (*hlanganani* is Zulu for “where people gather”). The goal of the Hlanganani Project was to explore and establish alternative performance methods and expressions that more accurately reflect the rich Zulu culture.

The loosely characterized five heads of the original Makanda of Zulu myth evolved through discussion, improvisation, and rehearsals, into five distinct characters: Greed, Fear, Cunning, Strength, and Reason. Each represented what the cast believed to be an essential player in South Africa's current political and cultural turmoil. Symbolic of current events in South Africa, the conflicting characteristics represented by each of the heads were dependent upon one body—much like the political reality of the nation itself. It was apparent from the beginning that the events surrounding us could not be kept outside the rehearsal room.

The NAPAC I had returned to in 1993 had just undergone a major reorganization to redefine itself for the coming multiracial “new” South Africa. NAPAC was in chaos, with low morale and disorganization everywhere—it was not an ideal working situation. Within a week of my arrival things deteriorated further when a strike was called by 202 NAPAC laborers. The South African Catering and Allied Workers Union (SACAWU), a predominantly Zulu union, struck in protest of the theatre's reorganization, which they felt was politically and racially motivated and economically unfair. Nearly half of the 202 strikers had their jobs “retrenched” (meaning eliminated) due to the reorganization mandated by NAPAC's major funder, the Durban city council.

The striker's Zulu *toi-toi* protest chant-dances filtered into our rehearsal room from the streets. Originally developed by Chaka Zulu's warriors as a preparation for battle, the rhythmic call-and-response chants can be unnerving, if not frightening, especially when you are the object of its unified and focused anger. Whenever I exited the theatre, strikers waved their fists at me, stared defiantly, and catcalled. My ideals and work as an artist were thrown into question. Should I sympathize with the strikers, or continue rehearsing and remain committed to the purpose of my work? I was an outsider, a foreigner, a white man, and my presence was especially high-profile. There was



5. Eric Hadebe, followed by Yise Gasa, plays a large Zulu drum to announce the march of Makanda in a 1993 performance that took place in Harding, a small farming community in southern Natal, South Africa. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)

no use explaining that my intent was honest, sincere, and meant to contribute to developing an expression for people just like them. After much thought and discussion I decided to continue with the project. The work we were engaged in would continue in the future through the work of others, I reasoned, whereas politics, especially the brand the strikers were practicing, was topical, short-term, and self-serving. Developments affirmed by decision, as the strike increasingly showed itself to be motivated by political power-playing and greed on the part of a few union officials.

Arsonists set fire to the Opera, NAPAC's 1300-seat main theatre, two weeks into our rehearsals, causing extensive damage, organizational disruption, and employee panic. Soon after the fire, several employees still coming to work were threatened with bodily harm. There were several bomb threats, even though security was doubled and police patrolled surrounding street corners. Strikers began to harass, intimidate, and beat up workers. At one of NAPAC's rehearsal halls, a security guard was shot in the head and left for dead. Then strikers began accosting audience members, myself included, on the street as they approached the NAPAC-sponsored Durban Music Festival. Ironically, the festival was a bold and costly attempt specifically to attract black and Indian audiences to the theatre and chart a new direction for NAPAC's programming.

The strike was taking its toll on the progress and morale of the group. Several Zulu women, many of whom I had previously worked with, were asked to join the group but declined because of the uncertainty and threat of violence surrounding the project. Two women finally accepted, however one left after a brief time to work on a new television series, and the other dropped out because her boyfriend would not allow her to work and travel with a group of men. We were not far into the rehearsal process when the actors became noticeably preoccupied, and the progress of the play development work

almost came to a standstill. The actors felt trapped, with no place to hide. The strikers knew the actors and where they lived. In Natal's poorly policed townships, house burning and tire necklacing (when a gasoline-drenched tire is put over a person's head and set afire) are common means of retribution. Life among some township Zulu holds little value. Reports of people being shot or thrown off township commuter trains because of politics, rivalry, or thievery were commonplace.

The Zulu actors found themselves in a difficult spot. With unemployment among young black men over 80 percent, they could not afford to turn down four months of employment. They went to the union offices and told a room filled with angry strikers that they were not taking the laborers' jobs from them—but it didn't matter. They were warned that they had better stop. The strikers did not want to hear that the laborers had continued working, but did not support the actors and other artists when they called a work stoppage—which had lasted several weeks—the year before in protest of NAPAC's Eurocentric programming and lack of racial diversity in its leadership. The SACAWU strike was about money and power for a few and not about ideals. In the changing South Africa, the play of politics, the cry of inequality, the waving of the race flag, and the threat of violence are increasingly part of the country's transition. Unfortunately, greed, fear, and self-interest also figure heavily into the country's remaking.

The actors and I found ourselves in a situation which, like a fire, simultaneously fuelled and threatened us. The ideas and themes of our evolving performance came directly from what we were experiencing firsthand.

The story of Makanda Mahlanu began with each of the five heads of Makanda presenting its characteristics with the help of the others. First was Greed, played by the incredibly energetic Thubani Ngubane. In kwaMashu he lived with seven other family members in the same run-down, two-room house that he had been born in 27 years ago. Ngubane's weekly income (and

6. (Left to right) Thubani Ngubane, Thubani Tshanini, Colin Nhlumayo, Thomas Riccio, and Yise Gasa perform a Zulu gumboot dance outside a health clinic at Umsunduzi Bridge, Natal, South Africa, 1993. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)



the income of all actors) was equal to approximately \$70 U.S. He, like the others, was the sole financial resource for his family. In the Greed scene, gumboot dancing—a style of dance developed by black mine workers in the 1930s—was a backdrop as Ngubane's Greed character admonished the audience.

I want all what I can get
 I want all what I can get
 Your money give me that
 Your beauty give me that
 Your power give me that
 Your vote give me that

 Yeah Yeah Yeah
 I want all what I can get
 I want all what I can get
 Your happiness give me that
 Your lust give me that
 Your intelligence give me that
 Your talent give me that

 I want all what I can get
 I want all what I can get
 Your culture give me that
 Your tradition give me that
 'Cause I want all what I can get

During the Greed scene, Ngubane would make his point by actually taking shoes, children, shopping bags, umbrellas, or whatever else he could get from the audience. Once, while performing in rural kwaXimba on the grass in front of the district magistrate court, Greed took several purses from office workers on lunch break. After a few moments of puzzlement, some women realized that Greed had no intention of returning their purses. There was a very vocal exchange about how the women gave up their purses without much of a struggle. Greed: "You must be careful that someone like me does not take what is yours. Give me your vote next. I want your vote! Will you give me your vote? It is as important as your purse!" In street theatre, the line between performance and reality is sometimes mercurial; the line wavers even more so when performing improvisationally for an audience with little experience of theatre. Some women thought Greed was serious about keeping their purses. An impromptu chase ensued, with a few of the women running after Greed—to the delight of the audience. The cast finally persuaded Greed that these women knew their minds and "were not going to have anything taken from them." With an important point illustrated, the purses were returned.

The next character, Fear, was played by gentle Yise Gasa, who used the music and dance of the traditional Zulu spiritual healer, the sangoma, as the musical motif for his scene. The well-known rhythms, songs, and dances of the sangoma never failed to provoke spontaneous participation; the audience knew exactly how to respond to Gasa's sangoma calls.

Gasa grew up in a rural area known for its powerful sangomas. He knew their inflections, gestures, and movements, and the knowing, ironic details of his presentation warmly delighted the audience. The impact of the performance on our audiences is hard to conceive. Life in Natal's rural areas is grueling. Many of the Zulu work for subsistence wages on nearby white farms and ranches that produce vegetables, cattle, and South Africa's cash crop, sugarcane. Transportation is limited and expensive; roads are either dust or mud, depending on the time of year. There is little electrification, telephone ser-

vice, or running water, and land for personal farming is still limited. Schooling and medical services are inadequate and woefully overtaxed.

It was in these remote rural areas of Natal, where traditional medicine and lifestyles hold strong, that Gasa's sangoma performance was most appreciated. Audiences, eager and grateful, danced, clapped, and sang without much provocation or inhibition. Those who had so little seemed always to give the most. Performing amidst the smoke of small fires, with the stench and textures of cow dung at our feet, added a sense of timeless communal ceremony. Rural audience members would hold their recently purchased live and fluttering chickens by their feet. Some women would watch as they balanced large bundles of shopping or buckets of water on their heads, while others in the audience, mainly men, commented with amazement and drunken lightheadedness induced by Ijuba, a mealy Zulu beer.

Gasa's Fear character, to fend off real and imagined troubles and paranoia, used a cartoonlike oversized ax to protect himself from evil spirits. Our audiences never failed to scream and scatter with delight as he charged at them. Slapstick, stage combat, pratfalls, and low comedy were put to play as he chased and threatened the other characters who jumped, ducked, mugged at, and hid from the attacking blind, unfounded Fear. Gasa's character was afraid of everything, and his mayhem disrupted what little order there was. It was not until his brother Snake Heads calmed him that order was restored.

My role as Cunning—an oily, conniving city slicker—came next. Backed by the smooth vocals of *isicathamiya* singing (*à la* Ladysmith Black Mambazo), Cunning wore a straw hat, glittering tail coat, and had the persona of a circus ringmaster. The backup song warned about the tricks and deceptions of my character, as Cunning, standing on a platform, gave his presentation:

Let me tell you about the future
Makanda Mahlanu is the future!
People always want to know about the future.

Think of yourself satisfied and happy
A great job, good wages, low food prices, low gas prices!
Let me tell you about the future
Makanda Mahlanu is the future!



7. Eric Hadebe (left) as the narrator and Yise Gasa as the sangoma in a 1993 performance of *Makanda Mahlanu* that took place in Harding, a small farming community in southern Natal, South Africa. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)

There you are as happy as can be, owning your own business
Waking up after a good night sleep
Turning on your big TV.
Your children are playing outside in the playground
The world is a safe and secure and peaceful place.

Everything will be free
Free Telephone
Free Electricity
Free quality education, no more of this useless Afrikaans shit.
Let me tell you about the future
Makanda Mahlanu is the future!

I'm your friend
Stick with me
Believe in me
Trust me
I love you, you're beautiful
I bring you hope
I bring you the future
I am the future!

Cunning then worked the crowd like a hustler, pumping handshakes and patting children on the head, asking them what they wanted. Then, helping audience members onto a small platform, like an evangelical minister-cum-oily politician, Cunning promised them everything they wanted including a vote, a constitution, peace, unbelievable wealth, and happiness. It was significant that a white male played this role, exposing, demystifying, and ultimately poking fun at the socially and psychologically ingrained dominant power. The use of English (the second or third language of the Zulu) was also important. Well-spoken English, for the Zulu, is associated with education, power, and authority. Cunning's use of English, being so obviously fallacious, demonstrated that both the white male and his language could be deflated and should not be accepted uncritically.

8. The character Cunning, played by Thomas Riccio, makes promises to the audience while the group (left to right: Thubani Ngubane, Colin Nhlumayo, Thubani Tshanini, and Yise Gasa) sings about how deceptive and untrustworthy he is, in a performance in Stedville, Natal, South Africa, October 1993. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)



Then came Strength, played by Thubani Tshanini, a muscular and gymnastic dancer from Ladysmith. He eyed and threatened the audience with his large *knobkieri*, a traditional Zulu weapon that has been the subject of much political contention between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Unfamiliar with theatre and its relation to reality, or possibly skittish because of the reality that surrounded them, some audience members would run away in genuine fear as blustering Strength approached them with the lethal weapon.

Outside of a Kentucky Fried Chicken in Ulundi, the administrative capital of the kwaZulu government and home of Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party, we performed for surprised government employees on their way home from work. Strength's appearance and sudden lurch at the audience sent an entire section of the audience that circled him fleeing in unison while the balance of the audience took a few steps back. The moment was both hilarious and sad. Several of the fleeing audience members kept running and went some distance before they stopped. We were all surprised by the reaction, and Tshanini immediately toned it down as Gasa and I walked around the perimeter, reassuring the audience and gathering them back to the performance.

The next day in Ulundi, we performed in an echoing, vandalized, and stripped-bare auditorium for nearly 500 uniformed schoolchildren. The reaction to Strength was almost identical, but this time girls were crying and some of the older boys stepped out to meet Strength's challenge. Such challenging and posturing is an institutionalized part of the traditional Zulu culture of the warrior. Again, Gasa and I had to make reassurances.

Strength's traditional Zulu war dance provided the musical motif for the scene. And once the challenge section was over, it did not take much prodding for the audience to sing, clap, and respond to Strength's traditional call-and-response summons to battle. The Zulu warrior culture and the values of fighting, machismo, and sexism were then simultaneously evoked and parodied by Strength's presentation:

Am I not strong?
 [audience: Bayete ("praise to you")]
 Am I not good in Demonstration?
 [audience: Bayete]
 Am I not a powerful man?
 [audience: Bayete]
 Am I not obeyed by everyone?
 [audience: Bayete]
 Am I not terrific?
 [audience: Bayete]
 Am I not a great warrior?
 [audience: Bayete]
 Am I not a Zulu!
 [audience: Bayete]

The last character presented was Reason, the snake head that held things together—if tenuously. Eric Hadebe, who was also our narrator, played Reason. With a smirk, he told the audience that he has "reserved the best part of the show for myself." Reason combined reggae and rap in an odd testament to the ricocheting cross-pollination of world music. Rap can trace its rhythmic origins to the praise singing of West Africa, the area from which the Zulu originally migrated. And reggae, a Jamaican popular music that has been influenced by Rastafarianism and is rooted in Africa, has been routed back to Africa through Jamaican blacks. In an appropriate demonstration of reconciliation and reinte-

gration, Reason told his story using both of these musical modes. Such a recombination of old and new was at the core of our performance—to invoke the audience to reaffirm and reimagine self and culture.

I'm gonna tell who I am
In a rap style
Because all I wanna see
Is your big smile
I make the people stay with peace and love
Order is my friend; chaos is my foe
Make love not war

I teach and I guide come on everybody
Let's have a vibe
I'm gonna count to three
And you will stamp your feet
One Two Three
Come on everybody let's have a fling
Listen to the beat and now try to sing!

9. *Strength*, played by Thubani Tshanini, challenges the audience in a performance that took place in an abandoned gymnasium in Ulundi, Natal, South Africa, October 1993. (Photo by Thomas Riccio)

Unlike the other snake head characters, Reason was hopeful and collaborative, demanding nothing from the audience and asking only that they listen, participate, and enjoy themselves.

During one township performance, a fight broke out in the audience when we were singing "Make love not war." Immediately, a space cleared around the five combatants, the attention of the audience turning to the fight rather than our performance. We didn't stop the show even though we felt upstaged by the fight, and, without discussion, the cast worked the fight into the show,



using the fight as an example of the chaos referred to in the song. We paused to comment on how fighting is disruptive to people's lives. "You are scared now! Why? Because one person chooses to make life difficult for himself and for everybody else! We cannot let one person get in our way and stop the good people! Chase him away! Go on, chase him!" exhorted Hadebe, with the rest of us chiming in. The audience finally chased off a pickpocket, and order was restored. When they turned their attention back to the show, they applauded us for continuing during the fracas.

The month-and-a-half-long strike action at NAPAC forced us to find alternative rehearsal space in and around Durban—at actors' homes, in parks, at a grammar school, in libraries, and in empty lobbies. We lost several days of rehearsal for the simple lack of a safe rehearsal space. A few potential venues refused to rent to us out of fear of striker reprisals. When we did rehearse, actors would take the precaution of arriving and leaving at different times, traveling separately and with ever-changing and circuitous routes so as to avoid arousing the suspicion of the strikers. They always carried shopping bags with clothing, books, or food to justify being in the city, if stopped by a group of roving strikers.

Despite a court-ordered prohibition against the intimidation of NAPAC employees, the strikers stopped the actors and myself on several occasions. My white skin protected me, for the strikers knew that the police would be much more severe on them if harm came to a white American. My status as a "foreign worker" did not go unnoticed by the strikers. Epithets emblazoned on several placards protested NAPAC's hiring of foreigners at a time when members of their ranks were being retrenched. (All retrenched workers received generous financial packages in amounts ranging from a few to several thousand Rand and skills training opportunities.) Neither the union nor the workers comprehended the bigger picture of reorganization beyond the loss of jobs. Reorganization was part of a plan to distribute funds more equitably to a broader range of arts groups. Previously, only the nation's four Eurocentric arts councils received arts funding.

When the show was ready for an audience, a new set of problems arose. We had to avoid townships where strikers lived, out of fear of being seen performing a NAPAC show. We at first concentrated on touring rural Natal. Jolla Mkame, our community coordinator, and Carl Criel, our tireless Afrikaans producer, called around the province for locations to perform *Makanda*. Invariably, they were confronted by a curious problem. Local chiefs, *indunas* (local clan heads), prominent citizens, magistrates, store owners, community workers, and the like asked: "What is theatre?"

Few of the rural people had any idea what theatre was or why we wanted to bring it to their area. Other African countries have used theatre as a powerful communication tool to address important issues such as AIDS awareness, birth control, health care, agricultural initiatives, soil erosion, forest management, insecticides, and voter education. In rural Africa, with high illiteracy and little or no electricity, television, or radio, theatre is often a major mode of communication. Under apartheid, black theatre in Natal, and South Africa in general, remained tightly controlled—out of fear of political activism—and consequently evolved very differently than it did elsewhere on the continent.

Mkame and Criel explained to our rural audiences that theatre was like dancing and storytelling with comedy, poetry, and magic. Once they understood "theatre," there came the inevitable follow-up question: "Why are you doing this? Are you ANC or IFP?" Many times we were refused permission out of fear that our performance would somehow disrupt the already fragile local politics by presenting ideas that might offend, provoke action, or be misinterpreted by somebody.

When we did perform, some audience members accused us of being either pro-ANC or pro-IFP. Accusations of political affiliation occurred even though we took great pains during the development of the performance to avoid language, gesture, or suggestion of political affiliation. For instance, we dropped the use of "Viva the People" because "viva" was a word associated with the ANC and the chant "Viva Mandela!" Much to our puzzlement, audience members would sometimes suddenly and inexplicably turn and leave in the middle of a performance. When asked why they left the performance, they explained that it was due to their fear of being seen as sympathetic to our political message. Some feared that hearing the show would somehow get them into trouble. Others saw our portrayal of certain characters as "like Mandela" or "making fun of King Goodwill" (king of the Zulu) or "making the snake like Buthelezi." One man said he left "because someone might see me laughing and get angry." Audience concerns were heightened because of the general sense of paranoia and mounting tensions associated with preelection uncertainty and the threat of impending violence. Nonetheless, we took note of specific moments within the performance and worked to adjust them as best we could without sacrificing the show's integrity.

The play continued with Makanda's unsuccessful search for a suitable wife in the animal kingdom. Frustrated, Makanda decided to seek a wife in the land of the humans (i.e., the audience). Each of the five snake heads had different criteria and agendas as they searched the audience for their love's desire. Much slapstick, discord, and chaos ensued before the snake heads realized they needed the talents of human "ministers" to court the women of the audience. Using a traditional Zulu courtship presentation, Tshanini and Ngubane respectively wowed the audience with a verbal display filled with word-play and rhythmical fancy.

TSHANINI: Since I was born in a box of matches
 I have never seen a beautiful lady like you
 Your body moves like a fish in the water
 Your body is like a blue train in the railway line
 What about your figure?
 It reminds me of a Coca-Cola bottle
 Com'on lady let's walk hand-in-hand
 Let's hold each other's hand to the gates of love
 No one can open them except you and me
 In a chameleon step
 With love and trust written on our faces
 Are you taking me out or putting me in?
 If I was drowning in the river you would pull me out?

NGUBANE: Your mother's knees.
 I'm not swearing you, I'm swearing love!
 Slant and slant, all the mountains are slanting for me
 When I slept on a grass mat, it annoys me
 When I sleep on a goat skin it reminds me of you, pretty lady
 When I sleep on a bed it talks nonsense to me
 I said so, me who is a piece of soap which
 Was left over when the women were bathing in the Inhalzan River.
 The dogs are biting him, throwing him against the fence
 Finder, finder horn of a witch doctor
 The animal that climbs the tree even though it doesn't have feet.
 Horn that grew on a dog



10. & 11. (Top) Patricia, played by Thubani Tshanini wearing a blond wig, pink evening dress, and pumps, enters with a giant plastic chain around her neck to sing her lament. (Bottom) Patricia and her father (Thubani Ngubane) discuss what they should do about Makanda Mahlanu's forcing her to marry him, in a 1993 market-day performance in Harding, a small farming town in southern Natal, South Africa. (Photos by Shelley Kjonstad)



I wonder why they didn't grow on a cow
The one that swims in a crocodile-infested river
But the crocodile don't do anything to him
They come out and eat the bubbles

If your dress had holes in it, you wouldn't mend it?
If there was a lion or me, which would you run to?

Each proposal ended with a riddle that decided the woman's worthiness. The women's failure of the riddle test meant that the sangoma had to be called to throw enormously oversized bones to divine who Makanda's bride-to-be should be.

The unlucky girl was the daughter of one of Makanda's ministers, played by Ngubane. The reality of having to sacrifice something close made him change his mind and turn against supporting the self-serving snake. A debate ensued that required the audience to respond to his predicament.

THE FATHER: The snake is evil, slimy, unhealthy, unnatural, rules by fear, will beat my daughter and not treat her well. The snake will take my daughter and I will never see her again—she will live in the river. To marry the snake is a big problem for a human like Patricia—it means there will be no future for her, for our family, our ancestors, and people will be angry and never forgive him or my daughter. If she marries Makanda her spirit will never, never go to heaven and our forefathers will curse us.

Arguments for and against the marriage became a dialog moderated by the cast. Then the audience voted on the issue. Participatory democracy and open discussion were alien to the Zulu, who have only known the rule of either rigid traditional chiefs or repressive apartheid. At first timid and sometimes confused by their sudden required participation, the audience was informed: "The show will stop unless you vote!" While performing the show in Ladysmith, a town in northern Natal, the performance came to a complete and awkward halt when no one in the audience responded to our call to vote on the issue. "We cannot go on!" bellowed Ngubane as the father. "You must participate, otherwise the snake, Makanda, will have its evil way. Today it is my daughter, tomorrow it will be your daughter, your son, yourself! You no longer have to stand by with your arms folded and wait for others to make decisions!" Then Ngubane pointed to audience members: "You and you! Unfold your arms! We have struggled for the opportunity to have a voice and now you must use it! Freedom means responsibility. Freedom is not something granted and that is it! It must be used or it will die. Use your freedom!" Soon the entire audience was vocalizing their approval and raising their hands to be counted. "That's right! I am proud of you! Get used to your freedom; your voice and your vote count now!"

The voting section of the performance was often the most awkward and difficult; the fantasy of the performance crossed over the boundaries of art and paralleled their approaching political reality. The audience's recognition of this crossover was almost palpable. Bodies would stiffen, eyes would brighten, and jaws would tighten, as the audience recognized the deeper significance of our story.

12. Yise Gasa, as a sangoma, divines the future by throwing oversized bones. The 1993 performance took place next to a schoolhouse in Stedville township, outside of Ladysmith, Natal, South Africa. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)



Another minister of Makanda then forced Ngubane into accepting his fate as Makanda's father-in-law. Ngubane pleaded with the audience for support, to consider the snake's evil intent and the bleak future of his daughter and family. The muscular Tshanini, in a comical blond wig, red evening wear, and pumps, entered wrapped in giant plastic chains to sing her lament. It was a moment that never failed to send the audience into hysterics of disbelief. The scene delighted but challenged the men in the audience, who as part of the Zulu warrior culture, reacted with a mix of discomfort, embarrassment, and pleasure.

THE DAUGHTER: Why me? How can I marry a king?
 I'm too young, I can't even cook porridge
 I am not fit to be a part of the royal family
 I see death in front of me
 I'm so ugly that I am the one that must marry the snake?
 There are more snakes in the world he can chose from.
 Why does he chose me?
 I don't want people to be scared of me. I want to be with people.
 What can I do about my boyfriend?

Makanda, now a large snake puppet with five heads, came to claim his bride, but the father was willing to fight to the death for his daughter. Again the father pleaded with the audience to support him as he transformed, rather than destroyed, the evil Makanda into something that would serve the future. He exhorted the audience to support him: "For next time it may be your daughter, your son or loved one. We must stand and work together to end this madness, this time of fear, and evil."

Some audience members were given one end of the multicolored cloth streamers attached to the Makanda puppet. The audience then had to "transform" the destructive and self-serving snake into something useful. With the streamers waving and the rest of the audience joining hands and chanting "Leave us!" in ritual-like unison, the audience willed the transformation of Makanda. After a brief, comic battle, the once fearsome and mighty Makanda collapsed into an inert heap.

Expelling the evil spirit of Makanda with their words came next. The ghostly evil spirit of Makanda (in long flowing gauze) chased through the audience, to the delighted fear of the children. The evil snake needed to be transformed into something new and good. Again the will of the people prevailed. The audience, closing their eyes and breathing into the remains of the snake, presided over the emergence of a handsome young man (played by Hadebe). The young man promptly declared himself the hope of a new South Africa. However, his moment of glory ended abruptly when the overjoyed and much stronger daughter carried him away, claiming him for herself.

THE DAUGHTER: I drank the type of tea I've been looking for
 I got the sweet orange from a lemon tree
 Now I found the one I love
 The one to share love with

The performance ended happily, with song, dance, and intermingling among the audience members lasting for some time. The audience liked the feelings evoked by the performance experience and wanted us to continue. Oftentimes it was difficult to leave our performance sites, with so many people lingering to thank us and ask more about the actors—and about how to do theatre themselves. Most gratifying was when the old people would ap-



13. To participate in the transformation of Makanda Mahlani, Stedville township schoolchildren hold the ends of the cloth streamers attached to the Makanda puppet. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)

proach us afterwards. Waiting quietly for their turn to talk, they would invariably extend work-calloused and gnarled hands in thanks. There was a specific and firm look in their eyes, a look that said they have lived to see the day. These handshakes, the smiles, the jumping kids, the pats on our sweaty backs—these were our reward.

The performance, using a wild mix of comedy, slapstick, traditional and modern music, dance, and song, debate, poetry, and audience participation, had served a time-honored performance function: It brought the community together on their terms, in their environment, and dealt with their issues, applying a performance language derived from their cultural imagery, mythology, music, dance, and sensibility. It was something that the Zulu were never allowed to explore during their long repression under apartheid.

The performance was a vehicle for the Zulu to see and reimagine themselves and their culture. Without our intending it, the show became a contemporary Zulu ritual. And like a ritual, the performance became a way of personifying and making visible the abstract and intangible ideas, issues, fears, and feelings that surrounded pre-election South Africa.

During our 34-performance tour, we played every variety of outdoor—and to a lesser degree indoor—space throughout the province of Natal. At Taylor's Halt, outside of Pietermaritzberg, we performed at a primary school established for children of families displaced by township violence—their homes burnt or their township so violent that the government had established a safe-haven refugee camp for them. At Umsunduzi Bridge, we spotted a large gathering of people outside of a health clinic. With permission from the nurse operating the clinic, we performed for several hundred people and several grazing goats that insisted on sharing our grass stage. After convincing a liquor store owner and several men operating an outdoor auto body shop, we received permission to perform in a dirt lot next to a large used-clothing market

in the Durban township of Claremont. The sound of nearby traffic and a rowdy after-work audience of more than 700 proved to be our biggest performance challenge. Some audience members, more than a few of whom were drunk, insisted on performing with us, and to add to the anything-can-happen atmosphere, a few trucks and even a transit bus passed through the lot we called our stage. To our delight, a local church choir on the way to their rehearsal joined the audience and helped several of our songs along.

Each performance was a unique experience, each special in its own way. Places with names like Nkondwana, Umlazi Centre, Stedville, Ladysmith, and Izakheni were each unique and extraordinary. On the Durban City Hall stairs at lunch hour we performed for smartly dressed office workers. At the South African Sugar Association mill we performed for workers. On the Durban beach front we performed for swimsuited Zulus and Afrikaners on vacation. In Umlazi, Durban's largest township, we honked our horn and beat our drums as we drove through the streets to lead people to a large soccer field where we performed in front of nearly a thousand people sitting on an adjacent hill slope.

The audience numbers varied anywhere between 250 and 2,000. Our audiences were overwhelmingly Zulu, but on some occasions, especially in urban areas, both white and Indian audiences would join us with equal delight. The amount of Zulu spoken in the performance would depend upon how we had sized up the audience. Generally, however, excepting my few lines of English, the performance celebrated the Zulu language. This fact in itself was startling for our Zulu audiences who were unaccustomed to hearing their language and seeing their traditions reaffirmed and celebrated.

There were hours of driving winding roads, days of hotels, and much Zulu singing and drumming in the kombi that had no radio. Tshanini became our very own songmaker who, like a traditional Zulu poet, never seemed at a loss for words or songs about our unfolding adventures.

After some time we felt like theatre commandos, always on the move and on the lookout for an audience and an open space. Generally, NAPAC arranged our performances in advance. Last-minute cancellations were frequent, however, because of increasing preelection tension and instability. One day's safe area could be the next day's trouble spot. With such day-to-day instability, we eventually got into the habit of pitching up the show wherever we thought we could get away with it. On a few occasions, police patrol cars or



14. (Left to right) Thubani Ngubane, Morten Ilsoe, Colin Nhlumayo, Thubani Tshanini, and Yise Gasa sing and perform a line dance as a prelude to the entrance of the character *Cunning*. (Photo by Shelley Kjonstad)

armored military vehicles, seeing a large crowd gathering and suspecting some sort of political action unfolding, would stop. As a sign of the changing times, however, soldiers would often sit and smile from their armored vehicles.

The most lasting and vivid impression of our tour was made by the performances at a few of the many squatter camps that surround Durban. Vast, sprawling, and squalid warrens of shacks made variously of shipping crates, plastic, tree branches, mud, metal, and any other practical material were without water, sewage, or electricity. These camps were home to uncounted thousands from rural areas seeking to eke out a meager wage in the city. Many of the camps had been in existence for years and had even organized minigovernments to provide order, sanitation, education, and leadership for dealing with the city government.

One squatter camp was next to a large freeway. When we arrived, the local Hare Krishna group was dispensing meals. The ragtag but proud squatters honored us like celebrities, rolling out a tattered old carpet for our stage. In an opening surrounded by tall trees and shacks, we beat drums and ran through the rugged pathways of the camp, inviting the wounded and downtrodden squatters to join us. It was our most emotionally charged show. Our audience hungrily observed and absorbed everything we did, every word, song, and gesture—laughter somehow feeding their souls. After our performance, we watched a play devised by a theatre group from the camp. It was a simple and beautifully told folk tale dealing with life in the camp, sexism, urban adjustment, communications, dislocation, and survival—a vivid expression of the social and moral struggle of proud people accepting intolerable conditions. That day we were all humbled. That day I understood the necessity of theatre and why I continue to do it.

At the end of our performance at the kwaMashu station, Hadebe came to me saying that some taxi drivers wanted to speak to me. As I walked toward the group of men, I braced myself for what I thought would be their anger at my presenting the performance where it would disrupt their lucrative transport business. The taxi business was very tense, with disputes settled—without much thought or hesitation—by means of violence. The postshow euphoria I was enjoying quickly evaporated into the reality of a potentially difficult situation. I was feeling, all of a sudden and very conspicuously, like the intruding white man. A big, round man came forward and gruffly asked, “Are you the one who is responsible for this play?”

I nodded and was about to offer an apology when he extended his open hand to shake my hand warmly.

“I represent the taxi owners of kwaMashu, and we would all like to thank you and your group for the beautiful performance you gave us.” The other men offered their hands to shake.

“We saw all the action over here and the passengers asked if they could see it. I told them to go ahead, that we would wait, and not to worry,” the big man said.

Another man said that he had heard about our performance from some of his passengers, but he had never seen theatre. He wanted us to come back and perform the show again so more children could see it.

“Can you come back on Saturday?”

The big man added: “We want our children to see things like this; my life is almost over, but for them there is the future to prepare for.”

We performed on Saturday.

Note

1. Excerpts of the performance texts were translated by Yise Gasa and Shelley Kjonstad.

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