

# LIGHTING UP THE STAGE

## Local kids show talent

By JABU KUMALO

**THIS** December was the turn of Tembisa to host the Worldwide Virtual Carousel.

The carousel is a network of performing arts organisations and individuals from all over the world.

They share their experiences using film, internet and multimedia communication across the globe to develop and exchange new projects.

The seven-day workshop of the Worldwide Virtual Theater School was hosted by Tembisa's Tswelopele Performing Artists.

The workshops were held at the revamped Moses

Molelekwa Art Centre.

The theatre school is led by a core membership of four community-based theatre organisations - Sering vzw of Belgium, Arena Y Esteras of Peru, Theatre Pregones of New York, US and Tembisa's Tswelopele Performing Artists.

The organisations were represented by Mia Grijp, Ira van der Borgh, Jorge Merced, Omar Perez and Oupa Malatjie.

Tswelopele, founded in 1994, is the brainchild of playwright, actor, dancer and choreographer Oupa Malatjie.

On the last day of the workshop, a group of 20 students from Tswelopele entertained guests

seven minutes each.

The organisers left it to the student actors to come up with ideas from their real-life experiences.

The kids really excelled. Their plays were thought-provoking and pulled at the heart-strings.

For most of the kids it was the first time they had been on stage.

They never realised they had so much talent.

One of them, Alice Puka, said she never knew that she had so much singing talent.

Malatjie, an internationally-acclaimed playwright, said: "We taught the kids how to create their own productions. We also gave them skills and tac-

An actor in one of the plays titled *The First People of Kalahari* in Tembisa. Photos by Jabu Kumalo



Tehiamo Ratlogo and Alice Puka in one of the plays called *Imbokodo*.

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The organisations were represented by Mia Grijp, Ira Vander Borgh, Jorge Merced, Omar Perez and Oupa China Malatjie.

Tswelopele founded in 1994, is the brainchild of playwright, actor, dancer and choreographer Oupa Malatjie. On the last day of the workshop a group of 20 students from Tswelopele entertained guests with different plays workshopped during the seven days.

The short plays took about five to seven minutes each.

The organisers left it to the student actors to come up with

ideas from their real life experiences.

The kids really excelled. Their plays were thought provoking and pulled at the heart strings. For most of the kids it was the first time they had been on stage.

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Malatjie, an internationally acclaimed playwright, said: "We taught the kids how to create their own productions. We also gave them skills and tactics on how to act in front of a still camera. We hope the kids will spread what they learned here by sharing it with their communities."

