

Drama Factory's push to keep theatre alive



There's a great drive to keep the theatre community alive in Somerset West, a town in the Western Cape that not only offers exquisite outdoor experiences such as hikes, trails, a wine estate and even a cheetah outreach programme, but a destination rich with art galleries, theatres and museums. Sue Diepeveen, the owner of The Drama Factory, has hosted several events, despite playing to tiny audiences, and recently showcased Michael-Taylor Brodericks' *King of Broken Things* and invited him to present a Theatre Lighting Workshop.



“Sue had been asking me to bring the show to her theatre for over a year,” said Michael Taylor-Broderick who wrote and directed *The King of Broken Things*, performed by Cara Roberts. The play is a poignant journey of a boy who mends broken items and leaves the audience with a touching reflection to appreciate the true value of people, and to believe that all things are possible if you dream.

“All the events hosted at the Drama Factory have enabled Sue to show people that theatre is up and running and ready to outlast the pandemic and its restrictions,” said Taylor-Broderick. “It’s all about building relationships and friendships. I was so pleased to have theatre practitioners of all ages and backgrounds, including an Kapp (Kappie) in the audience.”



Michael-Taylor Broderick also presented a two-day Lighting Workshop in conjunction with DWR Distribution. “It was great to have the occasion to do what I do best,” said Taylor-Broderick. “I love hosting the Lighting Workshops and imparting passion and knowledge with future theatre practitioners.”



Sue Diepeveen reiterates, “We were so appreciative of the workshop and to have had feedback from the 16 delegates who attended. We charged a negligible fee to make it as attractive as possible and were so lucky to get a large group from a local school as well as a sponsor who paid for another three people. On a personal level, I also got to see how my rig should be used and what we could achieve.”



Michael-Taylor Brodericks



from sharing with

Various attractions have been hosted at The Drama Factory, like *The Human Library*, an international social movement established in Denmark in 2000 and which challenges stereotypes, stigmas and prejudices. People are given a 20-minute one-on-one dialogue with a person wearing a title label such as *sexual abuse survivor*, *refugee* or *transgender* and hear that person's life story. The idea is



"I've been reading a book about the greatest songs of our times, and it struck me that many musicians and bands started out as pretty ordinary but through sheer determination and desire to succeed went on to start a movement. Punk, New Wave, Hip Hop are perfect examples of this, if you don't try, you'll never succeed," says Taylor-Broderick. "As a theatre community, we are ripe for new ideas. We are primed for new concepts within the adjusted framework Covid-19 has left us with, people are smart and adaptable, and the next great idea could be just around the corner, primed to start a new trend or following, but you have to try. Who knows, the next

show or concept that Sue and The Drama Factory present could just be the next big thing. We all need to keep on trying in the hope that our ideas could be the start of something new and exciting.”