Theatre and Politics in Africa in Depiction of "Identity, Identification & Cultural Citizenship" Through the Lens of Andrew Buckland One-Man Show "The Ugly Noo Noo" in South Africa Market Theatre[*]

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The purpose of this scientific article is to investigate and analyse the inextricable link between politics and theatre, as well as their interdependence in social and political relations in the arena of African stage play in the case of Andrew Buckland's one-man show, which was performed on Thursday, August 15, 2024 at the Market Theatre. As we know, in a particular country, without people, or more precisely, without actors who represent them in a theatrical performance, there are no history, politics, culture, theatre, and no political events in a certain time, space, and territory that we envision. Political events from the recent or distant past are often the subject of theatrical plays and art works in general. Such theatre develops into political theatre. The theatre can identify certain subjects in specific settings and solve their problems in their own way through performance, as well as critically explain and interpret them in terms of results, impacts, and repercussions. The writer of these articles observes the performance and immediately interviews the physical theatre performer Andrew Buckland in the backstage and analyses his performance on the topic of theater and politics correlations as a result from direct observation and audience position involvement. The research indicates the distinction between politics and theatre of one-man show of Andrew Buckland's "The Ugly Noo Noo" in South Africa market theatre through the theory of Aristotle's theatre and Brecht's theatre, which is manifested in their different function and relationship to the state in political and theatre perspectives in depiction of "Identity, Identification, and Cultural Citizenship". To assess the observed performance, the researcher relies on Aristotle's and Brecht's theatre theories. Aristotle's theatre supports the existing state order as a divine order, but Brecht's theatre destroys the state order through theatre. Brecht's theatre transforms into a political theatre, with the goal of awakening and changing the audience's consciousness, as well as converting it to an ideology that will contribute to the state. These and other theatre and political theories are used to analyze the aforementioned one-man show. In addition, the researcher of these articles uses primary and secondary datasets to define and question terms. To do so, the researcher employs a qualitative research methodology. After conducting an in-depth analysis of the dataset and observing the one-man show, the researcher discovered that Andrew Buckland's one-man show "The Ugly Noo Noo" theatre depicts not only the past but also the present realities of South Africa and world politics by understanding and observing the very essence of politics, its true nature, and its true meaning. The research findings

show that "The 2024 Ugly Noo Noo" is an impressed play that keeps its subversive thrust of the 80s but speaks to us now in this fractured world by narrating universal themes such as natural disasters, humanity and compassion, dreams and aspirations, isolation and connection, tradition vs. change of the world, freedom and oppression, courage and sacrifice, love and relationships, identity and self-discovery, power and corruption, conflict and resolution. He adds powerful and relatable components in his storytelling. As a result, Andrew Buckland's "The Ugly Noo Noo" exemplifies theater's power as a platform for political expression in Africa. The show pushes viewers to confront hard truths about identity and belonging in a fast changing world by delving into personal and societal concerns. As South Africa evolves, works like Buckland's remind us of the long-standing importance of performance in shaping political conversation and promoting understanding.

Background

Theatre arose from rites done in honor of Dionysus (the Greek deity of wine). The worship of his religion has resulted in the creation of play in Athens. It appears in three forms: satirical poem, tragedy, and comedy. The archeological scientific evidence are, such as the oldest fossils, Ge'ez script, and prop materials found in Ethiopia. The origins of theatre can be traced back to ancient African kingdoms, where it began as a religious ceremony honoring the god of Abedos' passion drama; old Nubeaas, Ethiopia, had the first government placement up to Indiana (Ge'ez script[1]). These ritual performances were performed in Africa, where they were performed as part of religious ceremonies and festivals; and ancient African peoples, where it emerged as a form of storytelling and entertainment in the form of theatre of human being which encompasses a wide range of everyday performances, from social interactions to cultural practices. This concept highlights how individuals navigate their identities and relationships, social critic, engaging in a continuous performance that shapes their experiences and interactions in diverse contexts so these can also be related with the existence of human being in the world. This leads to the earliest known origins of modern humans. Homo sapiens are traced back to Africa, specifically in regions like East Africa, with sites in. The oldest fossils of anatomically modern humans date to around 200,000 to 300,000 years ago. From these historical grounds, the political and cultural development of Africa, exemplified by the expansion of the Aksumite Empire, played a significant role in shaping the continent's history, as it fostered trade, cultural exchange, and the spread of Christianity across the region. the political and cultural development of Africa in the basses of Africa Political Developments such as Aksum's Expansion. The Aksumite Empire expanded its territory during the 4th century, becoming a major player in trade routes connecting Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and beyond. Aksum's wealth and influence grew, particularly through trade in ivory, gold, and other commodities (Philip, 2002, p. 234).

In addition to these cultural flourishing, the adoption of Christianity led to the flourishing of a distinct Ethiopian culture, characterized by unique religious art, architecture including the famous rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, and the development of the Ge'ez script. These create mono church education performers in "Kena" that can refer to various contexts depending on the subject matter of few interpretations: it might refer to a type of traditional music or dance. Africana music often features a range of styles and indigenous instruments, with performances that are vibrant and expressive of Ethiopia. Farther more "Kena" as in a contemporary reference,

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[1] Unpublished carbon copy.

it might relate to media, literature, or even a specific work or character which incorporates text and sub-text of meaning with representation of symbolic characters. The represented character can be anything which can care the theme, message and contents of a play due to this historical fact. The origin of theater is undeniably created in African counties in religious, choirs, ritual and mono performance form at the basses of depicting text and sub-text of a play. These can also be found in contemporary Andrew Buckland's One-Man Show "The Ugly Noo Noo" at the Market Theatre, South Africa.

These also truly present the world theatre history which is layers on Ancient Theatre starting from 2,500 BCE to 400 CE on Africa performance such as Egyptian ritual performances. Greek theatre: tragedy and comedy of Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes. Roman theatre: adaptations of Greek plays, emphasis on spectacle Medieval Theatre (500-1500 CE) which incorporates religious plays: mystery, miracle, and morality plays, liturgical drama traveling performers and gesture base improvisations. Renaissance Theatre starting from 1400-1700 CE includes immediate performance creative improvisations of Commedia dell'arte in Italy. Elizabethan theatre in England, a plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe, also includes Spanish Golden Age plays of Lope de Vega.

Modern theatre starting from 1700-1900 CE incorporates, restoration comedy, melodrama realism and naturalism opera, and musical theatre development. In addition, these contemporary theatres (1900 CE-present) incorporate Avant-garde movements, absurdist theatre, epic theatre, musical theatre expansion, experimental and postmodern forms (Brockett & Hildy, 2018, p. 236).

Theatre and Politics

Theater, both historically and currently, serves as a "conglomerate of spiritual compounds", reflecting social, political, and natural phenomena. It acts as a mirror of human experiences, including entertainment, leisure, and hardship, and highlights the virtues and flaws of society. The history of theater, literature, and art represents a significant aspect of human civilization.

This paper examines the relationship between politics and theater, particularly in the context of a one-man show performed in market theaters. It begins by defining politics and theater, exploring their interdependence in social and political contexts, especially regarding African artists.

Beyme (1974) notes that politics in ancient times was seen as the "science of a good and just life" and that contemporary boundaries between politics and other social spheres are increasingly blurred. Lipset (1959) emphasizes the universal nature of politics across various organizations, framing it as a struggle for power.

Lipset defines politics as the science of managing states, highlighting its ambivalence. He traces the concept of politics back to Plato, who viewed it as an art of persuasion evolving into a science studying the state. He criticized politicians for prioritizing popularity over truth, arguing that effective statesmanship requires education and skill.

Arts emphasizes politics as a social phenomenon, shaped by historical contexts and human needs. He defines it as the management of societal interests through power dynamics. This includes existential needs, as outlined by Krech and Crutchfield (1969), which drive human behavior and social organization.

In modern contexts, politics arises from the necessity of managing community interests and reflects the historical conditions that shape social phenomena. Artistic expression also interprets political realities, connecting the origins of "politics" and "theater" in ancient Greek terms related to community life.

Overall, both politics and theater serve as integral components of human social experience, evolving through historical and cultural developments.

Politics as a Subject of Theater, Political Theater

Politics and political phenomena, political events and other phenomena and processes are the subject of political science, history, literature, theater, and other sciences and scientific disciplines, i.e. they are the subject of people with all their characteristics, either as individuals or as members of smaller or larger groups, collectivities, communities, and human creations in totality and detail and their development. This means that there is no history, no politics, no culture, no theater in general, no political theater, no political event without people as social and political beings in a certain time, space, and on a certain territory.

In this context, various political, cultural, and historical events have often inspired theater, particularly political theater. For instance, in 5th century BC Athens, political theater became deeply aligned with the Greek polis. This era marked a significant literary flourishing in theater, with Athens being the largest and most influential Greek city-state. The works of the three greatest tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides reflect this strong connection to the polis. Numerous social and political phenomena have been explored through theater, ranging from the slavery of the Roman Republic and figures like Gaius Julius Caesar and Cleopatra, to epic narratives such as Homer's Iliad, the Trojan War, the Cretan-Mycenaean civilization, the Persian Wars, Spartacus' uprising, and the Crusades, as well as the First and Second World Wars.

It is generally known that the application of force, violence, and political violence is, generally speaking, a common, important method and tool of politics, both in internal and external political relations; this was often the subject of theatrical performances of theater, that is, political theater. Albert Camus (1993) explained it very nicely in his book *Caligula* using the example of the atomic bomb in World War II. The world is what it is, and that means almost nothing. This is what everyone has known since yesterday, thanks to the great concert that the radio, press, and news agencies started on the occasion of the atomic bomb. Indeed, in the midst of the crowd, we learn that any city of average importance can be obliterated by a bomb with the size of a football. The American, English, and French press bombard us with elegant discussions of the future, the past, the inventors, the prices, the pacifist appeal, and the war consequences, the political consequences, even the independent character of the atomic bomb.

We will summarize everything in one sentence: mechanical civilization has just reached the last pillar of savagery. We shall have to, in the near or distant future, choose between collective suicide or the judicious use of technical achievements (Camus, 1945, p. 9). Camus also condemned the Soviet military intervention in Budapest, as well as other political activities that were the result of political force and political power in international and domestic relations, in his time, during the forties and fifties of the last century. Certain analogies, just like in the time of Camus, are still present on the international scene, such as, according to some authors, special military intervention, or according to others, Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the relationship of the USA, the EU, NATO towards Russia and the possibility of using nuclear weapons during the year 2023 or the question of the justification of the use of artificial intelligence and unknowns that can be human work, and in general everything depends on political will, force, and power.

Artificial intelligence, according to some authors, represents a conglomeration of traditional science, physiology, and psychology, all with the aim of producing a machine that, according to human standards, could be defined as an intelligent machine.

This means that the power of politics, political power, includes the use of force as a means of achieving political and other goals. The application of force, political force, both in internal and external politics, no

matter how much it appeared as a counterpart to the politics of peace, was always very current, both in political life and in the theater in general, and especially in the political theater in the arena of the present existing world.

The example can be Andrew Buckland's political drama "The Ugly Noo Noo" in which the performer emphasized the model of political or state violence on the example of "Ugly Noo Noo", which was actually not talked about for a long time Parktown Prawn topic. The theme of "Ugly Noo Noo", essentially a political drama, was staged in the Market Theater in South Africa and other theaters; it became social therapy of the state because it was considered that plays can initiate audience gatherings and critical thinking in order to understand the past and to question the present social, political, and cultural existence. In the aforementioned political drama, the theme of "Ugly Noo Noo", which is to incorporate the relationship between politics and political theater, is a blatant example of the demystification of political violence and political power in order to preserve the given absolute political power. In this example, there is an indisputable conflict between the holders of political power and cultural and artistic creativity. In political theaters, regarding the use of violence, political violence, political force, and plays about wars, rebellions (the use of violence, force to destroy the political and social system), military interventions, assassinations, diversions, kidnappings, robberies, and other forms were often performed. Events at the time of Inform biro, "Ugly Noo Noo", were for Andrew Buckland's an inspiration and an instrument for presenting the problems and consequences of that time and the present time in South Africa and around the world

Theatre and Politics in Africa: Exploring "Identity, Identification & Cultural Citizenship"

The intersection of theatre and politics in Africa provides a rich landscape for examining themes of identity, identification, and cultural citizenship. Theatre in Africa serves as a powerful medium for exploring identity, identification, and cultural citizenship. Through its ability to reflect societal issues and foster dialogue, African theatre not only entertains but also educates and empowers audiences, making it a vital component in the ongoing quest for social justice and cultural affirmation in a form of performance. Community theatre initiatives which focus on grassroots theatre projects often engage local communities in discussions about identity and rights, fostering dialogue and understanding immediately and innovation forms such as Fusion of Forms, Digital Theatre. Cultural citizenship also encompasses belonging and participation, recognition, and rights. It emphasizes storytelling through theater and performance, advocating for the acknowledgment of cultural rights. This enables communities to assert their identities and advocate for social justice. Farther more regarding political commentary and critique in expression of social issues such as corruption, inequality, and human rights abuses through satire and drama, playwrights provoke thought and inspire action among audiences in participatory or physical performance forms of TFD (theatre for development), TFSD (Theatre for sustainable Development), TFPT (Theatre for political therapy), TFSC Theatre for social change, TFCT (Theatre for clinical therapy) forms (Boal, 2013, p. 123). Resistance and activism in theatre has historically been a tool for political resistance, providing a voice against oppressive regimes. It mobilizes communities and encourages civic engagement, fostering a sense of cultural citizenship.

The intersection of theatre and politics in Africa provides a rich landscape for examining themes of identity, identification, and cultural citizenship. Here are key points that encapsulate this dynamic relationship. Cultural expression and identity representation are also reflected in African theatre by expressing the diverse identities

within the continent, showcasing various ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. It serves as a platform for marginalized voices to express their unique experiences and histories.

Reclaiming heritage is also another issue which theatre plays frequently explore themes of cultural heritage, allowing communities to reclaim and celebrate their identities in the face of colonial histories and globalization. Identity formation and transformation, such as Personal and Collective Identities Productions, explores the interplay between individual identities and collective national identities, especially in post-colonial contexts where new national narratives are being forged. Diaspora and migration themes of migration and diaspora reflect the complexities of identity in a globalized world, highlighting the challenges faced by Africans navigating multiple cultural landscapes.

Depiction of South Africa Politics

Elements in theatre, performance and the political showcase ground-breaking research that responds urgently and critically to the defining political concerns and approaches of our past, present, and future time. The series presents various and sometimes contradictory readings of "the political", depending on the local contexts and intellectual histories of individual artist and politicians, and the specific research area subject, scholarly preoccupations. Through its international scope, and its engagement with diverse performance histories and intellectual traditions, it seeks to generate an array of productive tensions. Focusing on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, it analyses and explores genealogical connections and inheritances between political theatre performance-making and its accompanying scholarship both past and present, contesting established histories and opening up new critical perspectives in performing and visual arts of the visual screen, stage, and mixed digital media arena.

Due to this fact, to know the story sources of the Andrew Buckland's mono stage play, it is better to summarize South African politics on the basses of South Africa's political history which is a struggle for equality and democracy so South Africa's political history is a complex tapestry woven with threads of colonialism, apartheid, resistance, and ultimately, a hard-won transition to democracy. When we see Colonial Era starting from1652 up to 1948, in the historical time Dutch and British colonize South Africa in two parts; those are Dutch colonization: The Dutch East India Company established a settlement at the Cape in 1652, beginning European colonization and British rule: Britain took control of the Cape in 1806, expanding its territory and sparking conflicts with indigenous communities. In addition to this, segregation and discrimination become a system of racial segregation and discrimination against the majority; black population was gradually put in place, laying the groundwork for apartheid.

Apartheid era starting from 1948-1994 incorporates formalized segregation when the National Party came to power in 1948, enacting apartheid, a system of racial segregation and discrimination that classified people based on race and designated separate living spaces, social facilities, and even political rights. These creates resistance and activism which is marked by the African National Congress (ANC) emerged as a major resistance force, using peaceful and sometimes armed struggle against apartheid. Many activists, including Nelson Mandela, were imprisoned for their actions. In these time, condemnation on apartheid was widely condemned internationally, leading to economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation. These leads to the time of transition to democracy starting from1990 up to 1994, then end of apartheid by the inauguration of the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 marked a turning point. Negotiations began between the government and the ANC, leading to the dismantling of apartheid.

After a long walk to freedom[2], first multiracial election take place in 1994, South Africa held its first multiracial election. The ANC won a landslide victory, and Nelson Mandela became the first black president of South Africa.

After apartheid, South Africa has faced significant challenges during its transition since 1994. The new democratic government took on the daunting task of rebuilding a society deeply divided by apartheid. This involved tackling issues such as poverty, inequality, and ongoing racial tensions. Despite some progress, South Africa still contends with high levels of poverty, inequality, corruption, and crime. Nevertheless, the country boasts a robust constitution that safeguards the fundamental rights and freedoms of all its citizens (Baines & Scully, 2014).

This political history became a story source of artistes. According to these articles, and the researcher's practical observation, Buckland's one-man show "The Ugly Noo Noo" in South African market theatre depicts theatre and politics of South Africa through the basses of South African political history especially struggle, resistance, and ultimately, the triumph of democracy, the brutal and inhumane system that left a lasting legacy of inequality of apartheid. In addition to these, it tries to show a remarkable achievement towards true equality, social justice, and democracy. He symbolized the ongoing debates and challenges in addressing historical injustices and creating a more equitable future based on the dynamic land scape of South Africa's politics.

The One-Man Show "The Ugly Noo Noo": Writer and Performer Andrew Buckland's Performance Journey

Andrew Buckland is a prominent performer at the age of 70. Following his accidental foray into the world of theatre arts as a student in 1974, Andrew has been involved in both theatre and film productions, acting in a variety of classical and modern roles. He became an actor, comedian, theatre director, playwright, mime, performance coach, and theatre producer. His portrayal of Hamlet for SABC, three Fringe First Awards from the Edinburgh Festival, and his part as Sgt Pepper in the 2008/2009 Cirque du Soleil production of LOVE The Beatles in Las Vegas are among his highlights. During his 45-year career, he has also developed a reputation for producing an extraordinary range of cutting-edge original work, which has won over 20 national and international theatre awards for such works as "The Ugly Noo Noo", Between The Teeth, Bloodstream, Feedback, and The Well Being.

He had a significant impact on the university's drama department. Between 1992 and 2017, when he resigned and was appointed Associate Professor Emeritus, he was known as Rhodes. Even now, Andrew is still actively working on new projects. His most recent works are Crazy in Love with Conspiracy of Clowns, which won the Amsterdam Fringe's Best International Production award, and Tobacco for the Fortune Cookie Theatre Company, for which he received the 2016 Best Actor Prize at Wordless in Stellenbosch for his portrayal of Ivan. He is also a member of the creative team working on a new project for the Global Arts Corps with the Phare Ponleu Selpak Circus Company in Cambodia. His portrayal of Paul in Lara Foot's The Inconvenience of Wings earned him both the 2016 Fleur du Cap Award for Best Actor and the 2016 Naledi Award for Best Actor. In the

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[2] *Long Walk to Freedom* is the autobiography of Nelson Mandela, detailing his journey from childhood in a rural village to his role as a leader in the anti-apartheid movement and eventually becoming South Africa's first Black president. The book chronicles Mandela's early life, education, and the political awakening that led him to join the African National Congress (ANC). Mandela describes his experiences in prison, where he spent 27 years, and reflects on the struggles and sacrifices of those who fought against apartheid. The narrative emphasizes themes of resilience, forgiveness, and the importance of justice and equality.

feature film Catching Feelings, which was written and directed by Kagiso Lediga and distributed globally by Netflix, he also played Heiner Muller. Actor, director, teacher, theatre maker, voice actor, and performance consultant, Andrew resumed full-time professional freelancing employment in December 2017. Andrew won the Fleur du pôle for his performance as Hamm in Samuel Beckett's Endgame, which was directed by Sylvaine Strike, at the Baxter Theatre Centre in 2018 Cap best actor award. In 2020, he went on to play Detective Badenhorst in the thrilling television drama Legacy[3].

South Africa's Market Theatre

The South African theater scene has historically been a space for resistance and reflection. During the apartheid era, playwrights and performers used the stage to critique the oppressive regime, often at great personal risk. Today, while the political landscape has shifted, the country still grapples with issues of identity, inequality, and governance in focus of identification & cultural citizenship. The market theatre, renowned for its commitment to political theater, remains a vital venue for works that challenge the status quo. The market theatre in Johannesburg, South Africa, has a rich and significant history, particularly in the context of the anti-apartheid movement. Here's a summary of its key historical points:

The market theatre was established in 1976 in a converted fruit and vegetable market. It was founded by a group of artists, including Barney Simon and Mavis Taylor, who aimed to create a space for political and social dialogue through theatre. During the 1980s, the theatre became a crucial platform for anti-apartheid performances. It provided a space for black artists and playwrights to express their views and critique the apartheid regime. Productions often tackled themes of oppression, resistance, and social justice. The market theatre staged groundbreaking works, including plays by prominent South African writers such as Athol Fugard. These productions often employed a mix of traditional and contemporary forms, engaging audiences in both entertainment and activism.

The theatre not only served as an artistic venue but also as a community center that fostered discussions about race, identity, and human rights. It attracted diverse audiences and became a symbol of hope and resistance. During post-apartheid era, after the end of apartheid in 1994, the market theatre continued to evolve, reflecting the new social and political landscape of South Africa. It has remained a vital space for artistic expression and has expanded its programming to include a wider range of voices and stories. The market theatre is celebrated for its role in the cultural history of South Africa. It has influenced numerous artists and has been recognized internationally for its contributions to theatre and social change.

Synopses, Symbolic Summery of "Ugly Noon Mono Play"

The renowned one-man show, "The Ugly Noo Noo", is a masterwork of humorous physical performance by Andrew Buckland. It was initially presented at the market theatre 36 years ago, and it is perhaps the text that transformed the face of South African theatre for thousands of practitioners and spectators.

A man's meeting with an insect is the subject of "The Ugly Noo Noo", not just any bug, but the infamous Parktown Prawn, which was common in Johannesburg's suburbs, especially in the 1980s and 1990s. Buckland's distinct stage presence, incisive sarcastic commentary, and an explosive performance style take the audience on a fascinating voyage through the dark underbelly of big-city suburbia life and the compost heaps. It explores the

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[3] My online source is from page of market theatre and MLA which is the largest artist's agency on the African continent with offices in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

connection between power and terror in our daily lives in a hilariously detailed manner. This innovative piece, which was directed by his wife Janet Buckland, has won 17 national and international honours, including a Fringe First and a Perrier Pick of the Fringe shortlist at the Edinburgh Festival.

Over the years, it has received accolades for its exceptional performance, director, and writing. In addition to addressing general human realities, "The Ugly Noo Noo" explores how fear is managed during tough times, drawing inspiration from the Parktown Prawn's ability to arouse irrational terror. Because of its enduring humor and relevancy, the central theme of irrational fear remains as captivating now as it was in 1988.

Figure 1. "The Ugly Noo Noo" poster and the performer Andrew Buckland photo (source: from Market Theatre).

Analysis of the Play

In market theater stage black, I found myself positioned about four meters from the stage, where Andrew Buckland, a one-man show performer, was ready to engage the audience. The stage was bare, draped in black curtains, with a green light illuminating the space. Buckland stepped to the center, facing the audience, which grew quiet in anticipation of his presence.

Dressed in brown cargo shorts and a plain black T-shirt layered with a white one—an apolitical nod to costume-based acting Buckland began to express himself. With a meek but excited demeanor, he introduced the performance. After taking a deep breath, he focused on his imaginative setting and spoke: "Otherwise known as 'The Parktown prawn,' it is a coastal creature. When its natural habitat of sandstone was used for building materials in Parktown, it became a staple of Johannesburg suburbia" (Buckland, 2024). He delivered these lines with concentration, relaxing into the flow of his story: "People are terrified of them!" As he spoke, the stage plunged into darkness, creating a sense of connection with the symbolic characters he was about to embody.

Emerging once more, Buckland humorously exaggerated the scientific term: "'The Libanasidus Vittatus,' otherwise known as 'The Parktown prawn.'" With the imagination of a mime, he stooped low, emitting a machine-like purr from his throat. He extended his arms forward, leaning in as he growled. "Ahh!" he mimicked a suburban dad mowing the lawn on a Sunday afternoon. "Zzzzzzt," he grumbled, the sound of the lawnmower cutting through grass. Suddenly, the mower hit an unexpected bump. He looked up, bewildered, as if asking the audience, "What have I hit?"

Attempting again, he mowed, only to find his hand sinking into the ground up to his wrist. "Uuuugh!" he recoiled in disgust, noting the substance felt smooth, almost like flesh. Yet, his hand seemed drawn to the hole, creeping closer against his will. His body was caught in a struggle: one arm pushing while the other was pulled in. Soon, a foot joined the fray, and Buckland writhed as if magnetically attracted to the earth beneath him.

Then, with a sudden yank, the perspective shifted from the garden to a glass bottle buried beneath the grass. All this time, the stage remained empty, relying solely on Buckland's mime and imagination, embodying the essence of physical theater through layers of text and subtext.

Figure 2. Andrew Buckland & Paulos Aemero after the performance at the backstage of market theatre (photo by Daniel Buckland).

Buckland's evolution as a performer since the 1980s has been notable. He recalls, "When I first played it, I was 34 and burst in with energy, trying to make a name for myself. I was pounding it out and sweating within the first 15 seconds" (Buckland, 2024). Over time, he has refined his movement, conserving energy and allowing his character's voice to come through. The dynamic between his limbs and torso, which used to be much more intense, has changed significantly; he now approaches movement with greater precision, especially after undergoing a hip replacement. While he can still convey emotion, he believes the most crucial aspect is fostering the audience's imagination, enabling them to interpret the performance in their own way.

Buckland developed a visual narrative that reflects the political history of South Africa. He credits Professor Gary Gordon with introducing the concept of physicality into his performances at Rhodes University. Gordon recognized the importance of movement, akin to ballet, mime, and clowning, which was often overlooked. Buckland learned that movement has the power to elicit a physical reaction from the audience.

During his early days at the Market Theatre, he was inspired by a Polish drummer who practiced for eight hours daily. Buckland recalled thinking, "Jeez, he's noisy, my chick." However, he realized that to be a true professional, one must dedicate significant time to practice. This realization was a turning point for him, as he understood that true artistry requires commitment (Buckland, 2024).

Buckland trained eight hours a day from then on. He could construct classes for himself in voice and agility, and that became a pattern that he started to take responsibility for himself as an artist/actor. A couple of months later when had no work the market theatre offered him a 20-minute slot to perform. That day by chance, his son

had an insect show and tell at school, they had to race the "Noo Noo's" for class. Buckland continued his training regularly, along with an hour or so of free writing of half a page of dialogue every day. On a day-to-day basis, it was cyclical: he would play with the characters and the transitions of the characters and then that evening he would write text, play that text, and expand. The one fed the other. The Parkview Prawn had a huge mythology. Its appearance is so disgusting that in the 1960s students at the University of Witwatersrand spread a rumour that the intimidating insects were the result of genetic engineering gone wrong. "When Janet saw those things, the roof would lift off," Buckland explains. "I played calm but was terrified. It said to me that this is just like what was happening in the country since the late 1800s." (Buckland, A. 2024).

The ANC had been going to the British Government for an open conversation about South African politics since the beginning of the 20th century and was met with violence. Buckland's posh and proper Parktown Prawn explains that he is a representative of the CCC, the "Communalists" who are fighting for equality amongst all creatures, against the domination of one species. The poor prawn, who is quite an amiable fellow, undergoes multiple attempted murders: he is stepped on, squashed by the Yellow Pages, sprayed with the toxic Doom, and eventually sliced with a large kitchen knife. The insect is met with fear, like the British Government's attitude toward the ANC. "Human beings and insects respond to fear through violence, that is a human trait throughout the world" Buckland, A. 2024). Power and fear are negotiated in a delicate balance. And yet, when prodded, Buckland refuses to disclose who each character represents. "It's a world of its own. I don't want to load anything. The characters are unique individuals who have resonances with other people. If anything, they are parts of me" (Buckland, 2024). He continued the slow movements in placement base of narration "Buckland's posh and proper Parktown Prawn explains that he is a representative of the CCC, the 'Communalists' who are fighting for equality amongst all creatures, against the domination of one species." (Buckland, 2024).

Buckland, of development, enacts both roles, jumping between the prim and proper insect, and the terrified suburban South African. He became each character through intense physicality and detailed mime. The challenge of physical performance, one-man show, is to create distinct characters who don't bleed into each other. Buckland elaborates:

> Make sure the audience jumps their perspective in an instant. The solo mime, Marcel Marceau, does this. You see it in the position of the feet. Straightaway you've got the position changed. The change is physical, from how the spine sits to the connection to the floor. If I can make that sharp enough the audience is there. (Buckland, 2024)

It's about making an instant as economical as possible. Buckland worked for hours with the music of Bobby McFerrin, who would jump in styles and ranges—he would mime to that music, portraying musical differences in movement.

Buckland explains that by the time "The Ugly Noo Noo" was being performed, the Security Branch of the Apartheid Government didn't bother with artists. He played to audiences at the market theatre, a liberal, left-wing grouping. "We could say what we liked," Andrew says. "It was a specific kind of audience. This kind of comedy didn't protest directly at a white audience" (Buckland, 2024). This play was never banned, its comedy acted as a barrier to the apartheid state's understanding of protest theatre. "I got shut out at rallies and end conscription campaigns when my performances were blatantly political. With this not so much. Some people have walked out because they may find it offensive" (Buckland, 2024). "The Ugly Noo Noo" uses comedy and satire to make people look at problems long enough to laugh. "People have said I changed the way they see insects", he jokes, "and also the way they see life" (Buckland, 2024).

Drawing inspiration from the irrational fear evoked by the Parktown Prawn, "The Ugly Noo Noo" delves into how fear is manipulated in times of struggle and difficulty, while also addressing universal human truths in the perspective of world politics, history, and culture with especial focus of theatre and politics in Africa in depiction of "identity, identification & cultural citizenship" through the lens of Andrew Buckland's one-man show "The Ugly Noo Noo" in south Africa market theatre hall, I analyses and admire the physical performance of Andrew Buckland's work: How "The Ugly Noo Noo" challenged the past, present, and future apartheid and dealt with class consciousness through the lens of Parktown Prawns including the present world unrest, war, and clashes.

Conclusion

In Andrew Buckland's "The Ugly Noo Noo", the intersection of theater and politics in Africa is vividly illustrated through themes of identity, identification, and cultural citizenship. Buckland's masterful use of physicality and mime transcends mere storytelling, allowing audiences to engage with complex social issues and historical narratives in a dynamic and accessible manner. By transforming the Parktown Prawn into a potent symbol of fear and societal struggle, he invites reflection on the broader implications of power dynamics and the human experience in South Africa.

Buckland's performance serves not only as a critique of past injustices but also as a lens through which contemporary audiences can examine ongoing issues of inequality and cultural identity. Through humor and satire, he navigates the delicate terrain of political commentary, making the uncomfortable feeling palpable and engaging. His ability to create distinct characters that resonate with universal truths underscores the transformative power of theater as a medium for social change.

Ultimately, "The Ugly Noo Noo" exemplifies how performance can be a vehicle for dialogue and understanding in a society grappling with its history. Buckland's work not only challenges audiences to confront their own fears and biases but also fosters a sense of cultural citizenship, encouraging a collective reimagining of identity in the context of South Africa's evolving narrative. As Buckland deftly bridges the past and present, he reaffirms the vital role of theater in shaping political consciousness and fostering empathy within diverse communities.

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