

SHAKESPEARE IN MZANSI

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The Comedies

Four Proposals
for
SABC Drama – Mini Series

Twelfth Night

Much Ado About Nothing

The Winter's Tale

The Tempest

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Shakespeare in Mzansi

The Shakespeare in Mzansi series is a winning formula; the brilliance of Shakespeare's story telling with the vibrancy and rich contextual life of modern Mzansi.

It makes accessible the classical by translating it to the here and now.

It gives us a fresh view of our lives through stories that have stood the test of time.

Series Concept

In conceptualising the four episodes for this comedy series we have been conscious of the 'Mzansi fo sho' brand. The comedies included here have been selected for their breadth of characters, the fascination of their stories and their capacity to delight and entrance audiences in a modern context.

The style of these episodes is fresh, innovative and exciting. Innovative camera use draws the audience in so they are not merely observers but actively part of the story. Whilst keeping in mind the youthful SABC1 profile, with its energy and colour, this series will also capture older audiences through its delightful characters and thrilling plot lines.

Even when laced with tragedy the stories selected are positive and optimistic in their resolution; acknowledging the past but firmly looking forward to a bright future. Like many of Shakespeare's comedies they allow the youthful characters to be essential to the story's resolution and this we felt was perfectly in line with the Mzansi fo sho brand.

The stories have been contextualised very much with the present in mind. The locations and characters are modern and rooted in our reality. Even, as in *The Tempest*, when we dip into the allegorical, or in *The Winter's Tale*, which starts in 1994, the costumes, settings and language are real, true and thoroughly accessible to the audience.

The use of the camera is key to this conceptualisation. The camera, and therefore we as audience, is drawn directly into the action. In three of the stories the camera becomes a character in the story being told. The other characters relate to the camera and we are immediately emotionally and literally joined to the action of the story. In the other the camera also creates a documentary focus that allows us to travel swiftly through time and maintain a truthfulness of design.

All of the stories bring with them a rich cultural and social representation of modern Mzansi. Each of the stories has a central location that across the series takes us from lively Soweto, to lush KwaZulu-Natal, to the hills of the Eastern Cape and to the peninsula of beautiful Cape Town. That said we have been conscious of budget and each location can be established easily and then economically shot using interiors.

Shakespeare in Mzansi will once again then wow the Mzansi audience and take this excellent series to a new level for the SABC1 audience.