

You Think You Know Me?

Written and Performed By Linda Gabriel, Directed by Zaza Muchemwa

You Think You Know Me, is a gripping one woman play that evolves around the life of one sex worker called Netsy. Through narratives of her life the audience is allowed into many avenues of other sex workers and men who have been in Netsy's company.

Penned and performed by Linda Gabriel the play interrogates controversial themes of transactional sex, religion and other related issues that include Sexual and Reproductive Health, HIV and AIDS, Child Labour, Forced Child Marriages, Rape, Corruption, Livelihood, Unemployment, Migration, Discrimination among others.

Director of the play, Zaza Muchemwa had this to say, "She is tackling controversial issues that the society ignores to talk about. People are quick to make judgments, instead of taking their time to look into the causative issues of one's behaviour. No one grows up thinking of being a sex worker."

The play is an adaptation from Linda Gabriel's poem, '*Sins of our Mothers*' in which a child chronicles what the mother had to endure for the betterment of the child's life. This time it is no longer the voice of the child but that of the mother asking the world, '*You Think You Know Me?*'

How much do we know about sex work besides judging it on moral grounds? Women in the Avenues, streets or at organized lodges and some flats, do they engage in it for personal fulfillment or to fend for a whole chain of beneficiaries?

Muchemwa said about the play, "Criminalizing an individual working to provide for her family without looking at the causes and doing away with them is not easy." And Linda added, "To engage in transactional sex is like going to war. They will be sacrificing for something to happen."

The play leaves you asking yourself whether you know sex workers fully or you are obsessed by the stereotypes you grew up with about transactional sex work.

Gabriel is a University Of Witwatersrand Johannesburg graduate. Linda Gabriel, born in 1985, is one of the crop of exciting female performance poets to emerge out of Zimbabwe. The 30-year-old powerful orator has been hooked on performance poetry since high school in 2001 and has since participated in major literary events in Zimbabwe, the rest of southern Africa and Europe. Mostly her work celebrates womanhood and its challenges. She uses the stage to tell untold stories and address taboo matters.

A must see play.