



EFF STATEMENT ON THE DEEPLY SADDENING PASSING OF TALENTED FILMMAKER TEBOHO MAHLATSI

Tuesday, 4 July 2023

The EFF is deeply saddened by the passing of talented and rising filmmaker Teboho Moseling Mahlatsi. Mahlatsi's rather sudden death. Mahlatsi, who was a giant and a trailblazer in the filmmaking industry, was 49yrs of age and hailed from Maokeng, Kroonsatd in the Free State.

A quiet but committed professional, Mahlatsi created some of the most pioneering work in South African film and television. He was the creator and director of *Yizo Yizo* the television series which many have hailed as a turning point in South African Television. *Yizo Yizo* created a new local genre that many would try to emulate in the aftermath.

Mahlatsi then went on to create, write and direct a short film, *Portrait of a Young Man Drowning*, which won him the Silver Line Award at the Venice Film Festival. He also co-founded Bomb Productions with producers Angus Gibson and Desiree Markgraaf wherein he created more pioneering work such as *iSibaya* and *Zone 14* which have both mesmerised South African audiences for years.

Mahlatsi was a giant in the advertising space as well, where he worked for many years as creator and director of some of the most memorable adverts in South Africa, including the Cremora, Hunters, Sasol and Vodacom adverts. His success in the advertising market saw Bomb Productions creating its commercial wing, Bomb Commercials which has created a string of commercials both nationally and internationally.

At the time of his death, Mahlatsi was still rising. He was in the process of breaking ranks with the work that had created, the legend he already was, and was about to create a new legacy for himself. He was one of the creators of the now highly successful *Shaka iLembe*, which he and his team started putting together years ago, when he suddenly left the

process to concentrate on other work. Today, *Shaka iLembe* is an immense success, thanks to this giant.

Teboho Mahlatsi was a legend and though he was born and bred in a small town and he had no opportunity to study film, his love for the art of filmmaking led him to the greatest heights. Much of what he did was self-taught through studying, works by Russian and Cuban filmmakers which influenced much of his work. His passion to translate his knowledge of pioneering film works is what led him to produce works like the film *Sekali le Meokgo* which was a monument of stick fighting in the mountain Kingdom Lesotho.

Furthermore, Mahlatsi mentored many young black filmmakers because he understood the task of creating a strong filmmaking fraternity that would carry the baton forward in telling the African story. He was the quintessential representation of young black children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, but have the hunger to succeed. Through his life story, many young aspirant filmmakers now know that it can be done.

We at the EFF are particularly touched by Teboho Moseling Mahlatsi's passing because he was in the process of producing our 10th Anniversary documentary which celebrates the life of our movement in South African politics in the past decade. We are deeply saddened by his life being cut short before he could produce yet another trailblazer. We will forever be grateful for the vision he had for this work.

The EFF passes its deepest condolences to the Mahlatsi Family, and to the entire entertainment industry which has lost a torchlight. We take comfort in the fact that he has left us a legacy in the many young men and women he has mentored throughout his career. May his soul rest in revolutionary peace.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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