



## Activity Summary

### Velvet Revolution Screening

27<sup>th</sup> August 2017

To coincide with Women's Month commemorated every August in South Africa, the local chapter organized a screening of Velvet Revolution. The event was aimed at practicing women journalists and students from local universities and colleges.

As a result of the screening the local chapter was invited to screen the film by at Rosebank College Media Department, the screening was held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2017 and involved a discussion with students about gender norms and how they manifested in their own classrooms and campus. Another request was received to screen the film at CIVICUS – a local NGO that deals with human rights issues but a date has been difficult to confirm given unavailability of staff due to travel and work commitments.

After the screening on the 27<sup>th</sup> a robust discussion was held where both students and professionals recounted personal stories of their experiences.

*Some of the themes that emerged from the discussions included:*

- **Safety** – Zikhona Miso a journalist from SABC recounted how she had tried to interview people at the Marikana Site following the massacre of 34 miners by police. She had driven 3 hours to try and be one of the first journalists on the scene but the men would not engage with her. At some point her car was surrounded by angry men who were yelling at her to leave and that it was no place for a woman as she could get raped. She drove out in a panic and stayed at a nearby bed and breakfast where she called the office for a back up. Her male counterpart, a younger journalist, arrived the next day and she briefed him on the questions and photographs she wanted covered. She parked on the periphery of the mine, far away from the action.
- **Gendered Allocation of assignments:** Another journalist noted and wanted advise on how to challenge a culture in her newsroom that it almost automatic that certain stories were reserved for men journalists such as political rallies, analysis of sports and political commentary. Women were allocated more human interest stories such as annual commemorations, entertainment, gender based violence stories.
- **Editorial Laziness:** Someone noted the loss of quality in editing due to time pressures, interest groups invested in news outlets leading to poor controls for story accuracy, authenticity and deeper insight.

Overall, the film was well received and invoked a lot of discussion and empathy for the cause.

## **Gender Mainstreaming Workshop**

6th October 2017

The South African Chapter held a full day workshop and it was divided into two sections. The first section was aimed at male editors and professionals involved in decision making roles in public television and other media outlets. We had three excellent speakers from advocacy group Media Monitoring Africa as well as Genderlinks with Carmine Amaro from IAWRT-South Africa facilitating and presenting the work done by IAWRT.

The aim of the workshop was to make clear the aims and goals of gender mainstreaming in media organizations. We spent time on introducing methods of self-evaluation that media houses can use in order to gauge whether they are on-track with their goals. William Bird from Media Monitoring (points in Annexure A)Africa, gave an overview of the specific challenges and considerations that the media face in the South African context. He also gave examples of the positive results achieved in the past and gave his insights as to how we can move forward to achieve similar results in the future. His main point was that Gender Mainstreaming can only be advanced in South Africa when there is sufficient political will to do so. Mamokuena Makhema Media Studies Lecturer and Filmmaker presented a riveting talk on the practicalities of gender mainstreaming mainly the psychology of gender bias in society and the way forward in creating gender friendly spaces and content. (presentation attached)

The scriptwriting workshop was designed to teach writing from and for a female perspective. We had both men and women attending the workshop, which was ideal because an empowered women's voice is not just the job of the female. The intention of the workshop was to highlight the role fiction has in gender empowerment. The workshop was a practical workshop where we studied the script and watched the film UNomalanga and the Witch by Palesa Shongwe, which is a brilliant piece of work that presents the issues that create an interesting conversation around women, the stories they tell and how they tell them. We had participants from Global Girl Media, the points we covered were:

- It's not about the number of women in the writing room, it's the influence they can have in reimagining the portrayal of women.
- Ways female writers that endorse patriarchal agenda/ Things to look out for...how our conditioning plays out
- Standing up in the writing room
- Telling your story from your empowered perspective
- Finding creative ways of writing about relevant and supposedly exhausted topics

A woman owning her story is powerful and if we can own our stories as a collective; that can be more powerful. The last part of the workshop we gave the participants an opportunity to write their own short film and we all shared feedback on each other's work.

## **Women's Expo Joburg-Thru The Lens**

26 October

We got invited on the back of Her Africa Film Festival to speak on a panel about women in the industry. The audience was mostly students, therefore the aim was to relate experiences we have as experienced practitioners to give them some guidance for when they enter the industry post their

studies. We were honoured to be invited and be part of engaging young women, but more importantly to grow awareness and scout members for the IAWRT.SA. **Panellists and Angles:**

**Moderator: Nelisiwe Mwase (Actress and Co-Owner Ofentse Mwase Films)**

- Olefa Yalo- She.Clix (photography)
- Makganwana Mokgalong-HER AFRICA FILM Festival (writing)
- GEP Rep (funding)
- Teju Ajani (Content Partnerships Google Rep)
- Nelisiwe Mwase-Mwase Productions (online content)

**Topics of discussion:**

1. **Content**---The type of content produced by women in SA and on the African continent
2. **Representation**---Lack of transformation
3. **Policy**---What responsibilities do filmmakers, producers, directors etc have?
4. **Funding and sponsorship**---How do we get around the funding “barriers. Do barriers exist?
5. **Driving the Business Mind**---How can womxn in film & photography become more business-minded?
6. **Distribution Channels**---Different ways of accessing markets
7. **Evolution of the industry**---Why are we still stuck on funding? Automation -threat or opportunity?

### **Registration as NPO**

IAWRT-SA has decided to take its chapter to new levels by formally registering as an Non Profit Organisation (NPO). NPO status affords our chapter the legal status to gain access to grant funding, access to government programs such as the department of social services and it also allows us to do our own fundraising initiatives. As an NPO we are able to accept donations from various organizations and this can be used in developing programs and initiatives that further advance the aims and objectives of IAWRT. We are sensitive to the increasing need for funding in the organization in order to move forward and our chapter has been brainstorming ideas around future projects that will be able to further our work.

Besides applying for various grants available in South Africa, we aim to present our own scriptwriting workshops and film festival initiatives in order to raise some funding for our chapters activities.

### **Fund Raising Activities**

These are the organisations we have begun processing paperwork for:

<http://www.mdda.org.za/funding-criteria>

<https://journalismgrants.org/>

<https://www.impatientoptimists.org/Posts/2012/02/Storytelling-Matters-A-Look-at-the-Gates-Foundations-Media-Grantmaking#.WfbYs1yWbqQ>

## Upcoming Activities

Her Africa Film Festival

Partnering with Global Girl Media for a radio and scriptwriting workshop

News Room Agenda evening to grow the journalist complement for our chapter

### Annexure A

These are the main points from William Bird from Media Monitoring :

Our speaker from Media Monitoring Africa, William Bird gave an insightful presentation on Gender Mainstreaming in South Africa. He emphasized the importance political will had when it concerned the Public Broadcaster and gender parity. After South Africa became a Democratic Nation, gender parity was reached in the public broadcaster because it was one of the objectives of the state. Opportunities were given to women to lead as gender equality was one of the values enshrined in our new constitution. This, of course did not last and gender parity and leadership roles given to women has steadily declined since 1994 in South Africa. William states that it is important to note that the public broadcaster belongs to the people and it is our responsibility to hold government to account when it is not run in the best interest of democracy. He outlined the details of a recent case where different advocacy groups for media freedom rallied together to hold the government to account for mismanagement and for appointing a new board of directors at the SABC (the South African public broadcaster) that the public did not approve of. The minister of communications and the SABC were taken to court by these advocacy groups and the judgement was passed in favor of the advocacy groups. The judgement is a massive win for transparency, accountability and good governance at the SABC. Among others, one of the key elements of the judgement is found in paragraph 3 of the order, stating that “the executive members of the Board are to be appointed solely by the non-executive members of the Board without any requirement of approval by the Minister”. You can read the full judgment here: <https://www.mediamonitoringafrica.org/legal/cases/>

William stressed that issues concerning gender needed to be addressed in the same way by holding governments to account. He then went on to stress that we have to be aware of window dressing when it comes to giving high profile jobs to women. It is not always a legitimate way of addressing gender issues. Reasons for employing a woman in a high profile position in order to appease advocacy groups and the public can be deceiving. He notes that women should not be employed under conditions of pandering to the government. The SABC in South Africa has long been an institution plagued by accusations of being the governments instrument of propaganda. The public should be made aware that media freedom is not to be sacrificed for the sake of window dressing. It should be the aim of the public, advocacy groups and government to ensure that gender equality is achieved by appointing credible, professional persons who serve the public and have journalistic integrity.

William went on to tell us about a useful evaluation tool, Media Mic, that can be used when analyzing which voices are prominently being heard in the media. This is a great tool to use when deciphering whether women’s voices are being amplified or silenced in the media. You can find the link to this online evaluation tool here: <https://newstools.co.za/page/mediamic> . It is incredibly insightful as it gives you an up to date idea of which voices (male or female) is being amplified by a large range of media outlets. It also categorizes these voices by race and organization the person belongs to.