

# elly laughs, lead balloo

edy Blackout  
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and the  
nny, writes  
**Mabanga**

ood comedy works  
when the powers of  
quirky observation are  
allied with brilliant  
execution. One also  
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ce, as MC Chris Spencer  
mused. It marked the  
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ould have done the same.  
ican comedians, Willie  
headliner Pierre, were  
weight in mirth. They  
s of the show. Brown as

a ventriloquist — he says it's French for gynaecologist — and Pierre brought the evening to a thrilling, if somewhat monothematic, shall we say, climax, with his idiosyncratic take on, well, sex.

They set a high but attainable standard for local acts Tshepo Mogale, Kagiso Lediga and David Kau — the people on trial in this show. It is from them that we expected to hear about the Hefer commission, the Rugby World Cup and what a decade of democracy might mean to millions of jobless South Africans. That would after all be what they need to address in order to sustain their new television series *Pure Monate Show*, popularly known as *PMS*.

Between the three of them they either did not tap into the groundswell of rich material or, when they did, they did not exploit it sufficiently. Mogale, for his part, did not even try, which is not a problem. His "black man in Cape Town" reminds us that — years after Marc Lottering sought to show us what an irreparably abnormal place Cape Town is — there is still room to poke fun at the city. First because of its ability to make a black person feel isolated and displaced as part of an artificial minority, or as ventriloquist Brown showed, the

Mother City's receptiveness to gay culture. Brown's encounter in Cape Town with a gay pit bull terrier makes the vicious canine seem somewhat loveable.

Mogale's brilliance lay in his execution, but his

material needs to move up a gear. He has a week to rescue a rugby joke that sank like a lead balloon.

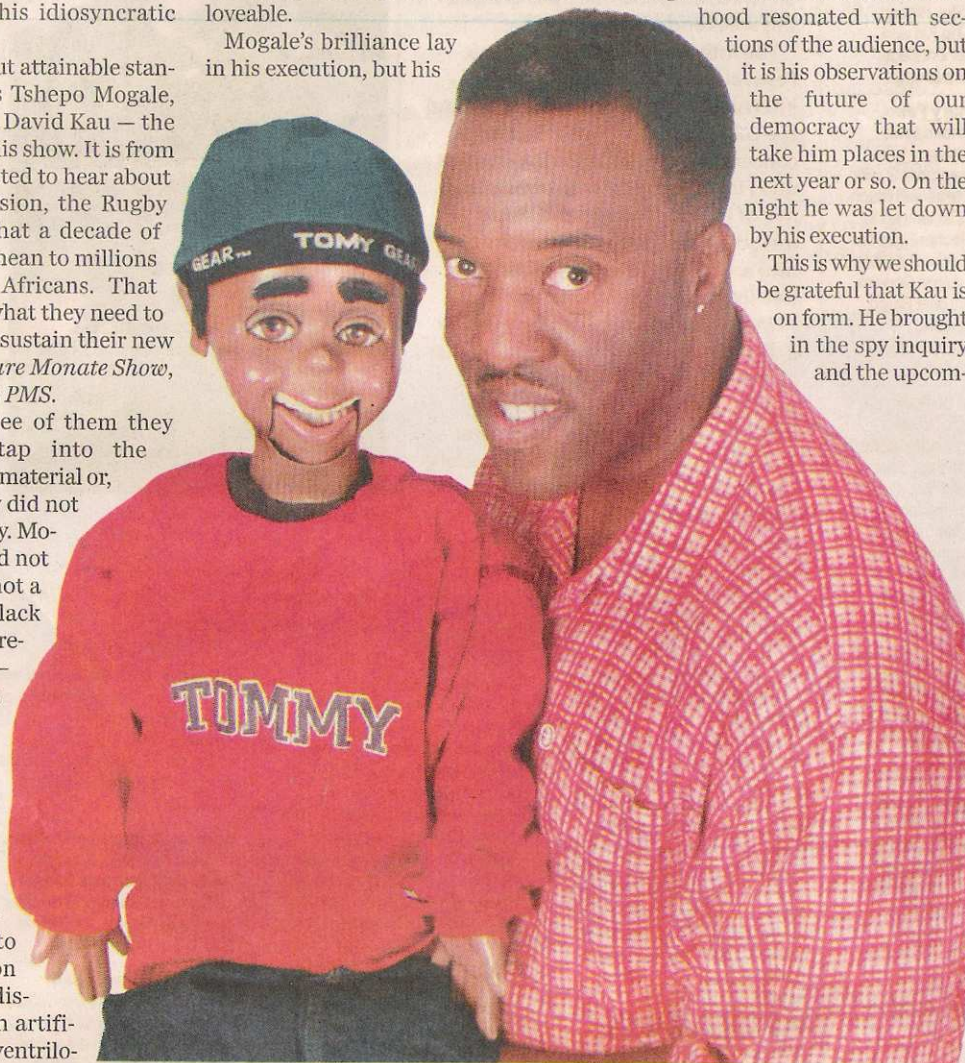
Lediga's chronicle of a black childhood resonated with sections of the audience, but it is his observations on the future of our democracy that will take him places in the next year or so. On the night he was let down by his execution.

This is why we should be grateful that Kau is on form. He brought in the spy inquiry and the upcom-

ing mooted release of Mbuli, among other effects. He finally has long believed Moyo restaurant at Melrose Arch's garage transplanted to a derelict, precinct town.

Kau has recently Sunday newspaper for using tired material he is using now in recent appearance International Comedy e-mail jokes, heard a second time in the spy inquiry and the upcom-

He needs to bring material that also Stephen Wright's having déjà vu at the same time, which note: "I have forgotten works whenever delivered. Kau, will be sharpened of delivering half on television even they must work established conte



Comedian/ventriloquist Willie Brown and his sidekick Woody

## The detail

*Comedy Blackout* "celebration of South African ability to laugh at the line", features an array of local and international comedians.

The festival runs at Theatre in Newtown until November 9.

To book through 083 915 8000.