



**Tshwane University
of Technology**

We empower people

**Faculty of
Arts & Design**



**Invitation to the
2025 Faculty of Arts and Design Research Showcase
17 October 2025
Arts Campus
Building 25 – Room 25
08:30 – 15:00**

You are invited to join us for the
2025 Faculty of Arts and Design Research Showcase.

There will be a range of paper and poster presentations from staff and postgraduate students on their cutting-edge research projects in topics such as new methods for film acting, neo-traditional South African dance, community theatre stage management, human-technology co-creation, video game narratives, film editing histories, the impact of music on mental health, African musical elements and compositional styles, AI-powered audio tools, and the careers of female jazz vocalists.

Prof Karendra Devroop from the Department of Performing Arts
will present a keynote address titled

*Survival of the performing musician:
Analysis of market trends and the state of the music industry.*

Please confirm attendance by

13 October 2025 with

botesjc@tut.ac.za



**Tshwane University
of Technology**
We empower people

**Faculty of
Arts & Design**

PROGRAMME

Faculty of Arts and Design Research Showcase 2025

17 October 2025

Building 25 – Room 25

08:30 – 15:00

Programme Director Pfunzo Sidogi

08:30 – 09:00	Registration & welcome coffee/tea	
09:00 – 09:15	Welcome Address	<i>Prof Nalini Moodley</i> Executive Dean: Faculty of Arts and Design
09:15 – 09:45	Keynote address: Survival of the performing musician: Analysis of market trends and the state of the music industry	<i>Prof Karendra Devroop</i>
09:45 – 10:00	Q&A	
10:00 – 10:20	The dissemination of Kgubu dance genre: a motswako approach to neo-traditional South African dance	<i>Lehlohonolo Justice Makhele</i>
10:20 – 10:30	Q&A	
10:30 – 10:50	Exploring Stage Management Practices in a Community Theatre Context: A Case Study of Selected Community Theatre Groups in Gauteng RSA	<i>Sibongiseni Zaca</i>
10:50 – 11:00	Q&A	
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee/tea break	
11:30 – 11:50	Digital Re-Mediation in Contemporary Sculpture Praxis: Human-Technology Co-Creation	<i>Dr Carol Kühn</i>
11:50 – 12:00	Q&A	
12:00 – 12:20	Unpacking an Obfuscated Female Protagonist: The Use of Mise-en-scène in Minimalist Video Game Narrative through Social Semiotics	<i>Dr Mienke Fouché</i>
12:20 – 12:30	Q&A	
12:30 – 12:50	Curbed Visio- Narrative Masters: Examining the Inadequate History of Film Editing in South Africa	<i>Laura van der Merwe and Dr Phyllis Dannhauser</i>
12:50 – 13:00	Q&A	
13:00 – 13:20	Towards a Method for South African Film Acting	<i>Dr Karina Lemmer</i>
13:20 – 13:30	Q&A	
13:30 – 14:00	Poster Presentations (5 mins per speaker) <i>Prof Karendra Devroop</i> <i>Rorisang Sechele</i> <i>Dr Roland Moses</i> <i>Lanie van der Walt</i> <i>Teboho Kobedi</i>	
14:00 – 15:00	Lunch and closure	

Paper Presentations

Abstracts and Author Bios

Devroop, Karendra (keynote speaker)



Karendra Devroop is a professor of music specializing in both research and performance. As a performer he has over 200 high profile national and international concerts and 8 full length CD recordings. His CDs received airplay in over 40 countries and 200 radio stations. As a researcher he has over 60 publications and over 130 conference presentations including several keynote addresses. He is regularly called upon to serve as a peer-reviewer for national and international journals such as *Noise* – Journal of the Audiological Society of America, the NRF and as a postgraduate examiner across South Africa. He is the 2002 winner of the Alice G Branfonbrener Young Researcher award that is presented the Performing Arts Medical Association (PAMA) based in the USA.

Survival of the performing musician: Analysis of market trends and the state of the music industry

Popular musicians are facing unprecedented challenges in the 21st century. The collapse of major record labels, illegal downloading of music and the shrinking audience for live music are making it impossible for popular musicians to sustain a livelihood. According to Nielsen Soundscan piracy has become the single largest threat to performing artists generating sufficient income to sustain their livelihood. This in return has resulted in record labels changing their operating procedures due to lack of revenue. It is no longer sufficient to be just a performer in the popular music genre. Musicians are increasingly required to take on additional duties including recording, engineering, marketing, distribution and self promotion in order to survive the music industry. But is it enough?

This session will look at the current state of the music industry by analyzing record sales, piracy, live touring and the impact of social media on the music industry. The presenter will summarize current research on the state of record sales, market trends and innovative new marketing ideas that popular musicians are employing in order to achieve success. The presenter will also present quantitative data from some his published research on jazz musicians in South Africa in addition to data from studies conducted abroad.



Dr Mienke Fouché is a design-led performance scholar whose research focuses on scenographic affect, object performance, and technologically mediated storytelling. Their work explores how space, gesture, and animated objects—ranging from marionettes to digital game environments—evoke emotional and embodied responses. With a background in puppet design and a strong interest in minimalist aesthetics, Fouché investigates how nonhuman agents perform character, agency, and presence in both live and virtual contexts.

Unpacking an Obfuscated Female Protagonist: The Use of Mise-en-scène in Minimalist Video Game Narrative through Social Semiotics

This paper explores the portrayal of an obfuscated female protagonist in the minimalist video game *Unpacking*, which narrates its story entirely through its mise-en-scène. Adopting a social semiotics approach, the study delves into how the socially constructed elements of the game's mise-en-scène assist players in 'unpacking' the protagonist's identity and narrative.

Unpacking introduces a novel approach to ludonarratology by intentionally omitting the direct presence of the protagonist, instead focusing on the spaces and objects that players interact with. As players progress through the protagonist's life, these spaces and objects become laden with social significance, creating a shared history between the player and the protagonist. The game diverges from traditional storytelling methods, offering an environment where the story is pieced together through the objects unpacked in each new space the protagonist inhabits. These objects serve as signifiers of her memories, aspirations, and life stages, evolving beyond mere gameplay elements into artefacts that shape her life story. A significant aspect of this paper is its discussion of the novel portrayal of a female protagonist who is omitted from visual representation. Rather than focusing on her physical appearance, the game emphasises unearthing her identity through gameplay, allowing players to discover who she is.

The game exemplifies how minimalist narrative techniques, rooted in social semiotics, can foster rich and engaging storytelling experiences. By omitting a visible protagonist, *Unpacking* allows players to explore and interpret the narrative through the spaces and objects they encounter and the connections they establish between them. This article's significance lies in its examination of *Unpacking* as a case study for understanding how minimalist narrative techniques can effectively convey a complex and emotionally resonant story through unconventional means.

Kühn, Carol



Carol Kühn is a lecturer in the Fine and Studio Arts Department at Tshwane University of Technology. Her research explores how contemporary sculpture is changing in the digital age. She investigates how artists combine traditional sculpting practices with digital fabrication technologies, creating new forms and ways of thinking. Carol holds a PhD in Digital Culture and Media from the University of Pretoria.

Digital Re-Mediation in Contemporary Sculpture Praxis: Human-Technology Co-Creation

This presentation offers an overview of my doctoral research, which interprets the praxes of traditionally trained sculptors now working in a postdigital (analogue-digital) reality. It examines digital technology's mediating role to show how the infolding of digitised bodies and embodied technologies form a co-creating nonlinear affective intra-action between the sculptor, digital device, and material. In this re-mediated hybrid reality, sculptor-digital technology relations respectively characterise a postdigital reassemblage defined by the notion of agentic matter constituting a performative sense of becoming-with the digital. New Materialism theory provides a means to move beyond a fixed postphenomenological interpretation, offering a lens through which to understand both digital fabrication technology's multistable conditions of use and the sculptors' intentions and materially situated relationality with the device. The study shows sculptors' embodied interactions occur through, with, alongside, and towards digital technologies, and the neomaterial aesthetic arising from this agentic entangled system of physical and non-tangible matter reterritorialises contemporary sculpture within the digital paradigm.

Lemmer, Karina

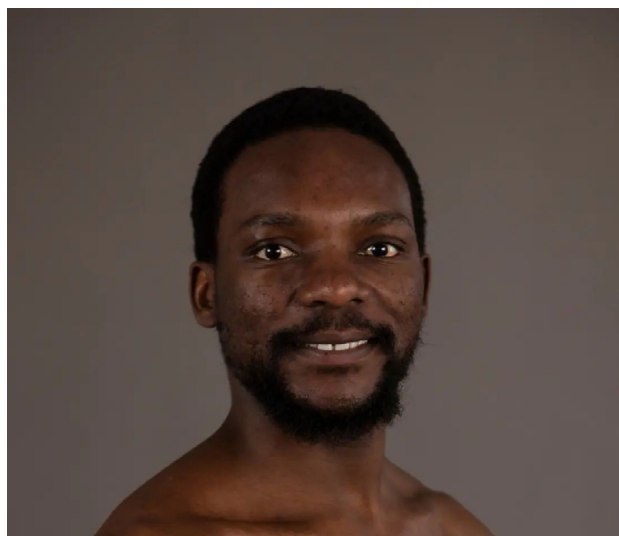


Karina holds a PhD, which examines multilingual embodied acting in the South African context. This was the outcome of various creative projects that explored multilingual acting and theatre making. As a senior lecturer she specializes in acting and voice. Karina is a certified Les-sac body-voice and Meisner facilitator who has coached several stage productions and films. In addition, she is the co-founder of the Creative Research Lab that engages in projects to connect creative process and research. Karina is a Naledi – nominated director has adapted and directed several classical texts and has also created original multilingual South African Theatre in educational and professional settings.

Towards a method for South African Film Acting

Acting in South Africa is informed by performative tradition that continues to shape innovative theatre. This performativity may however not always translate optimally on-screen where truthful embodiment of behaviour is required. In a film context the inner-world of the character expressed as truthful behaviour is a key and representational performative acting that enable stereotyping could impede this. Subsequently, a survey by the KZN Film Commission (2020:5) concluded that there is a disconnect between what some producers/directors require from actors and what the acting community is able to supply to the market. As the South African film industry grows and streaming platforms continue to provide possibilities, solid training in film acting has become vital as it impacts on the overall quality of the films produced. The primary methodologies applied towards truthful film acting are however, centred in American and European performance tradition and may be less accessible and not authentic to South African actors. This has led me to an on-going research project in which I investigate how synergy could be established between South African performance tradition and the requirements of contemporary film. The proposed paper will report on discoveries to date, including the outcomes of interviews with the SA industry as well as work with the Meisner Institute in Los Angeles. It considers the legacy of stereotyping in the South African industry, multilingual acting and proposes elements of effector patterning and embodied expression as a potential base for the training of film acting in South Africa.

Makhele, Lehlohonolo Justice



Lehlohonolo Justice Makhele is a professional and qualified dancer, teacher, and choreographer, who holds a diploma, B-tech, and a postgraduate diploma in performing arts (Dance), currently doing Master's in Performing Arts (Dance). He is a visionary artist who is skillful and exceptional in his interdisciplinary approach to the arts, and he also holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGCE). He is the co-founder of Bohlale ba Katlego Production Pty Ltd, they created the company as an homage to their children Bohlale (Wisdom) and Katlego (Success), and they are dedicated to advancing Afro-contemporary culture.

The dissemination of Kgubu dance genre: a motswako approach to neo-traditional South African dance

The study explored South African dance concepts from a decolonial perspective, with the goal of developing inclusive terminology for professional African dance practices. The research centred around a global categorization of African dance concepts as they are currently recognized in professional dance practice in South Africa, including traditional dance, African dance, African contemporary dance, and Afro-fusion dance. Consequently, literature on themes related to African dance served as secondary data, while professional dance practitioners provided primary data on how they integrate the styles and formulate their signatures. The population sampled included a diverse range of sources related to professional South African dance practitioners.

The study employed Ukuzilanda as a research method to gather insights from South African dance practitioners regarding their experiences with African dance through a Motswako approach. The data gathered from nine professional South African dance practitioners was collated and mined for its impact and influence on the professional dance South African landscape. The study highlights the dancers' journeys and ultimately the impact of the Moving Into Dance Mophatong program on the development of a unique movement style and the establishment of their institutions. The findings emphasized how one's background influences their career, as well as the importance of passion, perseverance, and dedication in shaping a future in dance. The study further offers an in-depth discussion and analysis of data. An evaluation and assessment of the newly coined inclusive term "kgubu" dance genre that emerged is offered as a neo-traditional approach towards professional South African dance as the outcome of the study.



Laura van der Merwe is the Programme coordinator and editing lecturer at the Motion Picture Production at TUT. She is a filmmaker with skills in the fields of producing, sound recording, distribution and specializing in post-production. Her 40 years' experience in editing spans celluloid film, analogue linear and non-linear video to current digital editing forms and covers numerous narrative forms, including advertisements, television drama series, feature films and long form documentaries. Phyllis Dannhauser is a part-time lecturer at TUT. Prior to this, she was the head of the film division at the University of Johannesburg. Her career in the South African film industry spans more than thirty years, as an editor, producer and scriptwriter.

Curbed Visio- Narrative Masters: Examining the Inadequate History of Film Editing in South Africa

Editing was famously dubbed 'the foundation of film art' by Vsevolod Pudovkin. Despite Pudovkin's claim, film editing is denied its place in the halls of filmmaking, remaining a mystery that belies the meticulous ingenuity involved. For many South African editors, the image of a dark room where magic happens on flickering screens is unrealistic and unattainable. The turbulent sociopolitical and economic history of South Africa has been mirrored in the fluid landscape of South African cinema. This impacted the representation of, or rather lack of representation film editors in written scholarship. Far from being seen as artists, these editors are the hidden and unacknowledged workhorses whose craftsmanship transforms soulless individual moving images into engaging packaged narratives. As an unseen element of screen narratives their craft mostly highlights the director and their peers' abilities. This paper discusses the development of editing in 20th-century South Africa and argues that, despite having one of the oldest film industries in the world, sociopolitical and economic factors have historically undermined the art of editing and failed to promote the essential narrative skillset of editors as key creatives. Governmental subsidy systems, commercial monopolies, the rise of television, dominance of traditionalist ideologies, unreliable support services and lack of private sector funding have influenced the South African editor's pathway within the current creative industries. This paper ventures to unravel these influences to answer the question, "have the South African editing fraternity lost their moment in film history to become a master of craft, recognized for their editorial visio-narrative artistry in developing and polishing visual stories, or are they relegated to the hallways of techno support for directorial talent in the completion of motion picture endeavours?"

Dr Phyllis Dannhauser

Dr Phyllis Dannhauser is a part-time lecturer and post-graduate supervisor at the Tshwane University of Technology. Prior to this, taught in Film and Television and designed curricula at various universities, among them the University of the Witwatersrand and the University of Johannesburg. She worked in the film industry for more than thirty years, as an editor, producer and scriptwriter. In terms of research, she believes that theory informs practice, and that practice is impossible without solid theoretical underpinnings. Her areas of interest are film analysis, representation and identity, personal storytelling in research, creativity in research, autoethnography and practice-led research.





Sibongiseni Zaca is a distinguished technical theatre practitioner and emerging academic whose career bridges international stages and South African scholarship. A triple cum laude graduate, he now pursues a Master of Performing Arts in Stage Management, undertaking groundbreaking research that documents and reimagines community theatre practices in South Africa. Beyond academia, he has shaped world-class productions with Netflix South Africa and global networks such as Nickelodeon, including Cocomelon, Peppa Pig, and Blippi. His work reflects both artistic excellence and cultural innovation, positioning him as a leading voice in advancing theatre education and redefining stage management globally.

Exploring Stage Management Practices in a Community Theatre Context: A Case Study of Selected Community Theatre Groups in Gauteng RSA

This review maps what stage managers are expected to do across formal theatre systems and how these expectations translate into South African community theatre. Foundational texts converge on the stage manager as a communicative and organisational hub across pre-production, rehearsal, performance, and strike, even as task lists vary by context. International models describe structured teams (e.g., SM/DSM/ASM or two-person formats), illustrating how scale, hierarchy, and budget shape role design and delegation. By contrast, South African practice adapts these templates under resource constraints, compressing roles and redistributing duties across smaller teams.

In community theatre, stage management functions are often absorbed by directors, producers, or production managers, reflecting participatory processes and hybrid labour. Recurrent themes include safety-planning gaps, tensions between creativity and compliance, and the absence of basic, context-sensitive protocols in informal venues. The literature also highlights documentation: prompt books, cue sheets, and reports as a professional marker of practice that enables remounts and institutional memory, though it is often under-resourced in community contexts.

Synthesising these strands, the review identifies a persistent mismatch between formalised pedagogies and community-based realities, motivating the next phase of the study: a context-specific stage-management blueprint guided by pragmatism and indigenisation.

Poster Presentations

Abstracts and Author Bios

The impact of music on the mental health of high school and university students in South Africa

Over the past several decades, mental health has become the focal point of public health across the world. While many studies in public health were conducted in more developed countries, little is known about mental health, particularly in high school and university students in developing countries such as those across Africa. This paucity of research is exacerbated when one considers that students in developing countries face additional challenges including but not limited to poverty, gender-based violence, drugs, teenage pregnancies and unique situations such as teenagers being classified as “head of household” due to the death or absence of parents.

In recent years there have been a large number of studies conducted on the impact of the arts, specifically music on mental health issues including but not limited to depression, anxiety, sense of happiness and optimism. Several studies also investigated relationships between music, drug abuse, alcoholism and suicide. However, similar to prior studies these studies were conducted on higher education students in developed countries. A very small number of studies investigated these variables in developing countries such as South Africa. None focused on high school students. This study will present an overview of existing literature on the impact of music on mental health in high school and university students in both developed and developing nations. This paper will also report on the findings of two studies that were conducted on the impact of music on mental health on high school and university students in South Africa. The study will compare data from two institutions in which instrumental music was used as an intervention to address, depression, anxiety, sense of happiness and optimism in students affected by poverty, crime, drugs, teenage pregnancy and lack of parental support.

Karendra Devroop is a jazz saxophonist and professor of music within the Dept of Music at the Faculty of Arts and Design at TUT. He is an NRF rated researcher who is regularly called upon as a peer-reviewer for the NRF, national and international journals and as postgraduate examiner in South Africa and internationally. In addition to his research, Devroop is a performing artist with 8 full length CD recordings as a leader and several recordings as a sideman with ensembles such as the Dallas Jazz Orchestra. He has performed at major festivals across the USA, Europe, Asia and Africa as side stage act for Chicago, Earth Wind and Fire and Jill Scott. In addition to having performed with several international artists such as Hans Vroomans, Hein van de Geyn, Matteo Mera, Dan Tepfer and Claudio Sanna amongst others, he has performed with South Africa's leading jazz, classical and Pop artists including but not limited to Sibongile Khumalo, Nduduzo Makhathini, Fdey Faku, Vicky Samson, Jesse Clegg, MICASA and Zoe Modiga.

An Exploration of African Musical Elements in the Compositional Style of Themba Mkhize

Themba Mkhize is a pianist, composer, arranger, producer, and one of the pioneers of South African jazz. South African jazz is described as a rich canon of work, consisting of African musical idioms and practices from various parts of the country, blended with American jazz styles. Similar to its American counterpart, South African jazz first emerged through styles that were traditional in nature, such as Marabi, Kwela, Mbaqanga, and Ghoea. Through innovation, exploration, and influences from the American jazz tradition, leading practitioners—such as Themba Mkhize—transformed these foundational styles into far more complex structures.

This study aims to investigate, at a deeper level, the compositional techniques used in South African jazz, with a particular focus on the works of Themba Mkhize. The intention is to understand how elements of African music are incorporated into South African jazz. A review of the literature on South African jazz reveals that, firstly, much of the scholarship has been carried out by musicologists who often observe the art form from the outside. Secondly, the existing literature rarely offers technical insights or theoretical analyses of how the music is performed and composed. Instead, it tends to emphasize the historical and socio-political context within which the art form developed. While this context is undeniably important, the imbalance in the literature makes it difficult for aspiring jazz musicians to fully grasp South African jazz in its entirety. Moreover, despite his remarkable contributions to the genre, Themba Mkhize's works have not been transcribed, nor have his compositional approaches been adequately explored.



Teboho Kobedi is a multi-faceted musician from the Vaal who wears many hats as a pianist, vocalist, composer, arranger, producer, and educator. A graduate of both TUT and UP, Teboho is currently a lecturer at the Tshwane University of Technology, where he is also pursuing a Master's degree in Performing Arts. He has collaborated with a wide range of artists, including Victor Masekela, Steve Dyer, and Viwe Mkhizwana, as well as international musicians such as Anaïs Cordt (France) and Rum.Gold (USA). His performances with these artists have taken him to renowned festivals such as the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, Joy of Jazz, and the Amersfoort Jazz Festival (Netherlands).

Adapting Thematic Musical Elements for Instructional Design: Building a Conceptual Framework for Online Jazz Piano Education at a University of Technology.

This study investigates how thematic musical elements can inform instructional design and facilitation strategies for online jazz piano courses in higher education, with a focus on addressing the specific challenges faced by students at a University of Technology (UoT). Using a constructivist theoretical framework, the research employs a qualitative, interpretive methodology through exploratory desk research and systematic literature review. Document and content analysis reveal key thematic musical elements embedded in current online jazz piano curricula and their pedagogical relevance.

The study is guided by three core questions: identifying important thematic musical elements for online jazz piano instruction; exploring how these elements can shape a conceptual framework tailored to UoT students; and adapting them to meet the educational and cultural needs of this context. Twenty-one thematic elements were identified and ranked, forming the basis of a conceptual framework applicable to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The top ten themes were especially relevant for higher certificate courses. To ensure cultural relevance, these elements were adapted to reflect South African jazz traditions, including repertoire, stylistic features, and performance practices. Instructional design was aligned with these adapted themes using the TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) model, integrating technology-based music applications and both synchronous and asynchronous learning methods. Multimedia resources and collaborative tools such as social media platforms were used to enhance student engagement.

The resulting framework offers a culturally inclusive and pedagogically sound model for online jazz piano education, addressing UoT-specific challenges and contributing to the evolution of digital music education.



Dr Roland Moses is a senior lecturer at the Tshwane University of Technology. He completed the Doctorate in Literature and Philosophy (DLitt et Phil) in Musicology and MMus (cum laude) in Jazz Performance, Composition and Arranging and a MBA in Education Management at Haaga Helia in Finland. He attended Goteborg University in Sweden as part of a student exchange program and has performed at numerous local and international Jazz festivals. His debut album has received numerous awards and international airplay. Roland presented master classes, lectures and solo concerts at Berklee College of Music (Boston, USA), Stockton University (New Jersey, USA), University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, USA) and UNIRIO (Brazil). His doctoral research focused on a music literacy program for church musicians. Other research interests lie in the area of religion and identity, Jazz performance evaluation, success rate, decolonization, curriculum development and online learning.

Establishing a sustainable career as a female Jazz Vocalist: A case study of three South African Jazz Vocalists

This study investigates how female jazz vocalists in South Africa sustain their careers in a male-dominated and economically unstable industry. While jazz has played a central role in South Africa's cultural and political history, female vocalists remain underrepresented and face persistent challenges, including unequal pay, gender bias, and limited performance opportunities. These dynamics raise critical questions about how women navigate and sustain their careers in this context. The research is framed by Ans de Vos's sustainable career model, which emphasises the interrelation of person, context, and time. Using a qualitative case study design, the study will focus on three professional South African jazz vocalists to examine their lived experiences, strategies for resilience, and approaches to balancing artistic identity with economic survival. Data collection will include semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and reflective journaling, with thematic analysis conducted through ATLAS.ti.

The study aims to fill a gap in South African jazz scholarship by providing a nuanced understanding of career sustainability for female jazz vocalists. It will document how they manage financial precarity, occupational challenges, and socio-cultural expectations while pursuing long-term sustainability. Findings are expected to yield practical strategies for emerging vocalists and contribute to broader policy and industry discussions on equity, representation, and career support in the arts. Ultimately, the study seeks to amplify female voices in jazz, highlight their contributions to the genre, and propose pathways towards more inclusive and sustainable artistic careers in South Africa and beyond.



Rorisang Sechele is a Pretoria-based vocalist, songwriter, and performing artist whose work is grounded in classical and jazz traditions. She holds a cum laude degree in Jazz and Popular Music from Tshwane University of Technology (2020, 2024). Her performance career includes selection for the 2021 Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Band, led by Dr. Nduduzo Makhathini, and participation in the Red Bull Symphonic with Kabza De Small. In 2024, she released her debut album *The Seed*, was runner-up in the Fine Music Radio Competition, and a semi-finalist in the 3rd UNISA National Voice Competition 2025.

A comparative analysis of artificial intelligence-powered audio mastering versus human audio mastering

Artificial intelligence (AI) has rapidly transformed creative industries, including audio mastering—the final stage of music production that shapes sonic quality before distribution. While AI-powered platforms such as LANDR and iZotope Ozone offer cost-effective and accessible mastering solutions, debate persists regarding their ability to match the technical precision, aesthetic judgment, and contextual decision-making of human engineers. This doctoral study undertakes a comparative analysis of AI-powered versus human audio mastering, focusing on perceptual, technical, financial, and ethical dimensions.

Using a quantitative experimental design, three songs across jazz, pop, and rock genres will be mastered by both AI systems and professional engineers. Participants—divided into trained musicians and non-musicians—will evaluate six mastered tracks through structured Likert-scale questionnaires, complemented by technical audio analysis using industry-standard metering tools. The study investigates perceived differences in clarity, tonal balance, dynamics, and overall aesthetic quality, while also exploring attitudes toward authorship, trust, and professional identity in the context of automation.

The research contributes to scholarly and industry debates by identifying measurable distinctions between algorithmic and human mastering processes, assessing financial implications for independent artists and studios, and addressing ethical concerns surrounding creative labour and algorithmic decision-making. Findings will provide evidence-based insights for producers, educators, engineers, and developers, guiding the integration of AI in music production without undermining human creativity and expertise.



Lanie van der Walt is a South African musician, producer, and academic with over three decades of experience in performance and music production. He holds a Master's degree in Music Production from Berklee College of Music and has served as a permanent lecturer in the Department of Performing Arts (Music) at Tshwane University of Technology for the past nine years. As founder of Wolmer Records, van der Walt has produced and mastered more than 100 albums across diverse genres, including award-winning projects. His career spans performances with iconic South African and international artists, alongside ongoing research into artificial intelligence in audio mastering for his Doctor of Performing Arts degree.