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PROGRAM NAME: WOMANITY – WOMEN IN UNITY

GUEST NAME: MS. XOLILE TSHABALALA

SPEAKER	TRANSCRIPTION
DR. MALKA (INTRODUCTION)	Hello, I'm Dr. Amaleya Goneos-Malka, welcome to 'Womanity – Women in unity'. The show that celebrates prominent and ordinary African women's milestone achievements in their struggles for liberation, self-emancipation, human rights, democracy, racism, socio-economic class division and gender based violence.
DR. MALKA (GUEST SYNOPSIS)	Joining us in studio is award winning actress Ms Xolile Tshabalala. Xolile is a South African actress best known for her role as Julia Montene on SABC soapie, Generations. Xolile was born in 1977 in Vrede, which means place of peace, in the Free State, South Africa. In her matric year, she played alongside her mentor, Thembi Mtshali in The Crucible at the Market Theatre. She enrolled at the National School of Arts and graduated with Honour of Best Overall Performer. She's worked on various television productions, including Justice for All, Scoop Schoombie, Isidingo, Secret in my Bosom, Generations, Soul City amongst others. She's worked on various industrial theatre productions, including Another Child. She's received a number of acting awards, to name a few, the 2003 Duka Duka Viewer's Choice Award and 2004 People Magazine Crystal Award for Best Soap Actress. She played the role of Sister Zama in the SABC drama series, Soul City. She also played a guest role in the fifth season of the American drama series NCIS in 2007. She starred as Mandi Mabalula in SABC drama series, Fallen in 2011 and she starred as Gugu in the SABC 3 drama series High Rollers in 2013. Welcome to the show.
MS. TSHABALALA	Thank you, thank you, lovely to be here.
DR. MALKA	Xolile, can you tell us a bit more about the work that you do? What your daily schedule looks like?
MS. TSHABALALA	I do so much. Okay at the moment I'm doing second season of High Rollers and then I produce certain things, right now there's something that I'm producing for. We're trying to find a way to be part of those people who are trying to curb the scourge of xenophobia.
DR. MALKA	But that's an important issue.
MS. TSHABALALA	It's an important issue. And then I direct as well, do television, so, ja. There's just acting, directing kind of reduced now, just to say something as well, as fellow Africans that with xenophobia, that we all are Africans. We belong to this continent and nobody has a right to kill anybody. We should just love one another. Ja.
DR. MALKA	I think it's a very important message and being able to have that courage and getting that exposure in the media so that we extend beyond our own borders and out into the continent. And in terms of the work which you're doing, you've got your fan base from an actress point of view. I'm sure

	you're getting a following from the directorship? Do you have opportunities to engage with your fans?
MS. TSHABALALA	I try my best. I mean I do, I try as much as I can on Facebook but it's not, it's not quite easy but I try and then also you know I go to schools, right now we've just finished doing Rise, a film about a teacher who goes to Alexandra and teaches young kids, Science and I try to go to schools and just give a positive, you know just to tell kids that in order for us to avoid things like xenophobia, to avoid things like poverty, the only answer is education. So that's all I try and do, and young kids always want to act and they want to make quick money, so you have to try and find a way to say no, no, it will come, just go to school, stay at school, yes it may be daunting now, I don't know, not all of us loved school but, you know, but it's the best thing. There's nothing else, there's no best medication in life.
DR. MALKA	Absolutely, without an education ...
MS. TSHABALALA	You're done, there is just nothing for you.
DR. MALKA	Your choices are limited and in fact you don't have any choices.
MS. TSHABALALA	Hence you will stand in the corner and think that a foreigner is coming to take your job, but you don't realise that if you're educated nobody can take your position, because if they remove you from the position there's always somewhere else to go.
DR. MALKA	And you've got the concept of being able to learn.
MS. TSHABALALA	Exactly. Enrich your life. Some people say, I think people were very upset when I left Generations to go and study film making, because people were saying, but why are you leaving, you've got so much, you've done so well, you're successful now, everybody knows you, you're an actress now, why would you want to go back and leave this and study and I said, if I don't empower myself, I want to tell African stories so that I'm not angry when other people are telling our stories differently, I want to be able to stand and say this is how I want to tell my story. This is how I want to, you know to be known, I want to ... For me acting is a calling, directing is just as a big calling so therefore if I don't follow it through with education then I feel like it's weak. I could have taken opportunities to be ... you know to shadow other directors, because there's this thing that is called shadow so what happens is that, you'd be given an opportunity to work with a director but for me I want to be studying, I have a lecturer, I want to be taught, I want to understand it deeply so that when I ... then I have my own voice, whereas I feel when I'm shadowing somebody, this is somebody's else's voice, somebody else can just give you whatever they feel like you know.
DR. MALKA	You're almost copying them, you're emulating them.
MS. TSHABALALA	Exactly, whereas education gives you foundation so you're sitting there, like now when I go on set, my set, this is how I control it, this is how I want to tell stories so I find education is the most powerful

	thing in the world.
DR. MALKA	Absolutely and it goes back through to Nelson Mandela's quote, when he said ...
MS. TSHABALALA	It's emancipating.
DR. MALKA	... education being the most powerful weapon in the world. Now on a personal level.
MS. TSHABALALA	Yebo.
DR. MALKA	Today you hold several awards, you have played in several movies, you shared the stage with local ...
MS. TSHABALALA	Yes.
DR. MALKA	... as well as internationally acclaimed actors and you've also become a role model for many women and girls in South Africa and I think extending across into the continent. You've just mentioned the role that you played in Rise, as being a teacher in Alexandra. Could you please share a bit more about that particular role and also other landmarks in your career and when you understood that acting was part of your destiny?
MS. TSHABALALA	Well for me it really started, it was a weird thing. I'm raised, my mother is a teacher. So for me, yes I'm fed education, you're fed, I remember, my mom when I was a little girl I couldn't write my name, because my mom gave me difficult names, I'm the only child so my name is Zixolilesonke so I couldn't write it and my mom would put it on the wall, on the doors, everywhere, for me I've been taught that if you don't read, if you don't read you will never become anybody. So when the role of Rise came about, to play the scientist teacher, by the way my mother was my Science teacher at some point. I thought my mother was an amazing teacher but a horrible mother because she would hit me at school but she was this wonderful teacher we all loved. So for me that was another opportunity to pay homage to my mom who just constantly told me that education is the powerful thing. So when Rise came, I was like, no I'm the only one who needs to read the script.
DR. MALKA	And before you go on, what did your mom think of this?
MS. TSHABALALA	My mom, she loved it, but she said to me, do your research. She's very funny.
DR. MALKA	As a good teacher would.
MS. TSHABALALA	She was like, do your research, you can't just be a Science teacher, standing there and not knowing, and by that you know, and I'm not allowed ... am I allowed to call brands?
DR. MALKA	Of course you are.

MS. TSHABALALA	<p>I went to Sasol, I went to Sasol to be taught a bit of Science because I do, I'm a method actor. A method actor it's one of those, because I'm, I trained actor so I studied at National School ... it's a long story so this is getting all confusing. So anyway I started at National School of the Arts, where I studied, we were the first black people who were allowed to come in to study drama. So I was one of those who studied drama there. And then when I was busy playing, studying there, the Market Theatre came to head hunt, sort of top actors, I was one of them. We did a play called The Crucible which I worked with Thembi Mtshali who was my ... I just marvel at her work, I think she's fantastic. So I was given that opportunity, here I was writing exams, matric exams and then at night I'd have to run to the Market Theatre and perform and she fell on stage, Mam Thembi me, so I had to take over her part in like two hours. So I had to reread my script, so she was playing Tituba, so I was one of the little girls there with Abigail and suddenly now I was turned, let's say, I remember, I was writing a Biology exam and my lecturer, I saw my drama teacher walking in, saying, when you're finished just come to the office and then I walked into the office, I see these directors from the Market Theatre saying, well there's been an accident and we think there's nobody else who can take over the part of Tituba.</p>
DR. MALKA	It's an incredible responsibility.
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>I know and as it, I'm only in matric, I'm only seventeen, I'm only a little girl. And they had called other big actors, but big actors, because you know how The Crucible is written, it's a tough language and they said no, they can't, so they thought I should come in and there's another thing, you have two hours to learn the whole script. I was like, okay, great. And I did it and for some reason I think God was on my side that day. I had a standing ovation and it was phenomenal, and I was like this is an amazing moment, I will never forget this moment, so that's how, that was the first big thing. And then the second big thing I guess was then in matric I got a scholarship to go and study at Afta. I was, I became a top student there, it blew my mother's mind away because I had just come, I started at National School of the Arts in Standard 8, so which means I only had two years because I had started, I was only in black schools so I couldn't even speak properly in English but then I became the top student and that's how I was got to get the award, when I performed I was the top student so that's how I was given the award to go and study at AFDA (Africa Film Drama Art - The South African School of Motion Picture Medium and Live Performance) and then that was ja and then another, I suppose great thing was being, working with Mark Harmon in America. It was the most bizarre thing, I was studying film and doing very well and one day, just like everybody, it's a stupid thing, somebody thinks you're very beautiful and then I was like, yeah whatever, everybody is beautiful in America, everybody love ... no, no, we think you're incredibly amazing, please come and audition for Mark Harmon there's a guest part, they're looking for somebody who has your looks.</p>
DR. MALKA	And now just for our listeners, this is for NCIS, the American series

	which is gone on for ...
MS. TSHABALALA	Gone on forever.
DR. MALKA	... Series and series. And Mark Harmon is the Director and also he's part of the lead ...
MS. TSHABALALA	He's the lead actor and the Producer, one of the producers now, I guess. And so the lady was sort of, became my manager, she said this is the audition, go in and I walked into this audition, there was a flood of people. I'm like, there's no way I'm going to get through this and I did, and they hired me and it was a success, so those things, ja. And then playing Winnie Mandela in ...
DR. MALKA	Those are wonderful stories but in particular, with playing Winnie Mandela in the Rivonia Trial, what was it like to step into the shoes of the mother of the nation, and to almost relive history?
MS. TSHABALALA	You cry, you cry, because I remember when the Director, I had just come back from America. It was 2010 and the Director's like, oh Xolile we ...he calls my agent to say, we want Xolile to play the part of ... I'm like, no, no, no guys I'm not yet ready you know, and Aubrey said, no nobody else can play the part, you have to come in and I was like, okay, we read the script and he was like, there you go. Can you do it? So Harriet and myself, so Harriet had to play my sister Lesu, the only two women in Rivonia Trial, no, no three women, and Heidi, another lady, I can't remember her name properly and the three of us were the three women in the cast of all these men, incredibly amazing actors and it was amazing just to ... then also I respected Winnie Mandela more when I just saw what she went through, it just really ... ja. It was an amazing moment of my life. And then George Bizos came and called the three girls on the side and says ... I couldn't have asked for anybody to play the part, it's been great. So that was nice.
DR. MALKA	That must have been an incredible experience and having him there as being the lawyer in the trial.
MS. TSHABALALA	Ja ... ja, ja and he said something so profound, he said I love the fact that you played her strong, you never made her any moment weak, because she was never weak and I thought, wow that's amazing.
DR. MALKA	And she was, she was a fortress for the nation and still is.
MS. TSHABALALA	She is, ja.
AD BREAK	
DR. MALKA	In our previous segment, Xolile was sharing her early beginnings and her foray into the acting space, particularly some of her memorable moments, whether it was from doing her matric and at seventeen being asked to play in The Crucible or being chosen for a part in internationally renowned American series NCIS. Now, picking up on our discussion, you've worked across theatre, film, television, are there different demands from each format and do you have a preference over one to another?

MS. TSHABALALA	You know film, I haven't done much, it's funny with film I'm still feeling, because film I like to ... it's so funny, I get a script, no I'm going to direct this one and then I end up not being in it and letting other people be in it. Theatre, for me I call it, that's where I recharge my batteries, it's like going to the church and praying, it's where I know God walks with me, we just did, we launched the Soweto Theatre, with a play called, The Suitcase and I literally, first woman there and to walk in that space and just being the first person to perform in that place was just electrifying but also the fact that it's stage, it just gives you ... because you know you've got one, there's no takes, you don't have another take.
DR. MALKA	No, you've got a live audience.
MS. TSHABALALA	I'm sorry, sorry, can I do it again? No, and the audience just also does wonders for you because I remember, the first opening night, everybody came, we did a play called Suitcase which is about, you know, those people who sit in the corners and waiting for a job and come from, you know, from rural areas, coming for an opportunity in the big city and to actually do that performance in Soweto and doing it for all those so called dignitaries and just for them to see the plight of people, it just, because you know the message you're sending out there, it's so vital and it's crucial, it can change so much and can even change legislation, it's like you're waiting on God, it's like you're walking with God. I love stage, I worship stage, I think it's the best thing for any actor to do and then comes television, television's easy and boring sometimes because after you've done theatre you just realise that this is too easy because I can always say, sorry, sorry can I do that again, you know, but it, also those stories are meant to be told you know, Generations and everything else that I've done, it's fantastic and I've been happy but it's easier.
DR. MALKA	It's part of a growth curve, would you say?
MS. TSHABALALA	Yes, it's nothing, whereas the stage is heaven for me.
DR. MALKA	And we alluded to it earlier but we didn't really go into it but you studied in New York and film making specifically and you've already got several productions under your belt.
MS. TSHABALALA	Yes.
DR. MALKA	How do you find the difference of behind the camera, versus being in front of the camera?
MS. TSHABALALA	Oh, I love both, I really do. I think I'm just scared that people will be very upset with me, I love directing more. I'm starting to really have to come to terms with that because you tell that story, it is you telling your own story and asking people to just give you that moment in time to just listen to what you're about to tell them. It's like dishing a plate, and saying, this is a food I've cooked, please enjoy it. I love directing and it gives you opportunity to just put everything together whereas as an actor you, you come in, you're like oh, today, we're just

	doing this segment, this is your segment, this is the bit, you know, you need, I mean some actors just read their own lines, whereas with the director you know the whole thing. You think about it from inception, it's like giving birth to a child and it's the most amazing feeling.
DR. MALKA	Well, you've got the whole vision. You've got the whole control over what is happening.
MS. TSHABALALA	Exactly, exactly and you become so attached to everything, it's beautiful, it really is beautiful. It's seeing the world that you've created come to life, it's beautiful.
DR. MALKA	Wonderful, wonderful experience. And what are some of the productions that you've got out, that you directed?
MS. TSHABALALA	Okay, so when I came back, I directed, in fact, when I was in America, which is another story, I directed a short film called Grace which is about gun awareness and it was the most bizarre thing. It was my thesis film at NYFA and it got me a job which was the most bizarre thing. It got me internship on Fast and Furious 3. It was the most bizarre thing because what happened is we did our thesis films and they were all taken to the backlog, which is where, you know I was in the Los Angeles branch, if I can explain that, so when I went to New York for my Academy, I applied and they were like, okay fine but they took twelve people from all over the world and we were all at Universal Studios. We were the group at Universal Studios.
DR. MALKA	So you were one of the twelve people that was selected across the world?
MS. TSHABALALA	To go and study there. Two of us were Africans, my best friend from Nigeria, Chineze Anyaene ... were two women there and I didn't know in then after that so the best film should be taken to the backlog and so and they'll be shown there and I didn't know that in that audience there was a lady who was an accountant for Fast and Furious 3 and she told somebody else that I saw this film about Ghana Winners and I really liked it and I think that whoever directed it must get their internship here at Universal and that's how I got the job.
DR. MALKA	Well, that's fantastic. And that's got to be one of the most successful franchises, worldwide.
MS. TSHABALALA	At the right time and they've just done another one. They just keep going and going and going and I was there, I was there and I was going to the sets, and it was amazing, ja.
DR. MALKA	Wonderful experience.
MS. TSHABALALA	That was my internship, ja.
DR. MALKA	Then you mentioned Chineze Anyaene from Nigeria and ...
MS. TSHABALALA	Who is the love of my life, my best friend. She and I we were, it was so funny because when we got there we like looked around, and okay, it's just you and me now, we're two black people, we might as well love you, you might as well love me back. Ja, she's a darling, she's a

	producer now she's producing a lot of her work.
DR. MALKA	And Nollywood, is one of the most successful film industries.
MS. TSHABALALA	It's beyond amazing. They're doing very well and you know it's giving people work. It's amazing and ja, so she's my best friend there.
DR. MALKA	And I believe that last year you were appointed Ambassador for the Africa International Film Festival which took place in Nigeria.
MS. TSHABALALA	In Abuja, Nigeria, last year, so I've got a two year contract this year is also with my other, I'm finishing off this year with them, and it's also one of those things that literally, makes you just weep when you hear about xenophobia, you like, they could have chosen another actor from anywhere else, but they chose me because I'm South African first, and you know, they don't see any borders, they just saw me as another African sister who's done well so they just said, you know what, you are what we're about, you are an African, come join us and I work in Nigeria in October, I'm there, I'm working there as an Ambassador for them for AFRIFF and you know I'm spokesperson for all over the globe.
DR. MALKA	And can you expand on that a little bit because I understand that it's a platform that seeks to give an expression of African cinema.
MS. TSHABALALA	Yes.
DR. MALKA	By recognizing excellence in the industry.
MS. TSHABALALA	Yes. So it's films from all over the continent. It's films from the diaspora. It's saying, let's work together, let's move this industry forward, let's also be just as successful as other people in other continents, tell your story, this is a platform. So it's people from Nigeria, Ghana, everywhere else. If you're a film maker, you have an African story to tell, this is the place for you.
DR. MALKA	And is it professional, amateur?
MS. TSHABALALA	Everybody, everybody, as long as you have a good film, we put it out there.
DR. MALKA	And are there particular criteria on duration or stories?
MS. TSHABALALA	There are, obviously, there are, there are but if your story is ... I mean we had a story last year the opening film was from Morocco, I mean it was from Egypt about the unrest that happened there and it was the most beautiful thing we've seen and it can be a two hour film, it can be whatever, as long it's brilliant, you're telling your story, as an African, bring it on.
DR. MALKA	And how do people enter?
MS. TSHABALALA	You go on the website afriff.com and then you just submit your stuff there.

DR. MALKA	So that's www.aiff.com ?
MS. TSHABALALA	Ja.
DR. MALKA	In the previous segment we spoke about education.
MS. TSHABALALA	Yes.
DR. MALKA	And we talked about your mom.
MS. TSHABALALA	Yes.
DR. MALKA	Who was a teacher.
MS. TSHABALALA	She still is a teacher.
DR. MALKA	She still is a teacher and has that lifelong passion which I think has rubbed off on you, in terms of your pursuits in continuing with your education.
MS. TSHABALALA	Yes.
DR. MALKA	You did your Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and History at UNISA, the University of South Africa, you've studied film making at the Film School in New York and you know and we've spoken about it, that education is a critical tool to empower people.
MS. TSHABALALA	It is.
DR. MALKA	Even with basic levels of literacy and numeracy they've shown ...
MS. TSHABALALA	Absolutely.
DR. MALKA	... profound effects on the wellbeing of women in particular and poverty alleviation. In your opinion, do you think that as a country, we're doing enough to ensure that knowledge is preached in every forum possible and passed on from mothers to daughters, particularly in underprivileged communities?
MS. TSHABALALA	I think we're doing the best we can, but it just saddens you, when you say you know when there's unrest, the first thing that people are going to burn is the school and a library and you like, but you are actually making things worse for yourself because you're burning the very institute that would pull you out of that poverty. So for me, I think we're doing our best but it's also, I always say this, the government can't do anything for you, it's our parents, it starts from home. I was raised by my grandfather. He was not a good reader but he would put a book in front of me and he would say, you read it for

	<p>me, just because he knew how important it is for me to know how to read. He would sit there and say, oh today, we're writing your name, you write it for me, you know what I mean because maybe, when I would do my homework, he would not know what to do but he would sit there with me until the candle, you know finishes. He would stay and say, are we finished with your homework and with our parents and with our guardians if they can just put so much effort, I think it would be on another level.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>So having greater support, even if you're not directly involved in the issue of education but being able to support your children or wards.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>Absolutely.</p>
<p>AD BREAK</p>	
DR. MALKA	<p>Now going into our last segment here, gender equality is increasingly a global focus, South Africa has its Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill which is now undergoing another stage of review and consultation, but in principle, its aim is about achieving equality so that there is a fifty-fifty representation of women across the board and you endeavour to alleviate aspects of unequal pay and having equal opportunity. You're in the film industry and we know that in this industry as of others there are issues of discrimination.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>Of course there are issues.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And on pay parity as well.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>Of course. Sometimes people will even tell you, you women we pay men more than you.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>So they tell you, they say it directly to you?</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>Yes. Sometimes they say it. Or they would say, oh each actor, or each director is unique, they're trying to tell you in your face, that actually, you're a girl. I mean, there was a time, when also the skin colour, you know, when you're black you'd be paid less, when you're a woman you're paid less, hence we need to just, as women we need to just start our own production houses and we just do our own thing.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>You're seeing that as being part of the solution?</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>It is part of the solution because if we don't then, if you're constantly working for somebody else, if you're constantly depending on somebody else, they will do whatever they want with you. They will never see your value. They will see your value only if you're given the money, so you become like nothing but a commodity so the day we start our own production houses, which it is harder, but we're trying, we'll see.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>But by that you're taking greater ownership of the value chain and especially when you're looking at it from a production and director, you're at the top.</p>

MS. TSHABALALA	At the top.
DR. MALKA	As opposed to being on the bottom of the chain.
MS. TSHABALALA	Exactly, exactly, exactly, ja.
DR. MALKA	And what have been some of the gender issues that you've experienced?
MS. TSHABALALA	So that's the pay, the pay and sometimes just because you're a woman, you can't take on this other epic, you can't tell this story because you're a woman and we're looking for a male director, on this there's too much action and I'm like, but I've studied this, I know this, I know this, you can wake me up at night and tell me, frame a picture, do this chart for me, I can do it, it doesn't matter if just because I don't know how to hold a gun, surely my extras would have been trained by somebody else anyway, you know. You know, the thing, the very thing, I mean the biggest one is payments, like no, no, no we don't but you're a woman. These are guys and they need to be paid more and you like, really. People when they're watching the television, or the story they're not saying it's a guy who's playing, they're not saying, they're watching, the chances are with all those guys people are watching you because people would tune in, sometimes say, oh Xolile is in that show, I'm going to watch it.
DR. MALKA	And did you find that having your professional film making education coming through from America, which I mean Hollywood is the biggest film industry in the world, well I stand to be corrected, it could be Bollywood or Nollywood.
MS. TSHABALALA	Whatever. But you studied with the best.
DR. MALKA	Your attitude, exactly you studied with the best. Did you find that that has held you in good stead coming into the continent?
MS. TSHABALALA	It gives me more confidence than anything else and it makes me more comfortable, to say I can do this, you decide I'm not worth it through your company, its fine because I will find another avenue because I will eventually, it may take longer, like we talked about, like when things don't always ascend in life, I will eventually tell my stories the way I want to tell them it's just right now I just need to get my own production going, I need to get money coming in and that's it.
DR. MALKA	And given your experiences in the industry both behind the camera and in front of the camera, what would be your advice to young women and girls who want to walk in your footsteps and pursue an acting career?
MS. TSHABALALA	Just go to school. I get very saddened when kids are coming to you and say, I want to be an actor, and then it's like, oh okay good, are studying anything, are you training your tongue to be flexible to be able to speak properly, to have different accents, are you doing anything or you just think I'm pretty enough to stand in front of the camera and be the person because beauty fades away but education

	<p>does not. So and when I say to them, I studied this, hence twenty years later, I'm still in it, it's because I've studied it. If tomorrow somebody decides they don't like me anymore for the way I look, there's another play I will do, there's something else, there's always an opportunity for me because I've longevity, I have education. So I try to say to kids, study, they get upset, some of them, ah, this is going to take so long and I'm like, well nothing comes ... in life things don't come easy.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>True, and when you are fifteen, sixteen years old you do think you know everything. Though you've had 10% of your life, if that.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>If anything ja.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>But building female leadership is an important element.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>It's my chance in South Africa because with, so here we are, we're sitting working on this pitch for xenophobia and obviously, it's guys and myself as a woman and I said, but no, no, no let the bad guy be the woman for a change, they go, no, women are good people.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>So there's the stereotyping.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>So I'm understanding ja, the stereotyping I understand and I say it's true, they say, to tell the truth, you have not seen a woman throwing a stone, yes you may have, but they are not as many. We're just gentle people and I think the world will be a better place with us on it ... I'm joking, but you know women ...</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>Women are multi-dimensional.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>Ja.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And I think that one of the points that you've also spoken about is that there is a tendency to stereotype because there's this expectation of what women should be, not necessarily what they are.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>Ja.</p>
DR. MALKA	<p>And it's someone else's perception if they've only ever known a woman to be a mother and having that point of view about them they don't understand the rest of her character and elements that she has to enrich.</p>
MS. TSHABALALA	<p>Ja, and also you know, I look back in my family line and I see my grandmother and I see my mom, with my mother, she wanted us all to be educated. I mean I'm her only child but to her it was not always about her child, it was like, everybody's children must be educated. You'd hear my mom when I'm going to a certain school, she'd call and say other kids can come to that school. Women have a thing of wanting everybody to be okay, I mean men do it but mostly, generally, it's women and women are for the world, I don't know, maybe I'm generalising, but I find that, ja.</p>

DR. MALKA	And one of the questions that I ask all my guests and this leads on, in terms of what you're saying, aspects from your mom, you've made significant achievements in your career, twenty years in and still going strong. What have been some of the factors that have contributed to your success, some people have spoken about perseverance, hard work what would you say have been the critical elements in your side?
MS. TSHABALALA	I keep going to my family. My grandfather, I think I was raised by an old man who maybe could not read or write who was working at a small shop in Vrede and he was raised in times of apartheid to fear white people, to be what white people wanted us to be in those times, just ordinary, just I think those people there and I think I told you a story earlier about my grandfather, one day we would walk to shops, every month end when he was going to get his pension, he would dress me up. My grandfather was a debonair dresser, he was handsome and he dressed up nicely and he always wanted to dress me up and we would pass in a white area, where black people were not allowed to walk on the pavement, we were supposed to walk on the other side and my grandfather would say, you can walk there that's fine, I 'll walk on this side. And one day another white woman, older woman said, you've got a mooi Kaffertjie, my grandfather for the first time, I saw my grandfather standing up to a white person and said, you can call me anything, but this one is special, she's going to be somebody, she can do whatever she wants to become so therefore, you will not call her anything, but this is her name. Her name is Xolile, in fact my grandfather calls me Somahi, her name is Somahi and for the first time as a little girl I looked up to this man and I just knew I can be anything I want to become because of my grandfather.
DR. MALKA	Oh, I'm getting goose bumps.
MS. TSHABALALA	I know.
DR. MALKA	What a phenomenal story.
MS. TSHABALALA	Ja, so for me when people say things are difficult, like when I was battling to get money to go and study at NYFA, National School of the Arts, my mom is a teacher and she would say, this School of the Arts is expensive, I can't afford, you have to find a way. I knew that if I studied hard and I become the top student I will get into the best schools in the world. And that's how my life has been, is that my grandfather told me I'm somebody, therefore I can be that whatever I want to become.
DR. MALKA	So would you say that he's influenced you the most?
MS. TSHABALALA	He has, I mean he raised me, twelve years of my life. This is a man that you know would bath me and sit there and tell me how perfect I am and feed me and because of that man, I do not expect things to be done for me because my path is fine, I'm done and you know, you look at young kids where they're expecting men to do things for them, for me, it's been done. I have this amazing man who believed in me so all I have to be is myself, you know. People ask me at 38, why I'm not married and I don't have kids, because I come from a, I've got it all. I

	don't have to, you know, I don't need anything because I was given everything by this incredible human being, until to his dying day, I remember him calling me to the bedroom and said, you will be fine no matter what happens, you will be fine and I believe that.
DR. MALKA	He sounded like a very, very special man.
MS. TSHABALALA	Incredible human being, yeah.
DR. MALKA	Thanks for sharing that, Xolile.
MS. TSHABALALA	Thank you.
DR. MALKA	And in closing our discussion, can you please share a few words of inspiration which you would like to pass on to young women listening to the show, on the continent.
MS. TSHABALALA	It's never easy, it's a struggle at any stage of your life you can assume that people who have made it, who've got Oscars, we all are still trying. I am still rising, I am still trying but you don't give up. That's all I can say, it's never easy, there are challenges, there's going to be dips. People will close doors on your face and say, no who do you think you are, I'm waiting for the results for my pitch. They could say no, but it's never easy, you keep rising, you keep trying, you keep pushing because that's the beauty of life and when you've done it all, at the end of the day, I always say, I want to be able to say when I go back to God, when I go back home I need to be able to say, I did it all and I come back to you empty because if I don't come back to you empty it means I didn't do everything and therefore I will be grumpy, I will not be in the angels so I'll be one of those bad angels. So you want to be the one to says, I've done it all.
DR. MALKA	That is a beautiful message. Thank you very much for joining us today. It's been wonderful having you here and to share your stories.
MS. TSHABALALA	Thank you.
DR. MALKA	And we look forward to hearing more about the successes that you make, either as an actress or through your directing career.
MS. TSHABALALA	Thank you. I hope it goes well.
END PROGRAM	