

Khanya's Bathekgi Store Well Positioned to Platform Activists Discussions and Recreation

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Khanya College routinely collaborates with the City of Johannesburg, operating from the Workers Museum (since 2006) which is a former municipal compound. During the annual Jozi Book Fair (16th edition recently held), Khanya's partnership with the COJ helps to expose the museum to activists. The compound-cum-museum features cottages on Rahima Moosa, facing the Mary Fitzgerald Square, which has had exhibitions after refurbishment. An exhibition showcasing the struggle of Palestinians, curated by Jimi Matthews, the son of the former JBF Patron, James Matthews (1929 – 2024), was held in recent years.

Khanya regularly hosts literature and cultural activities at the site together with its constituencies, including community-based organisations, independent activists, youth groups and Orphaned and Vulnerable Centres from around Johannesburg. The activities taking place here at the Workers Museum range from dance, music, activist theatre, workshops, and chess. Many of the activities are done collectively, such as biodanza and team sports when they are played.

In line with the aim of this short reading, the cottages also house the Bathekgi ba Khanya, a vibrant and exciting conceptual bookstore and coffee shop that will feature monthly events, for example, book reviews, author engagement, thought-provoking conversations, poetry sessions where performers take perform their art. At the store, readers will enjoy soul-soothing music, at times performed live while sipping on a cup of freshly brewed coffee and drinks.

The Bathekgi sessions are to be held once a month, on Saturdays, however the bookstore and coffee shop is already open every Thursdays, between 10:00 AM and 16:00 PM.

The store offers readers and literature enthusiasts the chance to join through paid membership which comes with a 10% discount on books, subscriptions start from as little as R50 per month for a whole world of books and more.

Through Bathekgi, members and other working class organisations can hire a venue for events, there is a linked publishing facility for aspiring writers. Independent publishers can get shelf space at the store for a small fee.

On its catalogue, Bathekgi offers critical titles such as *Ufil'Umuntu Ufil'usadikiza*, *Last night at the Baseline*, *South Africa Corporatised Ties Liberation: A Critical Analysis of the ANC in Power*, *Gold & Workers*, *Cry Rage*, *Age is a Beautiful Phase*. There are children's books, fiction, non-fiction literature.

The Bathekgi bookstore and coffee shop will feature a restaurant. We cannot wait to see it fully fledged and the vibrant space it will offer to activists and working class people at large.

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