

# Entity News



## Mapimpi documentary to feature NEMISA alumnus animation



NEMISA | ALUMNUS – JOEL MATLADI

**W**hen the long-anticipated sport documentary of the Eastern Cape-born rugby sensation, Makazole Mapimpi, hits the small screen – it will feature animation by NEMISA alumnus – Joel Matladi.

The documentary is one of the most awaited documentaries in the sport world this year and takes a deep dive into Mapimpi's journey from a seemingly hopeless situation to winning the 2019 Rugby World Cup. The documentary on Mapimpi, who is affectionately known as Drex, will feature snippets of animation created by Matladi who graduated from NEMISA in 2014.

Parts of the animation are already featured in the trailer for the documentary – depicting Mapimpi's famous try after

getting an assist from fellow Eastern Cape-born star player Lukhanyo Am, against England. Talking about the gig of recreating the moment that is still fixed on South African's memories, Matladi said that the brief he was given by the documentary's producers was straightforward, they wanted to use animation to depict certain parts of Mapimpi's childhood, but also to give it a unique "flair".

"I was given a couple of references but ultimately it was up to me to craft something that would work for the project. The project was initially scheduled for two months. They wanted a trailer out in two weeks, a bit of a pickle because they hadn't started editing the project yet so they hadn't figured out what needed animating yet, we normally do pre-production for an entire project before we animate, not just a small portion but in this case we had to work on the trailer before we knew what the rest of the doccic was going to be like.

We had to recreate Mapimpi's amazing world cup try, we worked on that but developed a workflow, tone, and aesthetic we could use for what was to follow, this helped figure out how to tackle various story elements, emotional beats, and being time-efficient. We worked closely with the director but generally had all the creative freedom to execute everything how I saw fit," said Matladi.

He said that the processes of recreating Mapimpi's moments required a lot of self-discipline and time for the project which ended up taking 4 months. "I was approached by a long-time collaborator/mentor Mike Sharman to work on the project. He's been a big supporter of my work for a long time and values what I bring to the table.

Great work ethic and great work build trust which leads to connections, and that's how I'd say I got the job. It's a principle I've learned over the years. The work does all the talking, especially because I'm not very good at articulating myself. 10th street (previous workplace) was also involved from a production standpoint, and they also understood the value of what I bring to the table," he said.

The date for the release of the documentary has not yet been announced.

The “Creator” who is originally from Tafelkop in Mpumalanga, but currently residing in Joburg, said that growing up he did not really know what animation was, however he started showing interest during career days and decided to enrol with NEMISA but he was unfortunately rejected at first, but he eventually got in. “Nemisa is a special place.

The offering was world-class even amongst international schools. My lecturer who went to go further his studies abroad told me that Nemisa’s students were exceptional in comparison to what he was experiencing. I think that speaks to how good the education Nemisa offers is.

Even now 7 years after I’ve left, what I learned at Nemisa is still the backbone of what my career has become, it gave me the edge in the workplace that most didn’t have. The course is hard, but it was so robust, that and the facilities and software we were exposed to were just excellent. Everything was given to you, all you had to do was just learn and apply yourself,” Matladi said.

After years of experience he decided to open his own company Black native ([www.blacknative.co.za](http://www.blacknative.co.za)) through which he often collaborates with various creatives from the industry, along with fellow Nemisa alumni. He also works in his personal capacity as an animator, illustrator and video editor.

To view the trailer of the documentary click here

