

RHYTHM CITY GOES GOLD! Weekdays at 6.30pm

In celebration of the festive season - and our entire production's move to new premises early 2008:

Hot Off The Press - A Xmas/New Year Collection of Note(s)...



THE RESIDENTS

RACHEL PHAKATI (Lucia Mthiyane)

The third-biggest selling gospel artist in Africa will be reborn in December with an official baptism and become engaged to the mysterious Pastor Abel Ngidi. Enthused with faith (and an active sex life), she's also going to record a new album – her best work ever. Rachel will get married in January.

THEMBI SELANI (Mmabatho Montsho)

She will discover she's pregnant, and (finally!) dump DJ Ngwazi, the father of her child. Our feature writer will try to keep her news a secret from everybody while she works out what to do. However, another (double) shock is in store: her mother's engagement/fast-track wedding – and a blackmail attempt. She will also become the editor of a magazine.



SIBUSISO (S'BU) VILAKAZI (Lungile Radu)

His good deed for the festive season is to help old, ill, flat broke (but always entertaining) former gospel great, Moses Ntombela, find his way home – literally and figuratively. S'bu is also going to produce the smash club remix of Rachel's track originally recorded for Redemption's Xmas gospel compilation CD.

MILES VILAKAZI (Peter Se-Puma)/LUCILLA VILAKAZI (KB Motsilanyane)

The owner of Redemption Records will be hard hit financially when he has to pay out - from his personal account - decades of unclaimed royalties owing to old man Moses. (Miles' wife, Lucilla, has, in the meanwhile, used the company's special account funds to settle other business debts). Then there's the good Pastor Ngidi who's making it his life's mission to poke his nose into Rachel's money matters and accuse Miles of (more!) fraudulent activities. All of this, and Lu's sideline sniggers about his inept handling of affairs, makes Miles' festive season anything but jolly.



BERNARD MARKGRAAF (Robert Hobbs)/GAIL OCTOBER (Pam Andrews)

The marketing and public relations manager of Redemption Records will become Rachel's wedding planner. He will also help Gail (Miles' PA) with an image makeover in preparation for her applying for a job promotion. Gail will have to embark on a go-slow, go AWOL, and resign to make a point. Oh, and there's a growing sexual attraction between Bernie and Gail. Who knew?

KOP KHUSE (Setlhabi Taunyane)

Fired by the unpredictable diva, Kop (who has been Rachel's personal driver for 13 loyal years) is at a loss as what to do about his predicament as he wanders through Redemption trying to plead his case with people who have their own problems, or are making plans for Christmas. He feels ill with the pressures and anxieties of keeping secret the news that he has no job, no salary, no Xmas bonus - not even a severance package - to carry his loved ones through to the New Year. The family's plans for owning a bed & breakfast place have stalled, and Tshidi has been promised an MP3 player for doing so well at school. What to do? What to do?

MAMOKETE KHUSE (Connie Chiume)

If home is where the heart is, remember this: if you're down and out this festive season, just get to the Khuse household in Diepkloof, Soweto – because there's always a warm welcome there. Money might be tight, but Mamokete's door is always wide open to lost souls. Especially on this Christmas Day, when just about everybody in town will pitch to ensure, that despite all their troubles, Mamokete's family has a big day of festivity. Cheers!



TSHIDI KHUSE (Nokuthula Ledwaba)

The girl will get an outstanding school report, awards and prizes. She's also going to be a prefect in her coming matric year. The ambitious private school bursary pupil will become part of a gang of girls, comprising Charlotte, Mpumi, and pregnant Puleng (who was knocked up by her maths teacher). They are going to teach her about the realities of their township lives – and how to let go and laugh a little in the New Year.

STONE KHUSE (Zenzo Ngqobe)

He's come into his own recently, what with becoming one of the boys (joining the ranks of Suffo, S'bu, and Fats) in helping to rid the neighbourhood of Bra Touch. Now the good Christian will fight for his dad's rights. He, and his student lawyer friend, Thomas, will confront Redemption with a letter of intent to take the record company to the CCMA. The response is the stuff that true Christmas tales are made of.



SUFFOCATE (Mduduzi Mabaso)

Joyous celebration: the former gangster has successfully freed his club from the clutches of the malevolent loan shark/drug dealer, Bra Touch. The Kilowatt (housed in a disused power station) will now host Gauteng's biggest New Year's Eve party. To kick-start business for 2008, he's going to launch the first ever Miss Kilowatt beauty pageant.

FATS (Mpho Molepo)

Praise Be! The big boy with a giant heart, and owner of the KO Palace (the gym where Nelson Mandela is said to have worked out back in the day), is going to fall in love in the New Year. A virgin (at the age of 25), he's going to need all the help he can get in the art of seduction. But first, he has to guest DJ at the Kilowatt on New Year's Eve.

DAVID GENARO (Jamie Bartlett)

Hallelujah! The villain of the show will be skiing in Switzerland over the Christmas holidays. But the owner of 9-Nine FM will return in January to organise the under-the-counter sale of Rachel's wedding photos.



GINA (Dorette Potgieter)

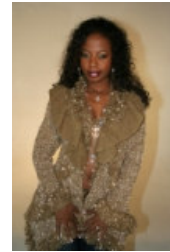
The sexy, savvy, manager of his strip club empire, she remains David's business and personal confidante.

**DJ NGWAZI (Matli Mohapeloa)**

Oh Happy Day! He will be ordered to take a leave of (paid) temporary absence by his boss, David, after uncontrollable outbursts of temper on air, when the tabloids spread the news of his bust-up with Thembi.

SUNAY (Kelly Khumalo)

Mercy Mercy Me! The raunchy R & B singer is desperate to salvage her career, semi-star status, and depleted finances after being sidelined by her record company, manager, and former best friend, Rachel - the Pastor reckons she's a toxic influence. She's going to appoint herself bridesmaid to the diva, steal Rachel's private wedding photos for David (for a fee!), and become a (rude and arrogant) celeb judge for the Miss Kilowatt beauty pageant.

**THE GUESTS****PASTOR ABEL NGIDI (Mangaliso Ngema)**

Rachel's husband has become her everything. Having guided our reborn diva about her career direction and personal relationships, he now begins to focus firmly on her finances. Is he, in actual fact, the pure and perfect personality that he projects as his public persona? Or is he yet another of the men in Rachel's life, with a dodgy past and a parasitic plan?

MOSES NTOMBELA (Phillip Mbele)/BELINDA (Linda Sebezo)

All is not calm, all is so not right when the worst guests in the history of mankind, old man Moses, and his new lady, Belinda, take over the Vilakazi household: loud parties, vandalised rooms, a demented domestic, a raided liquor cabinet, burnt furniture, noisy sex, physical fights and petty thieving make up their considerable contribution to the Xmas spirit.

MA PHAKATI (Daphne (Hlomuka) Ngubane)

Lordy, Lordy! She makes an extremely loud debut at her daughter Rachel's January wedding when she voices her public objection to the ceremony. With her no-nonsense wisdom, she provides a welcome security blanket for her emotionally battered granddaughter, Thembi, and gives her diva daughter many deserved lectures from hell, revealing a few family secrets along the way.

NOKUTHULA (Charmaine Kwenyama)

This mystery woman will, towards the end of January 2008, provide revelations about somebody's past. Happy New Year!

Xmas tip! With one month to Christmas Day – don't delay! Contact Portia Adams (NOW!) for the abundant festive season pictures we have available: