

SheSays launches in Cape Town

 By Leigh Andrews

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It's not often that my #FairnessFirst column is about an event I've covered, but there is always a first time - this is it! 'Excited. Uplifted. Motivated. Powerful. We've *been* ready!' These are some of the sentiments I captured on a chilly Thursday evening in April, when the global SheSays initiative launched its Cape Town chapter - the first in Africa and 42nd across the world - at the Red & Yellow Creative School of Business in Salt River...

“ Covering the launch of [@SheSaysCapeTown](#) at [@RedAndYellowEd](#) this evening - we've been ready! Coverage on [@Bizcommunity's @Biz_Marketing](#) soon ♀ [pic.twitter.com/vboEhOnmBp](#)— Rambling Litchi (@Leigh_Andrews) [April 19, 2018](#) ”

Starting with a networking session on the rooftop that offers Insta-worthy views of Devil's Peak on one end and the Cape harbour on the other, this was an overwhelming mix of the city's female creative inspirations and those looking for inspiration.

At 6:30pm on the dot we moved down into the sheltered auditorium and only then was it clear how many fierce females were in attendance – with a smattering of men, too.

“ So excited to be at [@SheSaysCapeTown](#)! This room of beautiful women is already inspiring! (And the guys too, we see you boo) [#SheSaysCT](#)— Estée de Villiers (@Estedv) [April 19, 2018](#) ”

SheSays is not about 'females-only feminism', after all “we're not going to pull off our bras and burn them – well, not yet,” said co-organiser of SheSays Cape Town, Anelde Greeff, also editor-in-chief of *Eat Out*.



Largest creative network for women, SheSays, launches in Cape Town

6 Apr 2018



It stands out as a women volunteer network focused on the engagement, education and advancement of female creatives, and is based on three principles:

1. SheSays is 'by the people, for the people', so each chapter can do as it likes
2. It's based on autonomy
3. It's based on doing.

Co-founder Alessandra Lariu emphasised the importance of conversations that will lead to actions, as SheSays is not about moaning but about doing, learning from each other and helping each other.

“ Exciting night of the launch of [#ShesaysCT](#) - we want more women business leaders and the top and women to have each other's backs! [#TsogoEntrepreneurs pic.twitter.com/mv2X7H45y4](#)— Bahati Tech (@bahati_tech) [April 19, 2018](#) ”

Greeff agreed that the Cape Town chapter is to be an inspiring place, which she says is important as things need to change – we need to put women on top, give young creatives someone to look up to, and have each other's backs. This momentum started on the night.

It's the ultimate networking get-together, offering inspiration and mentorship. Whether you're a freelancer, recently redundant, on sabbatical or a starry-eyed newbie, this is the movement for you. Here's why...

What *she* says about SheSays

Attendees tweeted their favourite pearls of wisdom as follows:

“ *I think about those women and my daughter coming behind me, if I need to sacrifice for other women to get ahead, I'll do that*” says [@raeraehickley #SheSaysCT](#)— African Geek Goddess (@RonellSharee) [April 19, 2018](#) ”

“ *#MondayMotivaton [pic.twitter.com/QqYnnXcvJn](#)*— SheSays Cape Town (@SheSaysCapeTown) [April 9, 2018](#) ”

“ *#WinnieMadikizelaMandela death and the solidarity amongst women since her passing has shown the biggest middle finger to [#patriarchy](#) since we voted in 1994 - [@JonesIngrid #SheSaysCT](#)*— African Geek Goddess (@RonellSharee) [April 19, 2018](#) ”

“ *See and hear the incredible [@JonesIngrid](#) at our launch event on 19 April [@RedAndYellowEd #SheSaysCT #launch \[pic.twitter.com/oKyroRkifp\]\(#\)](#)*— SheSays Cape Town (@SheSaysCapeTown) [April 7, 2018](#) ”

Heléne Lindsay then explained that SheSays ties in with the Red & Yellow ethos of addressing gender imbalance in addition to all imbalances of the past to a better future.



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Lindsay added that there's further tie-in with the belief that life-long learning is a non-negotiable – we need to keep up-to-date as technology changes the way we work and the way we live.

“ *85% of the jobs that will be important in 2030 don't yet exist. There's no better proof of the need to constantly upskill yourself.* ”



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Next it was time for the panel discussion. Moderated by Dr Dorrian Aiken, we heard from the five females on the panel for the night, all boasting such impressive CVs that there was applause and audible "wow"s from the audience:

“ *There they are. Our wonder women. [#SheSaysCT \[pic.twitter.com/l1F55ynXg8\]\(#\)](#)*— SheSays Cape Town (@SheSaysCapeTown) [April 19, 2018](#) ”

Red & Yellow CEO Nikki Cockcroft; publishing dynamite Ingrid Jones, author Paige Nick; former head of strategy at Saatchi & Saatchi, Tharina Haas; and Sturrae Hickley, head of the award-winning ad operations team at Mark1.



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All had different insights to share but one thing in common – a passion for digital and for developing and empowering females in all aspects of their lives. There's no denying that women are often their own and other women's harshest critics. It's time to step away from that judgemental mindset and look to better ourselves by bettering others.

“ “A robot has knowledge, a human has wisdom.” - [#SheSaysCT #quoteoftheday pic.twitter.com/ncdt5hJYtV](#)— Red & YellowSchool (@RedAndYellowEd) [April 19, 2018](#) ”

In the creative industry, which is notoriously fast-paced and cut-throat as it's based on the “you're only as good as your last...” way of thinking, you need to be good at what you do, and like what you do. Networking and meeting others in the industry is crucial to getting this right, as you focus on what you can do now to help yourself, both now and in future.

“ “Attended the first ever [#SheSaysCT](#) event this evening hosted at the [@RedAndYellowEd](#) (!!!) ~ an event for women by women speaking about navigating the future of careers in the creative & digital space! So apt. Amazing forum. [pic.twitter.com/ivm3LSk0XN](#)— eden_myrrh (@Eden_myrrh) [April 19, 2018](#) ”

The best part? Tickets are limited but membership is free and the advice is free-flowing. There's no cattiness or cliques to crack – simply show up with a smile on your face and join the conversation. I'm hoping to see you at the next one! Speed-mentoring events are also on the cards for the future, so join the group on [Facebook](#) and follow the conversation on Twitter at [@SheSaysCapeTown](#) and the [#SheSaysCT](#) hashtag.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at [@Leigh_Andrews](#).

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