



MUSICAL

26th April 2025 at 3 PM

Melkhoutfontein Youth and Kamammas bring the cultural heart of the community to life, in a stirring musical, *Oop Hok (Open Cage)*.
Sing the Story. Feel the Legacy.

Melkhoutfontein Primer Skool Saal

Adults: R15 • Ages 6–17: R5 • Under 6: Free! • Geniet Verversings!

[Tickets available at the door or contact Emordine on WhatsApp: 077 419 8824]

All proceeds support Dreamcatcher South Africa NPC for Melkhoutfontein Youth Development.



www.dreamcatchersouthafrica.com

Producer & Founder / Writer: Anthea Rossouw
Choreographer & Director / Co-Writer: Ally Dayniczak
Assistant Choreographer: Emordine Saayman
Wardrobe & Assistants: Gerty Felkers, Nisi Kortje & Kamammas

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MADE IN MELKHOUFFONTEIN
South Africa



Postcard



From: **Ally, Wisconsin, USA**

Volunteered in:
Melkhoutfontein

When: **2025**



This year, I had the extraordinary opportunity to join the Dreamcatcher South Africa program in the village of Melkhoutfontein, located near the southernmost tip of Africa. I'm actually sitting at the home office right now writing this! I have gotten so much done these past three months, and I still have 15 days to go! I've been a part of so many communities around the world this school year, and Melkhoutfontein is by far my favorite. The village is rich in hidden culture and close-knit companionship. My mission here is to bring back their cultural identity through a lively performance on stage. As director, choreographer, and co-writer of the performance, it's been tons of hard work but also very rewarding. I'm always excited to see the kids come in for rehearsal; they learn the songs and dances so fast it blows my mind every time I teach them something new, and they just jump into it. It's important to understand your history and where you come from because it plays a huge role in shaping the person you are and grow up to be. My production Oop Hok (Open Cage) is doing just that- taking you on a walk through the history of Melkhoutfontein and the origination of the first evidence of homo sapiens.

Alongside my theater project, I am also doing environmental sustainability work, baseline and impact research, both on Oop Hok and the type of change in perspective it causes in the participants, and the performance impact of composting within the community and neighboring ones in Stilbaai. To be able to implement my talents and passion into my work and with it create positive change is a dream come true. My favorite part was going to Stillbaai to install Green Joannas in people's yards. It's nice to see a community not only care, but also wants to learn about the impact and how they are helping, and how they can continue to help. (I also really love using a screw driver.)

Dreamcatcher South Africa is a unique volunteer experience, as I am living within a community that is struggling with poverty, environmental damage, and indifference to their own culture. I have been able to engage within the community close up, meet the people one-on-one, and see the change I am creating within the township. Here, I've innovated a pathway to success and cultural recognition in a society that has opened my mind to how I view the beauty and chance of the world. I was only led to my success through the number of mistakes and challenges I faced, which always ended in my growth of knowledge and perseverance.

I've played a huge leadership role here by implementing my ideas and experiences to help create change for the better and improve the quality of life, not just in the village, but also in myself.

Oop Hok (My main project with Dreamcatcher), was built over the duration of three months. Within that time, I created an outline script, choreographed dances to chosen songs, and created the outline of costumes, set pieces, etc. Directing is hard work, keeping kids' attention is even closer to the impossible, but "Nothing is impossible until it's done" - Nelson Mandela. From beginning to end, for those who stuck with me during the rehearsals and creation of Oop Hok, grew in confidence, passion, and love for one another and, most importantly, themselves. The Dreamcatcher kids made Oop Hok happen. Sure, I told them when to spin and jump, but they were the ones who took the initiative to spin and jump on that stage with a smile on their faces.

Leadership is about implementing the characteristics of open-mindedness and being a humble servant to the people you lead. When you start to define yourself as superior, your leadership only turns to power, and the people you lead with you abstain from collective success that can only be saved by humility and the admission that you made a mistake.

I am so grateful for the opportunity given to me. Working with Anthea and other Dreamcatcher volunteers has been so much fun. Three months flew by so fast, and as sad as I am to leave, my journey in Melkhoutfontein has built my confidence for my future studies in communication and sociology. I have a whole new perspective, and am much more open-minded to differences and creating change socially, economically, and culturally. I have so much more work to do when I get back (:

Always sending my love from far, far away,

Ally.