

Gabriella Geffen

 By [Beverley Klein](#)

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Writer Gabriella Geffen will talk about being a reflector and really connecting with people in a meaningful way. She'll be taking the stage at TEDxCapeTown 2016 on 15 October at Ratanga Junction.



▣ *Give us some background about yourself and your career/initiative?*

Geffen: I experienced a number of paths before I came home to the one that it was always going to be – Writer. I did the Economics route, Philosophy, Honours in English Literature, Business Development at a Non-Profit University, National government task team for putting entrepreneurship and creative thinking in schools. My own journey was always going to lead to writing about our human journeys and about the triumphs of the human spirit. I completed my late brother's memoir, I have written a Poetry book, and I have recently begun a new initiative that is still under wraps for now.

▣ *Is this your first TEDx presentation and how are you feeling about it?*

Geffen: Yes, it is my first. If you asked me this one week ago, I would have said incredibly excited and ready. Asking me this two days before the event, I am nervous and trying not to talk about it. But beneath those nerves is an inner wellspring of “Yes! This is so right. This is magical.”

▣ *What is your interpretation of the theme Here/Hear to Listen?*

Geffen: Being ‘here’ to listen is about much more than listening to the words properly. It is about sensing what is beneath the words. What emotions, past experiences, beliefs are driving those words. That is what is truly going on within a person, and that is what a human being really means – not the curated words that manage to pop out through layers of holding back. How do we sense what is going on beneath all that? What is driving a person to say those words?

▣ *How will your presentation relate to the theme?*

Geffen: My talk is about not being a Listener. It is about being a Reflector. That is the only way to see what is really going on within a person, and it is done by tapping into a deep sense of presence and 'feeling' with the speaker. I explain why as human beings we are genetically programmed to communicate deceptively, and why we need to change that if we are to evolve. My talk is about how to sense beneath the surface, from my own experience as a writer, as a human being, and as a person who feels most alive when engaged in deep and meaningful connection.

📌 **What are you looking forward to the most about TEDxCapeTown this year?**

Geffen: I am most looking forward to the chance to speak about something that means so much to me. When the person who nominated me mentioned that the topic would be 'Here to Listen,' I just smiled. It felt like one of the Universe's games. That topic is what makes my heart beat faster every day. It is how I measure the success of my days. And it is so incredible to give a talk, something that people want to listen to, that is about this.

TEDxCapeTown 2016: Tech-enabled to go green and enhance audience experience

For the first time since 2011, TEDxCapeTown is committed to a more tech-enabled team and delivery of the event. Audience members can expect to experience a web-enabled application, implemented by Accenture South Africa, allowing them to view the programme of the day, listed speakers and their bios and directly engage via the TEDxCapeTown social channels in-app.

For the second consecutive year, Accenture South Africa has decided to partner with the largest TEDx event on the African continent, to demonstrate and share contributions to innovation. Accenture strongly identifies with the ethos of TEDx which exists to discuss ideas worth spreading.

"Accenture and TEDx believe passionately in the power of innovation to change attitudes, perceptions and behaviours. In South Africa, Accenture remains committed to playing a strategic role in supporting our clients and helping to drive sustainable economic growth," says Suren Govender, managing director of Accenture Analytics, part of Accenture Digital. "Our focus at TEDx this year really is to listen to the ideas local TEDx folks have and assist by translating these ideas – from strategy to outcome – into meaningful and actionable results that could contribute to job creation and growing the economy."

ABOUT BEVERLEY KLEIN

Beverley Klein is the editor of the Marketing Media South Africa section on Bizcommunity.com. With a background in journalism and historical studies, she's dived into the world of industry news, curating content, writing and interviewing thought leaders. She's often spotted in a forest on the weekend and rarely seen without a camera. Follow @BevCPT.

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