Thandiwe Molefe Lead Svelte Developer

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PROFILE SUMMARY

- **Lead Svelte Developer** with **13 years** in front-end engineering, leading a team of **5 engineers** at **The New York Times** that builds election results, live trackers and the Svelte kit behind interactive stories.
- Works across **Svelte 5**, **SvelteKit**, **TypeScript**, **Node.js**, **D3** and **Playwright**, choosing **prerendering**, **server rendering** or **static HTML** page by page and caching it all at the CDN.
- Known for **pages that hold up under traffic spikes**, like results pages read by millions of people within minutes, and for **component APIs** that graphics editors can use without help.
- Plans each election cycle with **editors, graphics editors, the data desk and platform engineering**, and agrees data formats with the results team months before the first race.
- Sets the team's **Svelte coding standards**, runs **architecture reviews** for interactive projects, mentors its **2 junior engineers**, and has hired **3** through the interview loop.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Svelte & SvelteKit:	Svelte 5, SvelteKit, runes, snippets, prerendering, streaming SSR, remote functions (trial)
Languages:	TypeScript, JavaScript, Node.js, HTML, CSS, Python (data scripts)
State & Data:	$state classes, Svelte stores, server-sent events, polling, D3, JSON feeds
Component Libraries & CSS:	in-house Svelte component kit, Storybook, CSS custom properties, scoped CSS
Testing Tools:	Vitest, Playwright, visual regression tests, svelte-check, k6 load tests
Build & Deploy:	Vite, adapter-node, adapter-static, Docker, Google Cloud Run, Fastly
Web Vitals & Accessibility:	Core Web Vitals, SpeedCurve RUM, WCAG 2.2 AA, axe-core, screen reader testing

EDUCATION

University of the Witwatersrand — B.Sc. Honours in Computer Science — Johannesburg, South Africa · Feb 2009 to Dec 2012

WORK EXPERIENCE

The New York Times — Lead Software Engineer, Interactive News — New York, NY · Mar 2021 to Present

- Rebuilt the live results pages in **SvelteKit** with prerendered page shells and server-rendered race data behind the CDN, keeping them up through a **6x** traffic spike on election night 2024.
- Designed the **Svelte component kit** graphics editors use for maps, tables and charts, **64** components with typed props and snippets, now behind most interactive stories the desk publishes.
- Moved live race state from polling stores to a **$state** class fed by server-sent events, cutting the delay between a vote update and the reader's screen from 45 s to **8 s**.
- Shipped static charts as plain HTML and hydrated only the interactive parts of each story, cutting JavaScript per graphics story by **61%**.
- Led the migration of **200+** graphics templates and the shared kit from Svelte 3 and 4 to **Svelte 5**, with sv migrate, a checklist per template and weekly office hours for graphics editors.

Takealot — Front-End Developer to Senior Front-End Developer — Cape Town, South Africa · Jan 2013 to Feb 2021

- Built the product listing and search pages of the storefront in **React** with server-side data loading and route-level caching, keeping them fast through Black Friday peaks of **10x** normal traffic.
- Rewrote the checkout address and delivery forms with server-side validation and a no-JavaScript fallback, cutting checkout errors on low-end Android phones by **34%**.
- Introduced **Cypress** end-to-end tests on the checkout path and ran them on every merge, catching **9** release-blocking bugs in the first year.