

October 2013 **Volume 26**

WITS Review

The magazine for **ALUMNI** and friends of the University of the Witwatersrand

We talk to
MGM's CEO,
Gary Barber



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Once a Witsie, always a Witsie!



Witsies among the best in the world

I recently had the pleasure of landing at Vancouver airport and, being a jaded traveller, was astonished at how welcoming its architectural design is to visitors. It is refreshingly innovative, with an elevated walkway for international arrivals that is like a theme park for Vancouver. The indigenous cultural artifacts and artwork and spectacular water features make this a unique and calming experience very different to any other airport I've experienced.

The reason for my trip was to host alumni reunions in Vancouver and Toronto and, prior to that, four alumni reunions in California. As always, it is wonderful to experience the international Witsie bond. The herculean effort many alumni made to attend the reunions was awesome, with many travelling vast distances and navigating nightmare traffic for hours to attend. In one case a Los Angeles alumnus attended the San Francisco reunion and had to do the six-hour drive back home to LA the same night!

It is also inspiring that even though many alumni had left South Africa four or five decades ago, they still retain a strong Wits identity and connection to their alma mater -and quite a few still knew where to find their Wits tie to wear to the reunion!

As usual, what struck me was the amazing success Wits graduates have had in their adoptive countries. Whether as an environmental activist, architect, family doctor, or corporate honcho, they are successful, committed and passionate in what they do.

It is important that we identify, acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of Wits graduates as their successes are a reflection on their alma mater and enhance the global reputation and standing of the University.



Which takes me back to Vancouver as I subsequently discovered at the reunion that the Project Architect of this amazing airport – rated one of the ten best in the world – is Wits graduate Stanis Smith (BArch 1978), who also led the design team for Nassau, Santiago and Edmonton airports.

One of the hallmarks of a Wits education is that it produces resilient graduates who are independent thinkers and multi-skilled problem-solvers. This also makes Wits graduates fantastic entrepreneurs and leaders.

The number of business leaders who studied at Wits is extraordinary and is reflected in the recent Times Higher Education Alma Mater Index 2013, which has ranked Wits 24th in the world for producing Global Fortune 500 company heads.

But, although we celebrate those who rise to the top of their field, perhaps the real unsung heroes of Wits are the tens of thousands of graduates in all walks of life who use the knowledge and skills attained at Wits to great success in the everyday workplace. Their accomplishments are just as much a reflection on the quality and value of a Wits education and we are proud of them all.

Peter Maher
Director: Alumni Relations



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Cover: Gary Barber, Chair and CEO of MGM.
 Photographer: Alex Berliner/AB Images





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WITSReview



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Letters

from our readers

Letters to the editor are welcome and can be sent c/o the Office of Alumni Relations or e-mailed to alumni@wits.ac.za.

Passing the Ball to Faculties

Dear Editor,

I was most interested in Dr Mike Wright's letter in the July 2013 edition of the *WITSReview*.

It reminded me of Wits rugby club's golden years, when Wits University won, for the first, and as it now turns out, still the only time, the Pirates Grand Challenge in 1967.

I would like to add to Mike's letter to give a more comprehensive history of the era from 1961 – 1968, during which period I was the Wits rugby club Chairman.

When I took over as Chairman, the club was in a somewhat disorganised state, and it was then decided to draw up a short term plan (1963 – 1964), an intermediate plan (1965 – 1967), and a long term plan (1967 onwards).

The main problem was that Wits could only field four open and four junior sides. After the July vac, some of these sides disappeared due to a lack of players. As we only had two men's residences, unlike our main competition, Tukkies, Maties and Ikeys, we had to look for an alternative, and I turned to Dr Danie Craven for assistance.



I was privileged in that the great rugby supremo invited me to Stellenbosch to see how Maties did it. He suggested that we try faculty rugby. Thus, in 1964, faculty rugby started, with the Medics and Engineers. The former thus represented the official Wits 4th team, and the Engineers, the 5th.

The faculty league soon increased to ten sides, and thus, Wits was able to compete with its peers in the number of sides that we fielded. Later on, the faculty league was recognised by the then Transvaal Rugby Football Union, and official referees were appointed to handle the matches.

I wish Andy Royle, the senior coach, every best wish for the future, and I hope it won't be too long before Wits become champions again.

Kosta Babich BSc(Eng) Mining, 1959
Rivonia, Johannesburg

Illuminating All

Dear Editor,

I am one of Keyan Tomaselli's weirdos who reads the *Review* to the bitter end, each time.

This July, though, I had an "OMG!" moment on the last page, choked, and had to go have a Klippies & Coke!

Here, Tomaselli reveals that the Editor, Peter Maher, will address Drama students and "reveal all!" So that's where the sun comes from. Now one can imagine the end of the world if one P. Maher "bares all and illuminates the darkness."

I stood with the Black Sash outside the gates of Wits in 1960 [and] am now preparing to fly to Jozi at a moment's notice to prevent such a modern occurrence. I have my black academic hood at the ready.

And a gown to cover up.

Please ask Mr. Tomaselli to keep writing for the back page with wit and alarm. How else will we in the diaspora know where modern day Wits is going?

Bill Knott (BA 1967), Manitoba, Canada

I can send a flying saucer to fetch you, Bill

– The Aluminati Ed.

Special Signals Services

Dear Editor,

The latest *WITSReview* (Vol.25) has just arrived here in the UK. On scanning through it, it occurred to me that some of Wits' illustrious past can so easily be forgotten, especially in these times of almost seismic change in South Africa. Many famous personalities from those days spring to mind and one of the most remarkable is "Boz": Professor GR Bozzoli, Vice-Chancellor, Dean of Engineering and legendary Head of the Department of Electrical Engineering. During the Second World War, Boz played a key role in a top secret activity based at Wits in which the Special Signals Services (SSS) designed and built a radar set within three months of the outbreak of war. And this was when radar was still one of the most tightly-guarded secrets within Britain's wartime armoury. Boz was the chief design engineer of the SSS.

"A plaque commemorating the work done at Wits during the war, and especially the Special Signals Services, or SSS as they were known, is to be found in the Bernard Price Institute [the BPI], of which Sir Basil Schonland CBE, FRS was the founding Director."

**Brian Austin BSc(Eng) 1969; MSc(Eng) 1976;
PhD 1985, West Kirby, England**

Were you a guinea-pig?

A reader has sent us the following extract from a book, *The Secret War 1939 – 1945* by Gerald Pawle, published by George G Harrap & Co and asked if we know who these twelve, allegedly Wits students are. We don't have a clue, so any leads from **readers** would be welcomed:

"Twelve medical students, who volunteered to act as guinea pigs, were taken to a particularly arid part of the Transvaal. There six were supplied with sea water by this unusual method [injection of a saline solution up the rectum], while the other six were given no water at all. At the end of the given time the students who had had the sea water were, admittedly, in a worse condition than their companions – but not very much worse. From this it appeared that if the sea had about half its natural content of salt the human body might well adapt itself to the system of refreshment proposed by the naval surgeon."



UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG.

15th Octob

To all Heads of Departments,
University of the Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg.

Owing to the stocking shortage, I feel it desirable that the students at Milner Park and second and third-year women students at the Medical School should be permitted to wear slacks or dungarees.

Women students will be expected to see that any apparatus which they may wear is of a quiet and businesslike nature.

Women members of staff will use their own discretion as to whether they will themselves wear slacks or dungarees.

H.K. Raikes,
Principal.

Remember when...

It's been 65 years since Jackey, Peggy and Tibby met as giggly undergraduates queuing to register for a Social Sciences degree at Wits. The year was 1948. The National Party rose to power and set South Africa on a radical apartheid trajectory that would define an era. Three Wits Grande Dames reminisce.

Ruth 'Tibby' Shakenovsky (née Kramer) writes, "We all have a vivid recollection of our meeting whilst waiting in a short line to register for the BA Social Science degree. We were three apprehensive young girls somewhat overawed by the yet unknown world of academia. There was an immediate rapport between us which soon developed into the warm friendship which has endured despite being spread over different parts of the world."

The alumnae all distinctly recall the date they met – February 1948 – just months before the national elections in May, "which saw the shocked defeat of General Smuts and the coming to power of the Nationalist government and their subsequent introduction of apartheid legislation," says Tibby.

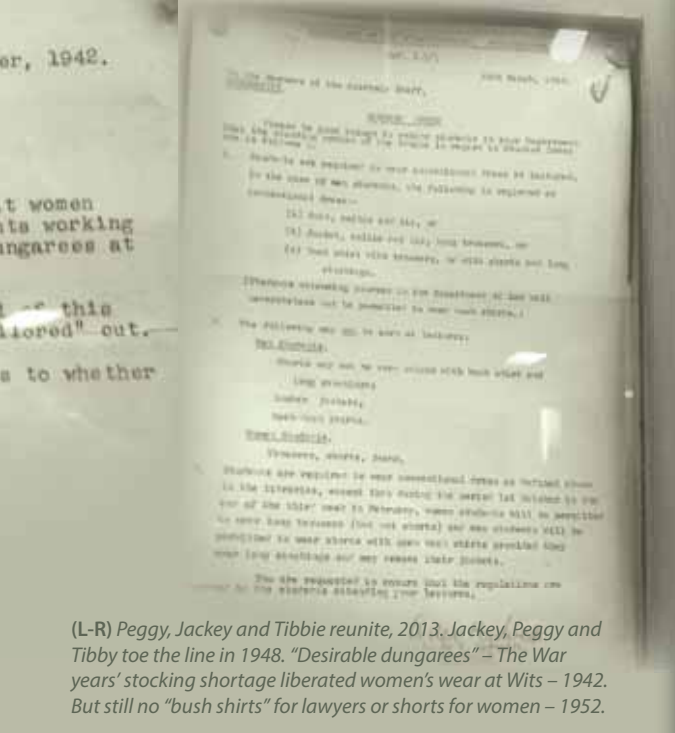
The political climate at the time didn't dampen the girls' academic enthusiasm, however. Jacqueline 'Jackey' Shall (née Rosin) writes, "Coming from the platteland [rural farmland] my strongest memory is of the imposing buildings and pillars on entering Wits – sitting on the steps outside the Great Hall. Wits personified the heart of academic learning."

Ruth agrees: "The academic exposure [to] Wits provided me with pearls of wisdom often quoted to this day."

The iconic Great Hall resonates with Patricia 'Peggy' Lia (née Liang) too: "My strongest memory of Wits was sitting outside on the steps of the Great Hall; the swimming pool, the two-shillings-and-sixpence 'sausage and mash' luncheon at the canteen, the Inter-varsity and the RAG."

Ruth remembers, "Being a young girl of 16, commuting from Germiston by bus, train and the last leg of my journey – which I remember most of all – the tram ride from Johannesburg Station to the Castle Brewery, and the short walk past Lawson's Motors to the University, with files in the crook of my arm."

She confesses to a "kaleidoscope of fond memories" that makes it difficult to pinpoint individually but concedes, "The Great Hall steps was the favourite meeting place for socialising. I have fond memories of participating in the Intervarsity tennis tournaments, RAG and of the rugby Inter-varsities."



Alumni the same age as Wits



(L-R) Peggy, Jackey and Tibbie reunite, 2013. Jackey, Peggy and Tibby toe the line in 1948. "Desirable dungarees" – The War years' stocking shortage liberated women's wear at Wits – 1942. But still no "bush shirts" for lawyers or shorts for women – 1952.

Wits alumna Dr Zena Stein, aged 91, accepts an honorary degree from Columbia University on 22 May 2013

Jackey's favourite memory is of the girls' graduation. "The dignity of the ceremony – the colours of the flowing gowns and hoods of the Professors as they walked down the aisle." Peggy recalls "the camaraderie that existed between the students and lecturers and especially between the three of us."

This camaraderie endures in the 21st century despite geography. Jackey, 82, lives in Klerksdorp, South Africa. Peggy, 84, is in Vancouver, Canada, while Tibby, 81, has settled in Israel.

The trio reunited in Kent, England in August 2013.

Jackey (BA 1951), Peggy (BA 1951) and Tibby (BA 1952, LLB 1963) conclude, "Wits provided the ingredient for cementing the relationship between the three of us which has endured for 65 years. The University sought to induce in its students a shared culture of tolerance and mutual respect. Academic freedom – the hallmark of Wits – came to be appreciated more in our later years than in the early days of our studies."

Ninety-one years ago, who could have imagined that baby **Zena Athene Stein** would pioneer research into mental retardation and earn a medical degree – and later an honorary degree – from Wits? A lifetime's commitment to psychiatry earned Dr Stein, an honorary degree from Columbia University in New York City on 22 May 2013. Dr Stein is Professor Emeritus of Epidemiology and Psychiatry at the university's Mailman School of Public Health.

Bernard Stanley Unterhalter was not yet born when the Kimberley School of Mines became the University of the Witwatersrand in 1922. He entered the world on 27 July 1923 and 22 years later graduated from Wits, making him today one of the few living alumni as old as his alma mater.



Bernard Unterhalter (BA 1944) at his 90th birthday on 27 July 2012

Send your "Remember when..." to alumni@wits.ac.za



MTN CEO calls on Wits Alumni

Group President and Chief Executive of the MTN Group Ltd, **Sifiso Dabengwa** (MBA 1993) was the guest speaker at an alumni networking event held at the Wits Club on Thursday 4 July 2013. Around 100 alumni listened to Dabengwa's presentation, entitled "Economic Development & Telecommunications: Implications for Emerging Markets". The Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Adam Habib, persuaded Dabengwa of the value of a strategic relationship between higher education institutions and mobile network operators. President of Convocation, Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng, delivered the vote of thanks. Alumni enjoyed delicious canapés and networking after the talk.



'68 Mechanical Engineers gear up to reunite

Alumni of the 1968 class of Wits Mechanical Engineers celebrated their 45th anniversary at a reunion in Bryanston, Johannesburg on Saturday 24 August 2013. The 15 alumni who attended – together with two special guests who were their lecturers at the time, Prof. Terry O'Donnail Duggan and Prof. Beric Skews – enjoyed a wonderful lunch with good wine, followed by several hours of reminiscing and networking. The group has reunited every five years for the past two decades and is planning a 50th anniversary reunion.

To reconnect with Mechanical Engineering alumni of the class of '68, please email dsella@iafrica.com or spero@mweb.co.za.



Seated, front row (L-R): Michael Myers; Evered Weavind; Richard Pearce; Prof. Beric Skews; Prof. Terry O'D Duggan; Amrat Diar; Haroon Alli; Peter Smith. **Standing, back row (L-R):** Francesco Sperotto (co-convenor), Peter Bennett; Arthur Fung; John Shaw; Andre Quinlan; Petrus Vosloo; Diego Sella (co-convenor); Oliver Martin; Peter Volck.



Celebrating a Wits Century in California and Canada

The Wits Alumni Office hosted a series of reunions in California and Canada in August 2013 to promote the Wits Century Campaign and pay tribute to Wits icon, the late Emeritus Professor Phillip Tobias.

Reunions were held in **San Diego** on 19 August, **Irvine** on 20 August, **Los Angeles** on 22 August, **San Francisco** on 25 August, **Vancouver** on 27 August, and ended with **Toronto** on 29 August.

Alumni Relations Director Peter Maher, said the global Wits community can play a vital role in helping Wits achieve its Century goals.

“Our recent experience in California and Canada is that, despite the distance and sometimes decades away from South Africa, Wits alumni remain extremely interested in their alma mater and enjoy meeting fellow Witsies and being reminded of their student days. Many international alumni have also achieved significant success in their careers. They are proud of the quality of education they received at Wits and grateful to lecturers, of which Phillip Tobias was the epitome. As a result almost all guests indicated a willingness to contribute to the University’s success, with many pledging support for the University’s Century Campaign,” he said.

Top to bottom: Vancouver reunion, Toronto reunion. (L-R) Dr Rashid and Sabira Cajee pose with senior alumni officer, Purvi Purohit at the San Francisco reunion. Dr Ian and Linda Samson and Dr Dennis and Evette Glauber at the Irvine reunion. Dr Craig Robinson and Dr Connie Tong at the San Francisco reunion.

Top right: Wits Reunion cake baked by Irvine alumni



Photos by: Vividimages

Joburgers, Alumni and Varsity Kudus hoof it through Parktown

Around 1 600 Joburgers competed in the third annual Wits Road Race on 18 August 2013. Athletes traversed the hilly suburbs of Westcliff and Parkview in a demanding 10km or 21km race, which started and finished at the University's Wits Club on West Campus. A few hundred people participated in the 5km fun-run. A festive carnival atmosphere prevailed where the race finished behind the Wits Club, where an informal prize-giving ceremony took place. The running club at Wits – the Varsity Kudus – and the Alumni Relations Office host the race, which features on the Central Gauteng Athletics calendar.

Results – 21km

First male: Retsepile Khotle, Scaw Harriers, in a time of 1:07:29

First female: Kim Laxton, Sunninghill Striders, in a time of 1:22:57

Results – 10km

First male: Givemore Mudzinganyama, Bidvest Athletics Club, in a time of 0:31:28

First female: Melanie Jennett, Fourways Runners, in a time of 0:46:54



Wits ranked 24th in the world in Alma Mater Index

The respected *Times Higher Education* has published its first-ever Alma Mater Index: Global Executives, placing Wits in 24th position amongst universities worldwide.

The ranking, announced on 5 September 2013, is based on the number of degrees awarded to chief executives of Global Fortune 500 companies and is regarded as an indicator of the best places to study if you want to become a CEO of one of the world's largest companies.

In this ranking index, which rated Harvard, the University of Tokyo and Stanford in the top three, Wits rubs shoulders with some of the world's most prestigious universities and outranked iconic ones like Princeton at number 36 and Cambridge at 45. The only other university in Africa to make the Top 100 was the University of Cape Town at number 79.

'Nourishing mother' to the world's top CEOs

Wits alumni who helped secure the University's spot in the top 25 of the Alma Mater index are:

- Steven Collis of AmerisourceBergen (BCom 1982; BCom Hons 1983)
- Gail Kelly of Westpac (MBA 1986) and
- Ivan Glasenberg (BAcc 1982), who heads two Global Fortune 500 companies, Glencore and Xstrata (now GlencoreXstrata after merging in May).

Collis views himself as "seeped in Wits culture", pointing out that his parents and his two sisters are Wits alumni too.

"Just over 30 years after completing my bachelor of commerce and bachelor of commerce honours (postgraduate) degrees at Wits, I look back at the diversity of the university curriculum, which included, for example accountancy, law, economics, business economics and business data processing," he says.

"I believe my time at Wits was the ideal preparation for my subsequent qualification as a chartered accountant. The time I spent at my university also gave me a solid grounding in the different disciplines I require to manage my daily life as a business executive.

"At Wits I recall we were taught to be independent – while all our professors were accessible and motivated, there was a great deal one had to figure out on one's own ... This proved to be a good background to enable one to succeed both personally and professionally in a new country," he says.

Gail Kelly has said that her Wits MBA helped equip her for the challenges of building new networks and coming to grips with different industry dynamics and organisational cultures in Australia. It assisted her in thinking broadly and strategically, enabling her to manage and thrive during a period of change.

The Top 100 universities on the Alma Mater Index can be found at: www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/executives



“Chimp-paddle”

When apes venture into deep water, they often drown. Some scientists argue that this represents a fundamental distinction between humans and apes: although people don’t swim instinctively, we like water and can learn to swim. Apes prefer terra firma.

However, it turns out that this distinction is not absolute. Two researchers have provided the first video-based observation of swimming apes. Renato Bender, a PhD candidate in Human Evolution at Wits, and Nicole Bender from the University of Bern studied Cooper the chimpanzee swimming in a pool in Missouri, USA. Humans raised Cooper and taught him to swim.

“We were surprised when Cooper dived repeatedly into a swimming pool and seemed comfortable,” says Renato. Cooper soon began diving into the two-metre-deep water to pick up objects off the pool floor. “It was surprising behaviour for an animal thought to be afraid of water.”

Some weeks later, Cooper began to swim on the surface in a style resembling breaststroke – unusual, as most mammals instinctively “doggy-paddle”. The researchers think Cooper’s style might be due to an ancient adaptation of tree-dwellers. “We still don’t know when the ancestors of humans began to swim and dive regularly,” says Nicole.

Watch Cooper swim at <http://www.swimmingapes.com/>

Top: Different strokes: An unexpected swimmer, Cooper the chimp enjoys a leisurely ‘breaststroke’ in a swimming pool in Missouri earlier this year.

Image: Henryka Czekanowska-Hayes

Wits precinct bolsters Built Environment

A new building to house the School of Construction Economics and Management (SCEM) was unveiled on 21 May 2013. The SCEM previously shared space with the School of Architecture and Planning. Growth in student numbers in both Schools had caused space shortages. The University has ambitious plans to develop a precinct comprising the SCEM Building, the John Moffat Building and its extension, and the Yale Telescope Building. The precinct will bolster Wits’ capacity to produce graduates and research for the built environment professions in South Africa and globally. The total cost of these plans is around R50-million, of which the Department of Higher Education and Training has contributed R13-million. Wits has committed to raising the balance of R37-million through donations.

Top: Building the future: The SCEM has 700 students. The annual intake of 150 first-years is the largest in the Built Environment sector in South Africa. Almost half of all building and quantity surveying graduates are Witsies.



National Geographic Explores Wits

Shortly after National Geographic named Professor Lee Berger (PhD 1994) an Explorer-in-Residence, the exploration society announced it was considering Wits as one of the five centres worldwide where it aims to establish exploration funds by 2016.

Palaeoanthropologist Lee Berger is Research Professor in Human Evolution and the Public Understanding of Science at Wits. His explorations over 20 years into human origins in Africa have resulted in significant discoveries, notably the most complete early hominin fossils thought to belong to a new species of early human ancestor – *Australopithecus sediba*.

National Geographic Explorers-in-Residence are among the world's pre-eminent explorers. They develop programmes in their areas of study and carry out fieldwork supported by the society.

On 29 August, Berger hosted a National Geographic delegation at Wits and Malapa, the fossil-rich site south of Johannesburg where he discovered *sediba*. The visit formed part of the 125-year-old Society's annual exploration retreat and coincided with the announcement of an exploration fund at Wits.

Terry Garcia, Executive Vice-President for Mission Programs for the National Geographic Society, said, "One of the initiatives we have is to create global exploration funds around the world. By 2016, we want five of these up and running in places that provide grants to explorer applications and researchers in these regions. It would be great to locate one of those exploration funds in South Africa ... So we will be talking to you all more about that."

Image: National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence Prof. Lee Berger with a cast of *Australopithecus sediba*, thought to be a new species of early human ancestor. Image: Brett Eloff



Witsie becomes a roaring success in Tinseltown

Heather Dugmore interviews Gary Barber, Chair and CEO of MGM

On the wall behind Wits alumnus Gary Barber's desk in Hollywood is a giant image of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's roaring lion that was filmed for the logo. It's fitting that a man from Africa should be leading a company that is synonymous with the iconic lion. In this Q&A we speak to chartered accountant Barber about life and times in Hollywood.

Barber completed his undergraduate and post-graduate degrees in commerce and accounting at Wits from 1979 to 1981. He passed the board exam in South Africa in 1982.

What took you to Los Angeles?

I was working for Price Waterhouse in Johannesburg when I applied for a transfer to Los Angeles and got it. That was 31 years ago. I thought it was a great opportunity to embark on a new adventure and learn the American way of doing business. It meant writing the board exam again over there, which I did. I had no aspirations to be in the entertainment industry at the time and I knew very little about the business other than enjoying going to the movies. Growing up in South Africa there was no television until 1976 and my first experience of the movies was watching 16mm and 35mm shorts like *Hawaii Five-0* and *The Mod Squad* and going to the old movie houses like the Astra and the Victory in Orange Grove, where my family lived before we moved to Linkfield.

How did you land up in Hollywood?

It so happened that my first client at Price Waterhouse in Los Angeles was Columbia Pictures. The business stimulated my interest from the outset and after three years an opportunity came up to enter the entertainment business. Soon thereafter I joined Vestron, the largest independent video company in the US at the time. I seized it and became president of Vestron International Group. One thing led to another, my contacts grew, and I was asked by a producer who subsequently became Chair of 20th Century Fox to join a new company called Morgan Creek Productions as Vice Chair and Chief Operating Officer, which I did from 1989 to 1997. A year later I co-founded the production, finance and distribution company Spyglass Entertainment. One of our first movies was *The Sixth Sense* in 1999, which did really well.

*“It is a great honour and I still pinch myself sometimes, because here is this **South African boy** who used to go to the movies in Orange Grove and watch **that lion roaring.**”*

How did your MGM position come about?

As you know, MGM is one of the most famous names in film and television production and distribution, but when I joined the company in December 2010 it was emerging from a pre-packaged bankruptcy and restructuring. We were amongst the initial bidders but when the debtors could not get a good enough price, they called for presentations to get the company back on its feet and they liked our presentation, so here I am.

Things have improved dramatically at MGM, and in 2012 we produced the 23rd James Bond adventure, *Skyfall*, together with Eon Productions and Sony Pictures. It made over \$1.1-billion at the worldwide box office and became the highest-grossing Bond film of all time. A month later *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*, which we financed with New Line Cinema, was released and surpassed \$1-billion worldwide. This made us the first studio ever to have back-to-back billion-dollar releases.

What is your favourite movie of all time?

Definitely *The Godfather* – it’s an epic family saga with unbelievable performances from Marlon Brando, James Caan and Al Pacino, and great music.



*Critics Choice Award/Accepting on behalf of “Skyfall”
Photographer: Lester Cohen / WireImage*

I read the novel by Mario Puzo when I was still in South Africa and I have seen the movie countless times since its release in 1972. I recently watched it again on Blu-ray. *The Godfather Part II* is another favourite of mine – it's almost as good.

What do you like about movies?

They take you into a different space where you can experience all kinds of emotions, and for two hours you can escape from whatever else is happening in your life.

What does it feel like to be the head of MGM?

It is a great honour and I still pinch myself sometimes, because here is this South African boy who used to go to the movies in Orange Grove and watch that lion roaring. MGM symbolises Hollywood and moviemaking and it has such a rich and wonderful tradition going back to 1924. To sit at the top of MGM is quite unbelievable.

Has it changed you?

If you mean have I gone Hollywood, no, I haven't. My family would never let me. I was always taught that the most important lesson in life is to remain grounded, and I think I have. In this business it's important to leave your ego at the door. It goes without saying that there are plenty of Hollywood events that I need to attend, and there are people who try to ingratiate themselves, but I keep a level head. Running this business is not about me, it's about doing what's right for the company and the shareholders. I'm fortunate to have a beautiful family life, which also grounds me. I also have good friends who would definitely tell me if I'd gone Hollywood! I still have my South African friends from when I was very young, as well as my high school friends – I matriculated at King David Linksfield in 1974 – and Wits friends. It's good to see how many South Africans have done well for themselves over here and elsewhere in the world.

When were you last in South Africa?

Four years ago when we shot *Invictus* with Clint Eastwood, Morgan Freeman and Matt Damon [Clint, Morgan and Matt to Gary]. I visited all my old pals and went to all my old stomping grounds and it was great. I was really impressed with how Joburg and Cape Town have developed and it was wonderful to see the new soccer stadiums. When I was young I was really into my soccer and played for Wits.

Where is home for you and what are your interests outside of business?

In Los Angeles I have a place near my office in Beverly Hills but home for my family and me is in both LA and La Jolla – which is absolutely beautiful. I have three daughters – Teri, Dana and Romy – and I have inherited a stepdaughter, Nicolette, and stepson, Andrew. My wonderful wife Nadine is American and everything for us is about family and sport. My mother and siblings also live in the US. My girls all played soccer and we go to all the sports games – we're huge supporters of the Lakers and Dodgers. I also own racehorses – they are amazing animals and I love the action and adrenaline of horse racing.

What is your advice to anyone wanting to move to Los Angeles today?

Emigration today is not easy. You have to temper your expectations and pay your dues. I came here with a suitcase and worked my way up by working extremely hard. I believe that good things come to those who work hard. I've also always been a sponge for knowledge and I never said no to any of the jobs my company asked me to do, no matter how big or small.

What is the most important piece of life advice you can offer?

To always keep your word. My word is my bond; I live by this, good or bad; and so far it has served me well.



Photo credit: Peter Maher

Attracting the Best

Professor Tawana Kupe, in his role as Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Finance and Operations, is part of the A-team leading Wits into a powerful new era.

By Heather Dugmore

“The top priority in our budget for 2014 will be scholarship and staff wellbeing,” says Kupe, who migrated from his office as Wits Dean of Humanities (a position he held for six years) to Senate House at the beginning of this year. He now chairs the budget committee and heads human resources, student life and legal affairs, finance and subsidiaries.

“We are focusing on retaining our existing staff by paying better salaries and we are allocating money to attract more academics, postdoctoral fellows and postgraduate students. Our emphasis in all these categories is to attract the best in South Africa and the best in the world.”

Postgraduates currently comprise 33% of the student body at Wits, which the A-team, led by Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Adam Habib, intends to increase to 50% by 2022.

Well-rounded, cosmopolitan citizens

At the same time as Wits is on an academic trajectory, it is bolstering its sporting, cultural and social capital too. “We want our students to be well-rounded, cosmopolitan citizens in terms of gender, culture, sport and religion,” says Kupe.

“Towards achieving this, we plan to broaden activities among the student community to encourage more participation in activities on campus – from taking part in debates to playing for our sports teams. Our students should not only have a good degree, they should be active sports people and community leaders who are conscious of the issues of the society and continent on which they live.”

Positively change Wits

While some regard the transition from Dean of Humanities to Kupe’s current position as a major change, he takes it in his stride: “I welcome the opportunity to work alongside Professor Habib to

positively change Wits, improve services and build strong support for the teaching and research mission of the University,” says Kupe from his 11th floor office in Senate House, with its bird’s eye view of campus.

“Mine is a strategy post rather than a technical one. Each of the portfolios that I manage has highly skilled people heading them, including, for example, a Chief Financial Officer and a senior legal person. It couldn’t be any other way, unless the person in my position was simultaneously an accountant, economist, engineer, policeman, psychologist and lawyer.”

Ask the right questions

For a strategist, the most important qualification is the ability to ask the right questions. For Kupe the question is straightforward: “What are Wits’ aspirations and how do we fulfil them?”

“According to certain rankings, Wits is currently in second place to the University of Cape Town and we would like to change this and position ourselves as the top-ranked university in South Africa and Africa, and a leading university in the world,” he says.

“To achieve this we need to sharpen our budget and ensure our resources are carefully managed to match the needs of a leading university populated with top scholars and students, with the appropriate infrastructure to support them – the buildings, lecture rooms, laboratories, equipment, sports facilities and residences. At the same time the University must be sustainable, and it is my responsibility to keep it on a secure footing.”

From 20 000 to 30 000 students in 10 years

To find the balance is not simple as the University has grown from 20 000 to 30 000 students in the last 10 years. With the rise in numbers, Wits needs to raise a lot more funds.

INSIDE WITS

“While my portfolio is not a fund-raising one, I need to ensure that more resources are made available to the University. The best way to do this is to focus on our strategy of producing outstanding graduates and postgraduates because this is what the economy and society need.”

Kupe says it is important to stress “society” here because he sees the University as an important social citizen contributing high-level skills across the board – social workers, doctors, engineers, teachers, artists, scientists – graduates who not only have skills but who are driven to contribute to improving the world.

“To produce these graduates we need a strong academic body that feels valued and feels it is part of a partnership between management and staff. We need to have an ongoing conversation about resources and salaries, and about how we can pay competitively while remaining sustainable. This way we will be seen to be using our resources well and we will be able to attract and retain excellent staff, as well as attract more resources, more bursaries and more scholarships from local and global research and philanthropic organisations, businesses and individual donors.”

Buildings matter

Concerning infrastructure, Kupe inherits the significant capital expansion and modernising programme of his predecessor Patrick FitzGerald, whose motto was “buildings matter”.

FitzGerald emphasised that Wits cannot expect to operate as a world-class university in tired, overcrowded, run-down infrastructure. Accordingly, he took up government’s offer to match funding at Wits for specific infrastructural developments in science, engineering, technology and teacher training.

In the five-year period between 2008 and 2012 Wits invested about R1.5-billion in infrastructure devel-

opment and improvement, including the new Science Stadium, the Fourth Quadrant of the Chamber of Mines building, the new Health Sciences Building, the extension to the FNB Building (which houses the School of Accountancy and serves as a shared teaching venue for Accountancy and Engineering), Wits Junction (a residence complex in Parktown for 1 200 students), the Professional Development Hub on Empire Road (a state-of-the-art professional continuing education centre where short courses and executive programmes are offered) and the Wits Art Museum (WAM) on Jan Smuts Avenue.

Kupe says that Wits will continue with new infrastructure projects but on a reduced scale. An example of smaller infrastructure projects is the recently opened Centre for Indian Studies in Africa in Jorissen Street, Braamfontein.


The only centre of its kind in Africa

“With money from the Mellon Foundation and the Indian Government we bought what used to be a mortuary and transformed it into a wonderful space for postgraduate students and visiting professors. It’s the only centre of its kind in Africa,” he explains.

Another example is the recommissioning of the Construction Economics and Management Building, using a variety of green technologies and 21st century spatial planning.

“It’s about transforming dated or dilapidated spaces into something wonderful, practical and aesthetic,” says Kupe. “WAM is an excellent example of this – it was a seriously dilapidated space and now it’s a modern architectural building that is an artwork in itself, in addition to housing an incredible collection.”

Wits’ ongoing contribution to the regeneration of Braamfontein is also part of this transformation focus. “Joining hands with other leading social citizens of Braamfontein, such as the South Point student

A portrait of a middle-aged Black man with glasses, wearing a dark suit, a light blue shirt, and a pink patterned tie. He is standing in a hallway with white arches in the background. The lighting is soft, and the overall tone is professional and thoughtful.

“Research produces new knowledge and skills to transform society for the better. Research-intensive universities are the incubators of what societies and humanity can be like in the future.”

INSIDE WITS

accommodation developers, we are part of the transformation of this part of the city into an exciting, interesting hub for academia, culture and society. We see it as part of our contribution to the city of Johannesburg and to South Africa.”

No child will be turned away

Wits is also playing a central role in the 200-bed Nelson Mandela Children’s Hospital, which will be built on land owned by the University and where Wits researchers and medical doctors will be based. This world-class facility will advance global medical research and serve as a training ground for medical professionals. Most importantly, no child will be turned away due to an inability to pay. The only other children’s hospital in South Africa is in Cape Town.

“This kind of facility reflects our goal to serve society and to increase our number of postgraduate and postdoctoral students as a research-intensive institution,” says Kupe, who is a strong advocate of research. “Research produces new knowledge and skills to transform society for the better. Research-intensive universities are the incubators of what societies and humanity can be like in the future. Research might not always have immediate use but it is developed into usable knowledge for society over time.”

University is not suited to everyone

At the same time as he regards knowledge, research and education as being something of a religion, he emphasises that university is not suited to everyone. He applauds the resuscitation of the Further Education and Training (FET) Colleges because they give students options. “The neglect of the 50 FET colleges and their 248 campuses across South Africa has placed undue pressure on the universities. Hundreds of thousands of students, including those who either failed matric or passed without university entrance, are left with very limited options,” he explains.

“It is also extremely important to debunk the false perception that FET colleges can only provide ‘technical skills’ such as welding and plumbing. These colleges can offer a wide range of excellent courses, including engineering, marketing, business studies, agriculture, hospitality, art, educare and electronics. At the same time, the negative perception sometimes associated with technical skills such as welding and plumbing also needs to change. These are highly important, well-paid skills that society needs and for which there is a ready job market.”

International flavour

For those who are suited to university and who go on to do postgraduate degrees, Kupe would like to see Wits extending its international reach beyond South Africa and Africa to attract and reflect a global demographic. He would like to see more Chinese, Indian and Latin American scholars coming to Wits. “Internationalisation injects hybrid vigour that intellectually strengthens academic institutions.”

He would also like to see far more women academic staff members and senior scholars from around the world. “It is still easier for men to pick up and go. It is harder for women because their husbands are often entrenched in their careers.”

The African continent is currently Wits’ strongest international source of staff members and students because it is recognised as a leading university on the continent by countries like Zimbabwe with a strong educational legacy. Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda share this legacy.

Kupe hopes to see a new era of education for South Africa. “I want to see education become a religion here. It once was, and all South Africans, irrespective of their circumstance, once aspired to be well educated. We all need to play our parts as social citizens to ensure that this returns.”

Comments

on Prof. Kupe's appointment

Professor Adam Habib Vice-Chancellor and Principal



"I know Professor Kupe as an academic, a Dean and a public intellectual. To have a public intellectual as part of the team is absolutely crucial. Prof. Kupe has an incredible ability to interact with people and the role he played in translating the ideas of the Humanities Faculty into the public domain is equally important in his DVC position.

What I like is that he is not simply a technocrat; he thinks through the role of finance and operations with regard to the academic and research mandate of the University. Having a financially sustainable institution is paramount, but as part of this, competitive remuneration of staff is crucial. It is part of Prof. Kupe's mandate to bridge the current divide and bring all the stakeholders into the conversation of where we want to be and how we are going to get there."

Professor Anton Harber Head of Wits Journalism

"Professor Kupe takes over at a challenging time, when the University is rebuilding its relationship with its staff after a period of conflict, and shoring up its intellectual reputation, while under serious financial constraints.

The balance between financial realities and academic needs and demands is never an easy one,

and it will take all of Prof Kupe's political skills to cater for the conflicting interests of a large University and a boisterous academic staff.



As Dean of Humanities, Prof. Kupe achieved a lot in terms of improving the faculty's administration. This strength will be tested to the limit in his DVC post. It's an extremely important job as he is responsible for the drive to modernise, streamline and shake up Wits' bureaucracy. He is responsible for the institution's backbone, which has to carry the meat of teaching and research.

I enjoy working with him as we share a passion for issues of media and journalism. He recognises the value of what we are doing in the Journalism Department and is supportive of it. He has worked with us, for example, to establish our Radio Academy and the Voice of Wits radio station. He has allowed us space to be bold and adventurous in the work and projects we do in the department. It's good to have someone with a keen awareness of this area at the top levels of the University."

Professor Georges Pfruender Head of Wits School of Arts

"Prof. Kupe has charisma. With his unique abilities to inspire, he was a great ambassador of the cause of the humanities in South Africa. He will surely achieve the same in his new post."

RISING STAR

The *real* Vuyo

The real Vuyo is Wits IT and Business alumnus Miles Kubheka. Not only is he a Big Big Dreamer, he's also a Big Big Doer who is walking the long, hard road of being an entrepreneur.

By Heather Dugmore

Image (Top) Front row from left to right: Rida Moffman, Chef Sfiso Tshabalala, Miles 'Vuyo' Kubheka, Peter Ncube. Back row from left to right: Lwazi Ncube, OJ Jeqede, Rush Kubheka, Thandi Nkosi



Images: EYEscape



RISING STAR

It's Cocktail Friday at Vuyo's in Braamfontein and the place is packed with a potent mix of Wits students and business people taking in the weekend mood. Anyone strolling by might well mistake it for a TV advert – a lively bunch sipping on daiquiris and tucking into the best wors rolls in town in the sleek, red and white restaurant that opened in the snowfall of December 2012.

The snowfall was organised by its founder and owner, Miles Kubheka, widely known as “the real Vuyo”, to attract attention to his grand opening. Images of him sporting a chef's hat in the blizzard outside his restaurant graced Joburg's papers as Vuyo's was born.



“It started with the Hansa advert about Vuyo,” Kubheka explains. “Along with the rest of South Africa I watched it many times and thought: nice advert. However, the more I watched it, the more I realised that, while it was advertising Hansa, the unintended consequence was that it was building the Vuyo brand.”

“After establishing that the Vuyo character was fictional I trademarked the name. It took two long years, but once that was done reality began imitating fiction and I started dreaming big”

A big, big dreamer

The advert features “a big, big dreamer” named Vuyo who starts out in life with a boerewors stand. Vuyo's wors is so good that he ultimately goes global with it and transforms himself into a lovable, celebrity tycoon who owns speedboats and planes and takes trips to outer space but who never forgets his friends. It's a modern fairy tale for entrepreneurs.

Enter entrepreneur Kubheka, whose dream is to have South Africa's best-loved fast-casual restaurant and to take South African cuisine to the global stage. He and Vuyo make a perfect match. Kubheka realised this and immediately started researching Vuyo.

“After establishing that the Vuyo character was fictional I trademarked the name. It took two long years, but once that was done reality began imitating fiction and I started dreaming big,” says Kubheka, whose branding identically matches Vuyo's in the advert. While Kubheka might not yet have that yacht and plane, to emphasise his aspirations he named his top of the range wors roll “Air Wors 1”.

“I could never have purchased the brand equity it has given me”

“Vuyo has been incredible for me as a start-up restaurateur and entrepreneur. I could never have purchased the brand equity it has given me, and it's ongoing!”

How creative! How ingenious!

Kubheka even had a friend film a “mocumentary” of him in space, just like Vuyo, for a competition where the first prize was a trip to space. “I didn’t win but a lot of people saw me on YouTube and Facebook, which entrenches my brand.”

What’s more, Hansa is supportive of him. Refilwe Maluleke, Hansa’s marketing manager, said: “Hansa is a brand built on the premise of inspiring people to create their own success and, as such, we are encouraged that it is having the desired effect among fellow South Africans who are doing it for themselves.”

That’s where the easy ride ends

But that’s where the easy ride ends. Having headed his restaurant and brand for almost a year, Kubheka (37) is no stranger to what it takes to be a self-made man. He previously founded and managed an IT solutions company, which he left in the hands of his business partner Dr Michael Magondo in order to focus on his restaurant and franchise.

Their IT company produced a range of novel products, including customised software for improving public service delivery. An example is their emergency medical services solution for a provincial government department; it pinpoints the location of every ambulance at any given time, and the speed at which it is driving. “Ambulance to incident assignment is a key issue in saving human life, and therefore the driver closest to the emergency must be the one assigned,” says Kubheka, who studied IT at Wits during his Commerce degree.

“It was during the dotcom bubble days, and I figured I would have a better chance of becoming my own boss one day if I mastered technology,” says Kubheka, who, on graduating, worked as an IT specialist with Microsoft before going on his own in 2007.

A gastronmist with a global goal

Switching from IT to the restaurant trade might seem like an extreme change but it was first nature for Kubheka, who comes from a family that loves cooking and food. He describes himself as a “gastronomist with a goal to lead a global South African food movement”.

“I aim to share the exceptional natural and cultural richness of our land through the diversity of our cuisine,” says Kubheka. He believes that South Africa would do well to address its issues through its stomach.

What is South African food?

“We do not have a clearly defined South African cuisine, and therefore nor do we have a well-defined, unifying culture. We need to ask ourselves: what is South African food? Is it pap and wors? In my opinion the same amount of care, creativity, scholastic effort and citizen participation that was put into our national flag and anthem is required to define our South African cuisine.

“We need South Africans from all cultures to put forward their contribution into a *drie-voet* pot to work out who we are. This is part of what I am doing through Vuyo’s,” he explains.

His menu is a proudly South African lineup – including dishes like lamb, mutton or beef *potjie* served with *dombolo* (steam bread dumplings), steak and pap, mielies, samp, and tripe on Mondays (it’s such a favourite with the customers they order it a week in advance). Not to mention the flagship Vuyo’s wors, which is extremely well priced at R20 for the Standard wors roll with caramelised onions and R35 for the Air Wors 1, served with delectable homemade chakalaka, red and white coleslaw, parmesan and cheddar.

RISING STAR

It's comfort food presented in a stylish, casual way, and it caters to every pocket, including a special student "Room Service" menu. Students living in Braamfontein or in any of Wits' residences phone in on a separate line and their order is delivered to them at special rates. He also caters for functions and events (Wits is a client) and he's at the Fourways Market on Sundays. The man and his team work 24/7; Vuyo's is open at 8am for breakfast (delicious cappuccinos) and closes at 9pm. He absolutely deserves to succeed.


"Great freedom comes with great responsibility," says Kubheka.

Still, he would not swap it for a corporate job. "I'm a born entrepreneur, as is my wife Dineo, a pharmacist by profession who opened a string of pharmacies. As we are both in the retail business and the hours are very long, we really cherish the little time we get to spend together with our five-year-old boy Khanya."

An ardent believer in entrepreneurial development as the way forward for South Africa, he believes two aspects that should be part of our country's job creation solution are: to adjust the current black economic empowerment model and execution strategy so that it empowers the average South African, and to start focusing our country's collective resources, brainpower, IT and skills on the small, medium and micro-sized enterprise (SMME) sector.

"If it's a phenomenal idea, invest in it"

"For the next ten years we should unashamedly invest in SMMEs. Irrespective of whether the business is a 'black idea' or a 'white idea', if it's a phenomenal idea, the government should invest in it. More businesses provide more employment opportunities for more people. If this does not happen we are risking the alternative of major disruption like Zimbabwe, from which it takes an extremely long time to recover."



"...my suggestion is that we bake multiple cupcakes; this results in many small businesses being started, which in turn creates jobs"

Kubheka believes the government's reliance on jobs from large corporates "is not only placing a glass ceiling over people's heads, it's placing a rock ceiling because when resource prices such as the gold price are bad or construction dips, people get re-trenched and then they are left with little to fall back on.

"We should be creating small businesses and not just jobs," says Kubheka. "And when our President attends business summits, I believe he should not be taking the bosses of big corporates with him, instead he should be taking people who run South Africa's SMMEs."

More accessible services for SMMEs

He adds that certain departments in government "are doing some good things" such as the Department of Trade and Industry and the Jobs Fund, where business investment and grants can be accessed. "This is positive but I believe they could be far more accessible than they currently are. I would like to see them all located under one website portal or housed in a service centre where all their offerings are available and SMMEs can be directed to the best facility for their purpose."

He believes the franchising business model should also be explored more extensively in South Africa because it is a tested and proven business model and one of the best ways of getting more businesses into the economy. "It's what I call the 'cupcake' model," he explains. "Instead of slicing up one big cake, such as the BEE model, my suggestion is that we bake multiple cup-

cakes. This results in many small businesses being started, which in turn creates jobs." Kubheka is currently creating a franchise of 300 mobile "Vuyo's wors" businesses.

50 wors rolls a day

Earlier this year he signed an agreement with the Spar group whereby it will co-fund the cost of the mobile Vuyo's wors carts, which are then set up outside Spar outlets. "We've worked it out that each vendor needs to sell 50 wors rolls a day to make a net income of R12 000 per month," he says, adding: "That's the kind of thing I needed to learn at Wits!"

His one criticism of the University is that "Wits Business School serves coffee in polystyrene cups," he laughs. "That's true but actually my one constructive criticism, or rather suggestion, is that Wits should offer structured entrepreneurial courses in every faculty so that all students get taught the basics of business management: accounting, HR, sales, marketing and operations.

"Whatever degree you do, you need these skills and the biggest disservice our higher education system does is not to recognise this." Kubheka adds that without these skills it is difficult for anyone to transform dreams into "audacious reality".

"We all need to dream big, and to have phenomenal dreams, but we can't remain in a dream state. We need to wake up and start doing!"

Vuyo's: www.vuyos.co.za ■



Bid to secure art endowment

Witsie stalwart and lecturer Robert Hodgins would have been proud. Three years before he died on 15 March 2010, Hodgins gave one of his works, *Three figures and a crowd* for sale, with the proceeds going towards a re-imagined University gallery space.

By Deborah Minors

The Wits Art Museum (WAM) celebrated its first anniversary on 30 May 2013 with a prestigious auction of South African contemporary art to launch the museum's endowment. Hodgins' *Three figures and a crowd* was among the 31 artworks donated, along with works by legendary Witsies David Goldblatt (honorary DLitt 2008) and William Kentridge (BA 1977, honorary DLitt 2004), among many others.

Senior Curator at WAM Julia Charlton (BAFA 1984) says, "Our journey towards creating a magnificent space to house our African art treasures began ten years ago. Halfway into our journey, Robert Hodgins catalysed the idea for a fund-raising auction for

Wits Art Museum. Robert was a huge supporter of the new museum project and even before the first jackhammers reverberated into the shell of the old garage on the corner of Jorissen Street, he donated a work to the museum to be used for this purpose.

"All the works on the auction have been donated specifically for this auction. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of the artists towards the museum. They cite their belief in the importance of WAM and many of them their connections to Wits, their alma mater," says Charlton.

Stephan Welz of art auctioneer Strauss & Co conducted the auction, which raised more than R5, 5-million.

Wits graduates who donated artworks for auction:

David Andrew (PDE 1986, PhD 2011)
 Deborah Bell (BA 1978, BA Hons 1979, MA Fine Arts 1986)
 Kim Berman (BAFA 1982, PhD 2009)
 Joni Brenner (BAFA 1991, MA Fine Arts 1996)
 Steven Cohen (BCom 1984, BAcc 1986)
 Jack Ginsberg (Certificate in Theory of Accountancy 1972)
 Kim Lieberman (MA Fine Arts 2002)
 Michael MacGarry (MA Fine Arts 2005)
 Gerhard Marx (MA Fine Arts 2004)
 Karel Nel (BAFA 1978)
 Serge Nitegeka (BAFA 2010)
 Walter Oltmann (MA Fine Arts 1960)
 Joachim Schönfeldt (BAFA 1981)
 Kathryn Smith (BAFA 1998, MA 1999)
 Jeremy Wafer (BA Hons 1981, MA Fine Arts 1987)



WAM Patron William Kentridge toasts the museum's first birthday

Alumni other than artists were active in the auction too: Professor Anitra Nettleton (BA 1970, BA Hons 1972, MA 1974, PhD Arts 1985), who is Chair, Centre for the Creative Arts of Africa at WAM, was among those who researched and wrote the catalogue notes accompanying each artist's work. Lesley Spiro Cohen (BA 1982, BA Hons 1983) continues to play a significant role at WAM as Strategy, Planning and Development Curator.

Peregrine Securities and the Bidvest Group sponsored the auction, with the endowment fund the

beneficiary of all proceeds raised. Wits Accountancy alumnus Brian Joffe (1972) is Chief Executive of the Bidvest Group.

Since first opening to the public on 19 May 2012, WAM has hosted 18 exhibitions and regular 'talkabouts' which, along with a vigorous publicity initiative, have firmly entrenched the museum in an increasingly arty and trendy Braamfontein. WAM envisages being the leading museum of African art on the continent, and growing this important collection.



(L-R) Angie Chapman, Chair of the WAM Endowment Fund Campaign and Benji Seitlhamo, Wits Development and Fundraising Office and Linda Givon (WAM donor) and Fiona-Rankin Smith (WAM Special Projects Curator)



WAM Donors Awarded

Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) promotes mutually beneficial business-arts partnerships that benefit society. The 2013 Business Day BASA Awards took place on 26 August 2013 at the Johannesburg City Hall. Contributors to WAM were among those recognised for their support of the arts:

Wits Accountancy alumnus Jack Ginsberg (1972) won the prestigious Art Champion Award, which recognises an individual's sustained commitment to the arts in South Africa. Ginsberg has donated multiple artworks to WAM and he established The Ampersand Foundation Endowment for the long-term support of the museum.

"However, our ambition extends further," says Charlton. "We also want to deliver substantial quality educational programming that addresses the needs of diverse audiences and makes WAM a vibrant, dynamic and popular space for the visual arts in Johannesburg." To this end, the museum and the Wits University Foundation, which will manage the endowment, aim to raise R25-million by 2017.

Hollard Insurance supports this vision and has committed R3-million to WAM over the next three years to kick-start the public programme. WAM partner Standard Bank continues to ensure the steady growth of the African art collection, while private individuals, collectors and galleries continue to contribute generously both artworks and funds to WAM.



Wits Accountancy alumnus Jack Ginsberg won the coveted BASA Art Champion Award. From left: Kwanele Gumbi (Chairman of BASA), Peter Bruce (Editor of Business Day), Jack Ginsberg, Ann Farn dell (Internal Communications Manager, Anglo American Corporation), Paul Mashatile (Minister of Arts and Culture).

Bidvest Group Limited won the First Time Sponsor Award for sponsoring "the event and publicity for the opening of the new WAM, enabling it to create an event congruent with its standing as a new, important cultural landmark." The associated Bidvest-Wits FC is the only university football team to compete in the premier league.

WAM runs a dynamic public education programme: Every 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month, the public can join a TALKABOUT where an expert provides insights into the current exhibition. The 3rd Saturday of every month is reserved for primary school children to enjoy a targeted museum experience. Both programmes are free and open to everyone. Find WAM at University Corner, cnr. Bertha & Jorissen Streets, Braamfontein. www.wits.ac.za/wam



30 Years

of The Wits Theatre

where stars are made

In July 1983, the curtain lifted for the first time in The Wits Theatre. On 19 July 2013, the Theatre mounted *Afrocartography – Traces of Places and All Points in Between* to celebrate 30 years of theatre, music and dance at Wits and chart a course for the Theatre's future.

By Deborah Minors

In *Afrocartography*, a Mapmaker sews at a vintage sewing machine. Red threads emanate from her, representing cartographic indicators and cultural heart lines – her link to dreams and memories. The Traveller embarks on an African pilgrimage, red suitcase in tow, while the Afropolitan is a global nomad.

“The travels take place in the timeless, surreal space of dreams,” write co-directors Khayelihle Dom Gumede (BADA 2012) and Mwenya Kabwe. “The Traveller and her other selves forge new paths, re-visit engrained routes and imagine a world where contradiction, uncertainty and complexity are the norm.”

For 30 years The Wits Theatre has been a training ground for School of Arts Witsies and a professional stage for companies, dance studios and schools. A theatre complex for the Schools of Dramatic Arts and Music was envisaged in 1973, when students had to stage productions in the Nunnery, a former convent hall. Ten years and around R5-million in donations later, The Wits Theatre Complex was established in 1983.

The Complex comprises The Wits Theatre (main theatre), the Amphitheatre and the Downstairs Theatre. The open-air Amphitheatre was enclosed in 1992. The Downstairs Theatre is an experimental theatre and exhibition space.

Steeped in theatrical tradition, the Nunnery hosted the likes of the Junction Avenue Theatre Company. Alumni William Kentridge, Malcolm Purkey and Ari Sitas were among the founders who aimed to create a space to confront and challenge South African state and society. Their production *The Fantastical History of a Useful Man* responded to the 1976 Soweto Uprisings. The Nunnery remains a teaching theatre today.

Tales abound of eminent alumni who have graced The Wits Theatre stages.





The Wider Ground are (L-R) Jessica Friedan, Ashleigh Harvey and Daniel Janks

Among many others are these:

- **Shannon Esra (Esrechowitz)** (BADA 2004) made Bollywood history as one of the first Caucasian actors in a lead role (Stephanie in *Salaam-e-Ishq: A Tribute to Love*).
- **Lara Foot-Newton** (BADA 1990) was the first woman Chief Executive and Artistic Director of the Baxter Theatre Centre. She wrote the play *Solomon and Marion*, which premiered in June 2013, and directed Dame Janet Suzman (BA 1959) in the title role.
- **Ed Jordan** (BADA 1991) is a South African Music Award-winning, platinum selling musician, and a presenter. Most recently, he wrote and produced the orchestral score and theme songs for *Spud: The Movie*.
- **Atandwa Kani** (BADA 2009) played Ariel in *The Tempest*, a Baxter Theatre Centre and Royal Shakespeare Company collaboration. Kani's films include *Blood Diamond* (2008) and he made his TV debut in the USA in 2007 in *Life is Wild*. Kani portrays a 16-year-old Nelson Mandela in the film *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*.
- **Nat Ramabulana** (BADA 2009) won the Richard Haines Prize at Wits for his exceptional ability. In 2011, he won a South African Film & Television Award for *The Mating Game*. He and Kani perform in *Hayani*, directed by Warren Nebe (BADA 1986), at the Market Theatre in October 2013. – Nebe is a Fullbright Scholar and Director of Drama for Life, a postgraduate research, training and development programme in the School of Arts, which explores applied theatre as a medium for HIV and Aids education, activism and therapy.

Forging new paths

Alumni forging new paths in theatre include **Jessica Friedan** (BADA 2001), **Ashleigh Harvey** (BADA 2005) and **Daniel Janks** (BADA 2000). Earlier this year they established *The Wider Ground*, a theatre collective. The trio performed Neil Labute's *Bash* at the POPART theatre in Johannesburg in July 2013, directed by **Megan Willson** (BADA, 1989). Friedan hopes that *The Wider Ground* will enable them to tell stories that are "neglected in South African theatre".

Lara Foot-Newton is similarly intent on telling untold stories and nurturing young talent. As a speaker at TEDx Cape Town in 2012, she said, "My passion is the development of new indigenous work, young writers and directors. My idea worth spreading...is the value of theatre to promote honesty, telling stories to re-write the plot of our lives."

The Wits Theatre is playing its part too. On 8 August, Wits Theatre Director Gita Pather announced a partnership to support artistic programmes in schools. The Theatre will host the Repertory Amateur Players Society (RAPS) Festival Schools' One Act Play Festival – established in 1969 – free of charge.

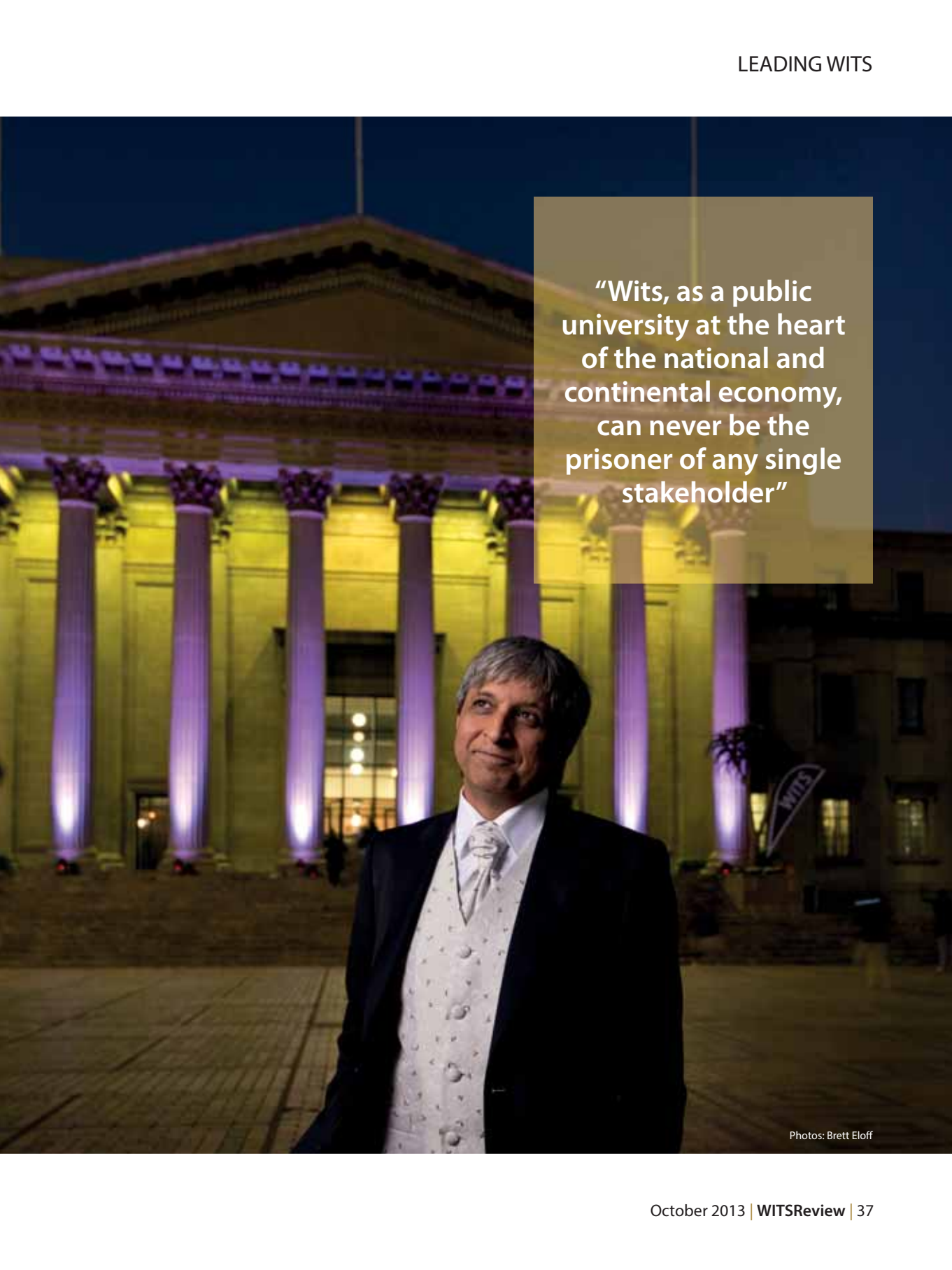
In 1984, The Wits Theatre became the venue for the RAPS Festival, which aims to immerse Gauteng high school learners in theatre. The festival was cancelled this year due to funding issues. "But our new partnership will allow this much loved event to be revived," says Pather. ■

Leading a University

at the very source
of civilization

Extracts from the speech delivered by Professor Adam Habib
at his installation as Vice-Chancellor and Principal held in the
Great Hall on 24 August 2013



A photograph of a man with grey hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a light-colored patterned vest, standing in front of a large, classical building at night. The building features a prominent portico with several tall, fluted columns. The scene is illuminated by warm yellow lights from the building's interior and purple spotlights that highlight the columns. The sky is dark blue. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

“Wits, as a public university at the heart of the national and continental economy, can never be the prisoner of any single stakeholder”

Photos: Brett Eloff

“It is an onerous responsibility – just ask my predecessor – to lead a university located at the very source of civilization. To be true to our ancestral heritage, to be honest to Wits’ geographic lineage, we have to weave a commitment to the nation, the continent and the entire globe. We have to see our world through the lenses of all of our people: black and white and all variations in between. We need to see our world from the eyes of both men and women, and all other communities including rural and urban, abled and disabled, homosexual and heterosexual, and citizen and immigrant.

We need to understand our world from the perspective of not only the coloniser, but also the colonised; not only the landowner and farmer, but also the labour tenant and farmworker; not only the entrepreneur and chief executive officer, but also the worker and the unemployed. We need to understand our world not only from the perspective of government, the president and the cabinet, but also by understanding the concerns, desires, fears and hopes of business (both big and small), trade unions, NGOs and the civic and social movements, and the general public. We need to be responsive to the concerns of the poor and marginalised, but as much as we want to do so, it cannot be our only concern. We also have to be responsive to the challenges of business and government, rich and poor, men and women, citizen, immigrant and refugees. Wits, as a public university at the heart of the national and continental economy, can never be the prisoner of any single stakeholder.

Rather, to be true to its mandate and its historical mission, it needs to be an institutional interlocutor that bridges divides, and enables a social cohesion among our multiple stakeholders. It needs to create a common bond between businessman and worker, government and citizen, farmer and tenant, citizen and immigrant, and the nation and our world.

Yet as much as we represent the multiplicity of our stakeholders, we do not do so in abstraction from a commitment to principle. This University is proudly grounded in the philosophical values of contemporary South Africa; values that are enshrined in the very constitution of the republic. This constitution requires of us to both address the historical disparities of our past and to build a new national identity among all of our citizens. It is a clarion call to build an integrative and cosmopolitan identity, where we are not only white or black, English, Afrikaner, Zulu, Sotho or Xhosa, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, or Jew, but we are all these things and simultaneously so much more, South African, African and human.

Building and managing any university is a challenging task in the 21st century, but undertaking this responsibility in South Africa is an even more onerous one. This is because the managerial challenges tend to be all the more acute. Structural poverty and inequality seep across institutional boundaries and forces the University’s executive to confront challenges such as starving students and residential overcrowding. Systemic disparities in education mean that limited state budgets get directed at primary and secondary education, with the result that higher education tends to be perpetually underfunded.

It would be worthwhile noting that higher education receives only 12% of the education budget, and the Department of Higher Education and Training Task Team on the Funding of Higher Education reports that if Higher Education were to be funded at the world average, it should be receiving R37-billion, not the R22-billion it presently receives. This in effect is an underfunding of about 40% in a context where the demands on universities are increasing all the time.

“Wits has to constantly balance the imperatives of building a globally competitive university with the demands to be nationally responsive”



In a world where science and higher education have no national boundaries, addressing these developmental challenges while still pursuing globally competitive university education and research requires hard trade-offs that are not simply managerial and strategic, but also ethical and moral.

“We have to see our world through the lenses of all of our people: black and white and all variations in between”



Wits, located as it is at the heart of the South African and African economy, confronts all of these challenges. In one sense, it is an institution that is blessed. Not many universities in the world own a private hospital, a 350 hectare game reserve, and a football team in the premier league. Like its host country, Wits represents two worlds in one. It has world class infrastructure. Wits also has a balance sheet that most African universities can only aspire to. Yet this budget, while large by African standards, is minuscule compared to its international peers and its institutional ambitions. Moreover, while the University can boast some world class scientists, research and teaching, and eight of its disciplines in the top 1% in the world, Wits still has to continually manage problems of student homelessness and starvation. In addition, given that South Africa is still in its developmental phase, Wits has to constantly balance the imperatives of building a globally competitive university with the demands to be nationally responsive.

Thankfully these need not be mutually exclusive goals. There are some who of course hold that to be world class requires eschewing the national. In this view, to be world class means simply to imitate the foreign. Wits, by contrast, holds that it is precisely



in responding to the national context that an institution can become globally competitive. It is the responsiveness to one's contextual specificities that enhances a university's ability to make unique contributions to the global corpus of knowledge.

Yet global competitiveness is also integral to our agenda. In the coming months, Wits will recruit 30 new A-rated or equivalent scholars, those that are defined by South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF) as being at the global cutting edge of their disciplines. A number of new multi-disciplinary research institutes have already been, or are in the process of being launched. Research productivity is to be revitalised with the introduction of incentives and penalties. It is intended that Wits will significantly increase its quantitative research output while

retaining its current globally competitive qualitative footprint. Wits will also double its existing cohort of postdoctoral fellows, and enhance its postgraduate scholarships to the tune of R300-million over five years so as to significantly increase its postgraduate footprint. By the end of this decade Wits should be a much more research productive and postgraduate oriented university.

This collective set of measures is meant to create a more globally competitive, yet nationally responsive Wits. As indicated earlier these are mutually compatible goals. And not only will these measures be important for South Africa to achieve its developmental and transformative potential, but they would also enable Wits to take its place as an equal partner in a global commons of 21st century universities. ■

The Sum of his Past: Gold Medal for mathematician, activist

Retired Mathematics teacher **Kantilal Naik** not only received the University's Gold Medal on 27 March 2013, but it was awarded by former Vice-Chancellor and Principal Professor Loyiso Nongxa at the very last graduation ceremony Nongxa attended as head of Wits. Nongxa, too, is an eminent mathematician, so the award is a poignant and fitting tribute to Professor Naik.

By Deborah Minors

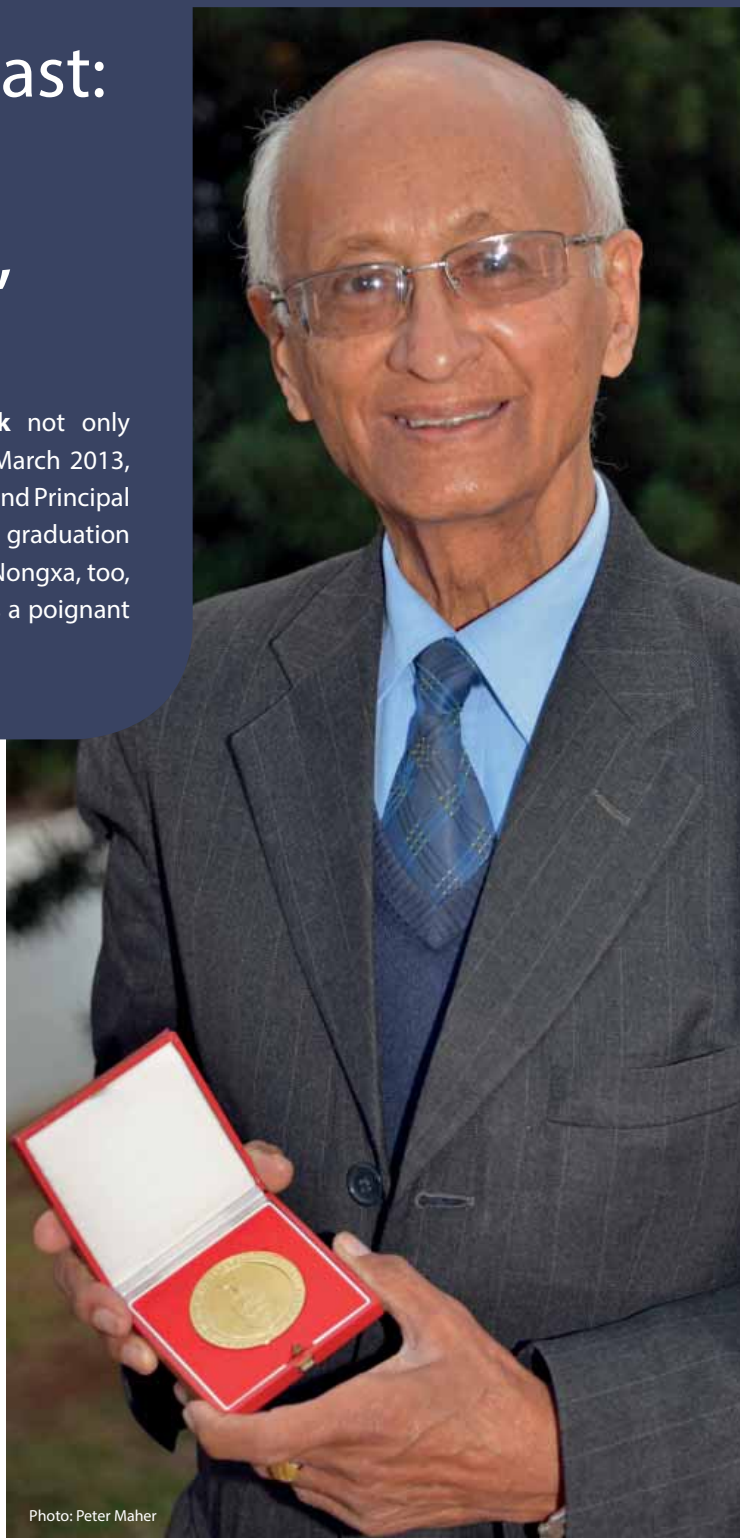


Photo: Peter Maher

“I received a phone call from [Registrar] Kirti Menon over the weekend to inform me about this award – it came as a total surprise!” wrote Naik, now an Honorary Adjunct Professor in the School of Computational and Applied Mathematics at Wits. “I was totally surprised with this kind honour by the University.”

Professor Kantilal ‘Kanti’ Naik’s association with Wits began in 1960 and endures to this day. He holds degrees in Science (1964) and Education (1974) from Wits, and a Masters (with distinction, 1980) and Doctorate in Education from UNISA (1989).

Between 1964 and 1974, Naik taught Science at Lenasia Indian High School and Roodepoort Asiatic School. He joined the Transvaal College of Education in 1975 and lectured Physical Science, Educational Technology, Guidance and Counselling for five years, becoming Senior Lecturer in 1980.

Naik joined the Department of Statistics at Wits as Senior Tutor in 1981. He transferred to Computational and Applied Mathematics in 1986, the same year he won the Distinguished Teacher Award. He became a Senior Lecturer in 1991 and remained in this department for 17 years before retiring in 2003. He won the Benjamin Pogrand Medal that year, in acknowledgement of his contribution to teaching. He continues to serve the University as a member of the Executive Committee of Convocation.

It was in the volatile 1970s, when Naik was teaching high school science, that he was arrested for associating with anti-apartheid activists. He was detained at John Vorster Square in 1971 and tortured. “My hands were totally immobilised from the wrists. I could not use my hands for almost four months,” Naik said later in an interview for the South African History Archive’s *Between Life and Death: Stories From John Vorster Square*. In 1996, he testified at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Department of Justice supplied documents proving the extent of the torture he had endured.

Naik is currently writing a book focusing on the death in detention of fellow detainee Ahmed Timol. In 1996, Naik became involved in the Indian community of Azaadville. As a member of the Governing Body of Azaadville Secondary School, he was instrumental in changing the name of the school to Ahmed Timol Secondary School. Nelson Mandela officially opened the new school on 29 April 1998.

The catharsis of writing, the realisation of democracy, and a handwritten message from former President Mandela in Naik’s copy of the statesman’s book, *Long Walk to Freedom*, have somewhat mollified Naik’s traumatic detention ordeal. “I had no hope at all that our motherland would ever become free from this tyranny of the Nationalist government. But it happened,” he said. And the University’s Gold Medal is a tribute to his role in it all.



Photo: Peter Maher

President Zuma awards heroic Wits doctor

At a ceremony in Pretoria on Freedom Day, 27 April 2013, President Jacob Zuma awarded **Dr Essop Jassat** the Order of Luthuli (silver) “for his excellent contribution to the struggle for liberation and advancing democracy in South Africa, through selfless sacrifice without regard for his own safety and well-being.”

ERRATUM: The July *WITSReview* featured a photograph on pg. 41 of Presidential Order recipient Mosie Moolla, incorrectly captioned as Dr Essop Jassat. *WITSReview* regrets the error.

By Deborah Minors

As a young doctor, Jassat inadvertently housed dynamite and sabotage materials for Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK – the ANC’s military wing) in a spare room attached to his surgery. The apartheid-era Special Branch confirmed the cache when they detained Jassat under the 90-day Detention Act (1964).

Jassat had bravely also medically assessed Govan Mbeki at Liliesleaf Farm, Rivonia. Jassat was arranging for a sympathetic ophthalmologist to attend to the ANC leader’s debilitating eye condition when police raided the farm and arrested the leadership, and the infamous Rivonia Treason Trial of 1963 ensued.

Essop Essak Jassat was born in Vrededorp, Johannesburg on 5 October 1932. His father and older brother inspired him politically and he joined the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress in 1947, aged 15.

Jassat was one of only 12 black students that Wits Medical School accepted in the 1950s. Politically active on campus, he co-founded and chaired the Student Liberal Organisation. He completed one year of medical studies but then had to take a Science degree due to space limitations at training hospitals. He graduated with a BSc in 1955, resumed his medical studies and graduated from Wits Medical School as a doctor in 1960.

In 1955, Jassat received the first of two successive five-year banning orders. He was charged and sentenced in 1964 for failing to comply with the conditions of his banning order. Eminent Wits Law alumnus Advocate George Bizos appealed Jassat’s case, arguing that Jassat had failed to report to police on that day because he was attending to a medical emergency. He lost the appeal and Jassat served 10 days of a two-year suspended sentence.

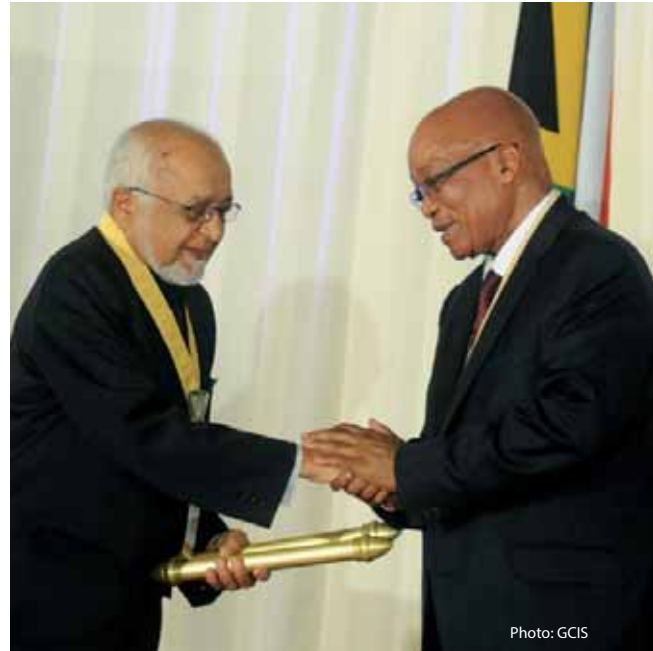


Photo: GCIS

President Jacob Zuma awards Dr Essop Jassat the Order of Luthuli (silver)

Jassat was effectively banned and detained for anti-apartheid activities from 1964 until 1974. During this period, he immersed himself in community work. He was a member – and for a short while, President – of the Johannesburg Indian Social Welfare Association, which later became the Johannesburg Institute for Social Services. He chaired the Transvaal Indian Congress (resuscitated in 1983 after being driven underground), which negotiated at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa in the early 1990s. He was an elected Member of Parliament and served in this capacity from 1994 until 2004.

In May 1998, the Faculty of Health Sciences at Wits introduced an Internal Reconciliation Commission. The Faculty appointed Jassat as an independent commissioner, along with Medical alumnus Professor Patrick Mokhobo and Law alumnus Justice Jules Browde. Most recently, Jassat served on the University Council’s Readmissions Committee. ■

Alumni with **the edge**

By Deborah Minors

Zuma appoints Law School Head

Twelve days after Professor **Vinodh Jaichand** took the reins as Head of the School of Law at Wits on 1 August 2013, President Jacob Zuma appointed him a Commissioner of the South African Law Reform Commission (SALRC). Jaichand is one of five new commissioners appointed to serve a five-year term. The SALRC researches the law to advise on its development and improvement. This includes making recommendations to repeal obsolete and unnecessary provisions in the law. Other Commissioners who are also Wits alumni include Professor Pamela Schwikard (BA 1982) and Advocate Mahlape Sello (LLB 1993). The Honourable Judge Jody Kollapen (BProc 1978, LLB 1982) is the Vice-Chair of the SALRC.



Global kudos for Future Business Leader

Economic Science alumnus **Sizwe Nxumalo**, 24, won the Future Business Leader Award at the Global Business Challenge in Sri Lanka in July 2012. The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) hosts the Challenge. The Future Business Leader Award is made to a student with outstanding presentation skills and the ability to convince the judges of his business acumen. Nxumalo was one of three finalists – selected from 88 contenders out of 14 000 students – rigorously interviewed by executives from CIMA, Tesco and Barclays. A consistent achiever, Nxumalo was one of 200 Top Young South Africans in the *Mail & Guardian's* annual feature in 2011. As an undergraduate, he won the Computational and Applied Mathematics I and the African Micro-Economic Research Unit prizes.



Sizwe Nxumalo (second from left), Global Business Challenge Future Business Leader 2012, with teammates, Simbarashe Nyatsambo, Panashe Chigumadzi and Khethinkhosi Dlamini. This SA team reached the final six and finished in fourth position.

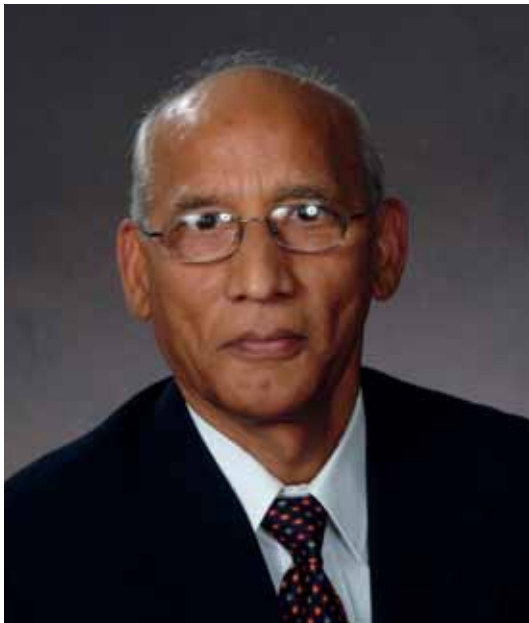
Education academic now Dean of Humanities

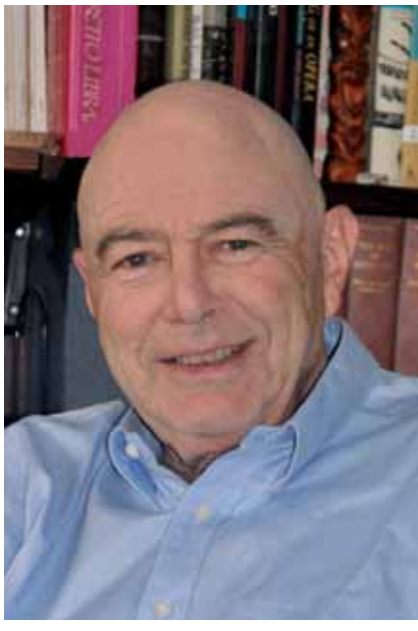
Education alumna Professor **Ruksana Osman** was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at Wits on 1 August 2013. She had been Head of the School of Education since January 2010. Osman holds degrees from two universities, including Wits. She is an eminent academic and serves on various academic boards and research committees. It was under her tenure that the Wits School of Education won the Educational Research in Africa Award in the category 'Most Enabling Institutional Environment for Educational Research' at a ceremony in France on 14 May 2013. Osman's hometown, Laudium – near Pretoria – has named her Laudium's 2013 Woman of the Year, recognising that "the mother of three has been an example of success and an inspiration for all the women who look to her achievements as guidance."



Lifetime achievement in Hydrology

Professor **Vijay P Singh** received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers (Environmental and Water Resources Institute) in August 2013. The award recognises Singh's contributions to water resources engineering and hydrology. Specifically, his application of kinematic wave theory – the behaviour of water in watersheds and irrigation channels – is now utilised worldwide. Singh is Distinguished Professor and the Caroline and William N Lehrer Chair in Water Engineering at Texas A&M University's Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering. He is also Honorary Professor at Sichuan University and Advisory Professor at Hohai University, China. One of Singh's 54 edited reference books is the *Encyclopaedia of Snow, Ice and Glaciers*. He holds a doctorate in Science (Engineering) from Wits (1998).





Endocrine specialist awarded

The Endocrine Society awarded Professor **Irving M Spitz** its 2013 Sidney H Ingbar Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his accomplishments related to reproduction in humans. In the 1980s, he introduced RU486 (the “abortion pill”) into the US and arranged the clinical trials that proved its efficacy and safety for termination of early pregnancy. Further studies indicated its potential as a “morning after pill” and to treat uterine fibromas. These studies represent one of the 20th century’s most important services to women’s health. Spitz holds an MBBCh (1962), PhD (Medicine) (1971) and a DSc (1999) from Wits. He is Emeritus Professor of Endocrinology at Ben Gurion University in Israel and Professor of Medicine at Weil Cornell Medical College in New York.

Arts alumna Moves into Dance

Nadia Virasamy was named Chief Executive of prominent dance training organisation Moving into Dance Mophatong (MIDM) in August 2013. Virasamy joined MIDM in 2005 and became its Director of Education in 2006, ensuring that the Performing Arts training course earned South African Qualifications Authority accreditation. She is an active mentor and author. Virasamy holds an MA (2010) from Wits and her thesis focused on cultural regeneration, branding, and arts organisations in Newtown. She serves on the board of the Newtown Improvement District, among others. Prior to MIDM, Virasamy lectured in Sociology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, where she earned a Social Science Honours degree. **Wits alumna Sylvia Glasser started MIDM in her garage in 1978 as a non-racial dance class culturally opposing apartheid. Glasser retired in March after 35 years as director.*





Witsie Hanneke Schutte with actor Willem Dafoe



Gavin Hood

Witsies with the Hollywood Edge

Two alumnae with Wits degrees in Fine Art and Drama respectively have won Hollywood accolades.

Donna Camargo (BAFA, 2001) was part of the team that won an Academy Award for the film *Life of Pi* in February 2013, while **Hanneke Schutte** (PGD Dramatic Art, 2006) produced a short film under the tutelage of Kevin Spacey, starring Willem Dafoe, which premiered in May 2013.

Camargo (née Segal), 34, was the digital compositor in the team of digital artists who developed the visual graphics in the blockbuster movie, *Life of Pi*. The film, based on the novel by Yann Martel, won the Oscar for Best Visual Effects.

Camargo has also worked on films including *Alvin and the Chipmunks*, *The A-Team* and *X-Men: First Class*. In addition to a Fine Arts degree from Wits, she holds a Masters in Film Animation from UCLA, Los Angeles. She lives in LA with her husband and daughter.

In Johannesburg, Hanneke Schutte, 37, wrote and directed *Saving Norman*, the script of which was the South African winner in the Jameson First Shot competition for aspirant filmmakers. Winners from

South Africa, Russia and the USA (excluding California) won the opportunity to transform their scripts into short films under the mentorship of Academy Award winning actor Kevin Spacey. Eminent actor Willem Dafoe starred in the films. Schutte's winning script, originally entitled *Ping-Pong with Mr Yong*, tells the story of a hypochondriac former ping-pong player who never got over missing a major tournament final because he had a cold.

Schutte is a writer and director from Johannesburg whose work has featured at the Durban International Film Festival. She studied Screenwriting, Writing for Theatre, and Representation in Film at Wits and completed the course-work for a Masters.

Camargo and Schutte join **Gavin Hood** and **Gary Barber** in the legion of Hollywood Witsies. Hood was born in Johannesburg and graduated from Wits in 1988 with a BCom degree in Law. He later studied film at the University of California, Los Angeles. He wrote and directed *Tsotsi*, which won the Oscar in 2006 for Best Foreign Film. Pre-production is currently under way for his next film, *Ender's Game*, a science-fiction action film based on the novel by Orson Scott Card. The expected release date is November 2013.

With Honours

By Deborah Minors

Wits University has awarded honorary degrees to the following illustrious alumni:



Professor **Gay Johnson McDougall** is an American activist, academic, and human rights lawyer. She is the Father Robert F Drinan Visiting Professor in Human Rights at Georgetown University. In 1980, she was Director of the *Southern Africa Project of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights under Law* in Washington, D.C. In this capacity, she arranged international consultations in 1993 to propose comparative legal systems for South Africa's new Constitution. She was one of five foreigners subsequently appointed to South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission in 1994. McDougall has campaigned against racism in the United States and South Africa and against sexual slavery during armed conflict. In 2005, the United Nations appointed her as the first UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues. Her work as a UN Special Rapporteur on issues of systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices in armed conflict resulted in a study calling for international legal standards to prosecute such crimes. McDougall holds postgraduate degrees in Law from Yale and the London School of Economics. Wits awarded her an honorary Doctor of Laws on 1 July 2013 for epitomizing the intellectual and human rights traditions for which the University stands.

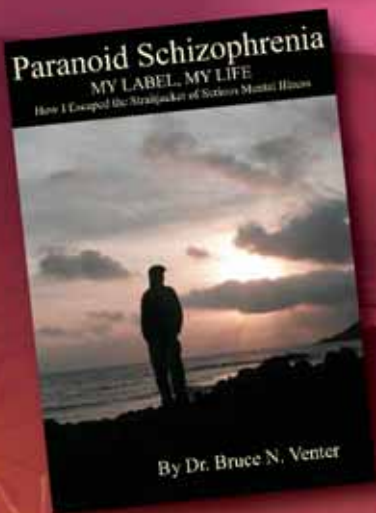


Wits Architectural alumnus **Clive Michael Chipkin**, 84, has made seminal contributions to the profession of architecture and its scholarship. He became a member of the Royal Institute of British Architecture in 1957 before establishing his practice in South Africa 1958. His firm rejected apartheid and never participated in any government work during that era. In 1986, Chipkin co-founded *Architects against Apartheid*, an informal pressure group, which challenged colleagues to support changes to the 1970 Architects' Act and the Code of Conduct of the Institute of South African Architects. That year, he co-authored the architectural profession's "Declaration of Human Rights," which resolved that it was unethical to participate in designing and planning apartheid buildings. Chipkin's monographs, in particular *Johannesburg Style* (1993) and *Johannesburg Transition* (2009), represent a lifetime of scholarship, reflecting Chipkin's extraordinary reach across disciplines. His lens is architectural history, but he traverses politics, economics, sociology and history to explain the city's development over 120 years. Chipkin holds a BArch (1955) from Wits and previously taught in the School of Architecture and Planning. His alma mater bestowed an honorary DArch on 25 June 2013 when Chipkin bequeathed the Valerie & Clive Chipkin Archives to the University, subject to the provision of "safe facilities." ■

Alumni with **the** writing **badge**

Alumni with

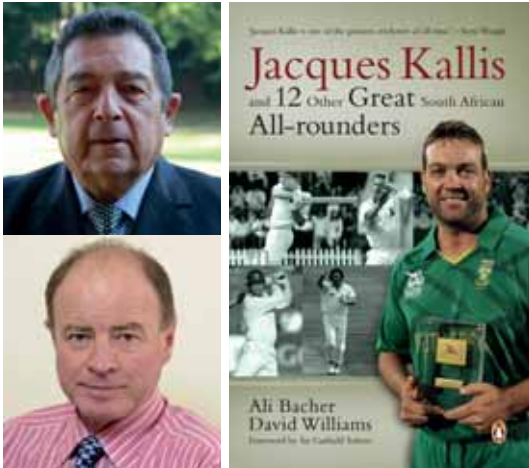
PAMELA HELLER-ST



A Journey of Desire and Confession



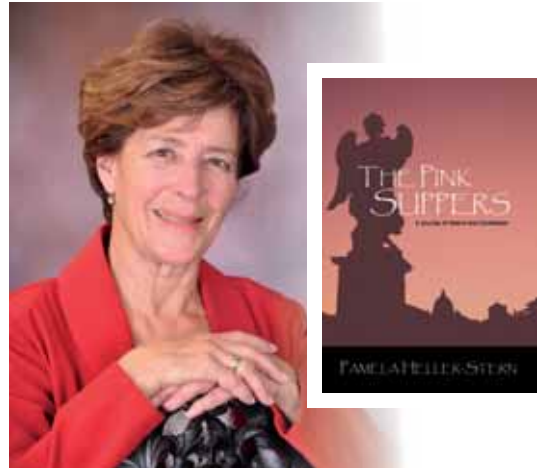
By Deborah Minors



NON-FICTION / SPORT

***Jacques Kallis and 12 Other Great South African All-Rounders*, by Dr Ali Bacher and David Williams**

Dr Ali Bacher (MBBCh 1967, honorary LLD 2001) is a renowned former cricket player and an administrator. He was a player in the South African team that toured the UK in 1965. He was Executive Director of the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2003, and of the Wits Foundation. He practised medicine for a decade after graduating, before becoming South Africa's first fulltime cricket administrator. Eminent journalist David Williams holds Arts (1977) and Education (1979) qualifications from Wits. He previously worked as a teacher, as communications director at Wits and SABMiller, at Radio 702 and at *Financial Mail* as Deputy Editor. He is now Senior Anchor at CNBC Africa. South Africa has produced most of the world's all-round cricketers. Bacher and Williams' book (Penguin, 2013) celebrates these heroes. Through anecdotes, commentary and statistics, it examines the careers of Kallis, Eddie Barlow, Basil D'Oliveira, Aubrey Faulkner, Trevor Goddard, Tony Greig, Mike Procter, Clive Rice, Jimmy Sinclair and the West Indian Sir Garfield Sobers. It acknowledges those who, but for apartheid, might have been their equals.

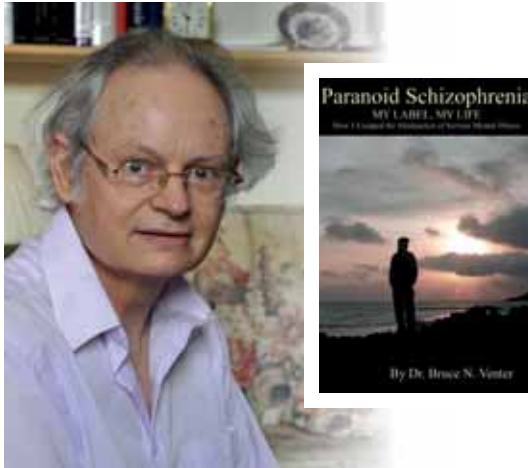


FICTION / NOVEL

***The Pink Slippers*, by Pamela Heller-Stern**

A Wits lecturer in English Literature from 1965 to 1970, alumna Pamela Heller-Stern holds an Arts PhD from Wits (1969). Born in Cape Town, Heller-Stern studied English Literature at UCT and Rhodes. She is a published poet, essayist and literary critic. Prior to her retirement in 2008, she ran a framing factory, an art franchise and art galleries.

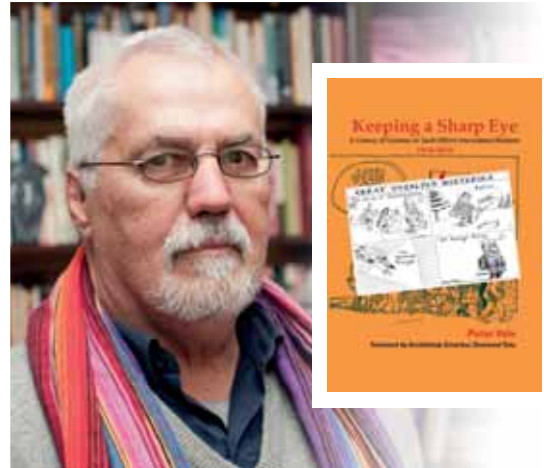
Her first novel, *The Pink Slippers* (Amazon, 2012), dramatises the life of Sister Beatrice, a St Augustinian nursing sister who lives in Genadendorp, Northern Cape. Beatrice leaves the convent but returns to Genadendorp three years later as a wife and mother, her passion for the church unabated. After her husband dies, Beatrice immerses herself in the Gnostic Gospels' startling revelations around the betrayal of Jesus. This strikes a chord with Beatrice, whose betrayal by her own son she must reconcile with her quest for ultimate spiritual fulfilment. Heller-Stern has also published a second e-novel, *It's a Red Moon and a Green Man* (Amazon, July 2012), available on Kindle.



MEMOIR / SELF-HELP

Paranoid Schizophrenia: My Label, My Life,
by Dr Bruce Venter

Wits Dental alumnus (1975) Bruce Venter was born in Zimbabwe. He completed compulsory military service and then entered private practice. In 1978, aged 27, he was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, a chronic mental illness characterised in his case by delusions of grandeur. *Paranoid Schizophrenia: My Label, My Life* (AuthorHouse, 2013) is his memoir of dealing with the diagnosis and how he worked to become rehabilitated. Venter shares how the diagnosis “shattered my world”, and how he was labelled, shunned and put in a mental asylum. “I was walled by a screen of prejudice and fear,” he writes. Venter wrote the book both as catharsis and in an effort to “lift the misunderstanding and stigma attached to all mental illness and paranoid schizophrenia in particular”. In 1999 he emigrated to the UK, where he practised orthodontics. In his 50s, Venter finally experienced a breakthrough in his illness. Now retired, he practises the clarinet with a view to pursuing a degree in music, which played a significant part in his recovery.



NON-FICTION / POLITICAL CARTOON

Keeping a Sharp Eye: A Century of Cartoons on South Africa's International Relations 1910 – 2010,
by Professor Peter Vale

Peter Vale is Professor of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg and Nelson Mandela Chair of Politics Emeritus at Rhodes University, Grahamstown. He holds a BA in Afrikaans (1971) and an Honours in International Relations (1973) from Wits, which he taught at the University for three years. Vale has published extensively in the field of International Relations, Politics, and Social Theory. He is a political columnist for *Daily Dispatch*, *Business Day* and the *Mail & Guardian*. Before think-tanks and foreign policy experts made their voices heard, a more subversive interpretation and criticism of international relations was at work. This was the “sharp eye” of cartoonists. *Keeping a Sharp Eye* (Otterley Press, 2011) explores how these observers have perceived and interpreted South Africa's relations with the world over the past century. It examines their views of unfolding international events and considers how they and their work have interacted with the more formal understandings of foreign policy and international relations that emerged long after the cartoons appeared.



Alumni events

ALUMNI REUNIONS

4 & 5 October: **Chicago, USA**

Wits Medical School Class of 1983 30th Reunion

Enquiries: Dr Trevor Lissoos, tlissoos@comcast.net

11 October: **Sydney, Australia**

Sydney North Shore Wits Alumni Social | 6pm,
Cabana Bar & Lounge, 80 Christie St, St Leonards,
NSW | Enquiries: karen.okeeffe@stryker.com or
pierrephd@gmail.com

9 November: **Cape Town Reunion: Meet the
Vice-Chancellor, Adam Habib** | 5:30pm, Southern
Sun Cape Sun, Strand Street, Cape Town
Enquiries: justine.dangor@wits.ac.za

7 December: **Johannesburg: Health Graduates'
Association Reunion Dinner**

Classes of 1963, 1973 and 1983

Enquiries: Poovy.govender@wits.ac.za

ALUMNI NETWORKING & EVENTS

20 October: **Screening of documentary *RFK in
the Land of Apartheid: A Ripple of Hope***, produced

and co-directed by alumnus Professor Larry Shore
3:30pm, Senate Room, 2nd Floor, Senate House
RSVP by 11 October to justine.dangor@wits.ac.za

23 October: **Young Alumni in Conversation with
Adam Habib** | 7pm, Senate Room, Senate House,
East Campus | Enquiries: justine.dangor@wits.ac.za

14 November: **Founders' Tea** with guest speaker
Bobby Godsell | Gavin Relly Green, West Campus
Enquiries: purvi.purohit@wits.ac.za

4 December: **Health Graduates' Association
Faculty Honours Celebration**
Enquiries: Poovy.govender@wits.ac.za

30 January 2014: **Networking cocktails with alum-
na Helen Nicholson**, Director: The Networking
Company | 5:30pm, Wits Club & Barns Complex,
West Campus | Enquiries: purvi.purohit@wits.ac.za

20 February 2014: **Networking Cocktails with
alumnus Dr Martyn Davies**, CEO Frontier Advi-
sory, an Emerging Markets consultancy | 5:30pm,
Wits Club & Barns Complex, West Campus
Enquiries: purvi.purohit@wits.ac.za

Please contact the Office of Alumni Relations for more information about alumni events:
Tel. +27 11 717 1091 or email: alumni@wits.ac.za



Places to visit at Wits

Adler Museum of Medicine

Wits Medical School, 7 York Road, Parktown, Gauteng
 Tel +27 (0) 11 717 2067 | Email adler.museum@wits.ac.za
 Cost Free | Hours Monday to Friday, 09:30 - 16:00, Saturdays on request

Wits Art Museum | WAM

Corner Jorissen and Bertha Streets, Braamfontein
 Tel + 27 (0) 11 717 1365 | WAM is one of Johannesburg's premier tourist attractions. It is home to one of the largest collections of African art on the continent. WAM has a café and hosts regular events and exhibitions.
www.wits.ac.za/wam

The Origins Centre

West Campus, Wits University, corner of Yale Road and Enoch Sontonga Avenue, Braamfontein, Johannesburg
 Tel +27 (0) 11 717 4700 | Hours Daily and public holidays, from 09:00 - 17:00 | Cost Adults R75, Children (under 12 with adult) R35, Guide fee (minimum ten) R180, Learners R40, Teachers (with school groups) R50, Lectures R45, Temporary exhibitions R45, Films R50 www.origins.org.za

Planetarium

East Campus, Wits University, Yale Road off Empire Road, Entrance 10, Milner Park, Braamfontein, Johannesburg
 Tel +27 (0) 11 717 1392 | Email planet@planetarium.co.za
 Hours Public shows Fridays 20:00, Saturdays 15:00, Kiddies' show (5-8-year-olds) Saturdays 10:30 | Cost Adults R32, Children/students/pensioners R20 www.planetarium.co.za

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 Tel +27 (0) 15 793 7500 | Email wrfmanager@tiscali.co.za
 Cost Terminalia and Vaalboom en-suite units: R530 for two, R215/extra person | Lodge: pps R200, single R296 | Anselia self-catering unit: pps R250, single R340 | Aerocamp: pps R204, single R293 | Bushcamp/4-person dormitory: R97 per person | www.wits.ac.za/wrf

Wits Theatre Complex

East Campus, Wits University, Performing Arts Administration, 24 Station Street, Braamfontein, Johannesburg
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Details accurate at time of publishing. Please contact facilities directly.

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BookReview

South Africa's Suspended Revolution: Hopes and Prospects, by Adam Habib

Published by Wits University Press, 2013

At the *Mail & Guardian* Literary Festival, where he gave the keynote address and participated in a panel on South Africa's future, Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib laughed and said that the editors had taken all the political theory out of his new book, leaving only the footnotes. If that's so, the editors of *South Africa's Suspended Revolution: Hopes and Prospects* (WUP) did us all a favour, because the resulting work covers a great deal of ground and it does so in a very readable manner. Not that one doesn't like a bit of political theory, but in a country with so much contestation going on in public affairs, and so much confusion about policy and its workings, too much theorisation can feel like fiddling while Rome burns.

Habib is obviously steeped in the necessary theory and his work is fully informed by it, but he looks at South Africa's problems in a deeply pragmatic way. The title of the book might lead one to think that he is focusing solely on the "revolution" that failed

to complete its project, as in the Left analysis of how the ANC abandoned its socialist tendencies and went "neoliberal". But Habib is in in fact juggling

opposing political ideas and systems here, as if trying to find a middle way between them — and as, it could be argued, South Africa must, if it is to get closer to meeting the expectations of the mass of the populace.

Looking back at the "social pact" of 1994, Habib asks why it worked for as long as it did, and what the conditions are that would allow the development of another such pact; after the Marikana massacre, it seems clear that a new social pact is needed. He diagnoses the stalled democratisation that has left South Africa's political system with a kind of proportional representation that detaches MPs from voters and makes political leaders less accountable to the populace than to their party bosses.

Accountability is a key issue for Habib, and he examines carefully how civic forms of pressure on the executive and the legislature can be developed — this is part of the new progressive political agenda he outlines at the book's end. Much turns on a useful, neat political idea all can ponder: to stabilise social development, we have to destabilise the political elite. First, though, we need more democracy.

Shaun de Waal is the Comment & Analysis Editor at the *Mail & Guardian*. He holds BA (1986), BA Honours (1987) and Masters (2005) degrees in English from Wits University. He chaired a session at the *M&G* Literary Festival on 31 August, at which Habib was a panellist, entitled "Hopes and Impediments".



Wits alumni qualify for a 20% discount on all Wits Press books if bought directly from the Wits Press offices on the 5th floor, above the Wits Art Museum, University Corner building, corner Jorissen Street and Jan Smuts Avenue. Cash or credit card only. Mondays – Fridays, 9am-4pm.

Pincus Catzel Alan Freed
Caryll Shear Ismail Mohamed
Gerald Alexander Daniel Krige

Wits University fondly remembers
those who have passed away

Obituaries

By Deborah Minors

PINCUS CATZEL

4 November 1925 – 15 November 2012



Paediatrician Dr Pincus 'Pinkie' Catzel (MBBCh 1947) died in the Western Cape on 4 November 2012, aged 86. He was born on 4 November 1925 and graduated from Wits Medical School in 1947. After studying and working in England and the US,

he began practising as Principal Paediatric Specialist at Johannesburg Hospital. He loved teaching and lectured Paediatrics at Wits in the 1970s and 1980s. His textbook, *The Paediatric Prescriber*, became a standard reference work. His interest in minimising the consequences of child poisoning led to his running Johannesburg's Poison Information Centre. He later retired to Cape Town but worked part time at Mitchells Plain Community Health Centre. Catzel retired entirely in 1998 and indulged his passion for painting. He leaves an impressive collection of landscape and portrait paintings.

ALAN FREED

27 August 1939 – 14 February 2013



Image: *The Queensland Times*

Psychiatrist Dr Alan Harvey De Cordova Freed died in Sydney on 14 February 2013, aged 73. Freed was born in Johannesburg on 27 August 1939 and attended Parktown Boys' High. He graduated from Wits Medical School in 1963 and completed a neurosurgery internship at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital. Freed and his wife, Myrna, emigrated to England, where he was a psychiatrist and lecturer at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne General Hospital. Freed also directed Drug and Alcohol Services for North East England. He relocated to Brisbane, Australia in 1976, after the Queensland Director-General for Health recruited him to direct the Drugs and Alcohol Department. Freed entered private practice in 1984, focusing particularly on drug and alcohol dependence by doctors. His wife, their two children, and his brother, Edgar (MBBCh 1961), survive him.

CARYLL SHEAR
25 July 1932 – 4 July 2013



Dr Caryl Frances Shear (née Posel) died in hospital in Cape Town on 4 July 2013 after a long illness. She was 80. Shear held a medical degree from Wits (1954) as well as BA Honours (1972) and Master of Arts (1978) degrees. She lectured Fine Arts at

Wits in the 1980s, and at UNISA. Shear was a Wits stalwart and generous benefactor. Her mother was Gertrude Posel – for whom a gallery in the Wits Art Museum is named – and her aunt was Helen Suzman (BCom 1942). Shear was married to Emeritus Professor of Oral Pathology Mervyn Shear, an alumnus and former Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The couple retired to Simon’s Town in 1991. Her son, Dr Keith Shear – a Wits Arts alumnus – and Mervyn survive her.

ISMAIL MOHAMED
27 July 1930 – 7 July 2013



A former lecturer in the Department of Mathematics at Wits, Professor Ismail Jacobus Mohamed died on 7 July 2013 after a long illness. He was 82. Mohamed held several science degrees from Wits including a Masters (1960), and an honorary Doctor of Laws (1996) conferred in recognition of his contribution

Image: SA History Online

to the University and to human rights. Mohamed joined Wits from the University of Roma in Lesotho. He lectured at Wits in the 1970s and 1980s and was Vice-President of the Transvaal branch of the United Democratic Front. He campaigned fiercely against the Tricameral Parliament and was vociferously outspoken on human rights violations. He was detained due to his activism and charged in 1985 in the Pietermaritzburg and Delmas Treason Trials. After democratisation in 1994, he served as an ANC representative in Parliament. Mohamed’s wife, Ellen, and their five children survive him.

GERALD ALEXANDER
6 January 1923 – 28 October 2012



Justice Gerald Arthur Alexander died on 28 October 2012, aged 89. He held BA (1943) and LLB (1947) degrees from Wits and was part of the class of mostly ex-War volunteers who graduated with distinction. Alexander’s illustrious career culminated in his appointment to the Bench of the Natal Supreme Court in 1989. In 1999, although retired, he resumed judicial duties when he was appointed head of a commission to adjudicate the fatal shooting of 11 people at an Empangeni taxi rank. Hearings for the so-called “Truth and Reconciliation Commission of the taxi industry” began in 2001. Aside from his legal career, Alexander was a talented actor and recording artist. He performed in stage productions and featured on South African radio in his era. He was a wine connoisseur and passionate about travel and fine food. His daughter, Amy, survives him.

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DANIËL KRIGE

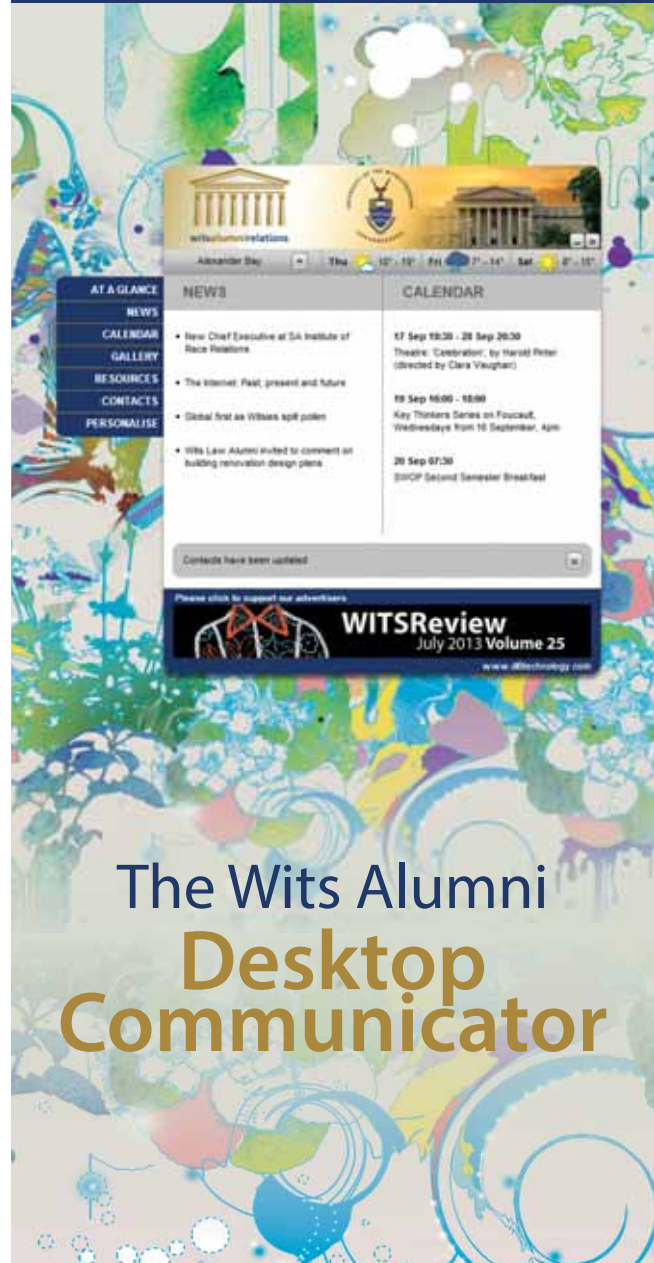
26 August 1919 – 3 March 2013



Image: *The Queensland Times*

World-renowned geostatistician Professor Daniël 'Danie' Gerhardus Krige died on 3 March 2013, aged 93. Krige held three degrees in Mining Engineering and an honorary doctorate in Science (2011) from Wits. Just last

year President Jacob Zuma awarded Krige the Order of the Baobab (silver) for his contribution to the field and for pioneering geostatistics, a branch of statistics focusing on space or space/time data-sets. The related technique of "kriging" is named after him. Krige was born in the Free State, one of nine siblings. He graduated from Wits in 1938 and then joined Anglo Transvaal where he gained experience in surveying, sampling and ore evaluation. Later, in the government's mining engineering department, he designed the uranium pricing formula for the contracts that led to the establishment of South Africa's uranium industry in the 1950s. Krige concurrently began his groundbreaking work in the application of mathematical statistics to the valuation of new gold mines, thus originating the field of geostatistics, which attracted international attention. He retired in 1981 and returned to Wits as Chair of Mineral Economics until 1991. He continued to consult privately to mining companies until 2011. His second wife, Ansie, survives him.



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Mandela manifests in **Taxi Hand Signs**



Susan Woolf is a Wits PhD candidate whose research focuses on the unusual combination of Sociology and Fine Arts. Woolf's artistic analysis of the gestures used by millions of South Africans daily to flag down mini-bus taxis has resulted in a considerable body of work. *Taxi Hand Signs* comprises a series of stamps (2010) and a *Taxi Hand Signs* booklet (2009).



By Deborah Minors

Nine years' postdoctoral research resulted in Woolf's *Taxi Hand Signs: Symbolic Landscapes of Public Culture* exhibition at the Wits Art Museum, which ran from 18 June – 19 July 2013. Here Woolf extended her interpretation of the visual language of taxi hand signs to Braille, the writing system for the visually impaired.

Taxi Hand Signs formed part of the *We Love Mandela: Art Inspired by Madiba* exhibition, which opened on International Mandela Day on 18 July in Nelson Mandela Square, Sandton. Curator Natalie Knight (BA 1975) said, "The exhibition features the work of 22 artists and pays tribute to Mandela through the mediums of painting, sculpture, drawing, bead work, photography and cartoons. Most artists depicted Mandela as a metaphor, portraying different facets of him."

Woolf created *Mandela's Sign* – a raised fist – within the context of her *Taxi Hand Signs* work. *Mandela's Sign* is the signature image for the *We Love Mandela* exhibition, which opens at South Africa House in London on 3 October 2013.

"I created the work *Mandela's Sign* using his iconic, popular raised fist," Woolf said about her painting of a disjointed body part. "Below that is drawn the blind sign, one that blind people would be able to 'read', when in a raised [Braille] format."

Woolf explains the Braille interpretation: "The dot is the defining feature. Each dot is a finger. The triangle is the palm. You don't need any other markers – these create the basic components of taxi hand signs for the blind. In all there are 14 shapes that grow into a universe of meaning."

We Love Mandela: Art Inspired by Madiba is on at South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London, from 3 – 16 October 2013. Details: nataliegknight@gmail.com



Susan Woolf going "to town" with Taxi Hand Signs



Wellington Pike, an associate of Susan's since 1996, "sees" taxi hand signs in Braille

Woolf's Taxi Hand Signs manifest as both a visual navigational "dictionary" for sighted and blind commuters, and as a theoretical analysis of the stories from which these gestures evolve. "Signification" is central to the academic foundation of her PhD. An upraised index finger, for example, indicates to a taxi driver that the commuter is heading to town. An upturned palm with fingers grasping invisible fruit indicates Orange Farm.

Woolf's research interrogates what these gestures signify and she interviewed taxi bosses, drivers and commuters to unravel the narratives behind the gestures. Her combined collection of artworks at the *We Love Mandela* exhibition reveals these stories, a collection comprising different works for different audiences.

"The first was the audience for the Taxi Hand Sign book published in 2009; urban black commuters who had created a unique language under the most difficult circumstances because they had to communicate to the driver," she says. "The second audience was blind people and the third an academic or conceptual art audience."





Graphic of a photo taken by David Morris of an art installation by Liz Crossley

Altering Perceptions

By Keyan G Tomaselli

Why is history important? One well-known Anglo-Boer War city neglects its tangible historical assets while it maps out intangible anti-apartheid “struggle routes”. In comparison, KZN promotes its Anglo-Zulu War and Voortrekker heritage. Now, all that remains in the city located in the Northern Cape is litter and deteriorating heritage assets, and everyone is irascible. Litter is the new struggle. There are those who create it and those who sweep it up and dump it somewhere else. All in a day’s work.

What’s in a struggle? This was the focus of the new and outgoing Vice-Chancellors (VCs) in the July *WITSReview*. Too often, academics trade in monologues rather than dialogues, planting in their students’ minds single explanations as the truth even as they argue that truth is negotiated. The Two VCs – a good name for a reality TV show – argue for debate and accommodation. Now, that’s novel. When last did anyone actually apply Hegel’s

dialectics? The dialectic is the basis of democracy – that’s why governments and their oppositions should debate each other more seriously. Out of the thesis-antithesis couplet comes synthesis. But, mostly, positions are rock hard – monologues attacking and insulting each other rather than dialogues looking for resolution. Good for the two VCs in calling for debate.

What’s being negotiated in the two VCs’ article? Position. Academics often forget that they occupy a position in research and teaching relations. Position is too often hidden. Academics, like most folks, follow fads. Fads are positions. Academics hail their favourite sources, which, like the Bible or the Koran, they cite *ad infinitum*. In the humanities, these sources are spelled Foucault or Spivak or the gurus who are replacing them. Students follow suit and everyone else complains about impenetrable academic writing. Humanities scholars often uncritically pick up and transplant their sources’ pithy turns of phrase, like

AT WITS END

“truth to power” (Edward Said), “the end of history” (Francis Fukuyama) and “can the subaltern speak?” (Gayatri Spivak). But do we stop to question what these once pregnant statements, now clichés, actually mean? Argument by numbers results from those who now speak these epithets as calls to response.

One of the road signs in the Northern Cape states “Miles and Miles of HiStories”. Another, “Miles and Miles of Bugger-all”. These signs, part of an art installation by Liz Crossley, provoke travellers along a tourism route, and not only excavate tangible and intangible heritage, but also question the masculinity implicit in History. Words change through use. A recent study on swearing reveals that the usual two four-letter words have now become meaningless through indiscriminate overuse by those who are unable to utter a sentence without profanity. These are being replaced by much more powerfully charged racist, sexist and fattist terms, once found even in kiddies’ picture books.

Letters written to newspaper editors are complaining that the old four-letter words are now making their way into (once) respectable newspapers. Problem is, however, how to define these words which are being re-lexified all the time. The boundaries are shifting – no one knows when one is swearing and when not any more. Well, actually, we do, when one notices the rage on the face of someone who objects to polite words, while impolite ones are increasingly publicly acceptable.

It’s all about position. One man’s freedom fighter is another’s liberator. Sh&It and fcuk (now a commercial fashion brand) must be the only words in English that are being de-sexualised in the (Western) consumerist, narcissistic, hypermediated world. At a recent and otherwise respectable international communication conference in Dublin, a new journal called *Porn Studies* was quietly announced,

without any irony, critique or awkwardness. Marshall McLuhan-like (now that’s revealing my age), I recently wrote an article on the Internet as a “Brothel Without Walls”. McLuhan, who wrote in this borderless vein, I am sure would approve of me recycling the clichés that he once invented, and that influenced a generation of intellectuals in the 1960s.

So, it’s very refreshing when the two VCs get back to basics. Bring back proper polite political debate to Wits’ pontificating corridors, its pubs and its canteens. The new VC builds continuity, lauds a legacy and maps a teamed path to Wits’ future.

But, what of Adam Habib’s TV appearances? He is, after all, a celebrity academic/guru/commentator/reality TV persona in his own right. Will he still have time to the TV cameras? Or is his accessibility to become history as Habib pilots Wits into the new age where performing academics, according to Blade, can expect to be employed until they are 80? Why make academics who turn 60 into his/herstory? They are just getting into their stride, and some are studying how once irredeemable expletives change meaning over generations, how they become acceptable in polite society, and why ageism should become a new expletive.

By this math, those who are this year 65 have got 15 years of paid employment left. Students after 2018 can indeed consider us 65ers his- or her-story, but I wonder what history will be left, given the speed at which hu-man-kind is wrecking the planet. We all need to be more irascible if we are to save it. If not, the landscape will indeed become miles and miles of bugger-all. Then, there’ll be no one around to take a position on anything. Neither His nor Hers nor the two VCs. But they’ve made a good start.



Keyan G Tomaselli works at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He invites **reader** comment on his columns: tomasell@ukzn.ac.za



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