

# WITSReview

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

WITSReview

## Wits Shop branded items, souvenirs and gifts

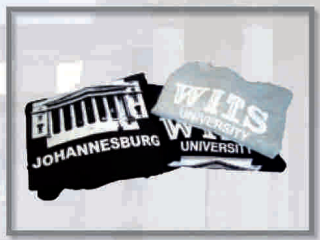


For more information call or visit the Shop at Senate House Concourse, Wits University

Business hours:

08h30 to 16h30 on weekdays or you can telephone: +27 11 717- 4071/2

Fax: +27 11 717- 4079



Online purchases can be made with a credit card at

[www.witsshop.co.za](http://www.witsshop.co.za)

(Deliveries are made nationally and internationally)



[www.witsshop.co.za](http://www.witsshop.co.za)

Volume 5 July 2008



## Wits Theatre celebrates its 25th birthday



IN THIS ISSUE: Wits tackles xenophobia • Interview with Johnny Clegg • Profile on Hofmeyr House



## Wits unites against **violence and xenophobia**

Observing a mass of red, blue and black gowns flowing from the steps of the Great Hall towards Jan Smuts Avenue is an impressive – even awe-inspiring – sight, full of gravitas and academic splendour, all the more so when leading from the front are the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and iconic Wits academic and alumnus, Professor Phillip Tobias.

Over 700 academics and administrative staff gathered on 21 May to demonstrate against the appalling wave of xenophobic attacks that had spread across the country as well as to protest against all forms of violence that have made victims of so many in our society. The academic protest was an expression of the historical role played by Wits of giving moral leadership on human rights issues of national import. Watching the demonstration, a staff member was overheard to say what many felt about the stand being taken, “I’ve never been as proud of Wits as I am today.”

The story of Wits’ response to the blight of violence and xenophobia is covered in this issue by alumna, Jackie Bischof.

### Why a subscription fee for **WITSReview**?

Alumni are being asked to subscribe to receive a print copy of the *WITSReview* by post. There are many reasons why it has become necessary to do this including the cost of printing and postage of a quarterly magazine, the enormous number of unverified postal addresses in our database, and the need for the magazine to be more accountable to alumni (alumni may feel greater ownership of their magazine if they actually contribute towards some of its production costs).

For our part we are committed to providing a magazine of the highest quality that alumni can be proud of and which is responsive to the interests of its readers. The subscription fee will be kept low and additional incentives, such as alumni benefits, may be added over time to reward and encourage subscribers. A complimentary copy programme has been implemented which will allow us to give recognition to those alumni who contribute in one way or another to the advancement of the University.

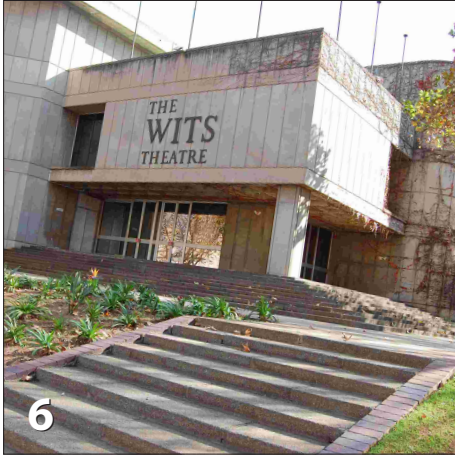
No one will be excluded from receiving the magazine as a free electronic copy will be made available on the alumni website and through an email link if we have your email address. In special circumstances a waiver of the subscription fee will be considered.

A free annual alumni newsletter will also be launched later in the year to ensure that all alumni continue to receive news and information about Wits in the mail.

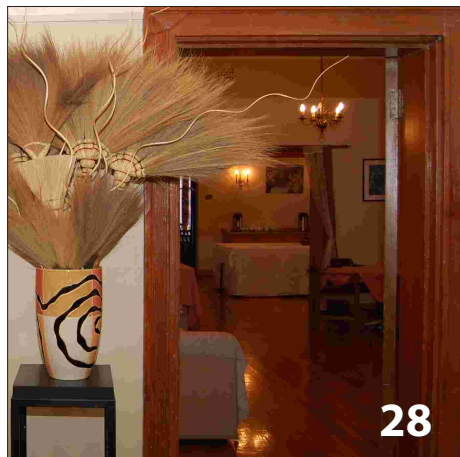
I want to thank readers for the encouragement and support we have received since we launched the *WITSReview* and hope that you will continue, as our ad alongside says, to see the *WITSReview* as news, information and views you can *subscribe* to!

Peter Maher

**Director: Alumni Relations**



- 6 Wits Theatre turns 25
- 12 Wits tackles xenophobia
- 18 Wits' music man:  
Johnny Clegg
- 26 Wits recognises excellence  
in investigative journalism
- 28 Hofmeyr House –  
from Principal's residence to  
Heritage Staff Club
- 34 Time Management
- 38 Photo Essay:  
Wits' Windows to the world
- 44 Of Hominids and Humankind  
– Prof. Phillip Tobias
- 46 Alumni Achievers
- 54 Social Events
- 58 Book Reviews
- 60 Obituaries
- 62 At Wits End



**wits**  
**alumni**  
**relations**

**Cover**

Anne Davis (Medeia) and Kabelo Thai (Jason/Creousa) in MedEia by Oscar van Woensel, directed by Brett Bailey.

**Photo:** Sally Gaule

*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](mailto:alumni@wits.ac.za)*

# WITSReview

**Editorial Team**

Peter Maher *Editor and Director: Alumni Relations*  
 Shirona Patel *Head: Communications*  
 Deborah Minors *Alumni Communications Officer*

**Design and layout**

Nicole Sterling

**Printing**

Ultra Litho (Pty) Limited

**Published by the Office of Alumni Relations,  
 University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg**

**Tel** : +27 (0)11 717 1090  
**Fax** : +27 (0)11 403 4493  
**Address** : Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050,  
 South Africa  
**E-mail** : [alumni@wits.ac.za](mailto:alumni@wits.ac.za)  
**Website** : [www.wits.ac.za/alumni](http://www.wits.ac.za/alumni)  
**Alumni Shop** : [www.witsshop.co.za](http://www.witsshop.co.za)

**Update contact details :**  
[www.wits.ac.za/alumni/update](http://www.wits.ac.za/alumni/update)

**Subscriptions**

International subscribers : R100 per annum  
 Local subscribers : R80 per annum

**Payment Options**

Online payment using a Visa, Mastercard, American Express, or Diners Club credit card at:  
[www.wits.ac.za/alumni/payment](http://www.wits.ac.za/alumni/payment) **or**  
<http://web.wits.ac.za/alumni/payment>  
**or**  
 by electronic transfer or bank deposit to First National Bank, Account No. 62077141580, Branch Code 255-005, Reference No. 1142 (subscription)  
**or**  
 by cash or credit card payment at the Alumni Office.

**For assistance with any payment or delivery problems or to apply for a complimentary copy please e-mail [alumni@wits.ac.za](mailto:alumni@wits.ac.za) or call +27 (0)11 717 1090/91/93/95**

*WITSReview is a quarterly publication. The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor, the Office of Alumni Relations or of the University of the Witwatersrand. © Copyright of all material in this publication is vested in the authors thereof. Requests to reproduce any of the material should be directed to the editor.*

# Comments from our readers

## "Those were the days, my friend ..."

Kate Turkington's romantic recollection of Wits in the early 70s, making it all sound so trite, has an error or two. Alf Stadler was from the Political Science department, not Economic. The American organising moratoriums on Vietnam did not teach in "some obscure department", but, like Alf, was from Political Science. Also, though Randy and an apostle of all things new and counter-cultural, he was not Randy Newman, the singer - songwriter. He was Randy Speer and he wanted us to levitate the Voortrekker Monument.

**Christopher Albertyn** (BA Hons, 1975)  
Toronto, Ontario Canada

## Witsie Generations

Dear Editor

Having just received my invitation to welcome me as a member of Wits Founders - the association of alumni who graduated from the University 40 years ago or more - I have been reflecting on my family's long association with the University of the Witwatersrand.

My grandparents, humble South Africans with minimal education (Std.2 equivalent) themselves, saw the great need for education as a future for their three sons.

Through the years of the Great Depression they struggled towards this goal. My father, Walter William Ballantyne, obtained his BCom in 1936 at Wits and thereafter his Chartered Accountants qualification, going on to become a senior partner in one of South Africa's top five accounting firms.

His brother, Percy Douglas Ballantyne, obtained a certificate in Mining Engineering and, after the war years, obtained his MBBCh in 1951 from Wits, practising medicine in rural Kwa-Zulu Natal for most of his life.

The youngest brother, Stanley Robert Ballantyne, obtained his BSc (Mechanical Engineering) in 1944 and BSc (Electrical Engineering) in 1945.

I was an only child. Fulfilling my father's wish, I obtained my BSc (Physiotherapy) in 1968 at Wits. My son, Paul Wilson, obtained his BCom in 1995, BAcc in 1996 and, following in his grandfather's footsteps, his Chartered Accountants qualification in 1997.

Our solid grounding at Wits allowed our family to achieve the aim of our ancestors who had such foresight into the value of learning.

**Gail Wilson** (née Ballantyne)  
Johannesburg

# Comments

## from our readers

### Embarrassed Witsie

The Editor

Your Volume 4, April 2008 was surely an aberration. Did you really intend to carry a picture of Jacob Maroga on the cover, along with a prominent interview that accords this person a measure of credibility?

Jacob Maroga might tackle the power challenge. Yet it is perfectly manifest that he is largely responsible for the challenge in the first place – a challenge of monumental proportions; one that seriously threatens our future

prosperity. For doing so he has voted himself a handsome bonus.

As a Wits alumnus I am embarrassed to have attended the same university as Jacob Maroga. That you have deigned to cast him in a positive light detracts from the value of the degrees of all who have considered it an honour to have graduated from the University of the Witwatersrand.

Shame on you!

**John Spira** (BCom Hons, 1966)  
Johannesburg

### Witsie Generations

Dear Editor

I have had a long and happy association with Wits.

My brother and sister and I were all students at the same time: a doctor, a teacher and a medical technologist. My husband and I met at the Medical School: he was a dentist. Our four children all graduated from Wits: a chemical engineer, a dentist, a speech therapist and a computer science graduate.

Between us, we made use of many of the residences, viz. Sunnyside, Cottesloe ex servicemen's Residence, the Men's Residence on campus, and the Teachers' Training College Residence.

Sadly, only two of these eight graduates still remain in South Africa and I will not have the pleasure of seeing my grandchildren attending Wits. I have two grandchildren attending universities in Perth.

**Mrs Maisie D de Klerk** (BSc, 1950)  
Lichtenburg

*(Letters have been shortened – Ed)*

# Wits Theatre *turns* 25

*By Alan Swerdlow*  
*Contributing editor: Melanie Dobbs*



Production photos by Sally Gaule



The University of the Witwatersrand's origin as an educational college designed primarily to focus on the needs of the mining industry can partly be seen in the fact that for much of its existence it had no venue for the performing arts other than the Great Hall. Although this venerable auditorium was witness to more than its fair share of drama over the decades, the percentage of artistic performances was relatively small compared to the usual type of events the Hall hosted: graduation ceremonies, public lectures and political protests. Due to the lack of theatrical facilities, easier-to-accommodate music presentations were the only artistic functions staged in the Great Hall.



---

## Theatre

At that time, Wits offered no performing arts courses. In some corners of the campus, there was even hostility to the idea of a school for drama. Nevertheless, the student body still managed over the decades to create a dramatic society of varying fortunes and the Great Hall increasingly became a venue of choice for certain professional managements who were finding it difficult to find 'legal' platforms for both multi-racial performers and audiences, which were considered to be in defiance of the segregation laws of the time.

In the early 70s, the performing arts began to assert their importance as voices of protest and agents of change in the political climate of the day. That, and the absence of professional, qualified training at an academic level in Johannesburg for aspiring performers were noted by various academics. In particular, Doctors Aart de Villiers and John van Zyl began to motivate for the creation of a suitable department.

They found a sympathetic ear in Professor Karl Tober who came from a background in the Humanities and was later to become Vice-Chancellor. Together they began to plan a vast twelve-storied Performing Arts Centre that would be home to drama, music, dance and allied disciplines. In addition, the Centre would house administration offices, lecture halls, rehearsal rooms and specialised workshops, featuring both a theatre and a concert hall. The prevailing ethos was that a theatre would complete the soul of a university and that the performing arts were an essential part of the academic make-up.

A suitable site was found on the south side of the University campus where the abandoned Spes Bona Laerskool stood along with some workers' cottages. The surrounding suburb of Braamfontein had begun its transformation from a residential area serving the Braamfontein railway yards into an office and business district in the late 50s. Its 'poor-white' origins were to



be memorialised theatrically in Athol Fugard's play *People Are Living There*.

Professor Tober recruited David Horner from Natal to be the first Head of the Drama Department. However, in the late 1970s the economy was in decline and the University was facing financial constraints. The grand plan for a Performing Arts Centre had to be set aside

and an upgrade of the facilities in the Great Hall was proposed instead. As a performance space the Drama Department would have to make do with the conversion of a small, disused convent hall into the Nunnery Theatre.

David Horner was not prepared to abandon the necessity of a custom-built theatre. He lobbied his case on the grounds that the acting and

faculty, but the city as a whole as a venue for visiting professional companies.

Don Lennard was appointed as architect and David Horner suggested that the famed British designer, John Bury, be appointed as technical advisor. Bury's expertise meant that the Wits Theatre gained unique features that determined the theatre's adaptability. As designed, the theatre can function as both a conventional proscenium-arch venue, and as a thrust stage venue (where the stage projects into the audience, much like Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, England). In an echo of the ancient, classical origins of theatre, the Wits Theatre has two Roman 'vomitoria' – entrances for actors leading onto the stage from under the arena-style, steeply raked audience seating. The Wits Theatre was intentionally designed to create a microcosm of the larger theatres (e.g. the State Theatre). In this space, the students would experience most of the technical aspects of a theatre, albeit in a miniature version.

An empty space underneath the auditorium was initially designated as a storeroom. John Bury suggested that the space could be more usefully employed as a small experimental theatre, and a subsequent bit of subterfuge (in the form of duplicate plans lacking the necessary detail) allowed approval of the final plan by the Finance Committee. This was a significant gain as the challenging space of the Downstairs Theatre has added many exciting and innovative productions to the Wits Theatre history. The outdoor amphitheatre suffered from the vagaries of Highveld weather (too wet in summer, too cold in winter). One ill-fated production was doomed to one performance only, as its lead



directing students, like other students in science faculties, needed a laboratory for research and experimentation. It was this motivation that won over those who had promoted the abandonment of the entire concept. The compromise was that a more modest single theatre with workshop and wardrobe facilities was projected. In addition, Horner saw the new theatre as serving not only the students and

---

## Theatre

performer, playing Hercules, contracted pneumonia during a June performance. The theatre was later enclosed under the aegis of Mannie Manim, and is now the fully-functional third space, bringing the Theatre closer to the original concept of a Performing Arts Centre.

Sadly, David Horner died before the Theatre was opened. However, he did live to see the laying of the foundation stone and, in a fine piece of theatricality, arranged for some of the luminaries of the South African theatre industry, including Joan Brickhill and Pieter Toerien, to place relics of demolished, famous theatres such as The Standard and His Majesty's, in the foundations. A marble step from the defunct Brooke Theatre formed part of a side entrance.

The building, named simply *The Wits Theatre*, with its raw concrete and glass exterior, instantly merged with the faceted facades of Senate House and Gate House as part of the University's southern entrance, but projected just enough to reach out to the urban environment of Braamfontein and the city.

Like much of the University, the newly-built Theatre also bore witness to the escalating

dramatic events of the 1980s as students and staff frequently staged protests and clashed with apartheid police on the theatre lawns. The

Theatre often provided refuge for students fleeing teargas and rubber bullets.

The opening ceremony of the Theatre took place on 25 August 1983, followed a few days later by the first production, William Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*. An annual production of a Shakespeare play gives students an opportunity to appreciate the constant relevance of Shakespeare's plays, for pupils from a wide range of Gauteng schools to see the plays in performance rather than on the printed page, and for the citizens of the city to see now rarely staged Shakespearean plays in Johannesburg.

From inception, the Theatre served not only the School of Arts, but the entire University. The needs of other faculties often collided amusingly with the more volatile and artistic demands of the performance students: staff members recall the annual clash of wills over Dental Faculty Day when Shakespearean scenery was supplanted by displays of unspeakable dental horrors

intently viewed by earnest scientists. Sarah Roberts, the present senior design lecturer at



---

Wits School of Arts, ruefully recalls the most unusual request the wardrobe received one day – a pair of trousers for an anaesthetised chimpanzee participating in an experiment conducted by the Anatomy Department!

On any given day, the building hosts a dizzying parade of rehearsals, workshops and performances. There might be an exhibition mounted on walls, sets and props being constructed, costumes sewn and fitted, lighting being plotted or sound recorded. The bar and canteen are favoured meeting spots and the foyer is crowded with audience members, students, staff and academics. The magic of the Wits Theatre is in its versatility and range of events: from recreation hall dance schools to the Washington Ballet; from a contemporary dance using soap bubbles to represent the universe, to Professor David Block's cosmic finding of the 'Hit and Run' galaxies.

The list of students, teachers and administrators who have achieved national and international success in the performing arts and other industries is extensive. The Wits Theatre was the workshop where they first fledged their creative and intellectual wings.

For 25 years the Wits Theatre has served the academic community, the citizens of Gauteng and the performing arts industry with distinction, fulfilling and extending the vision of its initiators. Change, and intense educational motivation, contrasted with pure entertainment defines its activities. It looks set to continue these ongoing cycles for many years to come and that is truly cause for celebration!



## Wits Theatre Reunion

The official celebration of this landmark anniversary of the Wits Theatre will take place on Sunday 31 August 2008, when Wits celebrities past, present and future will gather to reminisce. A brave few will be encouraged to 'strut their stuff' across the Wits Theatre stage. There will also be a photographic exhibition spanning 25 years of theatre in the making, a design exhibition, an auction and finally, a bun fight will round off the celebration. If you wish to participate please contact Conrad Haikes on 083 591 9625. Donations for the auction and the party are also very welcome. To book your place in the auditorium, please call Cathy Pisanti on 011 717 1376. Tickets are R25 each and festivities commence at 18:00.



# Wits' windows

Wits is home to more than a dozen museums that showcase the world we live in today, the history of our planet and even galaxies millions of light years away. Take a step back to the early days of medicine, dentistry, optometry, and pharmacy at the Adler Museum, imagine the time, millions of years ago, when dinosaurs roamed where we live today in the James Kitching Gallery, how the Earth was formed in the Bleloch Geological Museum, be amazed at the natural history specimens in the Life Sciences Museum, carry out research in the Hunterian Museum of Anatomy, or sit back and watch the mysteries of the night sky unfold inside the spectacular Planetarium ...

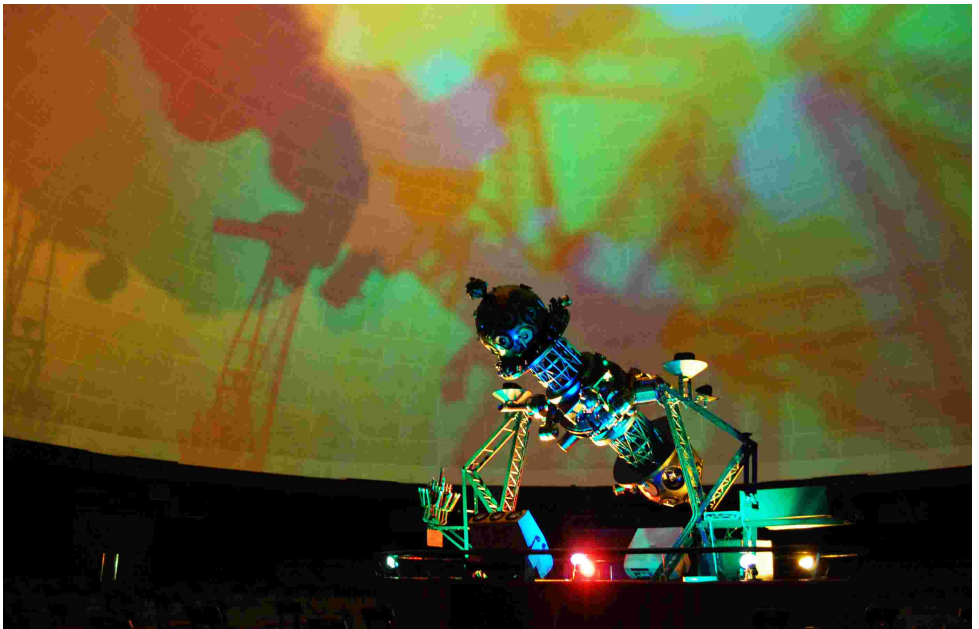
We'll bring you images from more of the University's museums and galleries in future issues of the *WITSReview*.

to our  
**history**  
and the  
**wonders**  
of the  
natural  
world

Photos: Peter Maher



Planetarium ([planet@planetarium.co.za](mailto:planet@planetarium.co.za))

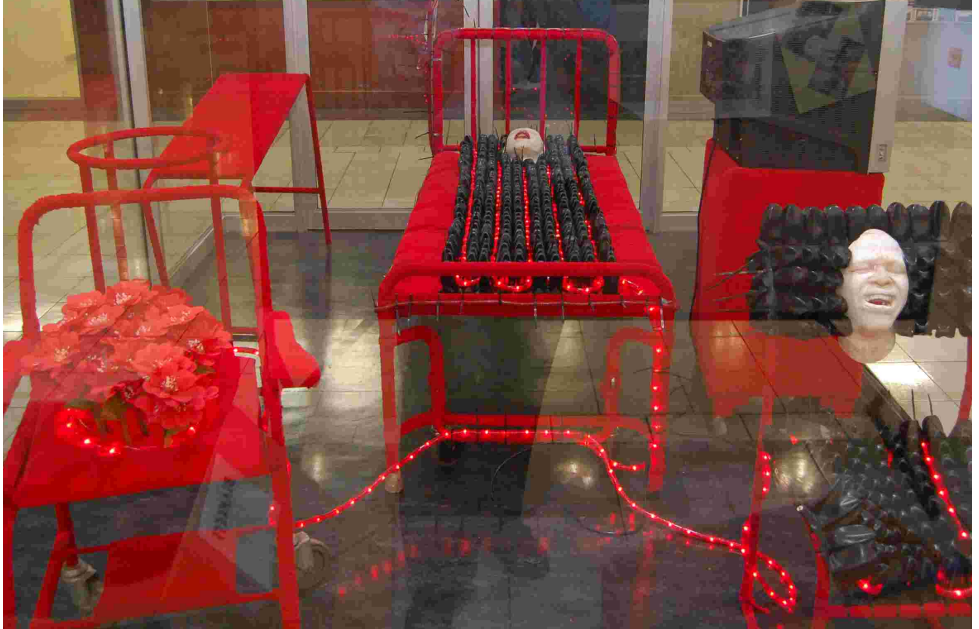




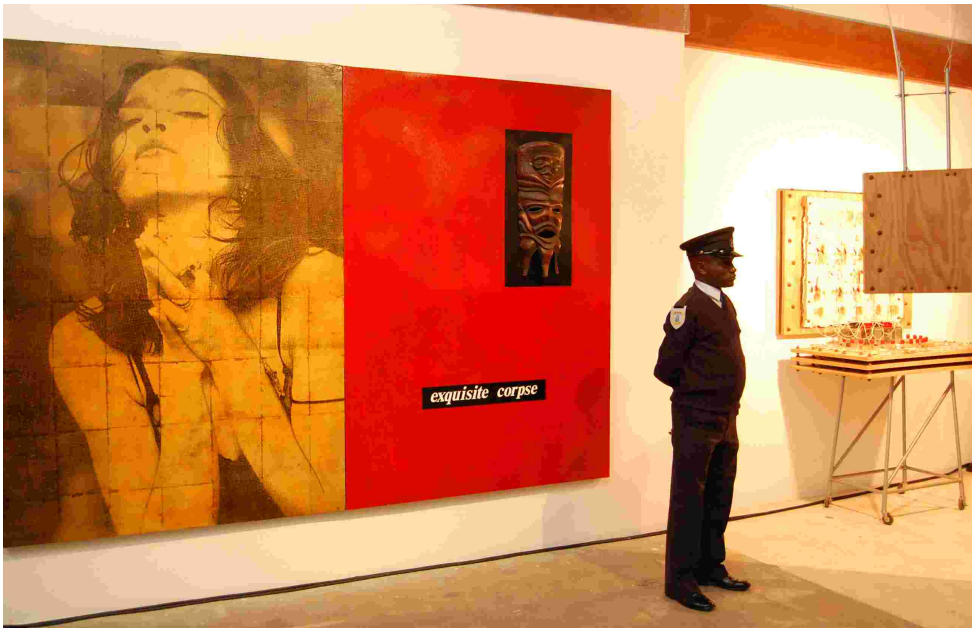
Life Sciences Museum ([caroline.crump@wits.ac.za](mailto:caroline.crump@wits.ac.za))



James Kitching Gallery ([ian.mckay@wits.ac.za](mailto:ian.mckay@wits.ac.za))



Adler Museum of Medicine ([adler.museum@wits.ac.za](mailto:adler.museum@wits.ac.za))



Wits Art Gallery ([julia.charlton@wits.ac.za](mailto:julia.charlton@wits.ac.za))

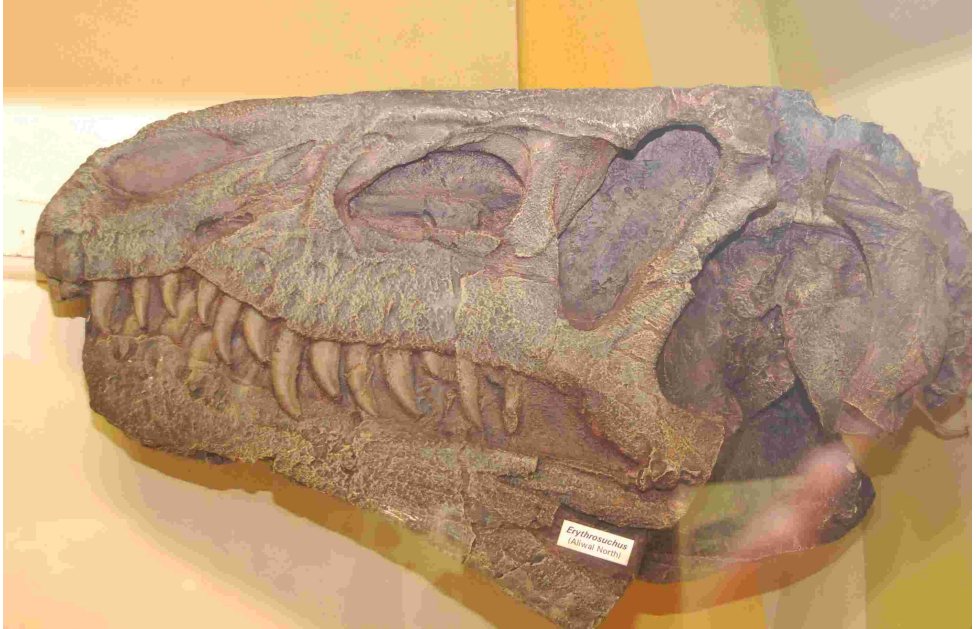
Photo Essay



Hunterian Museum of Anatomy ([anathos@anatomy.wits.ac.za](mailto:anathos@anatomy.wits.ac.za))



Adler Museum of Medicine ([adler.museum@wits.ac.za](mailto:adler.museum@wits.ac.za))



Bleloch Geological Museum ([ian.mckay@wits.ac.za](mailto:ian.mckay@wits.ac.za))





## Washington DC reunion

About 40 alumni and friends of Wits attended an alumni reunion at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Washington DC on 23 May.



Justice Richard Goldstone was the guest speaker at the function, which was attended by the South African Ambassador to the US, Mr Welile Nhlapo.

## Alumni Golf Day

Ninety alumni and friends of Wits participated in the inaugural Alumni Golf Day held at the Killarney Golf Course on Friday 11 April 2008.

After an enjoyable day's golf, a prize-giving ceremony was held in the club house with prizes sponsored by The Cut, Bakwena Printers, Wits Enterprise and Touchline Media. A small amount was raised for the alumni student bursary fund.

Officiating at the prize-giving ceremony were Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Advancement and Partnerships, Professor Rob Moore, President of Convocation, Professor Dave Koltz, Director: Alumni Relations, Peter Maher, and Greg Smith of the Wits Sports Office.

Mr Maher said the huge success of the Golf Day means it will become an annual fixture on the alumni calendar.

## Class of '68 reunion



A reunion for the class of 1968 was held on 16 April to induct them into Founders' - alumni who graduated 40 or more years ago. The group was given a campus tour before being addressed by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Loyiso Nongxa, and enjoying cocktails at the Wits Club.



## Wits alumni and students tackle Two Oceans marathon

Twenty-six athletes from Varsity Kudus, the running club for Wits alumni and staff, completed the 56km Two Oceans Ultra Marathon that took place in Cape Town on 22 March 2008. Seven alumni completed the associated 21km race.

Wits alumnus James Liston (BCom, 1998) was the first Kudus athlete home, just missing a silver medal in a time of 4:00:18.

Alumnus Frank Kienhofer (MSc, Engineering and Mechanical, 2002) who is currently completing his doctorate, followed in a time of 4:14:13. Mark Dowdeswell (MSc, 2002) a lecturer in the Wits School of Statistics and Actuarial Science, ran a time of 5:24:14.

The Varsity Kudus club was founded nearly 30 years ago to accommodate runners once they had graduated from Wits. Today, Varsity Kudus comprise some 150 Wits alumni, postgraduate students, Wits staff and some independent members.

Two members of the Wits Athletics Club (WAC), the campus club for Wits students, also completed the Ultra Marathon. Julian Blonski, currently completing his Honours in Commerce, ran a time of 5:13:52.

Wits postgraduate medical student, Bruce Young (PhD, Engineering and Chemical, 1989) completed his first ultra marathon in a time of 5:55:55.



Julian Blonski, Mark Dowdeswell and Frank Keinhofer.

The Varsity Kudus club meets on Wednesday evenings at the Wits Club. Please visit [www.kudus.org.za](http://www.kudus.org.za) for further information.

**Alumni Networking Breakfast**

South Africa's Economic Prospects  
On the cusp of a global financial turmoil, the focus is on energy prices, the electricity crisis and domestic political developments

**PROGRAMME**

- 07:30 - 07:50: Welcome and introduction by Peter Mahes, Director, Alumni Relations
- 07:50 - 08:30: Presentation by Dr Azar Jammine
- 08:30 - 09:30: Question and Answer Session
- 09:30 - 10:00: Breakfast

**Alumni Networking Breakfast**

'Shrink or Sink' - The energy challenge facing us

**MENU**

Fresh fruit salad, wheat free mussels, natural yoghurt & honey  
Further snacks available on separate tables next to vehicle entrance, plus a chocolate buffet & a selection of home made breads prepared by the Wits Alumni Association

Selection of food not meant to be eaten, including traditional South African (Jyhe) papaya or the smoked salted fish & chary braai. We'll enjoy games with registration & other opportunities to enjoy crispies that with caramelised pears & chocolate sauce

## Alumni Networking Breakfasts

A series of alumni networking breakfasts kicked off on 28 May in Hofmeyr House where the Dean of Engineering and the Built Environment, Professor Beatrys Lacquet, gave a presentation on, 'Shrink or Sink, the Energy Challenge Facing Us'. This was followed by a talk by the Director and Chief Economist of Econometrix, Dr Azar Jammine, on 13 June at the Wits Club.

## Wits Arts and Literary Experience

In April 2008 the Faculty of Humanities launched its first Wits Arts and Literary Experience. With rock concerts, theatre productions, book fairs, and art exhibitions, this interactive experience introduced the public to the richness of fields within the humanities and showcased the achievements of the Faculty's staff, students and alumni.

Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Professor Tawana Kupe said, "I believe that what makes us stand out is our location in Joburg. The city is South Africa's commercial hub and at the centre of Africa's arts, media, communications, financial and commercial networks and this makes it a natural place for public debate on a wide range of issues."

Included in the Experience were performances of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, a contemporary interpretation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, an Art from the Edge exhibition which featured the work of illustrious artists, including alumni, and a Wits Rocks concert featuring performances by well-known local artists Thandiswa Mazwai, Fuzigish and 340ml.

Acclaimed violinist Marc Uys and pianist Malcolm Nay were in concert, and films, including the Oscar winning *Tsotsi* directed by Wits alumnus Gavin Hood, were screened. Creative writing workshops, book displays and poetry, prose and storytelling activities took place. The Experience culminated in a music



performance on the library lawns which showcased Wits music students and graduates.

The Experience is part of a broader programme that continues during the second semester when the schools of Human and Community Development, Social Sciences and Education will present events, seminars, debates and panels pertaining to pressing current social issues.

## Boat Club Alumni Association launched

The Wits University Boat Club (WUBC) Alumni Association was launched at a dinner function held at the Bozzoli Pavilion on 17 May 2008.

Initiated by Colleen Orsmond, Sean Kerr, Bronwyn Jackson and Wig Dreyer, the Association re-established contact with Boat Club alumni and mobilised their support.

Some 90 alumni attended the dinner at which crews were reunited and new inter-generational friendships forged.

Generous and enthusiastic support by alumni and friends of the WUBC has resulted in collections of about R90 000 to support the Club and its touring programme.

The WUBC successes of 2008 continue. The women's crew secured both the SASSU Intervarsity and South African Championship gold medals and the men's eight showed their mettle at the SA National Performance Regatta. After a 25-year hiatus, the men's eight are poised to fly the WUBC flag at the Henley Royal Regatta as they take on other university crews in the Temple Challenge Cup.



*Attending the launch dinner were boating stalwarts from the '30s and '40s (from left to right): John McKenzie, Don Muller, Dan Robinson, Rex Milford, Joe Etertshank, Ian Simpson, and Noel "Ginger" Pope.*

## Alumni Diary

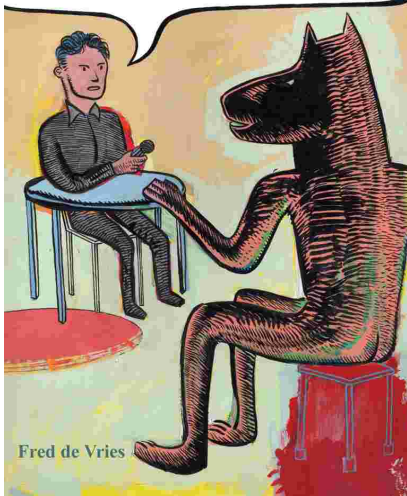
- Perth alumni outing first weekend in July
- Networking breakfast with Vuyo Jack at the Wits Club on Thursday 7 August
- Alumni breakfast in New York with Prof. Mthuli Ncube on Tuesday 5 August
- WBS/PDM Golf Day at Parkview Golf Course on Thursday 2 October
- Wits Business School alumni workshop on Saturday 4 October
- Lesotho alumni reunion TBA
- Cape Town Chapter launch TBA
- Founders Tea at Savernake on 19 November

# Book Reviews

## The Fred de Vries Interviews: from Abdullah to Zille

(Wits University Press)

### The Fred de Vries Interviews FROM Abdullah to Zille



This collection of 39 interviews with South African musicians, writers, entrepreneurs, politicians and cultural brokers presents a rich tapestry of our contemporary situation.

Fred de Vries delivers on his conviction that, when interviewing, part of you must become the interviewee, while another must remain coolly critical. The interviews combine insight without judgement and analysis without pretention.

Each interview follows its own somewhat eccentric path to a key finding, and each is redolent with implication and deeply memorable. These interviews are lessons in careful listening and diligent thought, confirming that it is possible to probe, and to discover secrets, without being manipulative. The interviews remain respectful, particularly when the weaknesses and foibles of their all-too-human subjects begin to emerge.

Two observations need to be made about this collection. First, interviews with unlikely, seemingly minor public figures are placed alongside the loudest and most institutionalised voices. This counterpoint is intriguing; it makes us wonder why we listen to certain people in particular ways, why we accord authority to certain voices. The second observation is that, with few exceptions, we lack portraits of the post-apartheid scene. These musicians, artists, business people, politicians and cultural activists open our eyes to what we have become.

Fred de Vries's voice – his preoccupations, frame of reference and intellectual demeanour – are those of an inside-outsider. He has lived in South Africa for years (having also lived here in the 1980s) but maintains a vital distance from a country on which so many of us battle to keep perspective. It is the unique place from which he speaks that makes his writing so important, persuasive and endlessly intriguing.

**Michael Titlestad**, Associate Professor,  
Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER)

## Composing Apartheid

Grant Olowe (Edited by Wits University Press)



This fascinating and timely collection began as an invited conference organised by the editor at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown in 2004. The conference aimed to investigate the role of music - its works, participants, industry - in either undermining or reinforcing the cultural programme of apartheid. The task of binding us all together in this purpose fell to Ingrid Bianca Byerly, whose keynote address bore the appropriate title, 'Things Come together'.

Byerly presents music as a central catalyst on the road to democracy. While official strategies managed to 'compose apartheid' through the monitoring and censoring of art forms, it was collaborative music that managed to reverse the

process and 'de-compose apartheid'. So the components of musical composition and performance can suggest corresponding non-musical tactics of conflict-resolution. Music thereby offers a blueprint through which to appreciate the prospects for political change.

Other themes include the musical formulation of 'South Africanness', the importance of music in envisioning the new society by crossing group boundaries, the role of South African music and musicians in political exile, music on film, the intersection of a range of genres from choral, classical and opera through township jive and jazz in scoring the struggle for freedom, narratives of whiteness both supremacist and transformational, and even 'Album Covers and the Presentation of Apartheid'. This chapter, by Michael Drewitt, hilariously illustrates the ambiguity of music in both composing and de-composing apartheid.

Still, the evidence shows that music did far more to tear apartheid down than it did to build it up, and that music is not posted at the margins but at the centre of power relations in societies in crisis.

My own chapter on the history and trans-national significance of our national anthem also provides a unifying theme: everyone involved with South Africa, it seems, has had an encounter with it. How ever much the song is political and institutional in reception, mobilisation and scope, *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika* proves that politics is not only personal, but surprisingly musical.

**David B. Coplan,**

*Professor and Chair in Anthropology*

# In Memoriam

Wits University fondly remembers those who have passed away.

## **ERICA BIESHEUVAL (1908 – 2008)**

Erica Biesheupal passed away in her hundredth year at her home in Cape Town on 3 March 2008. She was Dean of Sunnyside Women's Residence from 1939 to 1962, when this was the only residence dedicated for women students at Wits. She will be fondly remembered as a role model and mentor by successive cohorts of young women entrusted to her care while studying at Wits during the years of World War II and through to the early 1960s. Mrs B, as she was widely known, was married to Simon Biesheupal, lecturer in the Psychology Department in the 1930s, who was founding Director of the National Institute of Personnel Research located on the Wits campus and subsequently became Director of the Wits Business School.

## **DR EMILY KARK (1913 – 2006)**

Dr Emily Kark graduated from Wits Medical School in 1938. Most of her professional life was focused on the development of community healthcare in South Africa and Israel. She initiated a pilot health centre in rural Pholela, KwaZulu-Natal, at the foot of the Drakensberg Mountains on behalf of government in 1940. Demonstration and training centres at the Institute of Family and Community Health in Durban followed. Kark contributed to the development of a new kind of medical practice that combined curative, preventive and promotive health functions which Kark, and her husband and colleague, Professor Sidney Kark, named Community Orientated Primary Care (COPC). These initiatives had a substantial impact on the state of health of the population at the time. The South African programme ended in the late 1950s, due to changes in government and policy. Dr Kark was then invited to initiate a Department of Epidemiology at the University of North Carolina in the United States, after which she pursued research and teaching, including an international Master of Public Health programme featuring COPC at the University-Hadassah Faculty of Medicine in Jerusalem, Israel. The Karks' research ranged from epidemiologically-based studies of growth and survival in infancy and childhood, through the control of infectious diseases, to hypertension, diabetes and heart disease.

## **DR NEVILLE COLMAN (1945 - 2003)**

Dr Colman was a renowned haematologist and forensic DNA expert in New York. He passed away on 11 February 2003 after a tenacious fight with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Dr Glenys Lobban Colman, his children Stephen

and Timothy, mother Pearl Colman, and his brothers Dr Martin Colman and Robin Colman and their families. Dr Colman graduated with an MBChB from Wits University in 1969 and completed his PhD in 1974, after which he moved to New York.

He and his family (his wife, parents and siblings are all Wits alumni) continued their relationship with the University. Renowned for his research in South Africa in the 1970s which reflected that folate deficiency caused widespread medical disorders, his research pioneered the fortification of cereals worldwide. In addition, he furthered the acceptance of DNA as a forensic tool in the United States, through co-authoring a major article focusing on the quality control of DNA testing in the journal *Scientific American*. He served as Chairman of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Continuum Health Partners (a conglomerate of St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital and the Beth Israel Medical Center in the United States) and was appointed Professor and Vice-Chairman of Pathology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University.

In 1968 Dr Colman founded the West Side Soccer League, a volunteer organisation based on the motto 'everyone plays', which gives children on New York's upper West Side the opportunity to play soccer. With some 4 000 players today, the League is the largest volunteer sports organisation in New York and a new

soccer field in Manhattan was named in Dr Colman's honour in 2006. In 1998, he was named one of the 75 most distinguished graduates of the Wits Medical School since its inception and was awarded the Faculty of Health Sciences 75th Anniversary Merit Award. The Neville Colman Scholarship Fund for historically disenfranchised students of colour was established in 2005. The first recipient, a third-year medical student, Ntsako Marion Nkanyane was selected in 2006.

Described as "an international leader in pathologic medicine" and as a person "who dedicated his life to the clinical advancement of his field, the expansion of its applications in research, and the education of tomorrow's physicians", Dr Colman will be remembered for his determination to strive for academic excellence, quality research and social justice. The legend of this distinguished Wits alumnus lives on through the aspirations of today's medical students. He leaves behind a legacy in the Wits community that will continue to be cherished and nurtured in years to come.

### **LESLIE BOYD (1937 – 2008)**

Leslie Boyd, former deputy chairman of Anglo American, chairman of Anglo Platinum and Datatec and one of South Africa's most eminent businessmen, died of cancer on 21 March 2008. Born in Bellshill, Scotland in 1937, Boyd graduated from Wits with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering in 1957, after which he entered the Anglo American group and rose to managing director of Highveld Steel. He went on to lead the Anglo American Industrial Corporation, where he was effectively head of AECI, Mondi, Boart, Scaw, Highveld Steel, SA Motor Corp (Mazda and Ford), Tongaat-Hulett, African Products and many other companies. After retiring from Anglo, Boyd served on the boards of Absa, Aspen and Sun International and on the board of the Institute of Directors.

**WITSReview** relies on the Wits community to keep us informed of alumni deaths. To notify us about the recent death of a Wits alumnus, please e-mail [alumni@wits.ac.za](mailto:alumni@wits.ac.za)



## Meet you for muffins *and an argument...*

*By Hila Bouzaglou*

I went to an all-white, all-Jewish, all-perfect high school. After that, calling my education at Wits an eye-opener hardly begins to describe the experience.

Certainly, it was the very best thing that ever happened to me.

**W**its was the epicentre of freedom. It felt like magical things happened between its grey walls and then filtered out to transform Johannesburg and then South Africa.

At Wits, people say what they want whenever they want. You could call a student strike if you thought there weren't enough chocolate chips in your *Dolcé* muffin. And you could count on a hefty following at short notice.

I could tell you about the angry 10-minute lecture I got from a zoology student after I killed a bee in front of him or about the kinds of profane things people said to each other in Malcolm Purkey's lectures, spurred on by him of course.

But I want to tell you this little story. About four days into my first year, this bearded guy started speaking to me in Hebrew. As he was not an Ethiopian Jew and had never set foot in Israel, I was impressed. I was so blown away that I even listened with a smile to his points about why there was no such state as Israel and why the country I was born in was an apartheid state. It turned out that he did this to all the Jewish students – charmed them with his Hebrew, and then drowned them in Middle Eastern politics.

He approached me again in my fourth year, by which time Wits had given me the Edge and I was a much wiser and bolder person. I'd learnt about nihilism and existentialism, dealt with four years of bureaucratic nightmares (which move into an entirely different realm at Wits, akin only to the Johannesburg Home Affairs office) and even got away with swearing at the political editor of Independent News & Media for not listening to my point in class (ok, there was some fallout from this I admit). So, this time round I'd outgrown charm and dished it out to the nice bearded man.

Come to think of it, I don't think I've had a really good argument since I left Wits, which is saying a lot seeing as I now live in moody London. I miss sitting on the Central Block stairs or the library lawns or in the Matrix, chain-

smoking and analysing films and novels, arguing about human rights versus cultural rights, which always came back to the same thing: "Why is a Jewish briss okay but the Inuits committing infanticide isn't?"

But even with so many profound questions and passionate arguments, every day was carefree (except exam time). The coolest, most untroubled people at Wits, who epitomised this, were undoubtedly the drama students. I longed to be them. I'd even sit for hours at their watering hole, the Couch and Coffee, pretending I was one of them, staring and sometimes (only sometimes) stalking the ones I knew would be stars.

But the ultimate taste of Freedom – and I consider myself extremely lucky to have had this opportunity – was being one of the first journalists for Wits' one and only independent newspaper, *Vuvuzela*. We were taught the importance of freedom of the press and got into a whole lot of trouble for it when we used a controversial picture of a male student's hand on a female student's breast (which really wasn't so controversial but as I've said before, people at Wits love to argue) on the front page of an Orientation Week issue. It was a proud moment the day the head of the journalism department, Anton Harber, was taken to an internal hearing on our behalf.

If you graduated from Wits without having had a worthwhile argument or debate or life-changing discussion then consider yourself unlucky, because that's where the real education was. And if you disagree, that's great, write to the editor and say why ...

**Scandinavian Journal of Public Health publishes Wits research on health, population and social transitions**

The findings of some 20 peer-reviewed articles, published in August 2007 as a supplement to the *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, were based in part on research conducted by Professor Stephen Tollman and Dr Kathleen Kahn of the MRC/Wits Rural Public Health and Health Transitions Research Unit (Agincourt).

The supplement provides insight into health, population and social transitions in rural South Africa over a ten-year period of major socio-political change coupled with the emergence of a devastating HIV/Aids epidemic. The supplement is divided into sections addressing changing burdens of disease, population dynamics, childhood nutrition and social support, households and HIV/Aids, and healthcare and livelihoods. The supplement (number 69) can be downloaded freely from [www.tandf.no/sjpublic](http://www.tandf.no/sjpublic).

Chief Editor of the Journal, Stig Wall says: “The North-South health divide is said to have three dimensions: the gap in health itself, the gap in health research funding, and the gap in access to information concerning health conditions.”

In his Foreword, Wall says the supplement contributes to addressing the latter gap by providing access to information. He adds: “The supplement tells the story over ten years and provides its context and possible routes ahead. It also demonstrates the potential of a research infrastructure – the Agincourt health and demographic surveillance system – on which to build, methodologically and continually over time.”

The study site at Agincourt is a sub-district of Mpumalanga province in north-east South Africa, close to the Mozambique border and integral to a cross-border region of rural southern Africa, thereby amplifying the relevance and applicability of data and findings.

**RESULTS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION ELECTIONS 2008**

Voting for five vacant positions on the **Executive Committee of Convocation** took place from 1 February – 16 May 2008.

There were eight candidates and the following persons listed in alphabetical order were duly elected:

**Mr Gareth Bladon, Mr Dario Dosio, Professor Mamokgethi Setati, Mr Saul Symanowitz and Dr Kantilal Vallabh**

The above members will serve on the Executive Committee of Convocation for a period of four years commencing on 28 July 2008 and ending on 28 July 2012.





## The **WITS**Review Print Edition

News, views and opinions you can subscribe to!

*From the October 2008 issue, alumni based in South Africa who wish to have print editions of the WITSReview posted to them will need to subscribe.*

*Non-subscribers will be provided with an e-mail link to a free web copy of each issue.*

### *SUBSCRIBING TO THE PRINT EDITION*

International subscribers: R100 per annum - 4 issues (subscription service already in place, subscribe at any time to start receiving the magazine by post)

Local subscribers: R80 per annum - 4 issues (subscribe by 15 September to receive the October issue or any time thereafter to receive subsequent issues)

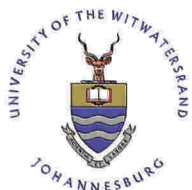
### *HOW TO SUBSCRIBE*

- Online payment using a Visa, Mastercard, American Express or Diners Club card at [www.wits.ac.za/alumni/payment](http://www.wits.ac.za/alumni/payment) or <http://web.wits.ac.za/alumni/payment>
- Via electronic transfer or bank deposit to FNB account no. 62077141580, branch code 255-005, reference no.1142 (Subscription)
- Cash or credit card payment at the Alumni Relations Office
- Telephone or fax your credit card details to the numbers that follow

For more information or if you need any assistance with payments please call: +27 (0)11 717 1090/93/91, email [alumni@wits.ac.za](mailto:alumni@wits.ac.za) or fax +27 (0)11 403 4493.

### *COMPLIMENTARY COPY PROGRAMME*

Some categories of alumni are exempt from having to subscribe to receive a print copy of the magazine. These categories include donors, volunteers, Wits staff, and special cases. To confirm if you are exempt from paying a subscription fee, please contact: +27 (0)11 717 1090 or e-mail [alumni@wits.ac.za](mailto:alumni@wits.ac.za) or Alumni Relations, Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050.



DDB South Africa 27715

35 Years of Academic Excellence ... now marked with the introduction of the Wits Convocation Ring

# Do you qualify for the gold ring?

*Convocation Rings*  
*Subtle, Distinctive and Distinguished*



**We don't like to be showy, but let's face it: a qualification from the University of the Witwatersrand is worth celebrating with a symbol of similar stature.**

*Priced between R2,000 and R7,000, the Wits rings are crafted in solid 9k, 14k or 18k gold. Individually hand finished. 10% of the purchase price on every ring is donated to the Wits Alumni Student Bursary fund.*

Order online at [www.wits.ac.za/alumni](http://www.wits.ac.za/alumni)  
Further information available on [www.wits.ac.za](http://www.wits.ac.za)  
or contact Desirée on 082 767 1009

