



# Wits Review

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

October edition 2023, Volume 50



## Abiding witnesses

A view of the Convocation War Memorial sculpture by Moses Kottler, which overlooks the flowerbed in front of Robert Sobukwe Block on East Campus. These figures, who have watched the changes on campus for years, commemorate the students, staff and alumni who gave their lives during the First and Second World Wars as well as the Korean War. Their names are inscribed in a book in the Wits archives

Image: Peter Maher





In this issue



Sixto Rodriguez performs on stage in 2015 in Glasgow, United Kingdom  
Photo: Gallo/Getty Images

38  
Cover feature  
Is that you Sugar?  
“It was like hearing from a ghost”

REGULARS

Editor’s Note .....	05
Letters .....	06
Reunions .....	08
Research .....	13
Witsies with the Edge .....	30
International Witsies .....	44
Books .....	58
In Memoriam .....	68
Wits End .....	78



64  
Historical feature  
Hugh Wilson  
“He taught with such enthusiasm”



Image: Chanté Schatz

25  
Photo Essay  
Rare snowy shower



Image: Brett Eloff

18  
Wits Spaces  
Flower Hall  
Tears and triumphs are the nature of exams and the revamped exam venue has seen it all



54  
International Witsie  
Hankyeol Lee  
Frame by frame

22  
Profile  
Ruth Leas  
“Accept things are always uncertain”

Image: Rebekah Kennington



30  
Witsies with the Edge  
Motswedi Modiba  
“South Africa is a great place”



44  
International Witsie  
Charles Goldstuck  
Note by note

Image: Brian Sager

**Editor**  
Peter Maher

**Contributors**  
Heather Dugmore, Ufrieda Ho,  
Jacqueline Steeneveldt,  
Professor Chris Thurman

**Photography**  
Brett Eloff, Chanté Schatz

**Graphic design**  
Jignasa Diar

**Printing**  
Remata

Published by the Office of Alumni Relations, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.  
**Address:** Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050, South Africa / Tel +27 (0)11 717 1090  
Email: [alumni@wits.ac.za](mailto:alumni@wits.ac.za), [www.wits.ac.za/alumni](http://www.wits.ac.za/alumni)  
[www.facebook.com/witsalumni/](http://www.facebook.com/witsalumni/)  
[www.twitter.com/witsalumni](http://www.twitter.com/witsalumni)  
[www.linkedin.com/groups/76204](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/76204)  
[www.flickr.com/groups/witsie/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/witsie/)

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

**Subscriptions per copy:**  
South Africa **R50** (incl. VAT & postage)  
International **R100** (incl. postage)

**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 by electronic transfer or bank deposit to: First National Bank, Account No. 62077141580, Branch Code 255-005, Ref. No. 29613 (+ your name) or by cash or credit card payment at the Alumni Office.

WITSReview is published twice a year. 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.

**WITSReview Magazine, Volume 50, October edition 2023**







## Alumni Giving Ensures Our Success

For more information visit  
<https://wits100.wits.ac.za/>

SCAN  
 HERE TO  
**DONATE**



**Wits. For Good**

# Achieving our full potential

A few years ago, I became aware of a distinguished Wits graduate, Cornelis de Kiewiet, who was Provost and later acting President of Cornell University before being appointed the fifth President of the University of Rochester, where he served from 1951 until his retirement in 1961.

Cornelis had commenced his studies at Wits' predecessor, University College, Johannesburg and was awarded a BA degree at the first Wits graduation ceremony in 1922. He then obtained a BA Hons in 1923 and MA the following year from Wits. He also served in the first Wits SRC in 1922.

I had no idea that Cornelis had a twin brother, John Arie de Kiewiet, until our alumni reunion events in Texas in September this year, when one of his descendants in San Antonio, Witsie Mark de Kiewiet, (BSc Eng 1982, GDE 1987, MSc Eng 1990) mentioned it to me.

The De Kiewiet twins were born in 1902 and the family emigrated to South Africa from the Netherlands in 1903. Their working-class father was originally a miner and later a railway worker. As Mark tells it, times were hard, and his great-great-grandparents could not afford to send both twins to university. With the help of a bursary, Cornelis was chosen for a university education. John started as a pattern maker for his father-in-law and later started a foundry in Fordsburg making iron, brass and aluminium parts for the mines and railways.

It's a fascinating story that illustrates how our lives can be influenced by situations beyond our control. It is sobering to think what different paths our lives could have taken under different circumstances or if we reflect on how the past has impacted the present, whether in our personal lives or more broadly in society.

From experiences in childhood to the collective histories of societies, the impact of the past is ever present. Our lives today can often only be understood in the context of what has gone before with access to education playing a key role.

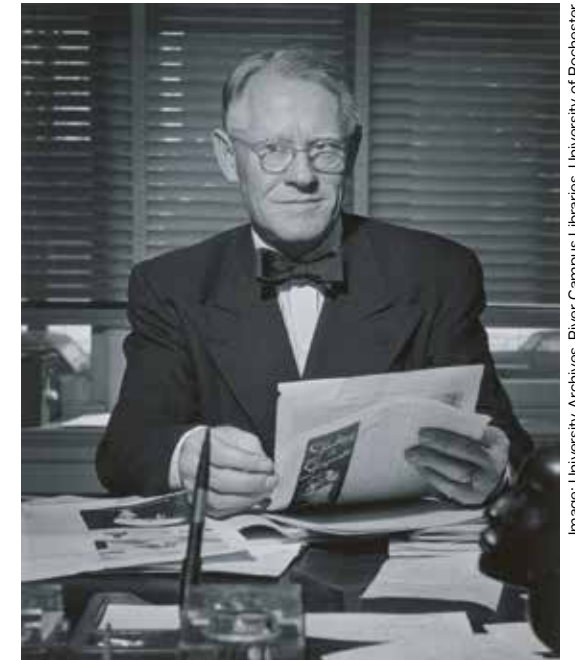


Image: University Archives, River Campus Libraries, University of Rochester

The former President of the University of Rochester, Cornelis de Kiewiet, is credited by some for helping create the research university as we know it today

Many alumni can attest to the enduring impact the education and training they received at Wits has had on their lives. Their time at Wits helped them grow, shaping their values and beliefs, instilling resilience and the ability to solve problems. The knowledge and skills gained during these years are the bedrock on which careers are built.

Researching De Kiewiet's career further, I was struck by an observation he recorded when working at the University of Iowa: "I have only to say a word and they order whatever books I require ... *They are madly keen that you be given every chance to do good work.*"

As a society, we need to be madly keen to ensure that every citizen has the opportunity to develop and realise their full potential. Education is one fundamental way to achieve this.

John was successful in what he did. He expanded and relocated his company to Isando, designed and built his own house on Linksfield Ridge and held several patents for shell mould casting of aluminium. He excelled in his hobbies of photography, oil painting and chess.

One can only wonder what heights such a talented twin brother might have scaled with a Wits education.

**Peter Maher**  
 Director of Alumni Relations



## What a great tribute

The latest *WITSReview* (April 2023) reached me the other day and between my wife and myself we've read most of it. My goodness, **Dr Anthony Holley** (MBBCh 1991) is quite a boytjie, isn't he?



As always, I read the obituaries first. This time I was reminded, very poignantly, of two men who'd lectured to me way back in the early 1960s.

**David James** (BSc Eng 1950, 1952) was a wonderful physics lecturer and John Bradley kept us aspirant electrical engineers both bemused and entertained by the bewildering aspects of chemistry – a world of eternal mystery to us. Somehow, we passed. It's another excellent issue and well done in producing such a great tribute to a great university.

**Brian Austin**  
(BSc Eng 1976, MBA 1988)



## Thank you for making an impact

Thanks so much! The story is just wonderful – and it looks gorgeous! The Anthropology Department has been in touch with me and **Regina**

**Twala's** (BA 1948) family; they are planning on re-naming a postgraduate student award in honour of Twala. So, thank you for the publicity for Twala. It's really great to see it making an impact.

**Joel Cabrita**  
Stanford University (author of *Written Out*)

## Keep up the good work

Last week my wife brought me the April 2023 edition of *WITSReview* – she got it from someone at our Friday Church Market. I only read it last night. I just want to congratulate you and your team with the high standard of this magazine...interesting articles, history and stories about old students...some that I still remember from public life! A very interesting story that I enjoyed was the one of Natalie Keetsi – “A year at Harvard Law School” – the best law school in the world. As a young man I was always dreaming of studying there. I am impressed with what Natalie achieved in life – I am sure she will soon be a Professor at that institution. I studied law at Tuks in the middle sixties, am now 83-years-old and retired 25 years ago and live in Strand/Somerset West. I wish you and your team good luck with the great work that you are doing, publishing a magazine of this calibre.

**Ben van Rensburg**  
Strand

## I enjoy the alumni stories

I'd just like to express my appreciation for the *WITSReview* and its quality in both content and presentation over the last few years. They have all been really interesting and

presented in a professional and attractive format. I particularly enjoy the alumni stories. My congratulations and thanks to the team.

I'm a fourth-generation Witsie with a proud family connection to the university since 1921. My great grandfather, **John Mitchell Watt** (LLD *honoris causa* 1972) was the first professor of pharmacology in 1921 and the first Dean in the Faculty of Medicine in 1922. He's particularly remembered



in his field for the monograph with Dr Maria Breyer-Brandwijk, *The Medicinal and Poisonous Plants of Southern and Eastern Africa*.

His son and my grandfather, **Ian Boris Watt** (BSc Eng 1947) later became professor of surveying. He had a keen interest in archaeology and he surveyed and developed the excavation grid for Sterkfontein caves where the now-famous Little Foot skeleton was discovered by Profs Ron Clarke and Phillip Tobias. His daughter and my mother, **Patricia de Saxe** (BA 1982) went on to work for several mining houses during her career as a market research analyst.

Finally, I am an engineering graduate and was a visiting senior lecturer in the School of Mechanical Industrial and Aeronautical Engineering, teaching a 2nd-year engineering course in the evenings through Wits Plus and supervised several final-year and master's students. Today, although I am based in the UK, I maintain research activities at Wits via the South African Centre for Sustainable Road Freight.

**Dr Chris de Saxe**  
(BSc Eng 2009, MSc Eng 2012)



# It begins with the students

Image: Brett Eloff

In August 2023 **Kgomotso Mufamadi** (BA 2006, LLB 2009, LLM 2011) became the new President of Convocation for a four-year term.

Kgomotso is an attorney of the High Court of South Africa, a qualified commissioner of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and a lecturer at the University of Johannesburg. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in political studies and law, a Bachelor of Laws degree as well as a master's in intellectual property and media law. She is a fellow of both Brightest Young Minds and the Aspen Institute's African Leadership Initiative, a recipient of the Inyathelo Youth in Philanthropy Award and was among the *Mail & Guardian's* Top 200 Young South Africans in 2015. She serves on several boards and is currently reading towards a doctorate in labour law.

She told *WITSReview* “My vision for my term is focused on improved student engagement as I am of the view that alumni engagement begins in our formative

years at the university. I am committed to improving the public profile of Convocation. I look forward to continuously crafting and reshaping my vision as my journey progresses.”

Convocation is a statutory body and the name given to the University's largest constituency – its alumni. Over 200 000 graduates, Wits academic staff, and retired academics with 10 consecutive years' service to the University make up Convocation. Convocation is guided by legislation, Wits Statute and the Wits Rules.

The role of Convocation is “to discuss and state its opinion upon any matter relating to the University”.

The President of Convocation leads the executive team of Convocation and is a member of Council (the governing body of the University) and plays a formal role at graduation ceremonies. The President works in collaboration with the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, the Alumni Relations Office and the Development and Fundraising Office.



## Reunions



## Local

**CAPE TOWN: 11 MAY**  
**UMHLANGA: 3 AUGUST**  
**POLOKWANE: 14 JUNE**

Alumni in South Africa were invited to attend the centenary reunions in **Cape Town, Polokwane** and **Umlhanga** between May and August 2023. They were given the opportunity to enjoy cocktails, catch up on Wits news and network at various spectacular venues. The turnouts were described as “successful” and atmosphere “very positive and convivial”.



Images: Peter Maher

## Texas

10-14 SEPTEMBER

A Wits delegation had a productive Texas road trip with fantastic offers of local volunteer-driven initiatives to keep Witsies in Texas connected. They enjoyed connecting with alumni and sharing an overview of Wits' achievements in **Dallas, Austin, Houston** and **San Antonio**.



Images: Peter Maher







## FOUNDERS' TEA 2023

### Messages of hope

The Class of 1983 was welcomed to their first Founders' Tea on a beautiful spring morning on the Gavin Relly Green on 3 September 2023. **Dr Stavros Nicolaou** (BPharm 1986, DSc *honoris causa* 2019), group senior executive responsible for strategic trade at the Aspen Pharmaceutical Group, was the guest speaker, and encouraged about 350 alumni to provide hope during times of uncertainty. Vice-Chancellor Professor Zebulon Vilakazi reassured alumni that "Wits is the shining city, the beacon of hope on the hill, an aspirational institution". The oldest graduate in attendance was specialist oncologist and activist **Dr Selma Browde** (MBBCH 1959, DSc *honoris causa* 2003). This year, a memento booklet of Founders' reminiscences, submitted at the University's Centenary celebrations, was gifted to all in attendance.



Photos: Vivid Images



BRIAN AND DOROTHY ZYLSTRA SPORTS COMPLEX

Healthy boost

This R250 million sports complex is described as a “gamechanger” for Wits and will house the Zylstra Sports and Health Building, the Zylstra Aquatics and Rowing Centre, and a 44-bed residence for elite athletes. It was made possible by a generous donation from the Zylstra family and the Skye Foundation and construction is expected to be completed by 2026.

Sports historian Jonty Winch launched his book, *Wits Sport 100: 1922-2022*, to celebrate a century of the University's sporting history at the ground-breaking ceremony in May.



Gauteng Health MEC Nomantu Nkomo-Ralehoko and Professor Joy Shackleton cut the ribbon to officially open the clinic

Image: Chanté Schatz

DENTAL CLINIC

Smiles all around

The Zola Wits Dental Clinic opened its doors to offer oral health services to the communities of Soweto on 15 September 2023. This state-of-the-art facility was made possible by a generous donation from the Bergman Family Foundation to the University's centenary campaign. The clinic will be staffed with dentists, oral hygienists, dental assistants, and specialist dentists on a rotational basis, supervising around 12 students per rotation.



SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY

Foundations of Steele

Wits University received a donation of US\$10 million to rename the Wits School of Accountancy after celebrated Professor Margo Steele, who served as Head of School from 1987 to 1995. The donation was announced at Steele's 90th birthday celebration that Wits hosted in her honour in May 2023. Her approach to education was forthright: “It's about upholding the morals and ethics of the profession. I focused on teaching my students to do their job properly, with no deviations from the Companies Act.” She has said: “I don't believe that accountants should be wise men, working out deals and looking for opportunities.”



Research

PALAEONTOLOGY



Image: Nobu Tamura, <http://spinops.blogspot.com/> /Patty Jansen/SciNews

A new study shows that a fossil discovered in 1978 was not a small *Massospondylus carinatus* (above)

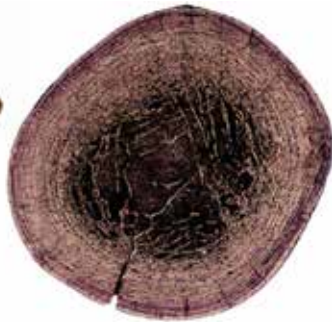
A small bone with big implications

Dr Kimberley Chapelle (BSc 2013, BSc Hon 2014, PhD 2019) is the lead author of an analysis of a single arm bone of a species that lived about 195 million years ago. The original fossil bone was discovered in an area known as the Massospondylus Assemblage Zone in the Karoo Basin in 1978. It was assumed, because of its small size, that the bone belonged to a young *Massospondylus*. But Chapelle's study, published in the journal *Royal Society Open Science*, shows the specimen was fully grown weighing around 75kg based on bone tissues studies. While there isn't enough evidence to name a new species yet, the fossil suggests that the ancestors of the sauropods and their close relatives, known as the sauropodomorphs, were more diverse than realised. This finding unlocks further research opportunities. “Until now, we didn't know that early sauropodomorphs could get this small, so the smallest skeletons were assumed to be babies. We can now reassess these skeletons discovered in southern Africa and hopefully find a more complete individual from which we can name a new species,” she says.

Sources: Royal Society Open Science, Genus Africa



The bone's structure suggests the dinosaur was fully grown at the time of its death





CONCUSSION  
**Tackle the risk**

“If there’s a potential to be involved in a tackle or to be hit there’s the risk of injury,” says **Professor Jon Patricios** (MBBCh 1999), director of the Wits Institute for Sports Health who co-led the latest international consensus statement on concussion, published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*. The implications were visible in protocols adopted by World Rugby during the 2023 Rugby World Cup. “Safety awareness is higher than it’s ever been, and our protocols are evidence-based and more robust,” he says.

Sources: The Conversation, Wits News

South Africa's number eight Duane Vermeulen (R) tackles France's wing Damian Penaud (C) during the France 2023 Rugby World Cup quarter-final match between France and South Africa in Paris, on October 15, 2023.

Gallo/Getty Images



## METEORITES

### Discovery rocks!

Two Wits geologists **Professor Roger Gibson** and **Professor Lew Ashwal** confirmed the “rocks” found by a member of the public, Gideon Lombaard, in the Northern Cape, years apart, were indeed meteorites. “Once we were able to examine the fragments, using a range of petrological and geochemical techniques, we were able to not only confirm that they were meteorites, but also show that the two were distinctly different, despite being found only one kilometre apart,” says Gibson. He says there are currently over 72 000 documented meteorites that have been collected across the world, weighing approximately 700 tonnes, but the entire meteorite collection of the world could fit into a cube with edges of only 6m.

Source: Wits News



# Show stopper

Tears and triumphs are the nature of exams and the newly revamped **Flower Hall** has seen it all.

By Ufrieda Ho

**Above:** The Flower Hall in 2019 **Right and bottom:** The newly revamped building at night with its elegant curved arches

Images: Supplied

**O**f all the nightmares we battle to shake off, one that clings pretty tightly involves taking up a seat in an exam hall knowing we'll need more than a hope and a prayer to get to the end of a three-hour paper and pass.

For many Witsies, the Flower Hall on West Campus is notorious as a brutal venue for exams, especially in winter.

But in 2021 the hall underwent a transformation. Under the architectural vision of **Heather Dodd** (BArch 1992) of Savage + Dodd Architects, the old 1969 building has bloomed into something a little closer to its name.

Dodd recalls her own loathing of writing exams in the venue. "It was so cold I got up and left as soon as we were allowed to. But after all, this had been the flower hall for the Rand Easter Show, so it was built to be cold to keep the flowers from withering."

Better temperature control was a priority in the refurbishment brief. "It is a space with huge volume but it now has fantastic environmental temperature control," says Dodd. The project set out to turn Flower Hall into an adaptable space for exams and to complement engineering lab research work.

"It now has good lighting," adds Dodd, "and we've used chilled beam technology, which

helps to keep the building cool in the summer and warm in the winter." This is a system that pushes water or air through a network of beams in the building to regulate temperature.

Two new floor plates have been added, meaning there is a full floor and mezzanine, which doubles the seating area.

The Flower Hall is connected to the Gold Fields building and the wall of the south façade has been replaced.

For Dodd the refurbishment is a nod to the history of the building, but also a recognition of the need to adapt and modernise the campus. It also recognises that places have personal resonance: when people say their years at Wits



"The Flower Hall reimagined is warm, inviting and visually stunning"







"I'm sure they didn't need water to mix the concrete with all the tears that we left in that building."

were the best of their lives, they can call to mind a picture of where that magic took place.

The Flower Hall reimagined is an outcome that **Julie Courtneage** (BSc 1991, BSc Hons 1992), who was a student in the late 1980s and works as a part-time lecturer at Wits Business School and Wits Mining Institute, says is warm, inviting and visually stunning.

"Today's students don't know how good they have it," she laughs.

"I finished with a BSc honours in geography and environmental science and from 1987 through to 1990 we used the Flower Hall for exams. The pain started with my walk from East Campus across the piazza outside the Great Hall with the freezing winds blowing in my face. I was always one of those who arrived early and watched as the layers of people would grow in the minutes before they opened those creaking barn doors," she says.

Courtneage was known to "dress" in a sleeping bag. "It was the floor that was so cold for me but also as if the cold radiated off the corrugated iron ceiling."

She says the landscaping has also helped transform the Flower Hall from its foreboding atmosphere to a welcoming, modern space.

For **Bernadict Maruma** (BSc Eng 2019), Flower Hall exams were bad but Hall 29 was next level cruel because it was so far from his residence in Braamfontein.

Maruma, who studied engineering between 2013 and 2018, says the long walk to get to exams meant more steps taken with anxiety and trepidation. "There are always those elements of doubt you have, no matter how well you have prepared."

Starting every exam with self-affirmation helped him focus. "I would say to myself, 'you deserve to be

here; you deserve the future you're working for – let's go get this," he says.

Maruma says he can hardly recognise the Flower Hall now. "When I saw the photos for the first time I remember thinking the architect had created a trick of deception making that space look so beautiful. I also said I'm sure they didn't need water to mix the concrete with all the tears that we left in that building."

The distance of time allows for a sense of humour about exams and perspective too about failure. **Tash Moodley** (BCom 2016) remembers a comp maths paper in her first year as a BCom student that went horribly wrong. "I didn't study at all for the paper. I had already failed the course but still had to go and write the fifth test. I didn't bother opening the question paper; I simply filled in at random the MCQ bubbles and handed it in so I could leave early (I only sat for the 30 minutes minimum time). I walked out of the exam venue (Flower Hall) and went straight to the library to finish an assignment for a different subject. When the results came out, I scored minus 15%. It remains my favourite and most memorable exam to this day."

Former law student **Olebogeng Mogomotsi** remembers a Hall 29 exam that was particularly embarrassing. It wasn't that the paper was particularly tough, it was because he was called out with a lecturer's quip.

"It was my final undergrad exam in Hall 29. As soon as I walked in my prof spotted me and blurted out 'I'm glad you graced us with your presence today' – in front of everyone. Clearly, I was notorious for missing lectures," Mogomotsi says.

On the flip side of it all are the people like Abe Pieterse and Denise Francis, who are head

and deputy head of the Examinations and Graduation Office (EGO). It falls to them to ensure that exams run smoothly. Planning for an exam starts four to six weeks before the day and involves co-ordinating schedules, input from the various schools, securing the services of chief invigilators and campus security. There are also venue checks and then the printing and checking of exam papers.

Pieterse says: "I totally understand the trauma of exams. But we are moving away from exams to systems of assessment. What students should realise though is that an exam is not just to test what they have learnt and what they can recall, it's also about goal-setting, discipline, time management, and delivering under pressure."

Francis says exams are about upholding integrity and standards for the university and the office's role is to ensure the smooth running of exams at all venues. Some seat 30 or 40 students; the Flower Hall can accommodate nearly 800 and Hall 29 around 1200.

"People do have a two-fold reaction to us at EGO. We can represent what they're most terrified of, especially if some students end up at our office because they've been caught cheating. We can also be their greatest help when they are in a dilemma at an exam venue," she says.

Inside the venues it's the invigilators like Moira Sampson who keep things in order. The team of invigilators sometimes manages a few hundred students at a time, writing several different subjects in the same venue.

Sampson says invigilation calls for a balance of empathy and firmness to ensure that everyone has the fairest chance to write their exams without glitches and disruptions.

"We have had a few panic attacks and then you have to try to calm the person down, remove them quietly from the hall and call campus health if they need it."



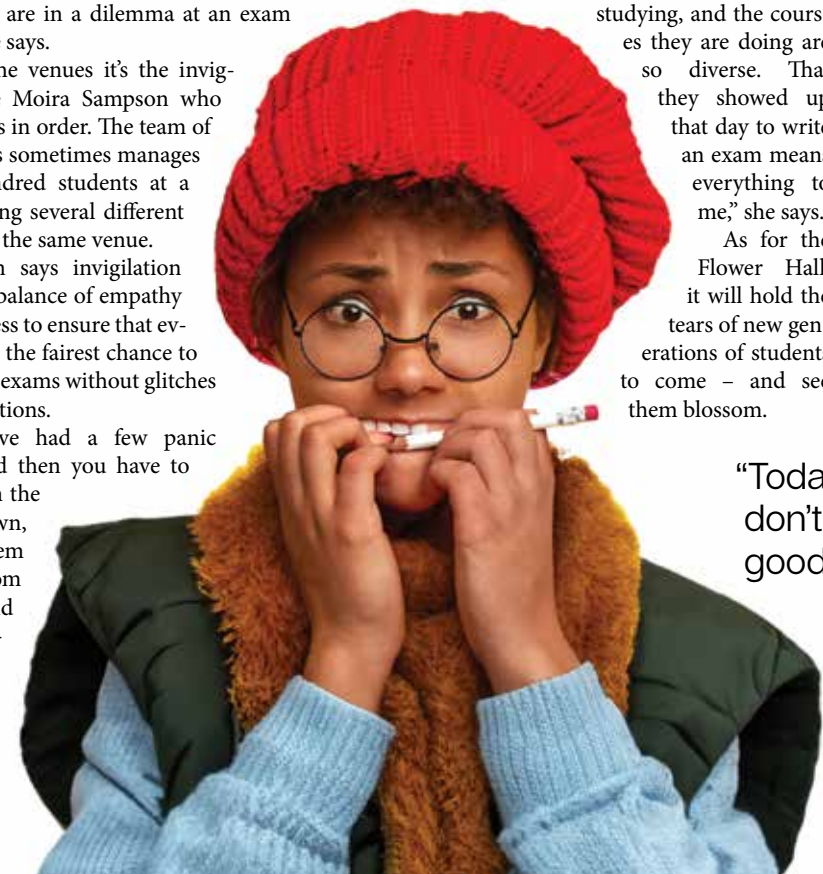
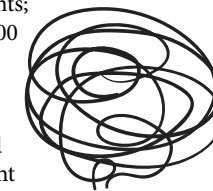
And yes, she's seen the crib sheets, the lucky charms, the parents praying outside and also the jubilation of getting to the end of a journey.

But Sampson says exams means stepping stones and possibility: "Education is my passion and it's my greatest pleasure to see so many students all there sitting in an exam venue because they are interested in studying, and the courses they are doing are so diverse. That they showed up that day to write an exam means everything to me," she says.

As for the Flower Hall, it will hold the tears of new generations of students to come – and see them blossom.

**Above:** Students writing exams in the newly renovated Flower Hall  
**Left:** Mezzanine floor, which doubles the seating area

Images: Brett Eloff



"Today's students don't know how good they have it."



# Take the first step

As one of just twelve FTSE 250 women CEOs, **Ruth Leas** (BA 1993, BA Hons 1994) shares how she's navigated her career in a fast-changing economic environment.

By Ufrieda Ho

It's Ruth Leas's accent that gives her away immediately – and that's exactly how she likes it.

Ruth is CEO of Investec Bank in the United Kingdom, and a South African who has proudly retained her Joburg accent even after living in London for the past 22 years. She has made straddling two worlds a kind of superpower: it certainly provides perspective.

Even when she was an undergrad student doing her Bachelor of Arts degree she unexpectedly had to bridge the two worlds of Wits East and West Campus. She says: "There was a lot of walking up and down because I was based on East Campus but took economics on West Campus. I got to be with both populations – those studying business and those who were in the arts. Those were good days with great memories," she says.

Fast forward to June this year. As she settles down for a video chat it's a time of upheaval in the finance world, with the fallout from bank collapses in the United States and Switzerland. In the UK, high inflation and higher interest rates are new territory.

Image: Rebekah Kennington





"It's not so much the level of the increases in the UK but the speed of the change. That's why it feels like seismic moves. The fallout from what has happened to the likes of Silicon Valley Bank and Credit Suisse filters down to what people experience as food price inflation, rising energy costs and massive income disparity.

"It does concern me what impact these uncertainties will have on people in emerging economies, like South Africa. As investors look to more attractive yields in the UK, for instance, it could mean the flows of capital are diverted from emerging economies," she says.

It helps to have perspective. Ruth says there has hardly ever been a time without some degree of uncertainty. "I can remember even as a student [in the politically turbulent years before democracy] it was uncertain times. Recently there's been uncertainty with COVID-19 and in the UK it's been about Brexit. In South Africa it's been political change and now the impact of power cuts.

"I've come to accept that things are always uncertain – it's the nature of life and the way the world is. What matters is how you respond and a key characteristic of a leader, or any person really, is to remain grounded; to build strong teams around you, to find your resilience and to practise graciousness under pressure," she says.

For Ruth, part of facing uncertainty is taking action – a bit like the "Keep calm and carry on" slogan from World War II.

It is an attitude that allowed her, as a young graduate, to be open to the advice of her economics lecturer at Wits, Professor Peet Strydom, to study abroad as a way to step outside her comfort zones.

"It's really the people at Wits who had the most impact on me. The lecturers who were engaged and were accessible and made the subjects come alive, that's stayed with me."

She did leave South Africa to study further at Cambridge on the Gencor Chairman's Scholarship. She returned to South Africa to work at Gencor (then Billiton), then joined Investec in 1998. Four years later, in 2002, she said yes to another major life shift: to take up a role that would

"I've come to accept that things are always uncertain – it's the nature of life and the way the world is. What matters is how you respond."

Ruth Leas

mean relocating to London. By 2004 she was the company's co-head: US principal finance. Ruth has continued to push her limits and is now one of just twelve woman CEOs in the FTSE 250 index.

She has also served on the UK Finance Board and currently serves on the Cambridge Judge Business School Advisory Board.

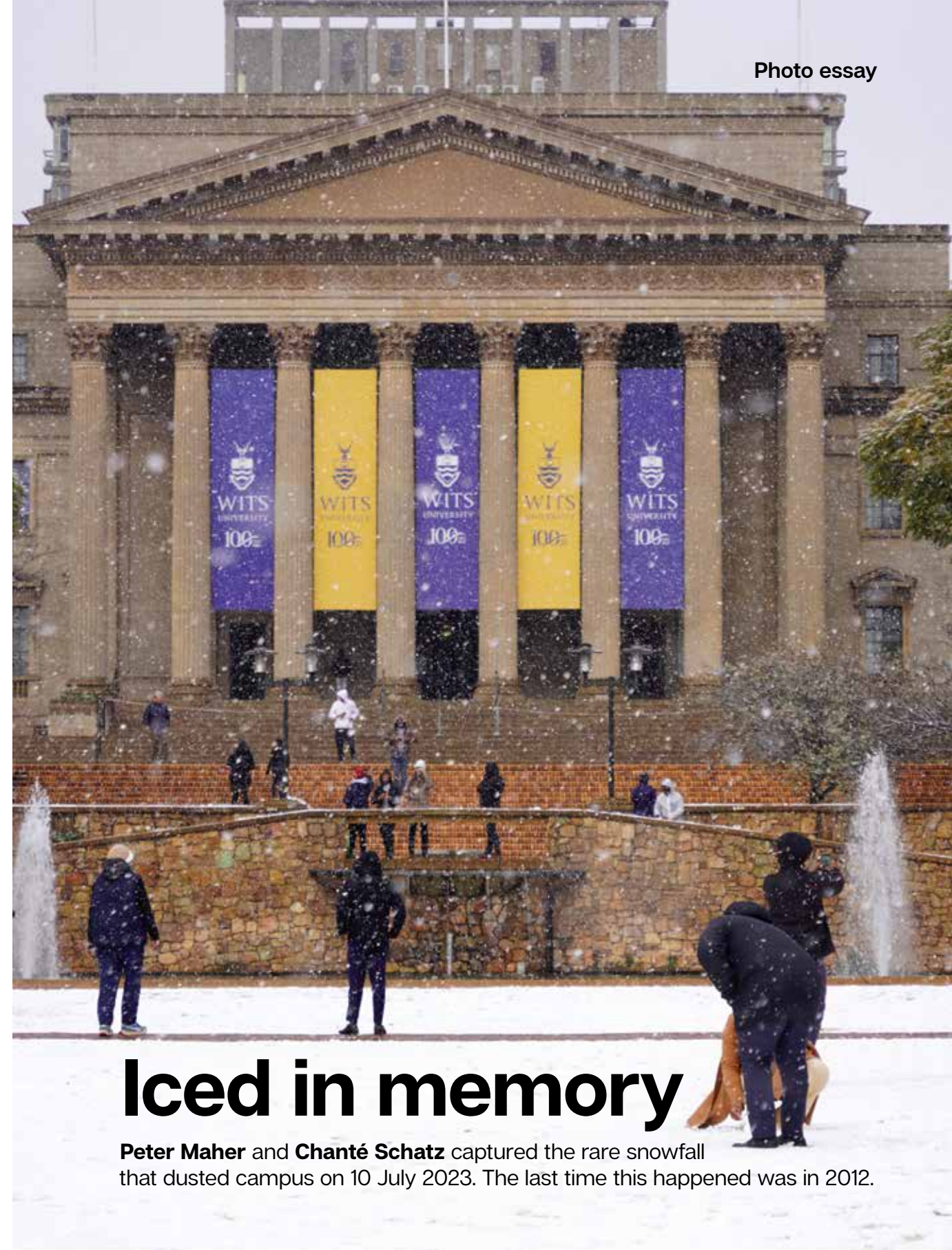
It's a lot of commitments but Ruth still finds time to mentor young women and men and stays engaged in entrepreneurial and upliftment projects, including some in South Africa. She's passionate about education and vocational training, especially teaching models that enhance children's individual strengths.

For Ruth, being tapped in matters. It's how she's able to get different views of things – and the bank's clients demand it. The businesses and banks that will thrive are the ones that recognise they are part of an ecosystem.

And right now the ecosystem is buckling in places. The world is grappling with polarisation, intolerance and inequality. Underpinning it all is the climate crisis.

"In the past, young people I engaged with would ask for advice on how to further their careers. Now they're asking what we are doing about climate change. It matters to our young people. That means we all have to play bigger roles," she says, acknowledging that her own high-profile role puts her in the same room as people with massive influence, political power and money.

Ruth says she is encouraged that the agenda is shifting. The thing is to start. "I wish I'd learnt earlier on in life that perfect is the enemy of good."



# Iced in memory

Peter Maher and Chanté Schatz captured the rare snowfall that dusted campus on 10 July 2023. The last time this happened was in 2012.











# Witsies with the Edge

## Motswedi Modiba

- SA BRAND AMBASSADOR
- BEST NEW AGE R&B ARTIST
- FIRST SOUTH AFRICAN TO COMPETE IN SING! CHINA

Wits music graduate **Motswedi Modiba** (BMus 2021) has been chosen as a global ambassador for Brand SA. Modiba, who goes by her stage name MOE, made headlines earlier this year for her MetroFM Music Award in the **Best New Age R&B Artist** category. She also became the first South African to compete in one of the biggest singing competitions in China – Sing! China. She is currently based at the Manhattan School of Music, completing her master's in jazz.

Modiba has embraced being a global citizen. "To be able to stand there in confidence knowing that I have been chosen to be a voice, to say South Africa is a great place, to paint our country in a great light and to hopefully make more people aware around the world of what we have to offer – I think it's an absolute honour for me."

Modiba has fond memories of Wits: "**Chantal Willie-Petersen** was my vocal coach – she really changed my life – helped me make sense of my voice. She moulded my voice. Her late husband, **Andre**, was also a lecturer. I am so grateful for them because they changed my life. They put in a good word, wrote referrals and spent hours and hours training me. Being able to study at Manhattan School of Music is because of them. They planted the idea and motivated me. Wits was an incredible experience. **David Couzens** was an accompanist from when I started until the end. These people were in the thick of it when I was really training my voice. I am eternally grateful for them."





Lara  
Foot



Images: Baxter theatre/Fiona McPherson

Production of JM Coetzee's *Life & Times of Michael K*

- 2023 INTERNATIONAL CITATION OF MERIT RECIPIENT
- 2023 FLEUR DU CAP BEST PRODUCTION
- SCOTSMAN FRINGE FIRST AWARD 2023 EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Multi-award-winning playwright, director and producer **Lara Foot** (BA DA 1990) was the recipient of the **2023 International Citation of Merit Award** from the International Society for the Performing Arts, for her unique lifetime achievement which “has enriched international performing arts.” She is the CEO and artistic director of the Baxter Theatre Centre. With a host of South African theatre accolades to her name, her own hard-hitting plays such as *Tshepang* (2004), *Hear and Now* (2006), *Reach* (2007), *Karoo Moose* (2009), *Solomon and Marion* (2013), *Fishers of Hope Taweret* (2017) and *The Inconvenience of Wings* (2017) have all tackled social issues in South Africa and received multiple awards. She has transformed the Zabalaza Theatre Festival, the Baxter's development programme, into a place that's “one of the most vital and important platforms

of its kind”. Most recently she adapted and directed the production of *Life and Times of Michael K*, based on Nobel Prize winning author JM Coetzee's novel, for the opening of the Teater der Welt Festival at the Düsseldorf Schauspielhaus and at The Baxter. The play is a collaboration with Handspring Puppet Company and won the **2023 Fleur du Cap Theatre Award** for **Best Production** and Best Puppetry Design; as well as nominations for best lighting design; best costume design; best performance by an ensemble; best sound design; original music; and best soundscape or live performance. At the 2023 Edinburgh Festival it further received the **Scotsman Fringe First Award**, as well as five-star reviews from *The Scotsman*, *Broadway World* and *British Theatre Guide*.



Sihle  
Hlophe

- 2023 SAFTAS: BEST ACHIEVEMENT IN DIRECTING
- BEST DOCUMENTARY FILM

Wits alumna **Sihle Hlophe** (BA DA 2009) documented her own journey through the tradition of lobola through her film *Lobola: A Bride's True Price?* In 2022 the film was runner-up of the Adiaha Award for Best Documentary Film by an African Woman at the Encounters South African International Documentary Festival and was a nominee in the best documentary category at the Africa Movie Academy Awards. This year Hlophe received two awards at the South African Film and Television Awards. She says “In South Africa, where communities have different customs and traditions, growing as a society also means acknowledging the ways we need to change, the ways we need to acknowledge women's oppression and do better for the sake of our future generations. But my message is this: Women can't be bought.” She was the winner of the Best Documentary Award at the Cameroon Film Festival for *Lindela Under Lockdown* (2020).



South African Film and Television Awards

Image: The National Film and Video Foundation



Pelonomi Moiloa

Shakir Mohamed

TIME MAGAZINE’S 100 MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN AI

Two Wits alumni, **Pelonomi Moiloa** (BSc Eng BM 2014, BSc Eng Elec 2015) and **Shakir Mohamed** (BSc Eng 2005, MSc Eng 2007) were named among **TIME magazine’s 100 Most Influential People in AI** published on 7 September 2023. Moila is CEO of Lelapa AI and in April this year the company announced its first natural language model solution called Vulavula. She was listed in the “innovators” category of the magazine’s list. She completed a double major in biomedical engineering and electrical engineering at Wits because she was fascinated by artificial organs and limbs. She went on to earn a master’s degree in 2016 at Tohoku University in Japan, where she focused on the intersection of bioengineering and artificial intelligence.

Mohamed is the research director at Google DeepMind and made the “thinker” category of TIME’s compilation. He was a star student during his time at Wits, receiving multiple student awards: SAIMM Gold Medal Award, Bernard Price Prize for electrical engineering, the Chancellor’s Medal, Schneider Automation Student Award as well as the Altech Electronic Engineering Medal. He enrolled in the University of Cambridge to study machine learning in 2007. Mohamed wants to work on projects that place the needs of local communities at the forefront of AI research. “This is one of the values that drives my work,” he says.



Pelonomi Moiloa



Shakir Mohamed



Mary Vilakazi

FIRST FEMALE CEO OF FIRSTRAND

Early in October, FirstRand announced that **Mary Vilakazi** (BCom 1999, BCom Hons 2000) will be appointed as the company’s **first female CEO** in April 2024. She joined the company as group COO in 2018. As one of three FirstRand executive directors she has worked closely on strategy execution and successfully led several key growth and diversification strategies. “I am delighted to be entrusted to lead one of the largest and most profitable financial institutions in Africa,” she says.

Image: Chanté Schatz



Rob  
Still

2023 EVOOLEUM OVERALL BEST

De Rustica Olive Estate, owned by **Rob Still** (BCom 1978, CTA 1980) won **first place** at the eighth edition of the prestigious **2023 International Extra Virgin Olive Oil Quality Awards** (EVOOLEUM). De Rustica Olive Estates, which Still founded in 2006, received the accolade for its Coratina oil, beating 999 other entrants to be named the “EVOOLEUM Overall Best”. A panel of 26 judges blind-tasted nearly 1 000 olive oil samples from global producers. Still’s 4000ha-olive farm is nestled in the Swartberg Mountains, around 5km from De Rust. He is also chairman of Pangea Exploration (Pty) Ltd. He shared his memories of Wits: “It was serious business and Wits commerce was probably best in South Africa. For us all, I think, the stand-out person was the Head of Accountancy, Professor Margaret Steele. She was a force – highly competent and tough. None of us missed her lectures! My fellow students graduating in 1978 have succeeded in diverse industries globally.”



Tiisetso  
Lephoto

DISTINGUISHED YOUNG WOMAN SPECIAL AWARD



**Dr Tiisetso Elizabeth Lephoto** (BSc 2010, BSc Hons 2011, MSc 2013, PhD 2016) was awarded the **Distinguished Young Woman Special Award** at the 2023 South African Women in Science Awards. She is the founder of a non-profit company, Nematech Pty Ltd, offering mentoring for unemployed science graduates. She is currently a microbiology and biotechnology lecturer at Wits and has three years of postdoctoral research experience. She is recognised as one of the youngest PhD graduates in the field of cell and molecular biology. She recently completed her MBA at the University of Reading, and she is currently a LLB candidate at Unisa with an aim of specialising in patent law, policy, and contract law.



Heather  
Zar

ERS LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN PAEDIATRICS

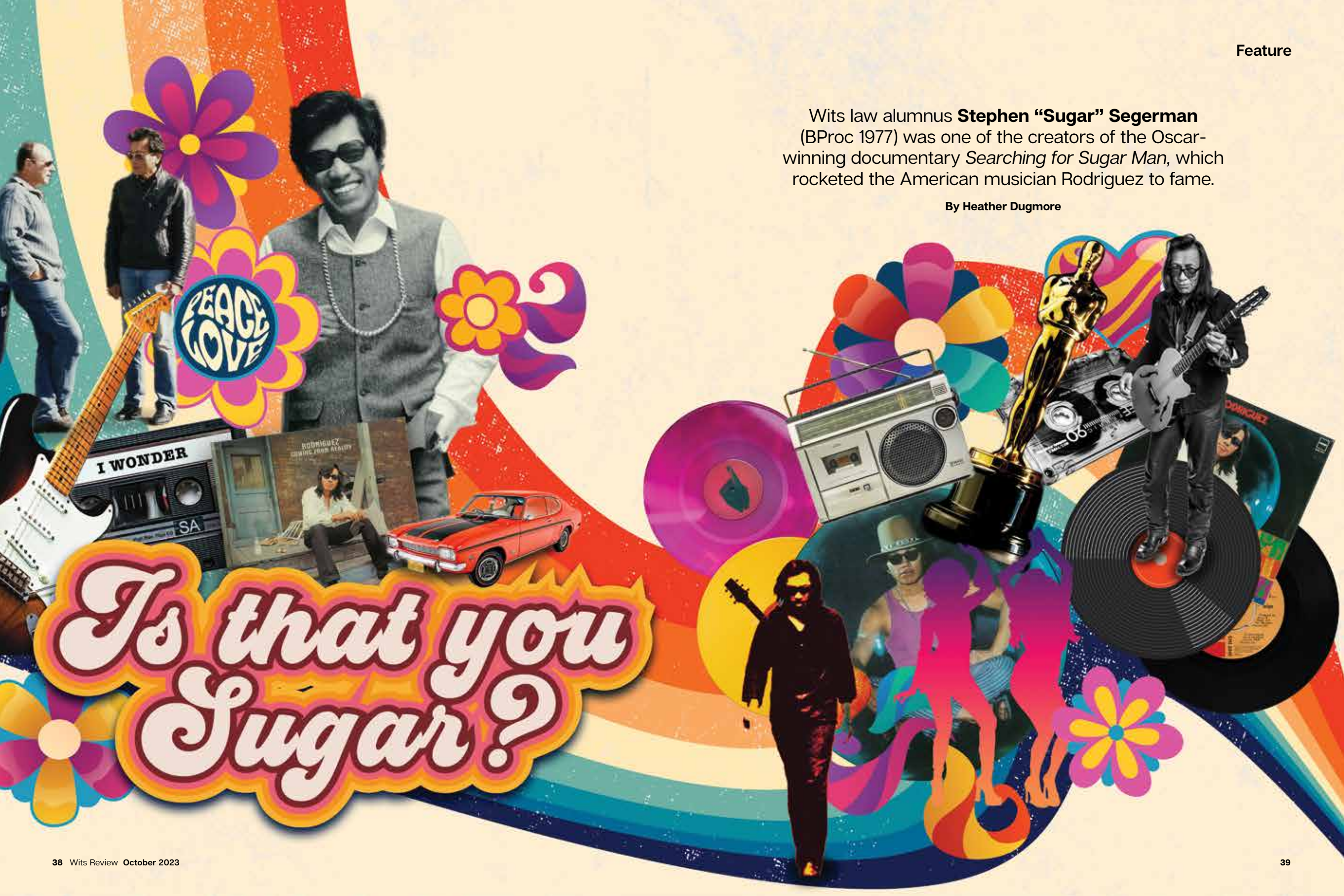
The European Respiratory Society (ERS), the largest scientific and clinical organisation in respiratory medicine in Europe, awarded **Professor Heather Zar** (MBBCh 1985) its **Lifetime Achievement Award in Paediatrics** in Milan in September for her work in child health. She is chair of the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health as well as director of the SA-MRC Unit on Child & Adolescent Health, at the Red Cross Children’s Hospital. She is passionate about reducing health inequalities and says paediatrics is “about creating futures” and “there’s so much to be done.”





Wits law alumnus **Stephen “Sugar” Segerman** (BProc 1977) was one of the creators of the Oscar-winning documentary *Searching for Sugar Man*, which rocketed the American musician Rodriguez to fame.

By Heather Dugmore





## Feature

**D**u-dudu-dudu-dudu ... the unmistakable opening chords of *I Wonder* repeated over and over, escalated the capacity audience's fevered anticipation of Rodriguez at the start of his South African tour on 6 March 1998.

Backstage was Stephen Segerman, or Sugar, a nickname derived from his surname being mispronounced as Sugarman. Sugar had been on an epic decades-long search to find the mysterious musician who had a profound influence on his generation in South Africa.

Rumours had circulated that he was dead, possibly by gruesome self-immolation on stage. But here he was at the Bellville Velodrome at the start of a nation-wide tour in front of an enraptured audience.

"Sixto Rodriguez was American but he was unknown there, while in South Africa he had this huge following that he didn't know about," says Sugar.

He clearly remembers the day he first heard Rodriguez's album *Cold Fact* in 1971: "I was at the Swartkop air force base in Pretoria doing compulsory military service when a friend of mine, John Hyde, told me to jump into his Ford Capri and listen to Rodriguez on cassette. It was just incredible.

"Apart from the brilliance of the album, as young South Africans living under apartheid we couldn't believe the censors had let through this anti-establishment album with explicit references to sex and drugs in songs like *I Wonder* and *Sugar Man*."

Straight after the air force Sugar went to Wits. "I loved Wits; they were wonderful years. I played a lot of football there and after the air force Wits was paradise. There were lovely women, interesting lectures and it was incredible to be part of South Africa's history, the protests and Free People's Concerts. At Wits you got to know what was happening in the country. I think Wits was at its most radical then."

During his student years Sugar lived in a large commune in Parktown with eight other students and met his wife Ronit there. "We all had such good times at that house and I somehow managed to get my BProc degree despite being not very academic and a bit lazy."

After graduating he did his articles but didn't enjoy them and joined his family's manufacturing jewellery business in downtown Johannesburg. "During that time I went to America and learnt all about diamonds. But after living in Johannesburg for many years, my wife and I decided to move to



Cape Town, and that's where we still live."

With his love of music and books, he came across a second-hand shop called Kloofmart and teamed up with the owner, Jacques Vosloo, to sell vinyl records, CDs and magazines in a business called Mabu Vinyl.

*Cold Fact* was one of the most treasured records and it continued to bother Sugar that no one knew what had happened to Rodriguez. "I decided I had to find out and it so happened that another South African, Craig Bartholomew Strydom, who was working at Look and Listen record store in Hillbrow at the time, wanted to do the same."

In the pre-internet years, it took them years to finally discover Rodriguez was alive and living in Detroit in 1997. They managed to get his telephone number and left a message for him to call. "It was like hearing from a ghost when I received this call at 2am one morning and the person on the end of the line said 'Is that Sugar?'. I knew it was his voice!"

Rodriguez had a modest house in Detroit, his home until he died, and was working in construction as he couldn't make a living from music. "When we told him he was bigger than Elvis in South Africa, he was amazed and amused by the rumours about how he had killed himself,"

Sugar says.

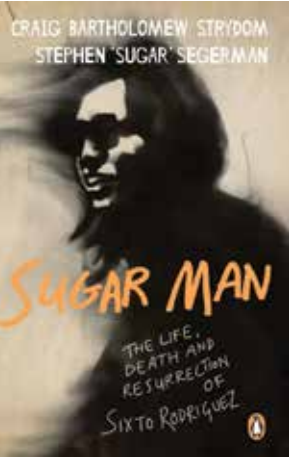
"He knew nothing about his fame in South Africa because he had never received any of the royalties from sales of his music here from his record label, Sussex Music, and manager, Clarence Avant. He wasn't even bitter about this. He had a wonderful philosophy about life. It gave him pleasure that there were people who loved his music and he handled his subsequent international success with wisdom and modesty."

Over two decades after *Cold Fact* had been released in South Africa, Rodriguez was still huge in the country. People loved him, and

**Above:** Stephen Segerman in his record store Mabu Vinyl in Cape Town



Feature



**Above left:** *Sugar Man* book cover published in 2015 **Above right:** Stephen at the Oscars along with director Malik Bendjelloul, writer Craig Bartholomew Strydom and producer Simon Chinn **Middle:** Rodriguez' legendary anti-establishment album 'Cold Fact' **Below:** Sugar and Rodriguez



when Sugar set in motion the 1998 tour and Rodriguez finally stepped onto the stage on opening night in Cape Town for the first of six sold-out concerts, his first words were: "Thanks for keeping me alive."

Rodriguez finally passed away at the age of 81 in August this year, but *Cold Fact* is now hugely popular worldwide. That's thanks to the documentary *Searching for Sugar Man* which Sugar made with Swedish director Malik Bendjelloul and cinematographer Camilla Skagerström over six years, from 2006 to 2012. This was followed by the book *Sugar Man – The Life, Death and Resurrection of Sixto Rodriguez*, co-written by Sugar and Craig and published in 2015.

Unfortunately, Sugar made very little money from the film which won the Oscar for Best Documentary in 2013. "I should have put my law degree to better use contractually," he smiles. "But I'm not worried about that. All I did was go on a search and hitch my wagon to Rodriguez's star, which inadvertently put the spotlight on me. The fact that I was called Sugar 20 years before this all happened is the strangest part of all."

Mabu Vinyl still exists but has moved to Long Street and Sugar is no longer part of it. "What's interesting is the revival in vinyl," he says. "If you have a good collection you can make decent money from it."

Rodriguez finally got his royalties a few years ago. "There was a protracted court case and everyone sued everyone else and he finally got the money he deserved. *Cold Fact* was also re-released and he died knowing he had taken good financial care of his three daughters."



# Thank you

1 614 individual donors have helped the **Wits Annual Fund** reach the **R12.2-million** mark!

# R100\* IS ALL IT TAKES

Small, regular donations by alumni will give future generations a world-class education. Enhance the reputation of your Wits degree, change lives and show appreciation for the education you received.

**DONATE** to the Wits Annual Fund at  
[www.wits.ac.za/annualfund](http://www.wits.ac.za/annualfund)

Donations are tax deductible in SA, the UK and the USA.

\*about £4; US\$5; A\$8; C\$7

UNIVERSITY OF THE  
WITWATERSRAND,  
JOHANNESBURG



**WITS**  
ANNUALFUND

[annualfund@wits.ac.za](mailto:annualfund@wits.ac.za)

Tel: (011) 717 1093



# International Witsies

## NOTE BY NOTE

US-based entrepreneur **Charles Goldstuck** (BCom 1982, BAcc 1983) has achieved worldwide success in the business of recorded music, music publishing and technology.

By Heather Dugmore

**C**harles Goldstuck has nurtured the careers of international music stars such as Alicia Keys, Justin Timberlake, Britney Spears, Usher, Leona Lewis, Sarah McLachlan and Avril Lavigne, as well as the Dave Matthews Band and Foo Fighters. He works with legends like the Rolling Stones, Rod Stewart and Annie Lennox. »





**Above:**  
Charles Goldstuck at his summer home in Nantucket

Image:  
Brian Sager

In April Charles flew from New York, where he has his office, to Johannesburg to visit Wits and to explore the local and continental music scene for his music investment firm, GoldState Music.

“African music is finally having its day, with a strong wave of global interest in music from the continent and investment from major music companies, particularly in genres such as West African Afrobeats,” says Charles.

“The ubiquity of streaming platforms is the equaliser as people can now listen to any style of music from anywhere on their smartphones. The viral nature of music is playing very well into this trend, and music from Africa will emerge as a creative global force in the next decade.”

Charles and his twin Witsie brother, journalist, author and tech commentator **Arthur** (BA 1984), have always loved music. Born and bred

in the small farming community of Trompsburg in the Free State, they went to boarding school at Brebner High School in Bloemfontein. There they smuggled a transistor radio into their dorm, and would each take one side of the earpiece and listen to the Top 40 on Radio 5 (now 5FM).

“We were at high school in the 1970s, and a lot of music was not allowed into the country or it could not be played on the radio because of the apartheid censorship laws,” Charles explains. “We would listen to everything we could find, including Rodriguez, Lou Rawls, Rod Stewart, Elton John, Pink Floyd, Slade, T. Rex and music on the Sotho and Zulu radio stations.”

He was also in the school’s cadet band, which repeatedly won the national championships. “I played the bugle and trumpet, never with much talent, but I loved the music and knew it would be a very important part of my life.”

The Goldstuck twins and their two siblings all studied at Wits and were the first generation in their family to get university degrees. Charles and their late brother **Oscar** (BCom 1982, BAcc 1983) studied accounting, Arthur studied languages and their sister **Daphne** (BCom 1979, HDipMan 1979) studied business.

“Wits was where our lives really began,” Charles says. “Arthur and I stayed on campus in Men’s Residence and it was one of the best periods of my life. It was a coming of age, and the first time we experienced a multi-racial, multi-cultural environment where free thought was encouraged.”

At Wits, he says, they could see “the world was full of opportunities, and we started seeing life in a very different way to growing up in a small town, where our parents ran the local store.

“Our parents were decent people in very conservative surroundings but in a natural way they understood that life should be fair for all. The mantra in the house was that you respected everyone.”

Their parents didn’t have the finances to send them to university, but Charles says it served them: “It’s what gave us the mindset of achieving as we had no one to fall back on financially. We had to make things happen for ourselves and we got all sorts of jobs to pay our fees. I did the books for a travel agent and got an internship from Ernst & Young, and we booked bands on campus like Mango Groove and Juluka, which was my first foray into the commercial side of music.”

The radio stations in South Africa, which were the primary form of music consumption and were SABC-owned, were very restrictive. “There were some exceptions,” says Charles, “like music presenter and producer David Gresham, but by large, no matter how good they were, local acts struggled to make a living or expand beyond South Africa’s borders, and music from the West dominated the airwaves.”

Driven by wanderlust and a desire to test himself in America, in 1985 Charles accepted an offer by Ernst & Young to move to their New York office. Arthur stayed in South Africa.

“My good fortune was that the New York office had a strong client base in the music industry and that’s how I got into contact with the Warner Music Group,” Charles says. “My first job was to run the Latin division for Warner Chappell Music in Los Angeles, a post



**Above:**  
Charles with Alicia Keys at the 2008 pre-Grammy party

Gallo/Getty Images

that no one else wanted at the time as the Latin American economies were in freefall.” With his dual ability to recognise talent and run businesses properly, he made a success of it, which led to an appointment at Capitol Records. It was also going through a rough patch and, once again, he turned it around.

“That brought me into the purview of music industry giant Clive Davis and we started J Records in 2000 in a joint venture with the German conglomerate Bertelsmann, which we built into the RCA Music Group. This was the first of my entrepreneurial endeavours.”

During this time he met his wife Karin in Los Angeles. She was in the fashion world, and running supermodel and actress Cindy Crawford’s office. “I suggested we live together for six months so that she could decide if she was happy to be with me as I’m a workaholic and I travel



non-stop. Fortunately her family had a showbiz background and she was familiar with the lifestyle. We married in 1999 and 24 years later we are still going strong, with two daughters in university.” Today, they have two homes, a summer home in Nantucket and a winter home in Palm Beach. “I spend most of my time on the road or in the air as the world of music is a very personal business and you need to be there with the artists, songwriters, producers and lawyers.”

RCA whetted Charles’s appetite for entrepreneurial pursuits and from there he took over

TouchTunes in 2009 and transformed the classic old jukebox company into the world’s largest out-of-home interactive digital entertainment network. He also introduced the first jukebox app, enabling people to select and play their favourite songs remotely.

Charles was also the founder of Hitco Entertainment LLC, a music and entertainment

company. GoldState Music is his most recent venture, established last year as a private investment firm focused on purchasing established artists’ catalogues to extend or revive the artist’s popularity.

Another recent project of Charles’s is The Sanctuary at Albany, a recording studio and music academy in the Bahamas. As part of this, he co-founded the Bahamas Youth Foundation, which provides scholarships for local teens to attend the academy.

The recording studio is a magnet for the famous. Earlier this year they had the Rolling Stones there for a month, recording an album. “I love the fact that they have been at it for 60 years and still have the drive to break new ground,” says Charles. “Top artists constantly strive for what takes them to the next place of creativity.”

Being involved in a variety of music and entertainment businesses and initiatives gives him a vantage point across the sector. “It keeps me current in terms of understanding music

consumption and where the music audience is today.”

“Social media platforms like TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat and Boomplay in Africa have quickly changed the way the younger demographic consume and use music. This is the demographic that drives music globally at present.”

He is keeping a close eye on the impact AI will have on music. “No one can predict the impact of advanced chatbots like ChatGPT. For the first time, no one has a clue about the future of the industry.

“This is not a format change or basic technology coming to market, this is about a completely different way of creating and communicating, and we are going to see an enormous amount of experimentation and disruption. Historically, technology has always been good for music. Even peer to peer file sharing, which nearly destroyed the music industry, gave way to streaming services.

“Also, great songs have always stood the test of time, so I’m confident that human creation will be at the centre of the industry for a long time to come.

“What we will have to see is whether legislation will be able to keep up with protecting intellectual copyright. When the first chart-topping AI song happens, we’ll see what opportunities this opens.”

Charles is as driven as ever. “I never feel that I have done enough,” he says. “Clive Davis is the same. At the age of 91 he is still at it every day. What I tell myself is that I had better stay relevant and keep charging up the hill, and to this day I feel I have to prove myself. It doesn’t come from insecurity or fear; it comes from wanting to do more for yourself and for others, to add value,” says Charles. He is active in philanthropic and social causes, including the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation, the United Jewish Appeal and the City of Hope Children’s Hospital.

This year he wants to get more involved in Wits. “Wits gave me everything that I have today; it gave me the propulsion to build the career I have, and I am exploring with the Vice-Chancellor how best I can give back and participate in the institution.”

He regularly returns to South Africa. “There is so much about South Africa that I love. Even though I have been living in the US for almost four decades, the country that raised me is still deep in my blood.”



**Above:** The Sanctuary at Albany in the Bahamas – one of Charles’s recent projects

# Goldstuck twins return to Wits

Earlier this year, Charles and Arthur Goldstuck visited Wits to discuss a transdisciplinary artificial intelligence (AI) research programme they will be partnering in and funding. Working with the schools of Computer Science, Arts and Business and the Innovation Hub, they will provide bursaries for PhD students to research the impact of AI on the creative industries.

“AI brings together the arts, sciences and commerce,” Charles explains. “We will be looking at the impact of AI from a technological, cultural and commercial standpoint. We have to move fast on this and produce research results within a year to be relevant and influential in this dynamic environment.

“There is lots to be done. Arthur and I strive to be relevant every day and to focus on innovations that can make a difference. Arthur is one of the premier researchers in technology globally and the focus for him would be to guide the research. I’ll ensure the research delves deeply into patterns of creation and consumption. I’ll also bring in a team of technical, creative and legal specialists from the US to work on this with the Wits team over the next year. It’s a project of about R5 million and we are confident that it will be very good for Wits, reputationally and financially.

“Arthur and I last collaborated at Wits as co-editors of the Rag magazine *Wits Wits* in 1981. We raised



Image: Chanté Schatz

Arthur Goldstuck, Professor Zebulon Vilakazi and Charles Goldstuck

about R300 000 at the time. Some 40 years later we felt it was time for the next Wits collaboration between us as we have never forgotten where we have come from and the positive impact of Wits on our student lives.”

## Wits reflections

“When we graduated in the 1980s there were 16 000 students at Wits; there are now 40 000. Wits is a significant institution by world standards and it is not an easy task to provide a premium education for so many students. We spent time with the Vice-Chancellor and department heads and deans during this visit, and it is very heart-warming to see their dedication to excellence. The contribution that Wits is making in research and innovation is enormous.

“We visited our residence, College House, and it brought back wonderful memories. The sensibility and atmosphere at Wits that challenged us country boys to better ourselves still prevails today and this was the most gratifying experience of our visit.”





# THE ICE ENGINEER

By Heather Dugmore

From his home overlooking St John's harbour in Newfoundland, civil engineer **Dr Ian Jordaan** (BSc Eng 1960; MSc Eng 1965) speaks about his work in the Canadian Arctic.

**“T**he being who put oil and gas on the planet had a sense of humour,” says Ian Jordaan. “Particularly in the Grand Banks area of Newfoundland, with depths of 100 metres and floating icebergs.” From the deck of his home, he points out the vessels for the rigs entering and leaving St John's harbour, the closest supply port.

Studying civil engineering at Wits, Ian never imagined that he would become the consummate ice engineer, whose book *Mechanics of Ice Failure: an Engineering Analysis* (Cambridge University Press, 2023) was published in February.

The art and science of designing offshore installations in ice zones is critical to the oil and gas industry operating in the Canadian and Arctic seas, to ensure the safety of rigs. It requires deep analysis and understanding of ice behaviour. “Basically, if a big iceberg or part of an iceberg called a ‘bergy bit’ hits your rig, you

need to make sure the structure is designed to withstand this,” says Ian, who started studying ice when he moved to Canada in 1970.

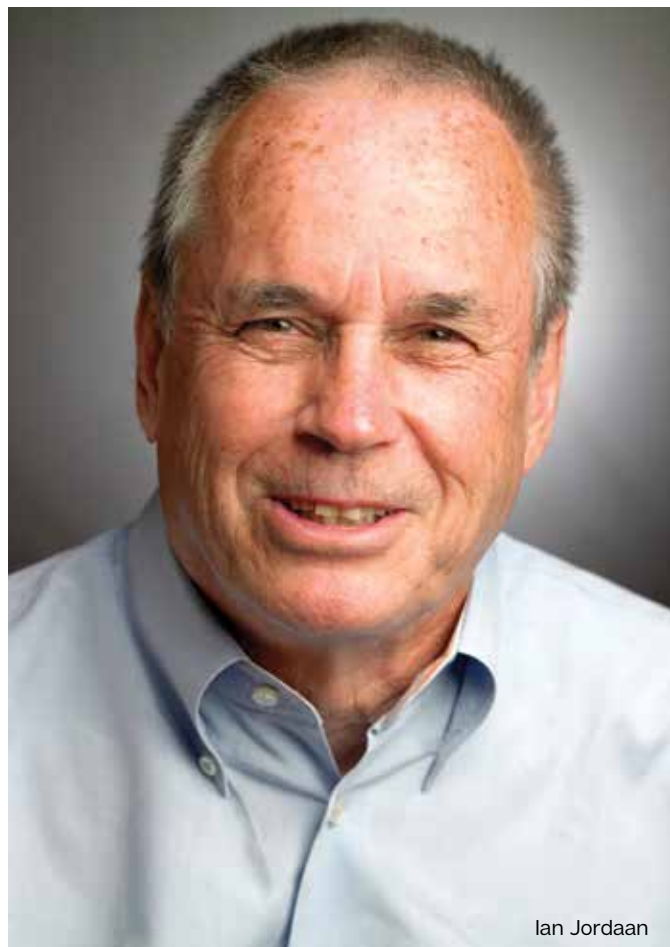
“It's been such an interesting time, and it started at Wits as a civil engineering student,” he says. Ian was in res for his second year and then lived at Phineas Court, across the road from Wits in Braamfontein. “You were really ‘in’ if you lived there,” he laughs.

“I had some outstanding maths and applied maths lecturers, such as **Professor Arthur Bleksley** (DSc 1937), who had the most astonishing mind and memory and gift for teaching.” Prof Bleksley was a member of The Three Wise Men on the Springbok Radio quiz show *Test the Team* from 1957 into the 1980s. The other two wise men were Grant Loudon and Eric Rosenthal.

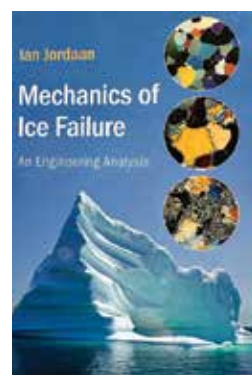
Ian was politically active and joined the anti-apartheid protests at Wits: “The police didn't play around and would violently use their batons on the students,” he says. “Verwoerd was

St John's harbour, Newfoundland. Ian's house is on the left with the red roof





Ian Jordaan



“Ice fascinates me; it changes its structure continually under stress and is one of the few materials that exhibits pressure melting”.



**Top right:** The cover of Ian's book *Mechanics of Ice Failure: an Engineering Analysis*

**Bottom right:** 'Alien registration' stamped in Ian's passport when he moved to the UK in 1965. South Africa had left the Commonwealth to become a Republic under Verwoerd

Prime Minister and the government was absolutely brutal. I felt ashamed to have an Afrikaans surname. You couldn't even get to know someone of another colour without breaking the law.”

Ian's leftist thinking was influenced by his father and professors on campus like botany Professor Eddie Roux, who ran the Rationalist Society. “It was a front for left-wing thinking and during my master's studies I organised some of the meetings.” In 1964 Prof Roux was issued with comprehensive banning orders, prohibiting him from teaching, publishing, attending gatherings, being quoted, or leaving Johannesburg. He died in 1966. His autobiography, *Rebel Pity: The Life of Eddie Roux*, written with his wife Winifred, was published in 1970.

“I cannot tell you how politically awful South Africa was then,” says Ian.

While completing his master's, he worked as an engineer on the railways. On graduating he faced the compulsory defence force call-up.

“I was definitely not going. I detested the idea of joining a white army whose objective was to beat up on black people and so I got an illegal work permit from the engineering firm Ove Arup and Partners.

“The head office was in London but Ove had offices in Johannesburg and other parts of the world. He was left-thinking and sympathised with people who wanted to get out of South Africa and he would issue work permits to assist us. I left the country ostensibly on a holiday visa at the age of 26. Your passport had conditions then and it would restrict where you could go and for how long.”

Ian joined the Arup Group in London and loved his time there. “It was the era of the flower children and the Beatles. I wasn't a flower child but I tagged along and I loved the Beatles; still do. London felt so free then. The labour government was in and you could say what you liked, whereas in South Africa you had to constantly



Image: MivPhotography



watch yourself.” At 30 he graduated with his doctorate at King's College.

Across the seas, the University of Calgary had just started its Department of Civil Engineering and offered him a post. Thus began his new life in Canada. “There were lots of young people in the department and they got me skiing from the first weekend.”

He then started doing consulting work with Det Norske Veritas, which had established a Cold Climate Technology Centre in Calgary. He became head of research and development and later vice-president in Canada for R&D. His next move was to St John's in Newfoundland. “In 1986, I was fortunate to obtain a position at Memorial University as a research chair in ocean engineering, sponsored by Mobil. The focus was to investigate ice-structure interaction.

“Ice fascinates me; it changes its structure continually under stress and is one of the few materials that exhibits pressure melting. To explain: ice usually melts at zero degrees celsius. Pressure of about 135 megapascals would decrease the melting point to minus 10 degrees. That's unusual material behaviour. Pressure also softens the ice and under certain conditions ejects it as a finely grained powder.

“We've done decades of research on the impact of ice on rig structures. One of the well-known ones is the Molikpaq structure, designed and built in the early 1980s as an exploration structure. It was extensively tested to measure its response to ice. You have to know how to weld the joints to take the punch.”

Ian explains that the Titanic, for example, was not designed to take the punch. “It was a design fault and not the welders' fault. The ship should never have wandered into the ice field and the captain did not slow down. They were

over-confident. We worked out the force on the rivets. It was like a can opening. The impact pops one rivet and the fracture extends.”

Now an emeritus professor, Ian has consulted on numerous ice projects, many with the engineering consultancy C-CORE, working on projects offshore Newfoundland and Labrador and also in the Beaufort, Barents and Caspian seas. “I worked for 61 years and I hated having to stop last year at age 82,” he says.

St John's has been his home for 38 years, together with his art curator partner Christina Parker. “It's a fascinating town with a population of about 120 000 people. It was originally a fishing village because of its proximity to the Grand Banks, which were once one of the world's richest fishing grounds.”

He's well adapted to the climate, which doesn't get nearly as cold as in Calgary. It generally hovers around zero in winter. And in summer it can get hot, 26 or 27 degrees for a week or so.

It would be remiss not to ask Ian about climate change. “I am certainly not a climate denier and I believe the melting of the Greenland ice sheet has increased the release of icebergs and ice islands. In addition to the anthropogenic reasons for climate change, there are also natural cycles accounting for the warming trend. Some years there are no icebergs at all in a given area, some years there are many.”

About the shift to renewable energy, he says, “of course we should be developing renewable energy alternatives on a global scale to make a real change. But let's be real: which country is going to stop a lucrative economic activity like oil and gas in order to ‘save the planet’? The world should be rationally working out what to do but I am not terribly confident about the extent to which we can change things.”

**Above left:** The Merchant Tavern references St John's history as a fishing village **Above centre:** Ian being inducted into the Royal Society of Canada by the President at the time, Prof Yolande Grisé **Above right:** The Duke of Duckworth in St John's for a good draught beer





International Witsies



Image: Zhen Qin

# FRAME BY FRAME

**Hankyeol Lee** (BA DA 2016) is the editor and cinematographer of the 2023 feature documentary *Milisuthando*, which has won two awards at key international film festivals.

By Heather Dugmore

“It’s nerve-racking to release a film into the world, but once it goes out it is able to form new meanings in people and that’s what we set out to do,” says Johannesburg-based Hankyeol Lee. She invested four-and-a-half years collaborating with writer/director Milisuthando Bongela on this debut feature film, which was produced by another Wits alumna, **Marion Isaacs** (BA 2003, BA Hons 2005).

The documentary is based on Milisuthando’s life and family history. It explores the complexity of identity in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa in a very personal way. Spanning

**Above left:** Milisuthando Bongela (left) with Hankyeol Lee at the New Directors/ New Films Festival in New York, April 2023. **Above:** stills from the documentary *Milisuthando*

30 years, it braids together the childhood of a Xhosa girl in what was then the homeland of Transkei, her schooling in East London in the new South Africa of the 1990s, and her adult life in Johannesburg.

“The former Transkei became an important space for black nationalism to be explored,” says Hankyeol. “It allowed Milisuthando to grow up beyond the direct reach of white racism, yet still within the belly of apartheid.”

The documentary looks at Milisuthando’s first encounter with “whiteness” at a Model C school in East London, when black children came to be integrated into previously whites-only schools,



Thank yo

Indir

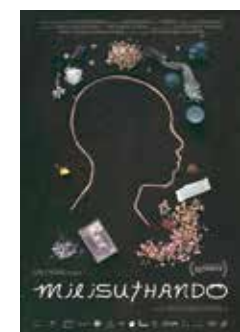
THE OFFICIAL SELECTIONS



**Top left:**  
Viviana  
Echeverry-  
Gomez, the  
Colombian  
co-producer  
of the film,  
Hankyeol,  
Milisuthando  
and Marion at  
the Sundance  
Film Festival,  
2023  
**Top right:**  
Hankyeol  
being  
interviewed  
at MoMA



Image: Zhen Qin



In June  
and July  
respectively,  
the film was  
awarded **Best  
African  
Feature  
Documentary  
Film** at  
Encounters  
International  
Documentary  
Film Festival  
and **Best  
South  
African  
Documentary**  
at the Durban  
International  
Film Festival

and then moves on to her life as an adult in the cultural jigsaw that is Johannesburg.

Hankyeol's first visit to the US was to attend the Sundance Film Festival in January this year and the New Directors/New Films Festival in New York in April. The film was screened at both. "At the Lincoln Center Theatre, there were these beautiful photographic portraits of directors, actors and masters of the cinematic form. Milisuthando and I took some photos next to them, because we couldn't believe we were here, showing our film in the same space that masters of cinema had passed through."

Hankyeol thrived on meeting other new filmmakers from around the world: "All of us dedicate so much time and energy to making non-traditional documentaries and you just don't know how they'll be received."

Their first screening of *Milisuthando* was a private test last year in the Wits cinema space, which Wits Film and Television made available.

"Watching with a group of people was one of the crucial moments in the edit of realising whether the film worked," Hankyeol recalls. "We received important feedback from my former editing lecturer **Jurgen Meekel** (MA FA 2018), my former cinematography lecturer Andrew Wessels, artist Andrea Rolles and independent film-maker Palesa Shongwe, among others."

Editing the film, Hankyeol blended the material she'd shot with the archival material shot by the director on her iPhone. "We would often

have conversations with lofty, big ideas about what the cinematography could be, drawing inspiration from this or that film. But by the end of the day, we found we had to release ourselves from this and be naked in our intentions and follow our intuition. You feel if a cut is working or not, you feel the emotion of it and whether it needs more breathing room or less."

They took the film to Colombia for online post-production, grading and colouring, and sound design. The Colombian government contributed some development funding. "We needed Dolby 5.1 surround sound and they have excellent facilities and technicians there," Hankyeol explains.

She says it was only this year that they started to get a sense of what they'd done: "It dawned on us, not only did we make a film, but it's being seen all over the world at these prestigious film festivals. We had worked so long on this, trying to make sense of this complex story and history, in this complex country of ours, and here we are."

The best part of the international screenings, she says, was the question and answer sessions afterwards: "We could see the audiences were deeply affected by the film and their encounter with a new version of South Africa's history. The way we speak about race and history, and the ancestral wounds we carry ... people came up to us crying and saying it touched an intense place that they needed to encounter."

## From South Korea to South Africa

"I was born in South Korea and my family emigrated to South Africa in 1999 when I was five years old. At the time South Korea was not yet a global power and there was a lot of violence and my family didn't know where the country was going. South Africa, after it got its democracy, was seen as a place where you could start something new and create a better life.

"With very little money, my mom and dad, who both had theology degrees but not a lick of English, became travelling sales people with a bag of optical frames which they sold to optometrists. Today, they have a thriving business called SA Optics. And my sister is an optometrist.

"I visit my family in South Korea as frequently as possible, as my grandparents are ageing. Going back is interesting and strange as I am very South African and it is very hard to acclimatise to the South Korean way of doing things. There is a strong sense of formality there, with all sorts of cultural borders between you and other people, whereas there is far more of a casual intimacy here.

"I find a lot of value in the perspective and position of being South African and South Korean. The complexity of it, the strange middle-ness of it within the greater conversation of racial and identity politics, was absolutely integral to the collaboration on this film.

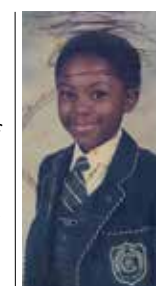


**Above:** Hankyeol having some lighthearted fun at the 2022 Jinju Lantern Festival, one of the biggest paper lantern festivals in South Korea.

"It's also important for me to understand Korean culture and where my ancestors are from. When you are outside Korea there is so much news coverage about the tensions between North and South, but when you are there, people carry on as usual. Like here, you live with the tensions, it's an everyday part of life."

About New York, she says she felt similarities with Johannesburg: "diverse; vibrant and vivid; and encountering people who were friendly, warm and open to opportunity. We were invited into people's homes, and we felt a sense of generosity."

She would definitely return to New York, "but with a reason and purpose – for a project or work. It feels full of possibility. I felt a real connectedness to a community of artists, institutes and workspaces there. I feel like I am finding my people scattered all over the world, and we are slowly forming something of a new film-makers community."



**Above:**  
A young  
Milisuthando

As for her next project, she says she and Milisuthando have "a whole notebook of ideas", but they still have so much more to do with *Milisuthando* after the festival screenings, including distribution and sales. "We also want to screen it widely in South Africa and other parts of Africa, and we want to go to Asia.

"In the meantime, I am learning how to calm my spirit as the space between projects is often the scariest because it is a place of not knowing. It feels important not to rush to the next thing, but to rather find stillness, and learn to be sensitive to the gentle nudge that pulls you to the right path."



# Books

## Statues and Storms: Leading through change

by **Max Price**

Tafelberg, 2023

**Dr Max Price** (MBBCh 1979, DOH 1993) is currently a non-resident fellow of The Centre for Global Development and consults in public health, higher education, strategic leadership, and crisis management. As former dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) at Wits from 1996 to 2006, he spearheaded a series of transformation initiatives, including the Internal Reconciliation Commission, which documented many of the discriminatory practices, including racism and the sense of humiliation that black students encountered, in the FHS. He also established a new graduate entry medical degree, academic programmes in rural health, bioethics, sports medicine, emergency medicine, and biomedical sciences.

In his latest memoir, *Statues and Storms*, Dr Price provides an insider's view, as Vice-Chancellor, of the

Rhodes Must Fall protests at the University of Cape Town. At the time, universities across the country were consumed by sustained, at times violent, demonstrations. He says the motivation for writing the book was to record a history and offer leadership lessons he'd learned around transformation. On a personal level, the memoir reveals the personal toll his job took on his family: struggling to sleep, planning escape routes out the house in the event of arson, packing photo albums and emergency supplies in the boot of the family car.

**Professor Adam Habib** (BA 1989), current director of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London and former Vice-Chancellor at Wits during the same time, praises the memoir for its empathy to the social justice agenda, whilst being "truthful about not only the inability of many activists to understand the complexities of institutional change, but also the malevolent actions of some who profess to be progressive".



**Right:** A defaced statue of British colonialist Cecil Rhodes being tied by straps to a crane, before its removal at the University of Cape Town in 2015

Gallo/Getty Images

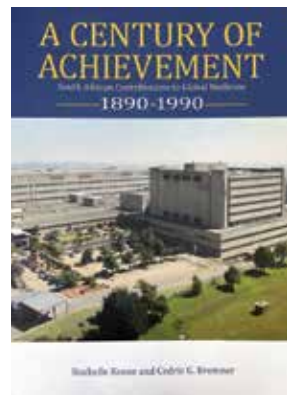




# A Century of Achievement: South African Contributors to Global Medicine 1890-1990

by **Rochelle Keene** and **Cedric G Bremner** with historical introductions by **Simonne Horwitz**

Print Matters, 2022



In 2004 when **Professor Gerald Gilchrist** (MBBCh 1957) received the prestigious Jacobi Award, he explored the unique contributions Wits graduates had made to the field of paediatrics in the United States. In his acceptance lecture he pondered on the “seeds” and “soil” at Wits Medical School that may have contributed to the University’s success in producing so many excellent graduates. He said: “The key ingredients for realising the potential of talented students are not necessarily high-technology laboratories or fancy facilities; where there are dedicated and serious teachers dedicated to hands-on medical education, the seeds of greatness will grow.”

*A Century of Achievement*, which was produced to celebrate Wits’ centenary and its Faculty of Health Sciences, offers a compilation of biographical sketches of some of the dedicated teachers and graduates who established the firm foundation for many successful global careers. The book is an outcome of an eight-year project between the authors, all Wits graduates: **Rochelle Keene** (BA 1970), former curator of the Adler Museum of Medicine; Emeritus professor of surgery **Professor Cedric Bremner** (MBBCh 1953, MMed 1968) and history professor **Dr Simonne Horwitz** (BA 2000, BA Hons 2001). It tracks the remarkable contributions made by South African doctors and medical scientists, the majority associated with Wits, from 1890 to 1990.

The historical vignettes provide insight into the conditions in South Africa, often demonstrating how responses to the challenges became “the very source of innovation”. A host of disciplines are covered, from neurosurgery, cardiology and endocrinology, to paediatrics, biomedical engineering, surgery, and transplantation, as well as fundamental discoveries about the nature of the genetic code and the control of infectious diseases, amongst several others. The dedication extends to those “who were never afforded the opportunity to excel because of sexism and racism of the time”.

Vice-Chancellor **Professor Zeblon Vilakazi** says the book “is a tribute not only to Wits University but to South African medical research in general. As such, it should serve as a source of pride not only for the University, but for all South Africans.”



**Above:** Tin temple, former municipal offices on Plein Square, Johannesburg. Teaching of first year medical and dental students in botany and zoology began here in 1917 **Below:** In 1988 many students and staff joined a march at Medical School to pressure the government to desegregate teaching hospitals

Images: Wits Archives

# The Man Who Shook Mountains: In the footsteps of my ancestors

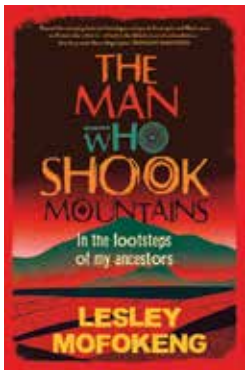
by **Lesley Mofokeng**

Jonathan Ball, 2023



**Lesley Mofokeng** (PGDipA 2019, MA 2021) is an experienced journalist who has worked at the *Sunday Times*, *City Press* and *Sowetan*. He’s authored the celebrity biographies of Khanyi Mbau in *Bitch, please! I’m Khanyi Mbau* (Tafelberg, 2012) and Somizi Mhlongo in *Dominoes: Unbreakable Spirit - The Somizi Mhlongo Story* (Brand Arc Media, 2017). In *The Man Who Shook Mountains* he turns to a more personal investigation, that of his grandfather, Mongangane Wilfred Mofokeng, a prominent Dutch Reformed Church evangelist. The title refers to a church elder’s memory of Mongangane’s animated sermons, which were “capable of shaking mountains”.

Mofokeng traces the incredible trajectory of Mongangane’s life: from farm labourer to city slicker to evangelist and community leader who built Gelukspan Hospital, several churches and schools in the area of Ditsobotla in the 1950s, known as the North West today. He says it’s a story he’s carried around for years, but only had the impetus to write because of his master’s degree in journalism and media studies at Wits. “I was worried about him being written out of history.” Sadly, much of what Mongangane built is in a state of disrepair and nothing bears his name. “This is a South African story of an unsung hero, a man forgotten by history – though not by me, nor by the people who knew and respected him,” he writes.



**Bulelwa Mabasa**

# Witsies in running for SA’s biggest literary prize

Three Witsies were shortlisted for the prestigious 2023 Sunday Times Literary Award, all in the non-fiction category: **Dr Matthew Wilhelm-Solomon** (BA Hons 2005) for *Blinded City: 10 Years in Inner-City Johannesburg* (Picador Africa, 2022), **Liz McGregor** (MA 2006) for *Unforgiven: Face to Face With My Father’s Killer* (Jonathan Ball, 2022) and **Bulelwa Mabasa** (BA 2000, LLB 2002) for *My Land Obsession: A Memoir by Bulelwa Mabasa* (Picador Africa, 2022). The awards take place on 2 November 2023 and the winners will each receive R100 000.

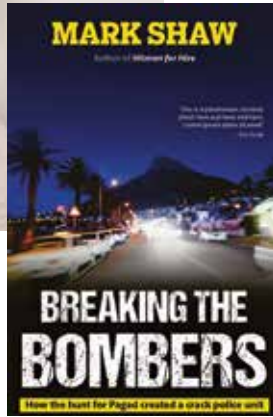


## Breaking the Bombers

by **Mark Shaw**

Jonathan Ball, 2023

**Dr Mark Shaw** (BA 1991, BA Hons 1992, PhD 1997) is director of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime and has vast experience in issues around crime, security and justice reform. His previous books include *Hitmen for Hire* (2017) and *Give Us More Guns* (2021). In *Breaking the Bombers*, he looks back a key story of violence that gripped Cape Town between 1996 and 2001. In a detailed way he looks at how Pagad, which started as a community protest action against crime, mutated into a vigilante group wreaking destruction across the city. More than 400 bombs rocked the city – most famously at the popular Planet Hollywood restaurant at the V&A Waterfront – and there were countless targeted hits on drug lords and gang bosses. Dr Shaw writes about how seemingly former foes joined forces to bring an end to the violence. “A few good men and women stepped forward, SA style: former apartheid-era detectives and intelligence personnel



formed a combined force with newly integrated liberation struggle cadres and guerrilla fighters. They represented the full spectrum of the new rainbow nation and had widely divergent political views, but after a period of squabbling they began to work together.” He says the central message of the book is: “With the right mix of people and support, the country can overcome today’s challenges no matter how dire they seem.”

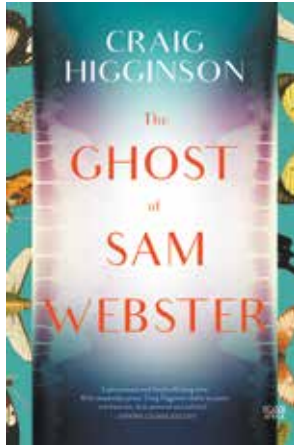
## The Ghost of Sam Webster

by **Craig Higginson**

Picador Africa, 2023

This latest novel by award-winning novelist and playwright **Craig Higginson** (BA 1994, BA Hons 1995, MA 2010, PhD 2018) tells the story of writer Daniel Hawthorne, who hears about the disappearance of a friend’s daughter, Sam Webster. When her body appears on the banks of the Buffalo River, Daniel decides to investigate. Under the pretence of researching a disgraced ancestor, the lepidopterist Lieutenant Charles Hawthorne, who fought in the Battle of iSandlwana, Daniel starts to investigate the reasons for Sam’s disappearance in the heart of Zululand.

The publisher writes that this novel is Higginson’s “most haunting and ambitious novel to date”, a combination of a war novel, a murder mystery and a multi-layered love story. It contains familiar psychological complexity of his previous prizewinning novels *The Landscape Painter* (Picador Africa, 2011) and *The Dream House* (Picador Africa, 2016), which was written for his PhD in creative writing at Wits. Fellow Witsie **Hamilton Wende** (BA 1985, MA 2015) says: “It’s an astounding book.”

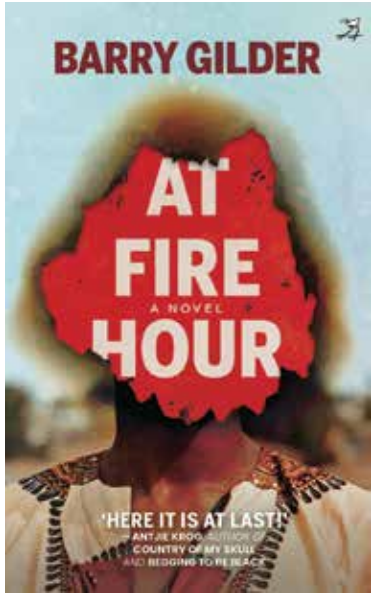


Listen to Craig Higginson discuss his latest novel and its setting

## At Fire Hour

by **Barry Gilder**

Jacana, 2023



**Barry Gilder** (BA 1972, BA Hons 1972, MA 2018) has maintained his relationship with Wits throughout his life: from enrolling as a philosophy and English student in 1969, when he joined the National Union of South African Students, participating in many anti-apartheid pickets on campus, to producing his debut novel *The List* (Jacana 2019) as part of his master’s in creative writing and now his most-recent novel *At Fire Hour*, which has been written as part of his doctorate.

The title comes from the poem *Native’s Letter* by Arthur Nortje (1942-1970): “And let no amnesia/ attach at fire hour: for some of us must storm the castles/ some define the happening.”

Gilder, who is the current South African ambassador to Syria and Lebanon, infuses his past experiences as ANC member and MK soldier with fictional characters in this novel. He tells the story of Bhekisizwe Makhatini, a young black South African writer, forced into exile, who studies a creative writing master’s in the UK and undergoes military training in Angola and the Soviet Union. Bhekisizwe must choose

between his writing and military skills. In addition, he faces suspicion by his ANC comrades that he is a spy.

The novel draws attention to the ANC’s links to poets and writers such as Mongane Wally Serote, Keorapetse Kgositse, Alex La Guma, Lewis Nkosi, Thami Manyele, Barbara Masekela and Albie Sachs. It shows the organisation’s ties to art and cultural events such as the Medu Art Ensemble in Botswana and the Culture in Another South Africa festival, which took place in the Netherlands in 1987.

Gilder says he hopes the novel will find resonance with people who have an interest in history and who are interested in the debate between art and society.

Fellow alumnus **Mandla Langa** (DLitt *honoris causa* 2019, MA 2020) says: “The writer takes a lot of risks in telling this story, going deep into his imagination to recreate a series of landscapes which form the staging grounds for acts of courage, love, commitment and of course, the very obverse side of this coin.”





# HOW MUCH STICKS?

A recent book celebrating the legacy of **Hugh Wilson** (BA 1953, BA Hons 1954) is a reminder of the impact an inspiring teacher makes.

By Jacqueline Steeneveldt





Contact  
pmarketos@  
kes.co.za to  
purchase a  
copy

There is an assumption that one goes to school (or university) to learn. But exactly what one learns is harder to quantify. Such thoughts prompted **Paul Marketos** (PGCED 2023) to return to the school where he'd spent most of his childhood. As a computer scientist with a Bachelor of Science and a master's in English literature from the University of Cape Town, he recently swapped his position as director of IsoMetrix – a leading global software company he co-founded in 2002 – for a high-school classroom at King Edward VII School in Johannesburg.

The motivations behind the radical move are outlined in Marketos's book *Hugh: The Life and Teachings of Hugh Wilson*, a celebration of a teacher who made a deep impact on his life at the very school he now teaches at. "The process of writing this book strongly influenced my decision to change career. Writing about Hugh inspired me to give back in some way the education I received. I remember from my Latin class that the root of 'inspire' is *spirare*, to breathe. So, I have breathed in something of his spirit as I have researched and remembered."

Drawing from diary entries, archival material and personal testimonies, Marketos shows the multiple ways in which Hugh influenced the environment in which he worked. Many of the reminiscences include students who themselves went on to become prominent Wits alumni.

**Hugh Wilson** was born on 24 September 1932, the eldest of three children, to schoolteacher parents. He excelled at school, matriculating from Krugersdorp High School, and enrolled at Wits in 1950, where some of the seeds of his life-long connection to Latin and classical thought were planted. He originally planned to major in mathematics, to follow in his father's footsteps, but chose classical studies after his interactions with **Professor Theodore Haarhoff**, a friend and contemporary of Wits' first Principal **Professor Jan Hofmeyr**. Haarhoff was a founding member of the Classical Association of South Africa, and as a liberal and humanist, believed deeply in the virtues of tolerance and co-operation. Professor Haarhoff's major interests were in Vergilian studies and classical antiquity. The "Vergil lecture" was an annual feature on the Wits calendar during Hugh's time on campus. In post-war Johannesburg a huge emphasis was placed on training professionals. Questions about the utility of a classical studies



teacher were not uncommon, as indicated by this tribute to Professor Haarhoff from the first volume of *Acta Classica* in 1958:

*a teacher of classics, more than one of the 'obvious utility' subjects, will feel constrained to ask himself from time to time, just how much of all this is 'sticking'?... In respect of anything beyond this, however, he must be content...to work in the dark, and it would be distressing indeed if the darkness were perpetual. But, if he has done his job well and conscientiously, illumination will come - and how refreshing this can be!*

Hugh proved to be an excellent student. He commuted between his family home and campus by train and the long journeys gave him time to read. He completed his Bachelor of Arts degree, receiving the Hellenic Community Prize for Classical Studies, with an award of £25. He was invited to complete an honours degree in Latin literature and moved into residence on campus. Despite being invited to continue with a master's degree, he chose to obtain a teaching diploma at the Transvaal College of Education and in 1955 joined King Edward VII School as a Latin teacher.

## EVERY LESSON A PERFORMANCE

Over the six decades of his tenure, it emerged that he had a gift for coaxing and challenging his students to think independently, and to pursue academic rigour and social responsibility. His classroom was arranged with desks pushed back against two walls, in an L-shape, so students could see each other and were seemingly looking onto a stage. To be taught by Hugh felt more like an "intimate theatre" with his desk being centre stage and every lesson a performance. "Each lesson was interspersed with a myriad of diversions into mythology, philosophy, history, psychology and sex education," writes Marketos.

Former South African Test cricketer and legendary administrator, **Dr Ali Bacher** (MBBCh 1967, LLD *honoris causa* 2001), who was also taught by Hugh from 1957, recalls: "He taught with such enthusiasm." Similarly, **Colin Hossack** (BA 1992, BA Hons 1993) recalls: "To be taught by Hugh Wilson was to be placed into a higher stream of consciousness – at its source, or about as close to its source as you can get. What keeps this stream from drying up? The one thing above all was that Hugh sought to inspire. He wanted more than our attention. He wanted our enthusiasm. *En theos*: god in you. Make the connection – root the word – to be enthusiastic is to have god in you."

Hugh's real passion was the Dramatic Society, which he started managing in 1955, as **Vincent Bath** (BSc Eng 1960), former CEO of Rand Water and past president of the International Water Association, recalls: "An important event in 1955 was the production of *The Pirates of Penzance*. Few boys at the time would have been prepared to be associated with the Dramatic Society, let alone participate in their activities. But Hugh changed all that. They involved a great cross section of boys, of varying talents, in a cultural and musical experience of benefit to their broader education. But above all it was intended to be fun." Under Hugh's guidance the school's reputation for drama grew, with a major production staged annually. There was a culture of self-sufficiency, the students in control of every aspect of the production, with Hugh hanging around as "eminence grise". He overcame numerous funding obstacles and transformed an abandoned bicycle shed into a permanent theatre. When Hugh stepped down as senior deputy headmaster in 1997, after 30

years as either vice principal or senior deputy headmaster, he had produced over 100 plays that dealt with serious topics, but not without humour, as well as inspiring talents of students such as **Michael Irwin** (BA 1972) and **William Kentridge** (BA 1977, DLitt *honoris causa* 2004).

## DO SOMETHING PRACTICAL

In 1978, Hugh also successfully set up KESFAM to "awaken in the school a social conscience, and "to do something about it in practical terms". Former chief specialist and head of the Department of Medicine at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital Professor emeritus **Kenneth Huddle** (MBBCh 1974, Gold Medal 2018) recalls of Hugh: "Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital was a recipient of equipment from KESFAM to assist the establishment of a centre for AIDS sufferers. There have been many such donations to various organisations...Two quotes come to mind when I think of Hugh's contribution: It was said by Winston Churchill that 'the empires of the future are empires of the mind' and by Henry Adams that 'a teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.'"

Marketos writes that Hugh "softened the school environment" by supporting a broad range of the students' talents and was the driving force behind the school's academic and cultural awards. This is a sentiment shared by **Professor Stephen Clingman** (BA 1977, BA Hons 1978), distinguished professor at the University of Massachusetts: "In sometimes (maybe often) difficult circumstances in the school environment, there was a fundamental decency in Hugh Wilson that stood out. He challenged us, but he also introduced us to the delights of thought. I think he had more of an impact on me than just about any of my other school teachers. He may have been, or appeared, fierce at times, but under all that was a soft and amiable heart. They don't make too many like him, and I think of him with gratitude and fondness."

Hugh died on 9 March 2010, at the age of 77. Among the artifacts found in his address book was a scrap of paper written in his shaky hand with the aphorism "Only the forgotten are truly dead."

Sources: *Acta Classica* Vol. 1, 1958; *Hugh: The Life and Teachings of Hugh Wilson* by Paul Marketos (2023); Wits: The Early Years (WUP, 1982)



Above:  
Hugh with  
fellow  
graduates  
outside the  
Great Hall

"He  
challenged  
us, but  
he also  
introduced  
us to the  
delights of  
thought."

Professor  
Stephen  
Clingman

Share your  
inspiring  
lecturer/  
teacher  
story at:  
alumni@  
wits.ac.za



# In Memoriam

We fondly remember those who have gone before us



1952-2023  
**Barry Dwolatzky**  
(BSc Eng 1975)

A much-loved Wits alumnus and “Grand Geek” of digital innovation, **Emeritus Professor Barry Dwolatzky** died on 16 May 2023 after a short illness.

His relationship with Wits spanned more than 50 years and at the time of his death he was director of innovation strategy in the office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation – a position he described as his “dream job”. Even after retiring, he worked alongside Wits University’s deputy vice-chancellor, **Professor Lynn Morris** (BSc 1981, BSc Hons 1982), to establish the Wits Innovation Centre, which was launched on 17 April 2023.

Affectionately referred to as “Prof Barry”, he grew up in the northern

“Young people have the creativity and energy, the drive and the reason to build a new South Africa, a new Africa, and a new world.”

suburbs of Johannesburg, living a relatively “insular childhood”. In 1971 he enrolled for an electrical engineering degree at Wits, going on to pursue a master’s degree, which he later converted to a doctorate. In his second year, he joined a student organisation, the South African Voluntary Service, which built schools and clinics in rural parts of southern Africa. The experience changed him profoundly, as he witnessed first-hand the reality

of apartheid South Africa – villages filled with malnourished children, run by women and abandoned old men who’d had their lives sucked out in the mines. “I realised for the first time: how much my privilege and their underdevelopment were part of the same coin,” he said at the launch of his memoir *Coded History: My Life of New Beginnings* in 2022.

It was the beginning of a life as a political being, with a strong ethical compass. He left South Africa in 1979 to pursue research at the University of Manchester’s Institute of Science and Technology and at Imperial College in London. He worked as a senior research associate at the GEC-Marconi Centre in the UK, work which entailed software research and development projects. On his return to South Africa in 1989, his impact as senior lecturer was pronounced. He identified the importance of programming and information technology in engineering as well as introducing a software stream, which became distinct from the electrical engineering stream. He was made full professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering in 2000.

Prof Barry demonstrated skills as an innovator and strategist and was the major driving force behind the establishment of the Johannesburg Centre for Software Engineering in 2005. In 2013 he spearheaded the Tshimologong Digital Precinct. The centre attracted support from government and a range of local and international companies, including IBM. He was named “South African IT Personality of the Year” in 2013. He became Tshimologong’s first director and was honoured for this visionary project with the Vice-Chancellor’s

Award for Academic Citizenship in 2016.

He received an award for Distinguished Service to IT from the Institute of IT Professionals of South Africa in 2016. In his acceptance speech Prof Barry said: “One of the things that I try to teach my students is that the hardest thing to manage is a software project, because you will be managing something invisible. This whole industry is invisible, yet it is the underpinning factor in the current fourth industrial revolution...” He loved young people and said:

“Young people have the creativity and energy, the drive and the reason to build a new South Africa, a new Africa, and a new world. I believe in the future of our country. This is also the point of a university – to prepare people for the future.”

His life had many health challenges – he received a diagnosis of leukaemia in 1987 and faced its recurrence in 2020. Yet, as a friend, **Janet Love** (BA 1988, PDM 1994), said, “he was able to do things – rather than dwell on a pile of lamentations”. He was generous with his time,

listening attentively with kindness to everyone who crossed his path. Vice-Chancellor Zebulon Vilakazi used the Yiddish word “tzadik” to describe him: a wise, righteous leader respected for his sense of justice and wisdom and whose life’s work was shared among many.

He is survived by his wife, **Rina King** (BSc Eng 1981, PGCE 2008), and his children, **Leslie** (MA 2022) and **Jodie** (BA 2019, BA Hons 2020).

Sources: Wits archives



1944-2023  
**Gladwyn Leiman**  
(MBBCh 1967)

Former director of cytopathology at the University of Vermont College of Medicine in Burlington, **Professor Gladwyn Leiman** passed away in Vermont, United States, on 1 October 2023.

Professor Leiman’s distinguished career began at Wits and after her surgical and medical internships at the Johannesburg General and Baragwanath hospitals, she was appointed medical officer and subsequently an associate professor in the Cytology Unit of the Department of Anatomical Pathology in the School of Pathology of the South African Institute for Medical Research in

1971. Professor Leiman gained international acclaim for, inter alia, her “Project Screen Soweto” programme, which led to a significant reduction in cervical cancers by monitoring cancer precursors and establishing family planning protocols in Soweto.

In 1999, the refurbished laboratory at the South African Institute for Medical Research was renamed the Gladwyn Leiman Cytopathology Centre. She was a sought-after speaker among the international obstetrics and pathology communities, travelling and lecturing extensively in the US, Canada, Australia, England, India and the Middle East. She was recruited as the director of cytopathology and as a professor of pathology at the University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington. Here, her fine needle aspiration skills brought her recognition as an excellent diagnostician, teacher and clinical researcher.

At the International Congress of Cytology in Paris, Professor Leiman received the 2012 Maurice Goldblatt Award: “For her lifelong love and dedication to clinical cytology; for her very special relationship to underserved areas of the world and her willingness to bring knowledge and expertise to people deserving improved medical care; for her

academic rigour and achievements in publishing and teaching.” She was awarded honorary membership of the Indian Academy of Cytologists and the South African Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. In 1996 she was named as a Light Source Personality of Cytopathology by the International Academy of Cytology.

On retirement she said: “My future plans are to resurrect my right brain, and re-enter the worlds of literature, music and history, which were my major interests before I deviated to medical school. In particular, I want to reengage in Holocaust studies and genealogy, which have been constant unofficial pursuits throughout my life.”

Professor Leiman’s family said she “rarely spoke about her accomplishments” and “was at once highly gregarious and intensely private”. Fellow alumni described her as an exceptionally kind, caring and compassionate person and a loyal friend. She “provided the glue” that held her Wits Medical Class of 1967 together for more than 50 years.

She is survived by her two brothers Russell and Darryll and their families.

Sources: *Cancer Cytopathology, A Century of Achievement* and **Dr Helen Feiner**, née Katzew (MBBCh 1967)



1926-2023  
**Doreen Mantle**  
(BA 1948)

**Doreen Mantle** died aged 97 in her London home on 9 August 2023. She was best known for her role as Jean Warboys, the annoying friend of Victor Meldrew’s wife, Margaret, in the BBC series *One Foot in the Grave* (1990-2000).

She was born in Johannesburg on 22 June 1926 to English parents, Hilda (née Greenberg) and Bernard Mantle, who ran a hotel. The family moved to England, returning to South Africa in 1930, shortly after the birth of her brother, **Alan** (BSc Eng 1953).

Mantle was schooled at Barnato Park for Girls and obtained a BA Social Science degree at Wits in 1948. Her stage career started while performing with the University Players, the Johannesburg Repertory Society, the Munro-Inglis Company and the National Theatre. She was also active in radio in the early 1950s in shows devised by Ian Messiter, who later in the UK, would create BBC Radio 4’s *Just A Minute*.

Shortly after graduating, Mantle worked as a social worker in the townships around Johannesburg, witnessing first-hand the social injustice of apartheid. She followed this with work for Legal Aid South Africa. Here she was able to provide support for activists during the growing resistance to the government. In later years she would reflect on these experiences in her one-woman show *My Truth and Reconciliation*.

Mantle met Joshua Graham-Smith, a computer engineer, at the theatre and they married in 1952. Aware that she was being investigated by the authorities for her activism and not wanting to bring up children under apartheid, the couple emigrated to the United Kingdom. “I wanted to see new places, to get away from



“The honesty that she brought to every line, however bizarre, was what made the character so funny and legitimised even the maddest of moments.”

parochial views and to change the world,” Mantle said.

In the United Kingdom she established herself as a prominent actress in stage, television and film. She carved a niche in the hearts of the British as the catalyst for surreal plot twists. The series writer of *One Foot in the Grave*, David Renwick, recalled: “No one else could have played Mrs Warboys as she did and the honesty that she brought to every line, however bizarre, was what made the character so funny and legitimised even the maddest of moments. There was never the remotest suggestion that she was playing comedy: in her hands it was all utterly real.”

Her fame led to appearances in shows such as a “*Weakest Link*” sitcom special in 2002. Asked by the host, Anne Robinson, for her most

memorable moment, she replied, deadpan, as in the mode of her character: “I was rolled down a hill and mounted by a dog.” The studio audience roared with laughter.

She toured Britain and performed at the National Theatre in *The Voyage Inheritance*. In 1979 she was awarded the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Actress in a supporting role for her performance in *Death of a Salesman*.

A highly intelligent woman of strong opinions, she worked closely with Richard Attenborough at the Actors’ Charitable Trust and latterly campaigned for visually impaired elderly people, of which she was one.

She is survived by her sons Quentin and Nicholas and her brother Alan.

Sources: Wits archives, *The Guardian*, Alan Mantle

1942-2023  
**Claude Hakim**  
(MBBCh 1965)

**Dr Claude Hakim** was a distinguished member of a remarkable class. After his internships he spent seven years in London with appointments at Charing Cross and Hammersmith hospitals.

Dr Hakim emigrated to Australia, arriving in Sydney in 1979, where he went into private practice in obstetrics and gynaecology.

He was French speaking and fluent in five other languages, which he

used daily in his practice.

He enjoyed travelling with his wife Roslyn and they visited France almost yearly. He was a gourmet and enjoyed fine wines, which he collected. He was truly a “bon vivant”.

He attended Athlone Boys’ High, where he was an outstanding rugby player and eventually school captain. An abiding vision, when Roosevelt High played Athlone, was Hakim running 25 yards to score under the posts, with four of the opposing team hanging onto him.

Dr Hakim was a skilled surgeon and his patients “thought the world of him”. He will be remembered as



a loyal friend, who “was a kind and thoughtful person”.

He is survived by his wife Ros and sons Jean-Marc and Daniel.

Source: Dr Roger Pillemer (MBBCh 1965)

1931-2023  
**Charles Brain**  
(PhD 1980, DSc honoris causa 1999)

**Dr Charles “Bob” Brain**, pioneer in the field of palaeontology, died on 6 June 2023. He had dedicated his life to unravelling the mysteries of our shared human story and his most significant achievement was his work at the Swartkrans Cave in the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site. Here, he made a series of discoveries that shed light on early hominin behaviour and evolutionary development, including the oldest evidence for the controlled use of fire by hominins, dating to about one million years ago. His influential book, *The Hunters or the Hunted? An Introduction to African Cave Taphonomy* (University of Chicago Press, 1981) revolutionised the field of palaeoanthropology. In it he developed the study of taphonomy: how organisms decay and fossilise.

Dr Brain was born on 7 May 1931 in Harare, Zimbabwe and he matriculated from Pretoria Boys’ High School in 1947. After he obtained

his Bachelor of Science degree and doctorate in zoology and geology from the University of Cape Town, he started his career at the Transvaal Museum (now the Ditsong National Museum of Natural History) in Pretoria, conducting research on rock layers of fossil hominid-bearing cave deposits. His systematic investigation revealed that each deposit had a distinct age and represented a unique climatic condition. Demonstrating his approach, Dr Brain assumed the role of curator in the Department of Lower Vertebrates in 1957, where he published several papers focusing on frogs, snakes, and lizards. In 1968 he was promoted to director, a position he held for 23 years until his retirement in 1991. In 1980 he obtained his doctorate titled “Studies in African Cave Taphonomy” from Wits.

Wits awarded Dr Brain an honorary doctorate in 1981. He received several other honorary degrees from the universities of Cape Town, Natal



and Pretoria. His contributions to the field were also recognised with awards such as the Gold Medal of the Zoological Society, the Senior Captain Scott Memorial Medal of the South African Biological Society, the Achievement Award of the Claude Harris Leon Foundation and the John FW Hershel Medal of the Royal Society of South Africa.

He is survived by his wife Laura and four children, Rosemary, Virginia, Tim and **Conrad** (PhD 1994).

Sources: Wits archive and Genus



In Memoriam

1931-2023  
**Werner Kirchhoff**  
(BSc Eng 1957)

A land surveyor of distinction and a pioneer of South African satellite geodesy, **Werner Kirchhoff** died at the age of 92 in August 2023.

Werner, born in Germany in 1931, was the son of Peter Kirchhoff and Margarete Bose. Two years later his family left Germany for South Africa, settling in Johannesburg in 1934. During Werner’s time at Pretoria Boys’ High School, he became fascinated with the way the land surveyors at the school measured angle and distance. This led him to study surveying at Wits.

Werner was influenced by his father in developing a special interest in astronomy. His early post-graduate surveys established whole degree lines of longitude and latitude in the Zambian (then the Northern Rhodesian) bush from basic astronomical field observations by precision navigation from stars. The USA’s Smithsonian Astrophysical

Observatory originated the project and Werner became associated with this institution in 1958 as an honorary observer for the International Geophysical Year.

In 1959 he was asked to join the observatory staff and to be involved with satellite tracking and later managing the Smithsonian Institution’s precision satellite photographic observation station at Olifantsfontein. He was awarded a medal for his observations.

He married Anna-Maria in 1961 and the couple had four children: Peter, Elizabeth, Teresa and **Christopher** (BSc Eng 1987).

Returning to South Africa in 1970, Werner established his own land surveying practice. He saw the application and benefits in the construction industry of laser instruments to achieve greater speed and accuracy in surveying.

When the family returned from



the US he served for several years as chairman of the Parktown Association. In 1997, following his retirement, he took up new interests in heritage and collecting Africana. In 2014 Werner re-discovered the beacon (dating from 1919) on Oxford Road, about 100 metres south of Glenhove Road.

His last few months were spent at an old age home where he peacefully passed away in his sleep.

Sources: **Kathy Munro** (BA 1967), The Heritage Portal

1928-2023  
**Beryl Unterhalter**  
(MA 1956)

Described as “one of those selfless souls who were the backbone of our country and Jewish community”, **Dr Beryl Unterhalter** died on 4 April 2023 at the age of 95.

Dr Unterhalter excelled at school and majored in social work at Wits. She went on to train social workers, teach at a primary school, and lecture in social work at the University. She became a pioneering influence in the field of medical sociology.

During apartheid, she was an active member of the Liberal Party

alongside her husband, Jack, who led the party in the Transvaal and worked as a civil-rights lawyer. The couple raised three children, **Elaine** (BA 1973), an academic in London, **Karen** (BA 1974), an educator based in Toronto, and **David** (LLB 1984), a Gauteng High Court judge.

She was “a woman of action”, with many projects on the go. She worked in early childhood education in Soweto; ran literacy programmes with young children and adults, collaborating on literacy and computer classes for domestic workers; and offered her skills to the volunteer organisation University of the Third Age (U3A). She told *WITSReview* in 2016: “When I retired from lecturing

in sociology at Wits, I wanted to learn rather than teach. I wanted to pursue my interests in English literature, poetry and philosophy. I found my intellectual home in U3A.” Among the group leaders were retired university staff who provide stimulating discussion in small groups with like-minded third-agers.

After her death, her son David said: “People talk a great deal about the value of giving, but there are those who actually do it as opposed to thinking about it. My mother’s great virtue was that she was a doer of boundless energy and effort.”

Sources: Wits archive, SA Jewish Report

In Memoriam

1941-2023  
**Winfried Bischoff**  
(BCom 1962)

**Sir Winfried Bischoff**, the former chairman of Lloyds Banking Group, Citigroup and JP Morgan Securities and CEO of Schroders, died after a short illness on 25 April 2023 at the age of 81.

Born in Aachen in Germany in 1941, he arrived in South Africa after his father had set up an import/export business in 1955. He graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce degree from Wits in 1962 and went on to attend New York University. Sir Winfried’s father nudged his son into a career in banking on the grounds that he’d “come across many bankers when building his business and none of them seemed to be very good,” Sir Winfried said.

He started his career at Chase Manhattan in New York. In 1966 he joined Schroders, which was a small investment bank and asset manager, and stayed for 34 years. At 29, he moved to Hong Kong to start the company’s Hong Kong operations. His first big deal was to help list Li Ka-shing’s property and manufacturing business. He returned to London in 1984 and was named



Schroders’ chief executive at the age of 42. “Hong Kong was the making of my career,” he told the *Financial Times* in 2019. “Among candidates who’d remained in London during the 1970s, there was a sense of negativism. That’s why I think they skipped a generation and chose me.” In the 1980s Schroders’ shares “were among the three best-performing investments” on the London Stock Exchange in the 1980s. Valued at £112m in 1984, Schroders was

worth £4.5bn by 2000, when Bischoff took the call to sell its banking business to Citigroup.

He was awarded a knighthood in 2000 for his services to banking, and applauded across Wall Street, steering Citi through the early days of the US subprime mortgage crisis, acting as chief executive at the end of 2007 and serving as chair until 2009.

In 2009, he returned to the UK as chair of Lloyds Bank, which was reeling from its ill-advised takeover of HBOS and taxpayer bailout, which sparked public fury. He removed the chief executive and recruited António Horta-Osório in 2011, who shrank and de-risked the combined group.

Soon afterwards he became chair of auditing watchdog the Financial Reporting Council, but had to endure a series of accounting scandals amid corporate collapses. He also chaired JPMorgan Securities, the European arm of the US company, from 2014 until 2020.

“Much loved husband of the late Rosemary. Loving father to Christopher and Charles and devoted grandfather to five grandchildren,” his family shared in a statement after his death.

Sources: FT, Reuters and Moneyweek

1966-2023  
**Cecilia Sentson**  
(BSc 1989, BCom 1990)

**Cecilia Sentson** was born on 31 May 1966 and died on 12 May 2023, days before her 57th birthday. She started her primary school career at St Theresa’s Convent in Coronationville in 1972, where her love of learning and reading was nurtured. She proceeded to St Barnabas High School and matriculated in 1983.

She studied at Wits, completing a BSc in information systems and thereafter pursued a BCom honours degree. She was awarded a scholarship to study towards an MBA at City University in the UK. On her return to South Africa, she was appointed as senior lecturer in the school of computer science and applied mathematics for several years.

She was employed by Gemini Consulting as a strategy consultant, by Coca-Cola Group as its head of Information Technology Strategy

and executive for Africa and the Middle East.

Her entrepreneurial journey started several years ago and involved the establishment of many ventures which culminated in the creation of her company which she aptly named Neland Consulting, in honour of her maternal grandmother.

Those who knew her said she had a larger-than-life personality and was a “pure and honest” soul.



1946-2023

**Shulamith Behr, née Ruch**

(BA FA 1969, BA Hons 1972)

Honorary research fellow and former senior faculty member of the Courtauld Institute of Art at the University of London, **Dr Shulamith Behr** died on 7 April 2023 at the age of 76.

She was born in Johannesburg on 21 December 1946, into a family of Lithuanian Jewish heritage, and was the youngest of three sisters. She graduated from Wits in 1969, receiving the Henri Lidchi Prize as the top undergraduate student in history of art. She went on to lecture at Wits for seven years, when **Professor Heather Martienssen** (BArch 1947, BA Hons 1948) initially was head of the department.

Dr Behr completed her studies in art history and theory at the University of Essex before joining The Courtauld's faculty in 1990, as Bosch lecturer in German art. She held the post of senior lecturer in 20th century German art until her appointment in 2012 as honorary research fellow. As a specialist in the study of German Expressionism she admitted to having had a long "fascination with materials and print production in the works of the twentieth century".

Her publications encompassed the contribution of women artists to German and Swedish modernism. Her richly illustrated *Women Artists in Expression: From Empire to Emancipation* (Princeton, 2022) explored how women negotiated the competitive world of modern art in Germany. Their stories challenge predominantly male-oriented narratives of Expressionism and shed light on the divergent artistic responses of women to the dramatic events of the early 20th century. Commentators have praised this work for "dismantling" the canonical histories



Image: Justin Piperger

Her work was praised for "dismantling" the canonical histories of modernism as well as painting a clearer image of how women Expressionist artists were regarded during their lifetimes.

of modernism as well as painting a clearer image of how women Expressionist artists were regarded during their lifetimes.

She was a supportive scholar and she published and edited numerous books, book chapters, reviews and catalogue contributions. She curated four exhibitions, ran 12 research seminars and conferences, made 22 guest contributions to conferences and symposia, several of these as keynote speaker, and gave 27 public lectures across the world. She taught hundreds of BA and MA students and supervised 20 students to completion of their PhD degrees.

There were numerous recognitions of Dr Behr's excellence in research, such as fellowships at Wolfson College, and at the Centre for Research in the Arts, University of

Cambridge as well as a Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship.

Dr Behr was described as "a woman before her time, who combined many fine qualities: the rigor and joy of academia as an inspiring teacher and outstanding researcher ... Behind her softness and loveliness was an iron will and determination that saw her not only through the many trials in her life, but also through much of her final illness."

She is survived by her husband **Bernard** (BCom 1968) and her sons Elijah and Gabriel and their wider family.

Sources: Bernard Behr, *Burlington* magazine and The Courtauld



1928-2022

**Joan Munday, née Elffers**

(BSc 1948, MSc 1980)

**Joan Munday** died peacefully on 29 December 2022 in Plettenberg Bay, South Africa. Born in Bloemfontein, she completed her schooling as a boarder at Johannesburg High School for Girls Barnato Park. She went on to study at Wits, obtaining a Bachelor of Science in 1948. After graduating she was awarded a scholarship to conduct plant research at the Kirstenbosch National Botanical

Gardens herbarium in Cape Town. In the 1950s she left South Africa for the United Kingdom, where she lived for several years, working in the herbarium at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, London. It was here that she began to specialise as a taxonomic botanist.

While learning German at a language school in London she met her husband **Ken** (HDipTax 1983), who had recently been demobilised from the British Army's occupation of Germany, and they married in 1956. Their son Nicholas was born in London. Later they moved to Johannesburg, where they had two more sons: **Martin** (BA 1986, MA 1988) and **Christopher** (BA 1988, BA Hons 1989, MA 1993, PGDipM 1992).

In 1972 Munday returned to Wits to work as a taxonomic botanist in the Department of Botany's Moss Herbarium. She focused her

research on grasses and desert plants and completed an MSc in 1980, with her dissertation on the plant genus *Monechma*. Fieldwork took her around Southern Africa. She and her husband both enjoyed wildlife and had a shared passion for studying birds of prey.

While working at Wits, she provided volunteer support to the Johannesburg General Hospital's Poison Centre helpline by identifying plants that patients had ingested. After retiring in 1988, she wrote the field guide *Poisonous Plants in South African Gardens and Parks* (Delta, 1988) with illustrations by the botanical artist Joan van Gogh.

Munday settled in Plettenberg Bay and when Ken died in 2019, they had been married for nearly 63 years. She is survived by her three sons and two grandchildren.

Source: Munday family

1939-2023

**David Limerick**

(BA 1960)

**Emeritus Professor David Limerick** died at the age of 84 on 13 July 2023 in Brisbane, Australia. He was born in Venterspost, where his father was mine manager, and matriculated at Krugersdorp High School. He completed a BA in psychology in 1960 at Wits and worked at the Institute of Personnel Research designing nonculture-specific IQ tests.

He married **Brigid Murray** (BA 1961, MEd 1972) and moved to Scotland in 1965 to undertake a PhD at Strathclyde on leadership, strategy, structure and culture. Thereafter he returned to Wits and, in 1975, aged 36, was appointed professor and head of Wits Business School.



In 1976, he was a visiting scholar at Harvard. In 1978, he emigrated to Australia, accepting a position at the University of Melbourne Business School. Within a year he was recruited by the innovative, new, multi-disciplinary Griffith University in Brisbane, as the foundation professor in organisational behaviour. He established the Graduate School of Management

there and retired in 1996.

Professor Limerick's research was published in key academic journals and culminated in his book, with a colleague: *Managing the New Organisation* (1993, 1998, 2002). His visionary views on organisational behaviour made him a highly sought-after management consultant, speaker and visiting professor at universities and organisations across the globe.

He was widely recognised as a forward thinker who offered groundbreaking insights on collaborative individualism, punctuated equilibrium, autopoietic models of change and interpretivist grounded models of self, leadership and change.

He is survived by his wife Brigid, daughter Tracey, son Michael, and six grandchildren.

Source: **Professor Jennifer Kromberg** (PhDMed 1986)



1962-2023

**Tiego Moseneke**

(BProc 1989)

Former president of the Wits Black Students' Society (BSS) **Tiego Moseneke** died on 19 April 2023 in a car accident at the age of 60.

He was born on 8 November 1962 in Atteridgeville in Tshwane, the fifth son of school teachers Karabo and Samuel Moseneke and youngest brother of former Wits Chancellor and **Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke** (LLD *honoris causa* 2018).

Moseneke attended primary school in his home village of Pheli and high school in Mamelodi. His grades were filled with distinctions, which ensured an easy entry into Wits on a scholarship from Anglo American for a BCom degree, but this was later changed to law. As a result of the Group Areas Act, he lived at the Mofolo Salvation Army Students' Residence, and later moved to Glyn Thomas House, on the grounds of the Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto. Valuable study time was lost during the daily two-hour commute by bus and after-hour access to libraries "was a pipe dream".

Absorbing the influence of many student activists at Glyn Thomas, he went on to be elected president of the Black Students Society in 1983 – among others such as **David Johnson** (BA 1984), **Firoz Cachalia** (BA 1981, BA Hons 1983, LLB 1988, HDipCoLaw 2003), **Chris Ngcobo** (BA 1987) and **Themba Maseko** (BA 1988, LLB 1993).

When the BSS was banned, Moseneke's resistance to apartheid morphed into active membership of and participation in the United Democratic Front. His activism came at great cost. He was arrested frequently and bore the brunt of violent encounters with the security police. According to the Moseneke



"Tiego reached out a protective brotherly arm, provided a listening ear and empathetic words of comfort"

**Shafee Verachia,**  
SRC President 2013/2014

family he was detained under emergency regulations for two years continuously and he had frequent asthma attacks while in detention.

With the dawn of democracy, Moseneke was a member of the first Gauteng ANC executive after the unbanning of the party and continued in other senior roles. He set up a law practice, founded the New Diamond Corporation, which partnered with

De Beers in diamond mining and exploration, and later New Platinum Corporation, which was sold to Jubilee Platinum. He was founder and chair of the Encha Group, an investment house, at the time of his death.

Moseneke was passionate about intergenerational dialogues between past and current student leaders. He was a founding chairman, along with other Wits alumni, of the South Africa Student Solidarity Foundation for Education, a fund started by a group of former student leaders in April 2016. It led

the way in supporting the Masidleni Daily Meal Project under the Wits Food Bank, which provides meals to students from disadvantaged backgrounds and aims to combat hunger and food insecurity on campus.

At his memorial service, held at Wits on 31 May 2023, former Wits SRC members spoke fondly of him: "He stressed innovative ways of addressing the annual fees crisis. Most importantly, he gelled well across generations. I never felt less wise when conversing with him — yet every moment was an opportunity to learn from him," said **Mpendulo Shakes Mfeka**, SRC President 2021/22. "When we were slandered, shunned and demonised as hooligans, Tiego reached out a protective brotherly arm, provided a listening ear and empathetic words of comfort," said **Shafee Verachia**, SRC President 2013/2014.

He is survived by his wife Koketso and children Didintle, Mooketsi and Pako.

**Sources:** Wits archives, Moseneke memorial



1951-2023

**Jani Allan**

(BA FA 1975, PDipEd 1977)

**Isobel Janet Allan**, better known as Jani Allan, the former columnist, died at the age of 70 on 25 July 2023 at the Chandler Hall Health Services Hospice in Pennsylvania, United States. Voted the "Most Admired Person in South Africa" in 1987, she was a glamorous trendsetter, concert pianist, model, teacher and waitress. Her career nosedived after a 1991 British documentary *The Leader, His Driver and the Driver's Wife* by Nick Broomfield alleged she had been sexually involved with right-wing leader of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging Eugene Terre'Blanche.

Allan was born in 1951 and adopted as a one-month-old by John Murray Allan and his wife Janet Sophia Allan (née Henning). John was Scottish and came to South Africa for the climate. He was chief sub-editor at *The Star* newspaper in Johannesburg. He died eight months after the adoption.

In her memoir *Jani Confidential* (Jacana, 2015) Jani described her childhood as "a parade of gymkhanas and piano recitals". She wrote: "My mother was an antique dealer. She had *horreur de vacui* – horror of empty spaces. Persian carpets

were layered upon each other at our Bryanston home."

At the age of 10, she made her debut with the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra. A year later, she won the Trinity Cup of South Africa, tying with Greta Beigel, a 21-year-old pianist. Professor Jacob Epstein and Professor Adolph Hallis, celebrated concert pianists, were among her mentors.

She initially applied to do a music degree, but enrolled for a degree in fine arts instead at Wits. She said she yearned "to be a hippie and wear tie-dyed clothing and hand-tooled leather sandals". She prolonged her time at Wits by enrolling for a post-graduate high school teaching diploma. She told *WITSReview* her favourite lecturer was Robert Hodgins: "Robert used to tell us that painting was 'a bit like surfing' in that a good deal of the time is spent bobbing about, waiting for the right wave to come along. He explained that there are paintings that stem from memory and from a sombre look at the human condition. There are paintings about the construction and confusion of contemporary urban life, but there are also paintings about the pleasures of being alive, pleasures that crowd in upon the pessimism everywhere and refuse to be ignored ... A painting of my life at Wits would be such a painting."

She met her first husband, Gordon Schachat (1982-1984), on campus. Apparently when he saw her walking down the steps at the Great Hall, he decided then and there to marry her. The marriage lasted two years. She also married Dr Peter Kulish (2002-2005). Her partners included **Stanley B Katz** (BCom 1972) and Mario Oriani-Ambrosini.

Her first job was teaching history of art at Greenoaks School. Later she taught art and English at Bryanston High School. She started writing classical music reviews for *The Citizen* newspaper and moved to the

*Sunday Times*. The editor, Tertius Myburgh, hired her on the strength of her music reviews. Within a week, Leslie Sellers designed the logo for her debut column, "Just Jani". He dropped T from Janet as it would not fit. Her first column appeared in March 1980. In her decade-long tenure at the newspaper, she became the country's most famous and influential writer and columnist. Her column later became "Jani Allan's Week", detailing her busy social diary. In later years it morphed into a straight interview profile column, "Face to Face".

Of her hometown, she wrote: "Johannesburg has never been a place for the fastidious or the over-sensitive. It is hideous and detestable, luxury without order, sensual enjoyment without refinement, display without dignity."

In a surreal twist of fate, Allan's last job was as a waitress in a fine-dining restaurant in the small town of Lambertville, in New Jersey. She became a US citizen and lived in "a small ground-floor apartment, against a steel traffic barrier and a parking lot", according to an article. She was simply known as "Juliette" – her mother's childhood nickname – and shared her living space with her beloved Pomeranians, whom she described as "spirit guides in fur coats".

She said in a SABC interview in 1995. "I think that my whole life, looking back at it, I was so rooted in worldly things, in worldly values, fame, fashion and fortune and all the things that are just transient."

**Sources:** Wits archive, *Mail & Guardian*, News24 and Gareth Davies

See more:  
[www.wits.ac.za/alumni/obituaries/](http://www.wits.ac.za/alumni/obituaries/)




 A full-page background image showing a person running away from the camera on a narrow, rocky coastal trail. The trail is bordered by lush green vegetation on the left and a steep, rocky cliff on the right. The ocean is visible to the right, with waves crashing against the rocks. The sky is bright and hazy.
 

# Finding the fun(d) in the trail

It's a tricky notion, one's legacy. It can seem so final, so fixed, so fatalistic – but it is actually a living, growing thing.

By Professor  
Chris Thurman

In a recent phone conversation with the *WITSReview* editorial office, I mentioned that for this issue I'd be writing about death. There was a nervous laugh and then an awkward silence on the other end of the line. The emphasis promised by this column's playful title is, after all, on wit (and by implication something upbeat). Readers have just made

their way through the obituaries and should not be expected to continue contemplating The End all the way to, well, the end.

But when death casts a pall over life, it doesn't keep to convenient times and seasons, never mind page numbers. It retreats and returns, it fades away but then catches us unawares. Wordsworth wrote about being

“surprised by joy” in the midst of grief: those moments when, mourning the loss of a loved one, we briefly forget that they are gone – only to be reminded of their absence with devastating sorrow, now compounded by guilt. Processing the death of a family member, a friend or a colleague, or even a prominent figure we didn't know personally, often entails recalling

(sometimes reliving) previous periods of grieving.

In September I learned of the death of James Loehlin, a much-loved professor at the University of Texas (UT) at Austin and the director of UT's flagship Shakespeare at Winedale programme. Every spring and summer for over two decades, Loehlin took students out into the Texas countryside and made »



Wits End

actors of them. It was a formative experience; being a “Winedaler” became part of their identity and stayed with them.

For two years, thanks to a course shared virtually by English students at UT and Wits, South African students were also able to benefit from Loehlin’s expertise and care as a teacher and mentor. I learned much from him as I observed him, online and in person, working his magic with young people. He had a gift and he shared it generously, resulting in an enviable legacy that was in no way diminished by his premature passing.

Earlier in 2023 the Wits community mourned the loss of another figure whose legacy is secure despite his untimely death. I was fortunate to befriend Eusebius McKaiser during our salad days at Rhodes University in Makhandla, but when I think of McKaiser during his “Johannesburg years” as a broadcaster, author and public intellectual I recall his connections to Wits: an associate of the Wits Centre for Ethics and the Philosophy Department, and a regular presence on campus as host or guest of seminars and panel discussions.

In the months following his death, it has sadly been discernible how narrow-minded individuals, opportunistic politicians and even conspiracy theorists have attempted to hijack the uncomfortable conversations that McKaiser facilitated and often led regarding race, class, sexuality, religion, culture, party politics and numerous other aspects of life in post-apartheid South Africa. Yet McKaiser’s legacy, too, remains intact: he helped to shape and sustain a culture of reasoned discussion and debate around these subjects that our country has desperately needed and will continue to need.

It’s a tricky notion, one’s legacy. It can seem so final, so fixed, so fatalistic – but it is actually a living, growing thing. It is unpredictable; it is relative to changing public moods, fashions and historical currents.

No doubt as an alumnus or friend of Wits University you, dear reader of *WITSReview*, have been asked to reflect on that word, legacy. How can you support the legacy of Wits as it celebrates 100 years? Have you



McKaiser helped to shape and sustain a culture of reasoned discussion and debate around subjects that our country desperately needed and will continue to need.

considered what your own legacy will be once you have shuffled off this mortal coil?

Perhaps you have reflected and committed to a donation or bequest. Perhaps you have politely declined; if so, I wouldn’t blame you. I’m not particularly good at contributing to worthy causes myself. But spare a thought for the fundraisers.

Recently I gave it a try, taking up an invitation from race sponsors EasyEquities to participate in the Otter African Trail Run Challenge event: known as the “Grail of Trail”, the Otter is a gruelling and sublime slog along 42km of unforgiving but beautiful Garden Route coastline. (Usually it takes five days. We were tasked with doing it in one.) This gave me the opportunity to start a fundraising campaign for Wits students in financial need. I got a lot of Facebook likes but comparatively few campaign contributions. I suppose the almost inversely proportional relationship between social media activity and real-world action is a defining characteristic of our age.

Apart from that, I don’t think there is a moral to my failed fundraising story. Perhaps the upshot of it all is, next time someone asks me for a donation, I will recall the muscle cramps, cuts and

bruises of my Otter adventure ... and I’ll contribute. Because running up, down, around and along coastal cliffs, forests and rocky shores for seven hours may be painful – but it is also life-affirming.

Out on the trail, you have a lot of time to think and you have no choice

but to feel. Somewhere between the endorphins and the exhaustion there is emotional susceptibility. You feel renewed sorrow for the dearly departed; you feel profound gratitude for the loved ones to whom you will soon return. And while you don’t have time or energy to think about your legacy, you experience an almost-mystical connection to those who have come before you and those who will follow after you.

Life, death, trail running and tax-deductible donations – it’s a lot to process. No wonder I was crying when I crossed the finish line.

Chris Thurman is Professor in the English Department and director of the Tsikinya-Chaka Centre

LEAVE A LEGACY

As we embark on our next century of impact for good, please consider supporting the University by making a bequest to Wits

Contact: Justine Dangor at [justine.dangor@wits.ac.za](mailto:justine.dangor@wits.ac.za) | 011 717 9713

