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# WITSIES IN HOLLYWOOD

# Wits Review

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

April 2020, Volume 43

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**Enquiries:** Peter Maher, Director - Alumni Relations  
[peter.maher@wits.ac.za](mailto:peter.maher@wits.ac.za) or [annualfund@wits.ac.za](mailto:annualfund@wits.ac.za)  
**Tel:** +27(11) 717 1092



# Tumultuous times

Image: Orde Eliason



Professor  
Adam Habib

**A**s I write, our world is changing at a rapid pace in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Wits University, its experts and scientists are working directly with the South African government to understand, predict, and contain COVID-19, manage the public health and socio-economic impact, and develop treatment and care regimens.

Internationally, many Wits-trained scientists and doctors are at the coalface of the pandemic and Witsies everywhere are impacted in one way or another. Our thoughts are with everyone who has suffered infection or has lost a loved one to the infection. Our gratitude goes to the millions of healthcare workers at the frontline of this public health war.

In the words of President Cyril Ramaphosa: "This epidemic will pass. But it is up to us to determine how long it will last, how damaging it will be, and how long it will take for our economy and our country to recover...But if we act together, if we act now, and

if we act decisively, we will overcome it." As Wits, we are doing just that and ensuring the safety of our students and staff during this critical time.

I also need to announce with great sadness that I will be leaving Wits at the end of 2020. By the end of the year, I will have served most of my second, and final, term of office as Vice-Chancellor at Wits. I have decided to take up the position as Director of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London with effect from January 2021.

It has been an honour and privilege to serve as Vice-Chancellor of Wits University for eight years. We have lived through some tumultuous times during my term of office and we would not have survived these times without the collective voice of all constituencies – including that of our alumni – being heard at crucial moments. Throughout my tenure, various Wits constituencies have provided wise counsel and support without which we would not have been able to survive institutionally and I thank you for that.

Our achievements have been significant in the past seven years. In 2013, we graduated 7 000 students; by 2019, this had jumped to over 9 500. In 2013, we enrolled 9 800 postgraduate students. By 2019, we enrolled 15 000 students. Our research has increased from 1 200 units in 2013 to just under 2 000 in 2020. Almost 50% of our students are first in their families to go to university. We have established a student community that is both diverse and cosmopolitan, and an academy in which black academics now constitute a small majority. We have proven that you can transform higher education and maintain the quality of our academic offering.

There is no better group of individuals to lead our institutional agenda into the future than the current executive management team at Wits. I can say without doubt that this is the strongest and most resilient executive team in the country. It has been an honour to serve with them and I look forward to doing so for the remainder of this year. I also know that I will leave this University in the best hands.

Thank you again for the collective support that you have provided throughout my tenure. Like you, I remain a #Witsie4Life.

**Adam**

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WITWATERSRAND,  
JOHANNESBURG



# Wits Review

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## EDITOR

Peter Maher (peter.maher@wits.ac.za)

## CONTRIBUTORS

Heather Dugmore (heather@icon.co.za)

Jacqueline Steeneveldt

(jacqueline.steeneveldt@wits.ac.za)

Ufrieda Ho (ufrieda@gmail.com)

## GRAPHIC DESIGN

Jignasa Diar (jignasa.diar@wits.ac.za)

## PRINTING

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University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.  
**Address:** Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050, South Africa,  
T +27 (0)11 717 1090  
E alumni@wits.ac.za, [www.wits.ac.za/alumni](http://www.wits.ac.za/alumni)

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# Witsies give expert

The *Times Higher Education* reports that one ray of light to the COVID-19 crisis is the extraordinary and unprecedented response by the global scientific community and its rapid shift to tackling the pandemic.

This includes many Wits alumni and researchers from an array of disciplines including epidemiology, medicine, public health, biomedical engineering, governance, and others, who are at the forefront of responding to the pandemic. In concert with the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), the Department of Health, and the South African government, scientists at Wits are helping to understand, predict, and contain COVID-19, manage the public health and socio-economic impact, and develop treatment and care regimens.

South Africa's experience with HIV, tuberculosis and the 2017/18 listeriosis outbreak provided valuable lessons for the current response. In the wake of the Ebola epidemic in 2014 when there were fears it would spread to South Africa, the Department of Health set up an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at the NICD to coordinate and direct an effective outbreak response. When the coronavirus in Wuhan, China, caught the attention of health authorities around the world, South Africa had world-class institutions, systems and skilled professionals ready.

## ON THE FRONT LINE

It has been speculated that one way in which the pandemic may change the world is greater recognition of the crucial role played by universities, experts and healthcare professionals in society. A large number of Wits alumni and academics are playing a lead role to tackle the pandemic. Just a few are mentioned below.



**Shabir Madhi**  
(**MBBCh 1990,**  
**MSc 1999,**  
**PhD 2003**) is

professor of vaccinology and Director of the Medical Research Council's (MRC's) Respiratory and Meningeal Pathogens Research Unit at Wits. He says his unit has been at the forefront and is internationally recognised for its contribution to the understanding of infectious respiratory disease, as well as the prevention thereof with vaccines. Madhi plays a crucial role responding to media questions, disseminating credible information and

advising government on best practice. He has received grants as the Principal Investigator from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and from the MRC to expand the surveillance of COVID-19. This includes sentinel surveillance for severe acute respiratory illness in at least four provinces in South Africa. A sentinel surveillance system is used when high-quality data about a particular disease is needed. Data collected in a well-designed sentinel system can signal trends, monitor the burden of disease in a community and provide a rapid, cost-effective alternative to other surveillance methods.



**Professor Lynn Morris**  
(**BSc 1981, BSc**  
**Hons 1983**)

is interim executive director at the NICD and a virology research professor at Wits. She obtained a DPhil from the University of Oxford in 1988. In a recent interview she says, "South Africa has had

a relatively good lead time to prepare for COVID-19". She has been a National Research Foundation A-rated researcher (international leader) for the past 25 years studying the immunovirology of South African HIV-1 subtype C infection, making significant contributions to understanding how the antibody responds as HIV develops.

# guidance

Gallo/Getty Images



**Professor Cheryl Cohen (MBBCh 1997)**, is Associate Professor in epidemiology at Wits and head of the Centre for Respiratory Disease and Meningitis at the NICD. Her work generates evidence to guide policy for the control of respiratory diseases. In 2009, she led the establishment of a national surveillance programme in South Africa for severe acute respiratory infections. She is at the forefront of COVID-19 case-finding, diagnosis, management and public health response.

SAHPRA



On the treatment front, **Professor Helen Rees** is Executive Director of the Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute (Wits RHI). She chairs the World Health Organization's (WHO) African Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group and she is Co-Chair of WHO's Ebola

Vaccine Working Group. South Africa is one of 10 countries involved in an urgent global trial announced by the WHO to identify the most effective treatment for coronavirus and Rees is involved in this effort.



**Dr Kerrigan McCarthy (MBBCh 1995)** is head of the National Institute of Communicable Diseases' Division of Public Health, Surveillance and Response. Her responsibilities include oversight of the Outbreak Response Unit, Notifiable Medical Conditions and GERMS-SA surveillance. McCarthy lectures in the Wits School of Public Health.

TheConversation



**Dr Julia De Kadt (PhD 2011)** from the Gauteng City-Region Observatory has developed an interactive map showing the province's vulnerability to COVID-19. The observatory is a partnership between Wits, the University of Johannesburg and the

Gauteng Provincial Government. Its mandate is building strategic intelligence through improved data, information, analysis and reflective evaluation for better planning, management and co-operative government.



Renowned HIV expert, **Professor Francois Venter** is Director of Ezintsha and

Deputy Director of Wits RHI. With an active interest in public sector access to HIV services, medical ethics and human rights, Venter is attuned to the impact of COVID-19 on those with comorbidities such as HIV and TB. He is an advisor to the South African government, to the Southern African HIV Clinicians Society and the World Health Organization.

ITNewsAfrica



Wits School of Physics Professor and Director of the Institute for Collider Particle Physics,

**Bruce Mellado**, initiated a comprehensive data dashboard, using an interdisciplinary team of researchers. The team includes iThemba laboratories, a faculty of the National Research Foundation, in collaboration with a data analytics team from DataConvergence. "We are experts in analysing and interpreting big data, and we believe that it is important that someone put this data together and present a bigger picture of the impact of the virus on the country," he says.

Gallo/Getty Images







## WITS SPIRIT GAME

29 January 2020

Wits Sport and Alumni Relations hosted the annual introduction of first year students to their new identities as #Witsies4Life. The soccer game held at the Bidvest Wits Stadium on East Campus was awash in gold and blue, while students were introduced to the Kudu mascot and the Wits W hand sign.

Images: Snippet video/Vivid Images/Peter Maher



## JOBURG REUNION

30 October 2019

A large number of alumni attended a Joburg reunion and connected with Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of the Witwatersrand, Professor Adam Habib, Chancellor Judy Dlamini and President of Convocation Stacey-Lee Bolon at the Wits Club Complex.

Images: Snippet video





## CAPE TOWN REUNION

10 September 2019

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of the Witwatersrand, Professor Adam Habib, Chancellor Judy Dlamini and President of Convocation Stacey-Lee Bolon connected with fellow alumni at the Southern Sun, The Cullinan. The University's leaders shared the institution's current vision and gave alumni an opportunity to understand how they could make a difference to their alma mater.

Images: Peter Maher





## FOUNDERS' TEA

27 November 2019

This long-standing Wits tradition took place at the Gavin Relly Green, West Campus to celebrate alumni who had graduated more than 40 years ago.

Chancellor of the University Dr Judy Dlamini, a medical doctor by training as well as leading businesswoman, author and philanthropist addressed alumni as guest speaker. "Founders' Tea, one of my favourite events of the year. Society tends to disregard the older generation but they have so much wisdom to offer," she tweeted during the event.

More than 400 alumni had the opportunity to reminisce and reflect on gains made over the past year.

"What I find so inspiring is that it's gotten better and better over the years," said Rosalind Wiebols (**BSc Physio 1968**) "There's so much negativity in this country. It's lovely to come back to somewhere you feel happy."

The University's Founders also heard the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Adam Habib, outline new developments at Wits.

"I've been coming to Founders' Tea since 2015 and I've enjoyed them all," said Robert Beckwith (**BSc Eng 1975**).

Shelly Conroy (**BA 1977**) said: "I think it's fantastic to get an update on what's happening and the chance to network."







## GLYN THOMAS HOUSE RES REUNION

14 February 2020

Glyn Thomas House, Wits University's first and only residence for students of colour, celebrated a "40-year" reunion for residents from 1976 to 1984. The residence was home to many apartheid struggle stalwarts during their tertiary studies.

The alumni shared "hard knock life" student stories of being detained by the Special Branch, regular raids and bugged telephones. However, as hard as their time at GTH may have been, many described campus days as some of the best of their lives. Unbreakable friendships brought a group of about 50 past residents back to Wits. They reminisced, danced and gave tribute to those who could not be there.

GTH was set up in 1976 to alleviate the issue of students travelling between their homes,



Baragwanath Hospital and the university. Dr I Glyn Thomas, former registrar and vice-principal of the university, whom the residence was named after, was instrumental in GTH's set-up, despite the disapproval of the then-apartheid government. He persevered and is commemorated for his dedication to medical education, especially that of black students.

Some noteworthy names that have passed through the halls of Glyn Thomas House over the years are Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, Patrice Motsepe, Tiego Moseneke, Hendrick Ramaala, Bheki Mlangeni and Bonang Mohale. Glyn Thomas House officially closed its doors in 1993, after it became legal for all races to take up residence at any of the university residence halls.

Images: Peter Maher



Image: Carl Nkosi

## HEALTH SCIENCES REUNION

19-21 September 2019

The Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Professor Martin Veller, and President of the Health Graduates Association, Dr Paul Davis, recently hosted FHS graduates from all over the world. The three-day programme started with the A J Orenstein Lecture, followed by an Alumni Symposium and a gala dinner. Professor Veller gave an insightful presentation highlighting the Faculty's milestones in 100 years of teaching excellence. Almost 100 graduates were in attendance and the Dean honoured special anniversary years of 10 (2009), 15 (2004), 20 (1999), 25 (1994), 30 (1989), 35 (1984), 40 (1979), 45 (1974), and 50 (1969) years since graduating.

**Front:** Harriet Copelyn, Naomi Arnheim, Ruth Katz, Phyllis Back and Carol Barlin  
**2nd row:** Margie McLaren, Dave Salant, Paul Davis, Alex Hammond and Martin Colman  
**3rd row:** Paul Porteous, Trevor Modlin, Colin Holloway and Leo Reinecke

# SUNNYSIDE RES REUNION

27 September 2019

A glamorous gala dinner commemorated the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sunnyside Hall of Residence, one of Wits' oldest female residences. Established in 1929 and originally named Isabel Dalrymple House, the residence is one of many cherished heritage sites at Wits. The memorable evening gave old "Ciders" the opportunity to walk down memory lane, listen to melodies from the respected Sunnyside Choir and draw inspiration from speeches from illustrious Sunnyside alumnae. It was a great way to reconnect with the university ahead of its centenary celebrations in 2022.

Images: Snippet video





# SYMPOSIUM IN HONOUR OF JUSTICE EDWIN CAMERON

4 September 2019

The Wits School of Law held a Symposium in honour of Justice Edwin Cameron on his retirement from the Constitutional Court in August 2019. It included three panels that interrogated aspects of Justice Cameron’s legacy. The first, titled Holding to Account: activism, LGBTQIA+ and AIDS, saw presentations on the plight of LGBTQIA+ African refugees and the state of South African AIDS activism.

The second panel of the day took a critical look at civil society organisations, debating issues of harassment, burnout and working with partners within the community as public law organisations. The final panel of the day focused on the critical jurisprudence of Justice Cameron.

Justice Cameron closed with a look at the work done to put the right laws (post 1994) in place. He mentioned the current gap between the law and its application. The Symposium was followed by an alumni cocktail function hosted by Head of the School of Law, Professor Wesahl Domingo.

Images: Humbelani Masikhwa



# LAW ALUMNI SUMMER SOCIAL

5 December 2019

The Wits School of Law hosted a Law Alumni Summer Social. Graduates from the 1950s to 2010s celebrated memories from their time at the School. Guests were entertained by a Wits student jazz band and Head of School, Wesahl Domingo, updated alumni on recent achievements.

Image: Sinethemba Msomi







## LONDON REUNION

16 October 2019

Portland Place in London provided a perfect setting for Vice-Chancellor Professor Adam Habib and the Director of Alumni Relations, Peter Maher, to connect with alumni.

Images: Orde Eliason



## OXFORD REUNION

17 October 2019

A group of Witsies in Oxford got together for cocktails with Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib and the Director of Alumni Relations, Peter Maher. It offered a good opportunity to catch up on Wits news, renew friendships and share memories.

Images: Peter Maher





## WENDY APPELBAUM

DSc (Med)

Respected business leader and philanthropist, Dr Wendy Appelbaum (BA 1982), was awarded an honorary doctorate in medicine in December 2019. Apart from her leadership in advancing economic and industrial development and uplifting health and welfare services, her role in support of two legal processes made significant change.

The first was a landmark case which she initiated into unsavoury business practices in the property auction environment.

The second was around the legality of “garnishee orders”, where she supported a group of workers who challenged this practice in court. Her efforts contributed to the benchmark judgment handed down by the Western Cape High Court in

2015 against illegal emolument attachment orders.

“The most positive outcome is that approximately R18 billion was put back into the pockets of the poor each year since that case. The success of this process was the most humbling and inspiring experience of my life,” she said.

She spoke of the importance of using one’s resources and position to the benefit of society. “Philanthropy now runs in my veins. I’ve had the privilege of access to funds, financial capital and connections I have gathered to create social capital. I use them. I pick their brains, I pick their pockets and I abuse them for their time and skills.

“This enables me to positively impact the lives of the poorest and the most vulnerable people in our society.”

**Appelbaum’s message to graduates:** “Your medicines, scalpels, devices and machines can cure people, but if you want to transform the world, the power you need is already inside each and every one of you. You have the power to imagine what better means, for your practice, for your profession and for the people you are so lucky to serve. As you go forward and succeed, never forget the contribution that Wits has made to your lives.”

## STAVROS NICOLAOU

DSc (Med)

As a leader in the pharmaceutical industry, Dr Stavros Nicolaou (BPharm 1986) was instrumental in developing and introducing the first generic antiretrovirals (ARVs) in Africa by persuading global pharmaceutical companies to give Aspen a licence to produce these agents. He also led the negotiation of technology transfer for two key multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) products at the time when MDR and extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) began to manifest in South Africa. These initiatives saved the lives of millions. He is widely recognised for taking on leadership roles that promote South Africa and the well-being of its people.

**Message to graduates:**  
“Follow your passion.”





## PHUMZILE MLAMBO- NGCUKA (DLitt)

Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka was honoured in recognition of her commitment to women's empowerment nationally and globally, social justice, education and service. As the minister of minerals and energy, she was the driving force behind the Mining Charter. In 2008,

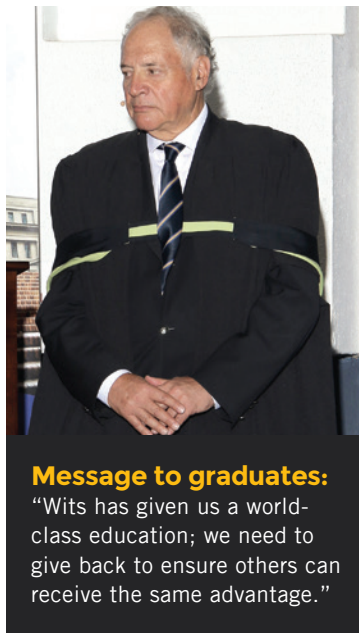
Mlambo-Ngcuka established the Umlambo Foundation, a non-profit organisation that built a national network of academic, resource, and psychosocial support for principals leading rural and township schools. She is currently an Executive Director of UN Women and is responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of four billion women around the world. She used her keynote address to highlight the role that health professionals play in the fight against gender-based violence.

**Message to graduates:** "We cannot bring about the changes that are required in the world without the participation of institutions of learning."

## JOHN TEEGER (Gold Medal)

John Teeger (**BComm 1968**) is a Wits champion and freely gives his time, talent and expertise to his alma mater. The University awarded Teeger its highly prized Gold Medal. He has made an invaluable contribution to the welfare of the University and strengthened its capacity to benefit from philanthropy. He is a long-serving President of the Board of the University of the Witwatersrand Fund Incorporated, an independent fundraising entity representing Wits in the United States. Raised in Johannesburg, Teeger attended Wits University in the late 1960s and was awarded a Bachelor of Commerce degree in 1968, followed by a Master of Business degree from Columbia Business School in 1969.

Before emigrating to the US



Images: Gordon Harris

**Message to graduates:** "Wits has given us a world-class education; we need to give back to ensure others can receive the same advantage."

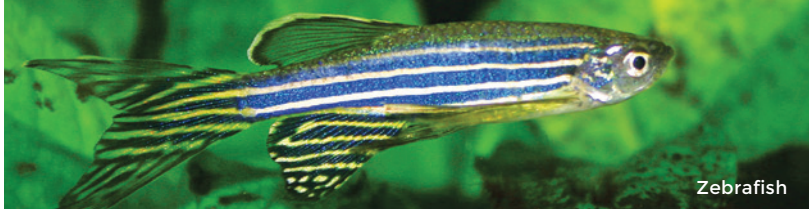
in 1976, he gained experience working in the financial services sector at Anglovaal Limited, Union Acceptances, and Arthur Andersen. His first job in New York was as Vice President, Investment Banking at Bear Stearns & Co. In

**Kgosietsile Diphokwane** has been awarded the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship for 2020. Raised by a single parent in Johannesburg South, Diphokwane defied the odds and graduated with a BA Honours in Development Studies and a BCom in Economics, Finance and Philosophy at Wits. He is passionate about driving development through enterprise and is completing his Masters of Management degree in Entrepreneurship and New Venture Creation at Wits Business School.

1981, he joined Founders Equity, where he remains as its President and Chief Operating Officer. He has also been a board member and officer of a number of public and private entities formed by Founders and its affiliates.

# HAZEL SIVE

(BSc 1977, BSc Hons 1979)



Globally respected developmental biologist and educator Professor Hazel Sive will become dean of the Northeastern University College of Science in Boston in June 2020.

Sive has also been on the faculty of the MIT Department of Biology since 1991.

Sive, who is also an associate member of Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, is recognised for her research in vertebrate developmental biology. Her contributions have been wide-ranging, encompassing molecular definition of anterior position, development of the brain ventricular system, and identifying novel cell biological processes, including “epithelial relaxation” and “basal constriction.”

“Doing research is something I love. It is the hardest thing I do and it’s the best part of my day,” says Sive.

Sive developed the zebrafish as a tool to analyse human neurodevelopmental disorders, most recently focusing on the metabolic underpinnings of disorders such as autism. She has also been a pioneer in the use of the frog *Xenopus* and zebrafish model systems. She created the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Course on Early Development of *Xenopus* — which has run for more than 25 years — and she is

editor-in-chief of a new two-volume *Xenopus Lab Manual*.

Sive has been named a MacVicar Faculty Fellow — MIT’s highest undergraduate teaching accolade — and has twice received the MIT School of Science Teaching Prize.

She has taught the undergraduate introductory biology course for 18 years, co-teaches the graduate developmental neuroscience course and recently created the course Building with Cells for students.

Sive has been building connections between MIT and Africa. In 2014, she founded the MIT-Africa Initiative, where she serves as faculty director. She is founder and faculty director of MISTI-Africa Internships, which sends students from multiple African countries to MIT.

At a recent speech at MIT Africans’ Ìdàgbà Cultural Night she acknowledged her Wits roots: “For me, my belonging tree reflects the complex mix of my life. It began rooted in South Africa, but was wrenched from the ground when I left to study. Our whole lives we work to develop a sense of belonging...My belonging tree is rooted in Joburg and Cambridge. It is rooted at MIT and at Wits University, at Makerere and Njala U in Sierra Leone.”

Source: Whitehead Institute



Sive has been named a MacVicar Faculty Fellow — MIT’s highest undergraduate teaching accolade — and has twice received the MIT School of Science Teaching Prize



Doing research is something I love. It is the hardest thing I do and it’s the best part of my day



# ROY ROBINS-BROWNE

(MBBCh 1970, PhD Medicine 1982)

Image: University of Melbourne



Former Doherty Institute Laboratory Head and University of Melbourne **Professor Roy Robins-Browne** has been recognised in an Australia Day Honour

For a career spanning almost 40 years dedicated to microbiology and immunology, former Doherty Institute Laboratory Head and University of Melbourne Professor Roy Robins-Browne has been recognised in an Australia Day Honour.

Robins-Browne says he developed a love for science and maths in high school: “I particularly liked explaining it to other students.”

“It was an assumption that I would do medicine because my father was a doctor. He died when I was 12 and I went on to study medicine and then completed a PhD at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg.”

Having enjoyed laboratory medicine, he became a pathologist before moving to Australia with his young family.

Between 1998 and 2012, he alternated between Head and Deputy Head of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at

the University of Melbourne, during which time it rose to the top-ranked department for both teaching and research.

He is also considered Australia’s best-known researcher in pathogenesis of bacterial enteropathogens, co-authoring more than 300 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters and, together with his collaborators, receiving more than \$35 million in competitive grant funding.

Robins-Browne’s research resulted in a commercial anti-EPEC antibody-based product, Travelan.

He retired at the end of 2018 after an impressive career which saw him teach over 500 science and 10000 medical undergraduates.

He also supervised more than 40 Bachelor of Science Honours students and 30 PhD students – several of whom are now full professors and leaders in microbiology.



He supervised more than 40 Bachelor of Science Honours students and 30 PhD students – several of whom are now full professors and leaders in microbiology



# KEN BOFFARD

(MBBCh 1972)



Esteemed trauma surgeon Professor Ken Boffard was inducted into full membership of the American College of Surgeons Academy of Master Surgeon Educators on 4 October 2019 in Chicago.

Boffard is one of only two surgeons from outside the United States to be included into this prestigious Academy.

He is the current Academic Head of Trauma Surgery at Milpark Hospital Academic Trauma Centre, Professor Emeritus, and Honorary Consultant in the Department of Surgery at the University of the Witwatersrand. He is also Guest Professor of Trauma Surgery at the Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Recently Netcare also bestowed its highest honour, the Christiaan Barnard Memorial Award, on him.

“What award can be presented to Professor Kenneth Boffard that can even begin to convey the enormous respect and esteem with which

he is regarded, not only within Netcare and South Africa, but also internationally,” says Dr Richard Friedland, chief executive officer of Netcare.

Boffard is a distinguished surgical educator whose experience in the field includes generations of medical students, surgical trainees and colleagues.

He has been instrumental in the design of surgical training, education, and skills courses in South Africa and internationally.

A licensed fixed-wing and helicopter pilot, he also has a keen interest in scuba diving and aeromedical care.

With over 90 publications and 20 book chapters to his name, in addition to having written three books on trauma surgery, he is a Freeman of the City of London by redemption, and an elected Liveryman of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators of London.



Esteemed trauma surgeon **Professor Ken Boffard** was inducted into full membership of the American College of Surgeons Academy of Master Surgeon Educators in Chicago



Professor Boffard is a distinguished surgical educator whose experience in the field includes generations of medical students, surgical trainees and colleagues



**Above:** Professor Ken Boffard (centre) with Professor David Hoyt, Executive Director of the American College of Surgeons, and Professor Ajit Sachdeva (right), Head of Education at the College of Surgeons

# SHAKIRA CHOONARA

(BHSc 2010, BA Hons 2011, MA 2012, PhD 2017)



**Shakira Choonara** is the recipient of Africa Youth Awards 100 Most Influential Young Africans in 2018 and 2019 and NRF Next Generation Female Researcher

After she obtained her PhD, Dr Shakira Choonara's youth activism and advocacy work in the civil society led to her running programmes across the continent. "It started off with the hopes of Africa in my heart and in my mind, and a little bit of pride as well and lots of excitement and ideas."

As a young leader, she is also a research-advocacy specialist in public health (malaria prevention, non-communicable diseases, HIV and health systems), gender equality and youth engagement.

She was appointed to the African Union Youth Advisory Council in August 2018 by the African Union Commission where she was joined by young leaders from Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin, Mauritania, Uganda, Senegal and Chad.

"I know what it is like to come from nothing with just a vision and determination, and that is the drive

that has brought me here today, the post is all about giving back to the youth on this continent," she says.

Choonara has been part of global platforms such as One Young World and Emerging Voices for Global Health and has been part of the Obama Foundation Leaders: Africa programme for emerging leaders across the continent.

With a core interest in public health, Choonara is listed among the most powerful women under the age of 40 in South Africa by *Destiny* magazine as well as making it to News24's 100 Young Mandelas of the Future list. She is the recipient of Africa Youth Awards 100 Most Influential Young Africans in 2018 and 2019, NRF Next Generation Female Researcher and a One Young World Ambassador.

More recently, Choonara has ventured into social entrepreneurship. She is CEO of the start-up Global Impact Solutions.

It started off with the hopes of Africa in my heart and in my mind, and a little bit of pride as well and lots of excitement and ideas



# RONA EPSTEIN

(BA 1959)



**Rona Epstein** was awarded an honorary doctorate from Coventry University in recognition of her significant contribution to research and campaigning activities

Rona Epstein was awarded an honorary doctorate from Coventry University in the UK in recognition of her significant contribution to research and campaigning activities in respect of detention conditions, particularly for women and children.

Beginning her legal career as a mature student on a part-time law

degree in Coventry more than 20 years ago, Epstein developed her interest with human rights and prison law classes before taking on a judicial review placement and writing short articles on legal issues relating to criminal justice.

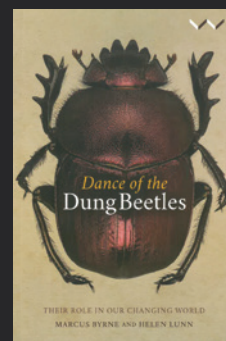
Her research has exposed unlawful decisions and led to sentences being quashed in the

High Court. It has also contributed to the decision taken in Wales this year to no longer imprison people for non-payment of council tax.

She has written over 200 articles and case notes in law journals and worked with legal practitioners on submitting reports into matters concerned with law and justice.

## Dung beetles take the award!

*Dance of the Dung Beetles* was announced as the winner in the Best Non-Fiction Monograph category of the annual National Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences Awards. The prize was awarded at a ceremony at the historic Constitution Hill in Johannesburg on 12 March. The judges congratulated authors Marcus Byrne (PhD 1998) and Helen Lunn (BA Hons 1979, MA 1986) for their humorous tour through mythology, evolution and innovations of scientific research.







01

- 01 Zakopane, Poland, August 1939  
Photo by Jasek Kallir
- 02 Bielsko-Biala, Poland, August 1939  
Photo by Jasek Kallir



02

## TERRY KURGAN

(MA 2016)

Writer and artist Terry Kurgan won the prestigious 2019 *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Award for *Everyone is Present* (2018), which is her first work of creative non-fiction. Consisting of multiple narrative threads, the book is a meditation on Kurgan's family history, with her Jewish grandparents who were forced to flee Poland after the German invasion serving as the focal point.

The judges called it “a compassionate, mesmerising tale of a time and place and the singular journey of remarkable people.”

Kurgan says the work examines “what it means to tell a family story through a forensic examination of photographs”.

*Everyone is Present* was shortlisted for the 2019 Photo Arles Book Prize and selected as a finalist for the 2019 US-based National Jewish Book Awards.

Kurgan received her BAFA from the California School of Arts in San Francisco, her MFA from the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town, and her MA in Creative Writing from Wits. She is registered for a PhD at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, where she is working on a new book project. She supervises on the Master's in Creative Writing Programme at the university, and is co-director (with Bronwyn Law-Viljoen) of the independent publishing project, Fourthwall Books.



Writer and artist **Terry Kurgan** has won the prestigious 2019 *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Award for *Everyone is Present* (2018)



The work examines what it means to tell a family story through a forensic examination of photographs



# Our ancestors cooked carbs

Charred food remains from old fires suggest modern humans consumed starchy food 170 000 years ago

## Buried treasure

The Border Cave is a heritage site with a small site museum. Researchers hope the discovery will emphasise the importance of the site as an irreplaceable cultural resource for South Africa and the rest of the world.



Images: Ashley Kruger

01

“This discovery is much older than earlier reports for cooking similar plants and it provides a fascinating insight into the behavioural practices of early modern humans in southern Africa,” says Professor Lyn Wadley (PhD 1987), a scientist from the Wits Evolutionary Studies Institute.

Researchers based at the Border Cave in the Lebombo Mountains on the KwaZulu-Natal/eSwatini border say early humans shared food and used wooden sticks to extract plants from the ground.

“It is extraordinary that such fragile plant remains have survived for so long,” says Dr Christine Sievers (MSc 2005, PhD 2005), a scientist who completed the archaeobotanical work with Wadley.

The underground food plants were uncovered during excavations, which the team has been digging since 2015.

During the excavation, Wadley and Sievers recognised the small, charred cylinders as rhizomes. All appear to belong to the same species, and 55 charred, whole rhizomes were identified as

*Hypoxis*, commonly called the Yellow Star flower.

“The most likely of the species growing in KwaZulu-Natal today is the slender-leaved *Hypoxis angustifolia* that is favoured as food,” adds Sievers. “It has small rhizomes with white flesh that is more palatable than the bitter, orange flesh of rhizomes from the better known medicinal *Hypoxis* species (incorrectly called African Potato).”

The plant identifications were made on the size and shape of the rhizomes and on the vascular structure examined under a

Image: Lucinda Backwell



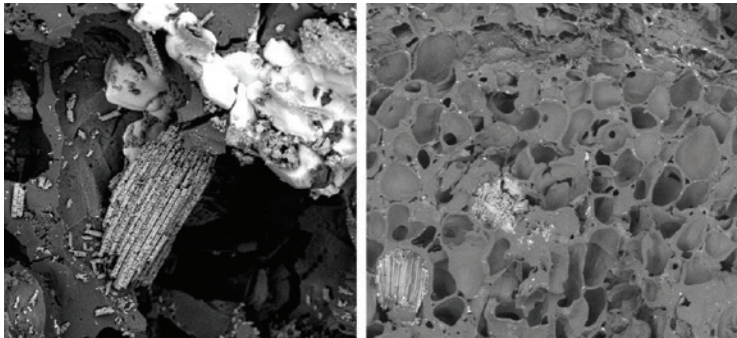
- 01 Border Cave drone image
- 02 Cave excavation
- 03 Border Cave *Hypoxis* rhizome with three views: top, profile and base
- 04 SEM images which show the microscopic crystal bundles called raphides

02



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Images: Lyn Wadley



04

scanning electron microscope. Modern *Hypoxis* rhizomes and their ancient counterparts have similar cellular structures and the same inclusions of microscopic crystal bundles, called raphides. The features are still recognisable even in the charred specimens.

Over a four-year period, Wadley and Sievers made a collection of modern rhizomes and geophytes from the Lebombo area.

“We compared the botanical features of the modern geophytes and the ancient charred specimens, in order to identify

them,” says Sievers.

*Hypoxis* rhizomes are nutritious and carbohydrate-rich with an energy value of approximately 500 KJ/100g. While they are edible raw, the rhizomes are fibrous and have high fracture toughness until they are cooked. The rhizomes are rich in starch and would have been an ideal staple plant food.

“Cooking the fibre-rich rhizomes would have made them easier to peel and to digest so more of them could be consumed and the nutritional benefits would be greater,” says Wadley.



Image: Lyn Wadley

### FOOD ON THE GO

*Hypoxis angustifolia* is evergreen, so it has visibility year-round, unlike the more common deciduous *Hypoxis* species. It thrives in a variety of modern habitats and is thus likely to have had wide distribution in the past as it does today.

It occurs in sub-Saharan Africa, South Sudan, some Indian Ocean islands, and as far afield as Yemen. Its presence in Yemen may imply even wider distribution of this *Hypoxis* plant during previous humid conditions. *Hypoxis angustifolia* rhizomes grow in clumps so many can be harvested at once.

“All of the rhizome’s attributes imply that it could have provided a reliable, familiar food source for early humans trekking within Africa, or even out of Africa,” said Lyn Wadley.

Hunter-gatherers tend to be highly mobile so the wide distribution of a potential staple plant food would have ensured food security.

# Weeds affect income of poor the most

Invasive species cost South Africa's economy R6,5 billion in damage from fire, loss of viable land and drinking water. These weeds also threaten our biodiversity.

**R**esearchers at Wits University have created the world's first framework to better guide the management of invasive species.

By using a big data approach and combining information from the South African National Census of 2011 with the *South African Plant Invaders Atlas*, the researchers found a way to prioritise targets in the control of invasive species. This will ensure the greatest benefits for both the environment and rural communities.

"South Africa spends R1,5 billion per year on controlling invasive species and while the

country is really at the forefront alien species control in the world, we still have a wicked problem," says lead author, Dr Chevonne Reynolds (**BSc 2006, BScHons 2007, MSc 2010 2012**), a lecturer at Wits University.

Each year invasive species cost South Africa's economy R6,5 billion in damage from fire, loss of viable land and drinking water. These weeds also threaten our biodiversity.

The main finding of the research, published in the journal *Ecosystem Services*, shows poorer rural communities are the most affected by the negative effects of invasive weeds.

"We looked at the livelihoods of

people on a national level, what their household income is and how they use natural resources to aid or supplement their daily living need, and then examined how this is affected by invasive species," says Reynolds.

While invasive species have both positive and negative effects, the team weighed up these trade-offs for a variety of invasive species to find their overall impact on the livelihoods of all South Africans.

For instance, people use the fruit of the prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia ficus-indica*) to supplement their diet and income. However, because it aggressively invades grassland it makes pastures unsuitable for livestock,

A cattle kraal is left abandoned due to a Parthenium infestation in Malelane, South Africa



while also competing for water and other resources.

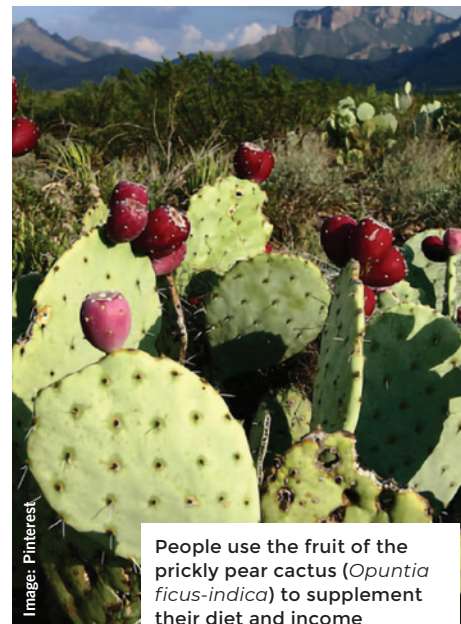
The team combined data on household incomes and their use of natural resources for all municipalities in South Africa, with the distribution data of 57 invasive weeds and established which communities are affected.

“We found that poorer rural communities are the most impacted by invasive species, as these people make most use of natural resources on a day-to-day basis. Their ability to make a living is severely restricted by the invasion of alien species,” says Reynolds.

Some of the worst-affected municipalities are Port St Johns,

Nyandeni, King Sabata Dalindyebo and Mhashe municipalities, all in the Eastern Cape. Stellenbosch and Knysna are the municipalities with the highest diversity of invasive weeds but depend less on natural resources.

“What we have done is create a framework for government to direct efforts to eradicate invasive species more effectively, by targeting municipalities where both people and the environment are most at risk. Our model can also be used and adapted for other countries with a similar problem, where the novel approach of combining big data with citizen science can provide answers to problems.”



People use the fruit of the prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia ficus-indica*) to supplement their diet and income

**FEATURE:**

*Hollywood Witsies*

**HOLLYWOOD.** *That neverland of possibility, that beacon of dreams with its name in giant letters on the hills and bronzed stars on its boulevard. In our imagination it's a glittering dreamscape where once upon a time you could be spotted by a studio and transformed by fame.*



Image: Shutterstock





**FEATURE:**  
*Hollywood Witsies*



Image: Daniel Schludi/Unsplash





*Today, Hollywood is the setting for a multibillion-dollar global entertainment industry. The Big Five studios with their origins in Hollywood – Walt Disney, Warner Bros, Universal, Columbia and Paramount – produce content all over the world. Los Angeles is all about the entertainment business and it's where many creative Witsies have gravitated.*

# CHASING DREAMS

**HEATHER DUGMORE**  
SPEAKS TO FOUR  
WITSIES – AN **ACTOR,**  
**SCREENWRITER, DIRECTOR**  
**AND PRODUCER** – WHO  
ARE MAKING THEIR MARK  
IN HOLLYWOOD



**FEATURE:**  
*Hollywood Witsies*

# David Jammy

**BA 1989, LLB 1996 – PRODUCER**

“LA is an extraordinary place and there is no doubt it is the epicentre of the entertainment industry, so whether you are in studio films or music performance or Netflix, Apple and any of these new platforms, it all gets run out of this one huge city.”



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David Jammy (**BA 1989; LLB 1996; SRC President 1991**) lives in Santa Monica, a coastal city west of downtown LA, with his wife Monika Wagenberg, a film festival director who is taking time out to raise their two children. They've been here for six years, following David's six years in New York when he moved from South Africa in 2008. He knows New

York well as he also spent time there in the nineties when he did his Master's in cinema studies at New York University.

“What's interesting about LA is that although there's such a sophisticated industry here, the west coast of America still has a frontier feel where people are making up the rules as they go along. You are

surrounded by people chasing the American dream and reaching for stardom and greatness and money. The more cynical view is that it is a terribly materialistic, individualistic, greedy place churning out values that are making the world a very precarious place.”

David's journey to America started in South Africa where he and Wits alumna



Stars are far more than people, they are multimillion dollar entities. When you meet them they're charming and vulnerable and real people





04

- 01 David Jammy and Dave Chappelle backstage at the Kennedy Center's Mark Twain Prize for American Humour
- 02 David with Julia Louis-Dreyfus at the 2019 Mark Twain Prize for American Humour
- 03 Watching from the wings
- 04 Done and Dusted, specialises in producing big events for television, such as music concerts, entertainment shows and awards like the Emmys and Oscars

Harriet Gavshon started a company in 1993 with the *Weekly Mail* newspaper and an American friend Jonathan Miller, called Weekly Mail Television. The company evolved into Curious Pictures, now Quizzical Pictures, which Harriet still runs and in which David still has an interest.

“We were one of the first post 1994 independent film and television production companies and it was a really exciting time because it was a whole new era for the SABC in a democratic South Africa, with fresh content and new rules.”

Well known for his craft, in 2008 David was invited to start a production company in New York, making films connected to the work of the International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). The ICTJ was established by the late South African anti-apartheid stalwart Alex Boraine in March 2001 to explore strategies for helping societies focus on the rights of victims in dealing with legacies of human rights abuses, such as in South Africa, Chile, Guatemala, Argentina and the former Yugoslavia.

“It was a great opportunity for storytelling but shortly after I arrived the

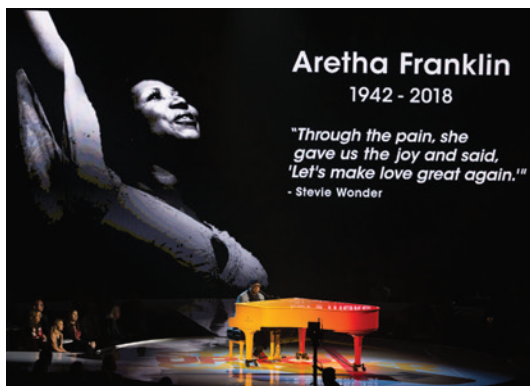
momentous 2008 financial collapse happened and there was no longer any money around to make the films. During this same period I met my wife and then Obama got elected, and for many reasons I wasn't ready to go back to SA. So, through a sequence of events I found myself starting my life and career over again, which meant a lot of hustling and building of networks in a very single-minded way.”

This led to him being offered a producing position for a show on CNN called *CNN Heroes* with a company called Done and Dusted that specialises in “event television”. He ended up developing new projects and producing for the company fulltime and is now one of the seven partners.

They produce one-off big televised specials, such as mega music concerts or award specials like the Emmys and Oscars. One of his partners, Hamish Hamilton, directs the biggest TV event of the year – the *Super Bowl Half Time Show* – which is the most watched show in America, with 110 million viewers. They also produce entertainment shows, including the *Mark*

## FEATURE:

### *Hollywood Witsies*



*Twain Prize for American Humour*, which this year went to renowned stand-up comedian Dave Chappelle.

David's company routinely intersects with a swathe of big stars and he says: "It's easy to get cynical about stars and celebrities but almost without exception they are deeply talented and good at what they do.

"You also realise they are an industry and everything about them is constructed, managed, organised and maintained by a sophisticated network of skills to make them who they are, manage their public personalities and what they say and do. Stars are far more than people, they are multimillion dollar entities.

"When you meet them they're charming and vulnerable and

you share that bonding moment with them but when the event is over they're off and there's not much swapping of numbers and keeping in touch."

Making connections, whether temporary or enduring, is the LA way. The connections between people and the choices we make that define our human stories, have always fascinated David and informed his storytelling.

"What I love about South Africa is that it demands of you to make choices about right and wrong every day; about who to be, what you stand for and how to treat each other.

"It is such a privilege to come from this background as it's the intangible thing that binds us all.

"I try to carry this into all the work I do

here and I have to remind myself when I feel like I'm part of the Hollywood machine that it reaches people all over the world, so it can be an incredibly powerful platform. As a producer, I believe in setting the tone of the production by treating people well, which creates an atmosphere of respect.

"America under Trump is doing the opposite. It has become a breeding ground for the ugliness of humanity that is so recognisable to me who grew up in apartheid South Africa. Trump's America is enabling prejudice and fascism but many of us are hoping that the tenets of democracy here have been in place for so long, that there is a chance that America will turn against wrong and reinvent itself again."



What I love about South Africa is that it demands of you to make choices about right and wrong every day; about who to be, what you stand for and how to treat each other



Above: The Aretha Franklin memorial concert and Stand up to Cancer event were produced by Done and Dusted



# WITSIES IN HOLLYWOOD



## NICK BORAINÉ

BA (Dramatic Art) 1995

- Actor, *Homeland* (2011), *Call of Duty: Black Ops 4* (2018), *Bloodline* (2018)



## GARY BARBER

BCom 1979, Certificate in the theory of accounting 1981

- Former Chair and CEO of MGM and current CEO of Spyglass Media Group



## JOHNATHAN DORFMAN

BA 1990, BAHons 1993

- Producer and founder of ATO Pictures with collaborator, musician Dave Matthews



## GAVIN HOOD

BCom 1986, LLB 1989

- Director, producer, actor, screenwriter. Director of the Oscar-winning South African movie *Tsotsi* (2005), *Eye In The Sky* (2015), *Official Secrets* (2019)



## LOUISE BARNES-BORAINÉ

BA (Dramatic Art) 2006

- Actor, *Reprisal* (2019), *Black Sails* (2014), *Outsiders* (2016)



## NADINE ZYLSTRA

BA (Dramatic Art) 1997

- Director, Head of Kids and Learning Entertainment for YouTube Originals



## GIDEON EMERY

BA (Dramatic Art) 1994

- Actor, *Teen Wolf* (2013 – 2017), *Chicago P.D.* (2016), *Avalanche* (2018), *S.W.A.T.* (2018), *Scream* (2019)



## ALAN LAZAR

BSC 1989, BAHons 1981

- Composer, original film and television scores. Senior Director of Catalog Music at STX



## JASON KENNETT

BA (Dramatic Art) 1993

- Actor, *Madiba* (2017), *Chicago Fire* (2014 – 2015)

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM OTHER HOLLYWOOD WITSIES IN TINSEL TOWN

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

**FEATURE:**

*Hollywood Witsies*

# Janine Eser

**BA (DA) 1992 – ACTOR, SCREENWRITER & PRODUCER**

It's impossible to lure Janine Eser from her home office in West LA right now as she's busy completing the Hollywood screenplay adaptation of Trevor Noah's memoir *Born a Crime*, starring Oscar winner Lupita Nyong'o. The director is former Capetonian Liesl Tommy, also director of the Aretha Franklin movie *Respect* with Jennifer Hudson in the title role.



02

**MOVIES**

*Tsotsi*  
(2005)

*Madiba (mini-series)*  
(2017)

*Born a Crime*  
(2020)

*Alien Hunter*  
(2003)

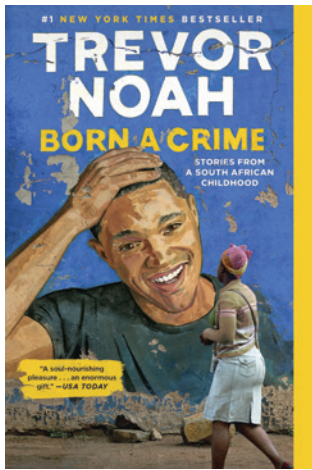
“As a South African I feel incredibly proud of Trevor,” says Janine. “Here’s this guy who is able to stand on a stage talking and sell out Madison Square Garden in New York and the Staples Centre in LA, both of which seat 20 000 people.”

To be chosen as the sole writer of his screenplay, Janine went through nine months of interviews and presentations, competing against the Hollywood scriptwriting pack. “Getting that script was a very long



“  
“  
The Oscars are very glamorous and it was special to be there, but my reward was what it meant to South Africa  
“  
“

01



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- 01 Janine at the Oscars for *Tsotsi* with Terry Pheto and Presley Chweneyagae
- 02 In *Alien Hunter* (2003)
- 03 *Born a Crime* cover
- 04 With Jerry Mofokeng at the premier of *Fanie Fourie's Lobola* (2013)

road, like a pregnancy, but all the way it felt like the pieces were fitting together.”

Her credentials include her work on the Oscar-winning *Tsotsi* (2005), a South African production directed by Wits alumnus Gavin Hood. Janine was also a scriptwriter on *Madiba* (2017), a mini-series about Nelson Mandela, starring Laurence Fishburne.

“That Oscar for *Tsotsi* was very meaningful as *Madiba* held it and the whole of South Africa was behind us

and really proud when we won. The Oscars are very glamorous and it was special to be there, but my reward was what it meant to South Africa.”

Janine says it's exciting to see the artists currently coming out of Southern Africa. At the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, a special award for visionary filmmaking was presented to Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese from Lesotho for *This Is Not a Burial, It's a Resurrection*. “One of the actors is Jerry Mofokeng, who lectured me at Wits, and we acted together. I feel a sense of real pride about this award as I know how hard it is to have a career in films back home.”

Janine started her career as an actress, first in South Africa, and then in the UK in the 1990s. She moved to the US in the early 2000s to see what Hollywood was like.

Soon after arriving, she got the female lead in *Alien Hunter* (2003) opposite James Spader. “It was a bad movie but it gave me insight into Hollywood and I decided to start focusing on screenplay development rather than acting as I found it more rewarding.” She settled in LA and married South

African composer Adam Schiff in 2005.

“We live in an area of West LA where there aren't a lot of crazy movie industry people,” she says. “There's a lot of money at stake and tied to that is status and power and people behaving badly. Everyone is stressed as everyone feels they are about to get fired all the time, and it doesn't make for healthy individuals.

“The bigger the star, the more stressed they are. It is damn hard living under a microscope; it's relentless. Especially today with social media there is no peace or freedom or privacy and that is very, very difficult. Many people aspire to this, but they don't understand the importance of privacy until it is taken away from them. On top of this, stars are not just supporting themselves, they are supporting a whole team of people.”

Janine says as a Hollywood scriptwriter, she feels fortunate as many talented people don't get anywhere. Her agent is Frank Wuliger of the Gersh Agency in Beverly Hills, one of the largest literary and talent agents in the US. “I knew how good he was when he represented Kasi

Lemmons, a female director in a town that is not kind to female directors and writers. The legacy is changing but very slowly as most of the people who make decisions are not women and not people of colour. It is how this town is and it is very entrenched.”

Following the Harvey Weinstein conviction, she says men in the industry who previously wouldn't think twice about putting their hands on women are desisting. “It is very freeing as you don't need to be on your guard as much. Hopefully a sense of what is acceptable or unacceptable will become the norm. And I certainly hope we are moving into the space where women and diversity become part of Hollywood at every level.”

Janine adds that as an artist and writer she is finding life very interesting in America right now during the Trump years. “I never thought I'd be back on the streets marching again after my student years, but there I was at the first women's march in DC and it was a surreal feeling to have that experience again. I thought that part of my life was over. How could it be: I went to Wits!”

**FEATURE:**

*Hollywood Witsies*

# Atandwa Kani

**BA (DA) 2009 – ACTOR**

His American accent isn't about being phony, it's about his Hollywood ambitions, which he is pursuing from his base in New York, together with his South African actress wife Fikile Mthwalo.



Image: Sherene Hustler Photography

“If you don't lose your accent you'll be cast as a refugee or terrorist,” says Atandwa Kani.

“My sights are set on Hollywood. I'm young and I want to become one of the biggest stars in this place. When Hollywood makes movies about South Africans, instead of casting Denzel [Washington] as Biko or Morgan [Freeman] as Mandela, I want them to cast South African stars. We have

the talent, we just have to push through, and that's what I'm doing here.”

He comes from stardom – his father is John Kani – and he's confident about his trajectory. It started, he says, at Wits, where he graduated with an Honours degree in theatre performance in 2008. “It prepared me for my path and it was in a first-year production that agent and casting

director Moonyeenn Lee saw me acting and took me on. She has been an incredible force in my career, collaborating with my US agent, Brookside Artist Management.”

His first Hollywood role was in 2018 in *Black Panther*; playing the young King T'Chaka. The experience was an eye-opener, he says. “The magnitude of this US\$400-million production and the



01

## MOVIES

*Black Panther*  
(2018)

*Love by Chance*  
(2017)



Ultimately, I would like to be in the position where I can draw on my Hollywood credentials to help grow the industry at home







02



03

- 01 *Black Panther* movie poster
- 02 Atandwa playing the young King T'Chaka in *Black Panther*
- 03 Movie poster for *Love by Chance* starring Atandwa and Altovise Lawrence (also a Witsie)

talent from all over the world was just phenomenal. We were all treated like royalty and we worked incredibly hard. There was no official break; we would eat on the move and shoot for 12 hours straight.

“I would be on set with stars like Chadwick Boseman, Lupita Nyong’o, Michael B Jordan, Angela Bassett and Danai Gurira, and what struck me was the humility and integrity with which they represented Xhosa culture and language in the movie,” says Atandwa. He and his father were also the cultural consultants and dialect coaches on set. The language of the kingdom of Wakanda in *Black Panther* is isiXhosa – the first time it has been shared internationally on such a scale.

“All the stars and the director Ryan Coogler were so interested in Xhosa history and so willing to learn, and the lengths to which they went to prepare for their roles and research their characters was inspiring.”

*Black Panther* was filmed over four months in a huge warehouse that was turned into a small city with countless dressing rooms, make-up rooms, catering

areas and spaces for the hundreds of crew members. Paparazzi were on the perimeter all the time, constantly taking pictures. “On set we were surrounded by blue screens, and we had to imagine the scene. We had to imagine spaceships flying, and vast lands with waterfalls. A huge amount of research went into creating the mindset for the actors. To prepare for your scene, you’d go into rooms where videos were playing to give you a sensory reference. For the African scenes, the non-African actors immersed themselves in videos of Africa and they would ask us Africans what the ground felt like, what it smelt like. They got such a strong sense of it, they would even start telling me, and I would smile and say: ‘I know, I live there!’.”

He now shares time between South Africa and New York, which he prefers to LA. “New York is like Johannesburg, LA is like Cape Town. I also did my Master’s in acting at New York University so I know the city, and Broadway is here so I get to do theatre here and I meet people from a wide range of professions. In LA it’s all about the industry. Everyone is

either in the industry or trying to get into the industry. It’s all about ‘are you in the Hollywood scene?’

“If you are, you are in no doubt that you are. It means you get endless calls from people wanting to be your manager, agent and publicist, you get calls about scripts and roles, and you have to be very astute as to what you accept and how much money you are paid. Another important aspect that I have to consider is the movie and theatre industry in South Africa as I want to continue being a part of it and acting in good South African productions. Ultimately, I would like to be in the position where I can draw on my Hollywood credentials to help grow the industry at home.

“I boast about South Africa every single day and I miss the beauty of it. I miss the sunrises and sunsets. New York is an island of buildings. I miss our people, the oceans, the humidity of Durban, the stature of Table Mountain, exploring the Garden Route, experiencing the vineyards of Stellenbosch ... it’s like driving into a huge painting where there is no time to take pictures because there is so much beauty.”

**FEATURE:**

*Hollywood Witsies*

# Donovan Marsh

**BA (DA) 1992 – DIRECTOR**

South African director Donovan Marsh's Hollywood submarine thriller *Hunter Killer* was screened locally and internationally in 2018, starring Gerard Butler and Oscar winner Gary Oldman.



"I always had a clear idea that I wanted to direct a Hollywood film but it was a long haul to get there. It was 25 years into my career and I had written over 20 screenplays and directed several movies by then," says Donovan, who studied drama and psychology at Wits (**BADA 1992**), followed by film studies in London. "I love creating compelling

fictional narratives and the invention that goes with making movies. Key to this is human psychology, which fascinates me – the internal struggles that define our lives. That is why we like good and evil portrayed in movies, as we play out those archetypes in our minds to determine how to conduct ourselves and how to avoid mistakes." With a Hollywood

movie to his name, it would have been easy to relocate to LA, but Donovan chose to stay in Cape Town. "There is something very special about our lives here in South Africa and the telling of the South African story that keeps pulling me back. I also have a three-year-old daughter in Johannesburg. "Fortunately, Hollywood is so



**MOVIES**

*Dollar\$ and White Pipes*  
(2005)

*Spud*  
(2010)

*iNumber Number*  
(2013)

*Hunter Killer*  
(2018)

*I Am All Girls*  
(2020)

**SHOWS**

*Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*

*Gladiators*



I love creating compelling fictional narratives and the invention that goes with making movies. Key to this is human psychology, which fascinates me





02



03



04



05

- 01 Donovan on set of *I Am All Girls*
- 02 L to R Donovan, John Cleese & Troye Sivan (*Spud*)
- 03 *Hunter Killer* movie poster
- 04 On set of *Hunter Killer*
- 05 On set directing *I Am All Girls*

ubiquitous these days it doesn't matter where you live. Even if you live in Los Angeles, it's so big that people would rather Skype than travel to meetings. The only difficulty is when you're needed there for a face-to-face. My agent would love me to live in LA because of this but I'd rather hop on a flight."

His directing career started in television in Johannesburg, doing shows such as *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and *Gladiators*. He didn't enjoy it. He wanted to make movies. "I met film producer Anant Singh on the set of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and he funded my first movie *Dollar\$ and White Pipes* (2005), which I wrote and directed. It was based on the story of a gangster I'd met and befriended."

It won best director and writer awards in South Africa and was short-listed for the Toronto Film Festival. Thousands of submissions are made to this festival, which Donovan describes as "the gatekeeper to whether you're going to get an agent in Hollywood".

After that he directed *Spud* starring John Cleese and Troye Sivan, which was a South

African box office success but didn't do well overseas. What finally got him into the Toronto Film Festival was his 2013 crime and corruption movie *iNumber Number*, which got amazing reviews.

"Hollywood agents started phoning me. I connected with Jeff Barry from ICM; I felt I could trust him and he became my agent. I started receiving lots of scripts but I didn't like most of them. Then *Hunter Killer* came my way and I wanted it."

Securing the movie with the Lionsgate studio took time but Donovan says he eventually convinced them with his sheer enthusiasm. "Nuclear submarines are highly classified, and I dived into research to show that I was committed to creating an authentic movie – something that *Hunter Killer* is consistently praised for. I actually cut a short promo movie as part of my pitch."

He says the most challenging part of directing *Hunter Killer* was not having full creative control. "In a \$40-million production with seven producers, each with their own vision, it was a juggling act of trying to accommodate producers and actors and making

it authentic to the navy. Also, although the budget was more than anything I have ever worked with (my largest budget in South Africa was R3-million), it was still very lean for a film of this magnitude.

"After that I returned to full creative control, directing a South African film for an international market called *I Am All Girls*, about the international sex trafficking industry." He supports the producer, Nthibah Pictures' vision of creating a South African studio where big-budget movies can be shot.

Would he want to make another Hollywood movie? "Making *Hunter Killer* was a wake-up for me as to whether I want to work with so many people all wanting their say. I have a craving to do interesting and unusual films so I would always consider these, but what has worked best for me so far has been my own scripts that I direct. "I'm also interested in the creative opportunities on the internet, including the video game space. It has incredible artistry and is the biggest grossing entertainment sector. I've been programming video games since I was 14 and I love it as much now as I did then."

**FEATURE:**  
*#Witsie4Life*



Lynn Joffe

Alumni Relations Director Peter Maher and I started talking about storytelling as a way to bring Wits' 2022 Centenary to Wits alumni across the globe. We wanted to show how Wits has changed lives and influenced the life journeys of alumni.

I'm one of them - a Witsie. After 35 years of running a life, a business, a marriage, I went back to varsity at the age of 55. I obtained a Master's in Creative Writing at the School of Literature, Language and Media Studies in 2017, at the University I'd dreamed of attending since I was a teen. It's never too late to have a happy adulthood.

Working in collaboration with the Wits Alumni Office we produced a series of videos featuring alumni whose narratives embody Wits values.

We captured them on campus. We stalked them at their gigs. We followed them to their homes and surgeries. We haunted them on social media. I was moved by the level of cooperation and generosity displayed by each of the eight alumni during filming. You'll be seeing their stories on social media over the next few months with the theme **#Witsie4Life**.

**#Witsie4Life**  
Storytelling series

[www.youtube.com/user/witsalumni](http://www.youtube.com/user/witsalumni)



Celebrate the build-up to our Centenary in 2022. Tell us your own story by emailing [alumni@wits.ac.za](mailto:alumni@wits.ac.za).





# Wits is where it all began

Storytelling can heal wounds, build lifelong relationships and bring ubuntu to life. Alumni share their stories with **Lynn Joffe**.

Image: Maritz Verwey

**FEATURE:**  
*#Witsie4Life*

## BRUCE FORDYCE

**BA Hons 1979 (Archaeology),  
Honorary Doctorate in Law 2007**

With a record nine Comrades Marathon wins under his belt, **Bruce Fordyce** is a household name. He received an honorary doctorate from Wits in 2007 for his contribution to sport, politics and culture in South Africa. In 2004 he chaired one of the committees overseeing the development of the Origins Centre, working tirelessly to bring Africa's archaeological and historical past to a wider public. He has also been instrumental in the Parkrun initiative which has 1.2 million South Africans on their feet.

Bruce shared how running became a balm during apartheid's darkest hours while he was at Wits.

"I was involved in the June 16 1976 Soweto riots as part of a small, naive, passionate group of Wits students who decided to march from the campus to Soweto to show our solidarity. We were attacked. I just had this feeling of wanting to have some control over my destiny in a world that was depressing and over which I had no control. I started running. I started two days later, 18 June, and I ran for 10 minutes around the Wits rugby fields at night. I ran at night because I didn't want anyone to see me. And I didn't stop after that, I just carried on going each day and carried on and on and on. I joined the Wits Marathon Club at the beginning of the next academic year. I've been running non-stop since June 1976."

For his first Comrades win in 1981, he wore Wits colours along with the black armband that marked his protest against the apartheid republic's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As an activist for social change he's still delighted and honoured to be a **#Witsie4Life**.



I look back and realise how much the University gave me and how much it grew me as a person, both in sport and academically and then importantly introduced me to great friends. It will always be a rock and an anchor and a part of my life as I get older



Gallo/Getty Images

# LEBOHANG MASANGO

MA 2019 (Anthropology)



To be able to change the world in big ways through small actions and gestures of kindness; that's what this University has really taught me



Intending to become a ballerina, and then a fashion designer, **Lebohang Masango** ultimately chose a more cerebral path and is fast becoming a thought leader in South Africa. Now a PhD candidate at Wits, she graduated in 2019 with a Master's degree in Social Anthropology and has been challenging the cultural status quo ever since. She is the poster womxn for thinking outside the box.

"The wonderful thing about anthropology is that it made me understand that knowledge doesn't have to live only in the books you take out from the library or in your university readings. Knowledge can be produced and placed anywhere."

Lebohang's thoughts and challenges are very much in the public domain and she has built a community of avid followers as well as detractors. Never shy to speak her mind, she has raised her social profile high above the parapet. With more than 23 000 followers on Twitter, she is vocal about cultural, feminist and academic issues, outspoken in

her views, firm in her beliefs. That she is also a poet is very apparent, with frequent performances and judging panels in and around Gauteng. We captured her on the steps of the Great Hall in full lyrical flight.

Her gifts have been honed into storytelling projects over and above her academic pursuits. Her debut children's book, *Mpumi's Magic Beads*, written during her Master's studies, twists the cultural trope of African hair into a magical tale of girl empowerment and a celebration of diversity. The book won the award for children's literature in the 2019 South African Literary Awards and the Exclusive Books IBBY SA Award for Best Writer.

"Whether I'm writing poetry or children's books or an opinion piece or sitting on a panel, my viewpoint is influenced by the discipline of anthropology," she says. A passionate believer in giving back to the future, she has tutored students since her first year and continues to do so now.

FEATURE:  
#Witsie4Life

# ALEXANDER RAWHÁNI

BDS 2010, MSc  
Dentistry 2016



What Wits allowed me to do was develop patience and persistence, to handle pressure and come out the other side



**Alexander Rawhání** is the perfect example of a “polymath”. He is a jeweller, celebrity dentist, rapper, couturier and youth activist. What better ambassador for Wits’ energy and edge than this self-made New Age South African?

Graduating in Dental Science in 2010 and a Master’s in Prosthodontics in 2016, Alexander has developed an abundance of skills. He’s always worked with his hands and sees cosmetic dentistry as an art. He approaches teeth the way an architect would. Or a painter. Or a poet. He brings an entrepreneurial spirit, nurtured by his parents from a very young age, to everything he turns his mind to.

“I’ve always grown up with this entrepreneurial side because my parents didn’t just buy me what I wanted. They said ‘go and make it, go and figure it out’.”

Celebrities flock to Alexander for dental care, he has over 90 000 followers on Instagram and he is known around town as Doctor Smile.

His second rap album, *13*, has just dropped.

“I am very present at Wits still, every day. I’m connected either because I am a student at the Language School, or because I teach a few dentistry subjects.”

Alexander gives Wits his time and talent as an educator, a Zulu language student and community role model. Without doubt, he’s a **#Witsie4Life**.





I think you  
only realise  
there is a story  
to be told when  
you tell it to  
someone else



KATHY  
MUNRO

BA 1967, Honorary  
Associate Professor

Who better to tell the Wits story than **Kathy Munro**? How fitting to speak to Kathy on the campus she's been part of her entire adult life. Graduating from Wits in 1962, she pursued her postgraduate studies in Edinburgh, returning to South Africa to take up a lecturer post in the Department of Economics. Kathy has lectured on campus for almost 40 years. Being an Emeritus Honorary Professor gives her a permanent office on campus and she lectures regularly to Economics and Architecture students. Her knowledge of Johannesburg and its history and heritage is unparalleled. Don't get her started while she's in her library.

In her various roles at Wits, Kathy has mentored dozens of Wits students and, as an ardent feminist, blazed a trail for other women.

We followed Kathy around campus for a morning and got the annotated guided tour. She shared tidbits of campus lore, like the time she was teargassed in her office, or witnessed the inaugural spadework for the statues next to the Great Hall. All the while singing Wits' praises.

She just can't help it. "You carry, I believe, a Wits ethos with you throughout your life," she says while we walk.

"I think the people who have taught you, influence you. You, in turn, will influence others." Kathy met her husband, Keith, at Wits – they shared an interest in brass rubbings. He proposed on campus and 46 years later their love burns bright. Kathy and Keith are truly **#Witsies4Lifers**. As is their daughter, Kim, who tells us that her son, in turn, wants to be a rocket scientist. Where else but Wits, she asks rhetorically.

Kathy took a liking to Wits and books from the age of 10, when she first attended a "town and gown" festival with her mother.

She started her book collection then and now has one of the largest privately owned libraries.

"I have built my library from the time I was a child. My family wasn't affluent, but my parents were quite imaginative, buying books on sale and going to auctions. I knew I wanted to go to Wits when I was 10 years old."

## THEMBEKILE MARIVATE

BSc Eng 2009 (Electrical)



It is where I grew my intellectual curiosity. Wits gave me that



## VUKOSI MARIVATE

BSc Eng 2009 (Electrical)

Nobody goes to varsity in search of a life partner, but finding just that has been known to happen. Often. Like-minded individuals find more in common than their studies.

**Thembekile Masanabo Marivate** and her husband **Vukosi** are coming up for their 10<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Wits was where it all began. The attraction between them is still as palpable as the day they met.

“I asked him, ‘What are you doing?’ And he said, ‘I’m updating my website.’ And this was 2003. I mean who had a website, and who knew what to do for hours on the internet? I think that’s when he noticed me, because I started asked questions about stuff he liked.”

Their schedules are hectic, but they’ve somehow found the perfect balance between ambition and relationship.

They have embraced different aspects of the electrical engineering field. Vukosi is a machine engineer and the Absa Chair of Data Science at the University of Pretoria. Thembekile has

a Master’s in power and energy systems and works for GE Renewable Energy. Wits opened international opportunities and both have flourishing careers that take them around the world.

Even though they both had the chance to work and study in the US, they made a choice to stay in South Africa.

“We want to give back and empower as much as possible. Vukosi and I love the African continent and I think it’s always been apparent that we want to solve African problems and we want them to be solved by people who are African,” says Thembekile.

“I’m a **#Witsie4Life** because I am married to Thembi and that’s where we made our roots. We have that shared history and we can use it to shape the future we want in the country.

“It is where I grew my intellectual curiosity. Wits gave me that,” says Vukosi.

“I’m a **#Witsie4Life** because I think that Wits has empowered me,” says Thembekile.

**Claudine Ullman** graduated with an Honours degree in Dramatic Art and studied improvisation. She returned with a burning passion for relevant, feminist stand-up comedy and has been sharing her expertise with performers and audiences in a variety of self-penned performances. She is building a successful business out of raising young comedians to become fearless warriors of hilarity.

“Throughout my varsity career everyone kept saying to me, ‘You know, Claudine, you’ve got to do comedy’, and I absolutely loved improv. After Wits I went straight to the US to study. So I got my training overseas thanks to my exposure to it at Wits. You could say Wits was the bedrock upon which my career was founded.”

Claudine’s resilience and confidence shines. She is a powerhouse on social media, with workshops and shows taking place all over South Africa as well as overseas. She has just returned from two sold-out shows in London and has more planned.

“I started Jittery Citizens [her theatre training and corporate teambuilding venture] because I wanted to perform and it became about giving myself and my troupe the opportunity to perform, to make some money, to do corporates. And then the mission and the vision became a lot bigger. It became about going overseas, getting all this knowledge, coming back and saying, ‘We’re just as good.’ I think that my degree has aided me in my entrepreneurial journey because you come out of varsity going, ‘I know what I’m doing.’ If I hadn’t studied I would have been very lost.”

## CLAUDINE ULLMAN

BA (DA) Hons 2009



You could say Wits was the bedrock upon which my career was founded





01

# KHALID ISMAIL

MBBCh 1963



**Dr Khalid Ismail** raised himself above the discriminatory laws of his day, studied medicine at Wits, married the woman of his dreams and had five children who all followed in his footsteps to become medical doctors at Wits. They, in turn, produced 10 grandchildren who live his legacy. You don't get more **#Witsie4Life** than this.

We interviewed the good doctor at his Polokwane home, surrounded by his wife of over 50 years, his five children and all his grandchildren and learned what an inspiration Khalid has been to his family, his community and the world of medicine. I've never been made to feel so utterly at home in the bosom of a family not my own.

"For an Indian boy to be accepted at Wits was exhilarating. I was proud of the fact and I used to put on my bright blue blazer to show off to the world that I'm a Witsie."

Khalid went on to join a practice in Polokwane – in those days he was prohibited from starting his own – and worked tirelessly for the community of Limpopo and beyond, starting the first diabetes clinic in the region, taking further degree and diploma qualifications, giving back to fellow humans of all creeds.

Even more remarkable, all five of his children graduated from Wits with MBBCh degrees. In 1994, our first year of democracy, they were all at Wits Medical School together. "We came to a stage where suddenly, the age gap had disappeared," says his daughter Kareema, "and we were all becoming colleagues and all studying the same career."

Khalid retired in 2017, two years shy of his 80th birthday. He and his educator wife, Khadija, live to inspire and empower their budding brood. They have one of the largest privately owned libraries in South Africa. Seven grandchildren have published books before their teens. The little ones attend Wits weekly with their doctor moms – extra maths never hurt any bright six-year-old – and the family gather often in Polokwane to share love, stories and the best samosas this side of the Limpopo.



I don't know if my record has been broken by anybody else, but five of my kids, at the same time, in one year, were all Wits students



01 L to R Kaamila, Kuraysha, Khaleel, Kabeer (seated), Dr Khalid Ismail, his wife Khadija and Kareema  
 02 Wits Students' Medical Council, 1961-1962

02



ELINOR  
COLMAN

BSc 1965



I think the legacy of Wits continues. There's no doubt in my mind that Wits influenced generations of South Africans



MARTIN  
COLMAN

MBBCh 1964, MMed 1971

Even though they left South Africa almost 50 years ago, **Elinor and Martin Colman** have kept in intimate touch with their alma mater. In his long and illustrious career, Martin has worked all over the United States and started alumni groups in Chicago and San Francisco which still meet to this day. We were fortunate enough to meet the Colmans on campus during a visit home. Their sheer exuberance belied their years and it was a rare treat to accompany them around the grounds of the East and West campuses on a nostalgic journey into the past.

Elinor and Martin attended Wits together during their primary degrees, Elinor for a BSc in Chemistry and Zoology and Martin for his MBBCh. The Wits experience bonded these childhood sweethearts for life. They graduated in 1964 and were married at the end of that year. The Colmans have just celebrated their 55th anniversary.

While Martin completed his internship, Elinor taught Chemistry and Biology at Kingsmead College. Then, while Martin was a registrar in Radiation Oncology at the old Johannesburg General Hospital, he completed another degree, Master of Medicine in Therapeutic Radiology, later known as Radiation Oncology.

"I really never thought about being a family doctor

and I never thought about doing surgical things, so I went to medical school for the idea that I was going to find another area of medicine that was scientifically oriented and I eventually lucked into Radiation Oncology."

The Colmans left South Africa in January 1971. Martin was awarded a postgraduate scholarship by the South African Atomic Energy Board to continue his Nuclear Medicine studies at Johns Hopkins University and Medical School in Baltimore, Maryland, in the US. He received his Wits MMed degree in absentia in May 1971.

Martin retired from the University of California, Irvine in 1996, and was accorded the honorific title of Emeritus Professor. In 2017, he similarly retired from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and was awarded the title of Emeritus Chair of Radiation Oncology.

Since retirement, Elinor and Martin have become inveterate globetrotters, traversing the US and South Africa, visiting family, friends and **#Witsies4Life**. They are delighted to see that Wits has kept its standing as one of the top universities in the world and they fly the banner high wherever they go.

"I'm pretty well convinced that Wits is adapting to the situation in South Africa well and trying to make sure it remains a valid, relevant institution."

## FEATURE:

*Rock Art – Origins Centre*



These rocks hold clues to history, belief systems, even the effects of climate change. They tell a story of humankind



Origins Centre Rock Engraving Archive

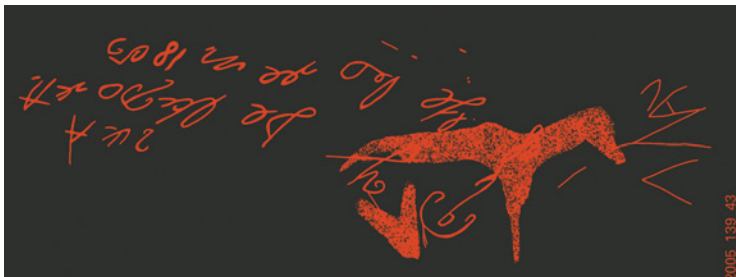
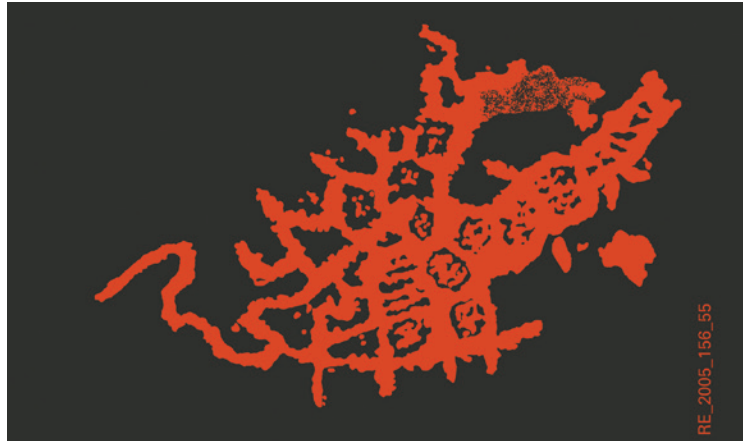
# Stones speak at last

**Ufrieda Ho** shares the excitement with researchers at the Origins Centre about the rocks that have been locked away in storage for years.

**I**t was like opening presents, says Professor Amanda Esterhuysen about the moment she and colleagues at the Wits Origins Centre finally got to remove plastic wrappers from 76 boulders in the museum's new wing.

The boulders, of course, are no run-of-the-mill rocks. They are treasures that hold clues to the rich stories of some of the first inhabitants of southern Africa, told in paintings and engravings. Yet they had been in storage at the Rembrandt Gallery on West Campus for years and housed before that at the Johannesburg Zoo and Museum Africa.

The collection also tells the story of the university's long tradition of rock art research, archaeology, and the move to make museums and academic research relevant and more accessible to the general public.



Images: © Origins Centre & Rock Art Research Institute

The basement wing, which opened in October last year, is the Origins Centre’s new Rock Engraving Archive. The budget to develop it was only R900 000. Museum architect Nabeel Essa (24/7) won the tender with the most effective design at the most economical price.

Esterhuysen, an associate professor in the School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies and head

of the Origins Centre, still has a huge wish list for the museum: everything from better lighting to more interactive displays. But she says the fact that the wing is now open after about six years is a good start.

“These rocks have been in storage for a long time so it’s wonderful that they’re now in this space where people can finally appreciate them,” she says.

As she walks and talks through

the exhibition it’s clear that the display has visceral power.

Esterhuysen points out the animals and creatures of myths and sacred ritual that appear on the rocks. She says they hold clues to history, belief systems, even the effects of climate change. They tell a story of humankind: who was where at what point and for what

## FEATURE:

### *Rock Art – Origins Centre*

reasons. She points out depictions of raids and invasions, the arrival of newcomers in South Africa, sometimes different styles of art including geometric patterns that are still open to interpretation.

Some of the rock art pieces are tiny, faded, solitary images. Others are massive, with detail and rich narrative.

For Dr Catherine Nomono, a researcher at the Rock Art Research Institute (RARI), which is also based in the Origins Centre building, the new basement wing gives a public life to the rock art engravings. “Researchers have always been close to these rocks even though they were locked away in storage. But in the museum space they may be an eye-opener for people who didn’t know about our collections. We can share the meaning of the symbolism and historical context and what this may have meant for the people who made the engravings,” Nomono says.

Questions and even critique of interpretations, conservation and research approaches are welcome.

“There is a lot about rock art that remains open to interpretation but displaying the collection helps to show the process of knowledge making, the depth of the research and how the expertise has grown over the years.

“A museum space like Origins allows us to examine all these elements – things like supporting the move to leave rock art in situ rather than to excavate; reflecting



There is a lot about rock art that remains open to interpretation but displaying the collection helps to show the process of knowledge making, the depth of the research and how the expertise has grown over the years







on whose voice is being heard in research and interpretation, who remains silent and why; the filter of the curator and the researcher; and the changing roles of museums and galleries in responding to what a contemporary visitor believes is relevant,” says Esterhuysen.

Professor David Pearce, director of RARI, remembers when Wits undertook a massive cleaning of the rocks in 2000s. “They were covered in lichen and algae and damaged by acid rain, the sun and pollution from the time they were at the zoo as part of an outdoor exhibition in the 1960s. It was very exciting for us to see things that had been covered up for decades. It is very exciting now that the engravings are on display. They tell the real story of the history of this country and Wits’ commitment to preserving our heritage. It’s my hope that people who see the engravings start to ask more questions about rock art, archaeology, evolutionary science and heritage,” he says of how the collection embraces all of these disciplines.

“When you look closely at the engravings you see the complexity and the skill of the engraving and you get to appreciate the stories in

a fascinating new way,” he adds.

The Centre has for some time been welcoming diverse ways to tell origin stories. Some past collaborations include the creation of a Buddhist sand mandala, interactive workshops making ochre and participation in Joburg’s first Museum Night – a free after-hours visit.

Over the next two years the plan is to use space on the first floor for an exhibition focusing on the story of Johannesburg.

Another significant development has been the creation of a digital rock art archive.

Azizo da Fonseca managed the digitisation process between 2002 and 2017 and is now director of the Ringing Rocks Digital Laboratory. Its database contains around 300 000 pieces of rock art-related photos, tracings, researchers’ notes and documentation — and Da Fonseca says this is only “scratching the surface”.

The digitisation project is not active now as its funding has run out, but the archive stands as an important research and analysis tool. For Da Fonseca it also adds to the preservation of cultural heritage and to deepening the appreciation of rock art and the

people who made the art.

The digital archive includes tools that can adjust lighting and contrast, essential to tease out details that can be missed in photographs. “This helps researchers and students who may not be able to get to a remote site. We’ve also seen how farmers or hikers who’ve looked at the archive come forward with information about rock art that’s on their properties or that they’ve seen on hikes,” says Da Fonseca.

He says the archive has been used in school classrooms and for interdisciplinary research and collaborations. And of course it’s a virtual showcase of Southern African rock art heritage to a global community. “What we need is funding to restart the digitisation process and a model to sustain it,” he says.

The Origins Centre and its partner institutes and departments at the university are compelled to keep thinking through these challenges, especially in a time of constrained resources. Above all it’s a mission to find new ways to let people experience for themselves why these old boulders and their tales still matter.

**FEATURE:**  
*Climate Change*



**Bushfires sweep  
across Australia**

Gallo/Getty Images



# Wits' feet to the fire

It's official, we've lived through the hottest decade since 1850 and global temperatures are creeping upwards still. Worst of all is that we as a world community, a university and as individuals seem stuck in prevarication, writes [Ufrieda Ho](#).



**50 million**  
people in Africa face a  
hunger crisis as crops fail  
because of drought and  
climate-related disasters

**T**he report this January from NASA and NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) detail the warmest global temperatures recorded as the hard science of our climate crisis. But if we're honest, extreme weather is something we've known, or at least felt, for years already.

Alumni around the world will know the signs in their backyards. Out of Australia this past December were the severe bushfires; it's difficult to forget night time images of a country smouldering like a seething briquette on a braai or images of

burnt koalas and kangaroos. And when the rains finally came they arrived with flash floods in some places in that country.

In Europe, countries such as Greece, Italy and France have all been struck by flooding and snow storms in the northern hemisphere winter. And in recent years the likes of the Philippines have been repeatedly hit by typhoons while drought seasons have been extended and severe everywhere from parts of Brazil to California in the United States.

Closer to home, aid agency Oxfam reported in November last year that at least 18 countries in Africa are suffering from some of

the worst drought and climate-related disasters in decades. Oxfam estimated in their report that at least 50 million people face a hunger crisis as crops fail. It's been exacerbated by locust swarms in Kenya that arrived this new year. The attendant calamities of the climate crisis are humanitarian crises of forced migration, displacement of people, starvation and higher risks of outbreaks of disease, Oxfam has warned.

The picture is bleak at a domestic level too. Wits' Global Change Institute (GCI) says that for every 2 degrees Celsius the earth warms by, parts of South



Galio/Getty Images

Locust infestation, Kenya 2020



# 12 000 megatons

South Africa's carbon budget up to 2050

Africa will warm by double that rate. The Institute also says South Africa's cumulative carbon budget (a kind of carbon emission limit we can emit) stands at about 12 000 megatons till 2050.

Professor Francois Engelbrecht, a specialist in climate modelling based at the GCI, warns that the cost of climate change – or the cost of not acting – will keep ballooning. Engelbrecht says: "These costs can be divided into three main categories: the costs of mitigating climate change, the costs of adapting to climate change and the direct damages and impacts caused by climate change."

It means planning on all levels to shift from fossil fuel-based technologies to renewable energy sources, says Engelbrecht. "In a future world where the Paris Agreement [signed in 2015] is successfully implemented, continued investments in fossil-fuel based energy, including coal plants and oil refineries, carry the major risk of these assets becoming stranded assets."

At Wits, it's Jason Huang, Infrastructure Planning and Development Manager, who has to oversee the implementation of plans of change and action across campus.

He acknowledges that Wits has been slow off the mark in gearing up for climate change largely

because of financial and resource pressures and myriad other competing needs the university has had over the past few years.

But Huang says there are significant advances from the successful implementation of projects and increasing commitment from leadership and management teams.

"When you show the financial savings (last year Wits' electricity budget was in the region of R160 million) and when people can personally experience changes, then you start to gain traction. But offsetting all of Wits' carbon emissions immediately is not as simple nor as affordable as it may seem. Even when you look at popular interventions such as solar panels, we just do not have the roof space to generate the amount of electricity we consume as a university. We also have many diverse operational areas and getting them to work together will not happen overnight," he says.

But inertia is not an option either. He adds: "We started with the so-called low hanging fruit in 2017 by changing light bulbs, using motion sensor lights, and installing photovoltaic (solar panels) systems mostly for lighting and other office requirements. We've also been installing a combined solar thermal and gas heating system for hot water heating in several residences since

2018. However, we're still not moving fast enough to outpace the pending impact of climate change."

Huang and his team won the Sustainability Award in Higher Education Facilities Management for this initiative and is already replicating and adapting the model for other residences at Wits.

For Huang, the next steps are to further align leadership and management commitment as well as to optimise and refine technologies. There's also a need for overarching initiatives and awareness programmes that are highly visible, interactive and effective to shift behaviour change.

"Unfortunately we still sit with a situation where we as a university community of students, staff and visitors are not yet collectively taking responsibility for sustainability such as forgoing comfort cooling or to be more water wise, for instance," says Huang. He understands student apathy, having at one point been an electrical engineering student at Wits himself.

The "act or be left behind" moment is already here though, according to Professor Ivor Sarakinsky of the Wits School of Governance.

Sarakinsky says there's no reason why Wits cannot be a living laboratory for finding ways

**FEATURE:**  
*Climate Change*



to support the implementation of cross-disciplinary and innovative interventions and projects that respond to the deepening climate crisis.

“Wits will be left behind the curve and isolated if it doesn’t show itself to be a university that leads in terms of implementing change in policy and on campus,” says Sarakinsky.

For Sarakinsky immediate

- 01 Food gardens at Wits
- 02 The Gavin Relly Green at Wits
- 03 Wits Junction residence solar heating plant

changes could include the use of electronic conferencing to cut down on air travel by academics and researchers, creating a zero-waste policy on campus; installing water reticulation and bio-digesters and even retaining sports





Image: Walley Webber

03

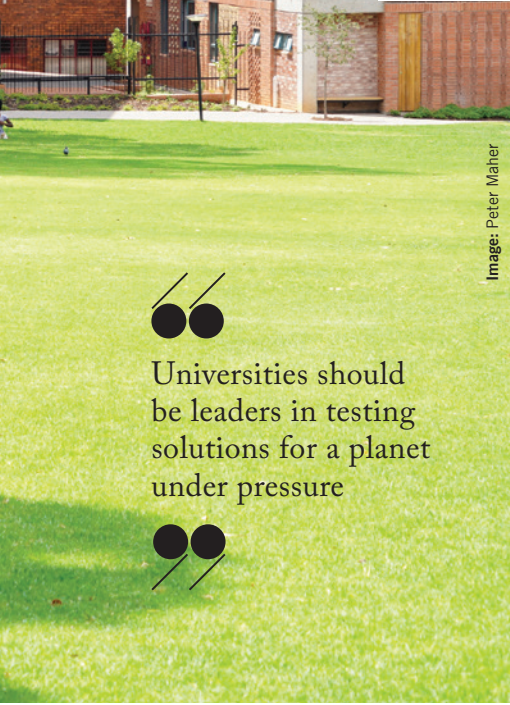


Image: Peter Maher

Universities should be leaders in testing solutions for a planet under pressure

02

fields grass cuttings for mulching to eliminate chemical fertiliser use and reduce water consumption. Bicycle pools on each of the campuses could enable students and staff to travel cleanly from one campus to another without having to deploy a diesel heavy bus service throughout the day.

Some of Wits' sustainability projects that are already in place include food gardens, including

two rooftop gardens on the Hillman Building and the Oppenheimer Life Sciences building, and an increasing reliance on photovoltaic technology – Google Maps reveals an enlarging PV footprint. There are plans to revive the campus recycling programme, re-examine carpooling and bicycle lanes and to give preference to suppliers across the supply chain including transport, catering and cleaning services that are environmentally sustainable.

Sarakinsky says another key switch we all need to make is to understand that in a time of climate change we have to look at governance through the lens of “custodianship and co-production”. Done right it can break down silos; make us more agile thinkers, learners and doers. It also puts creativity, collaborative solution finding, communication and critical awareness to work.

Part of this agility, Sarakinsky says, is to get financial managers to be less risk averse and more adaptive in planning for a climate-change campus. Supply chain and procurement needs to be modified to prioritise environmentally friendly products and short-term

costs need to be accepted to receive much-longer-term benefits, especially with regard to the University going for solar PV. Car parks could be covered with panels to generate power during the day and create shade. This is the kind of out of the box thinking needed. Academics are caught up in the unrelenting routine of publishing their research in accredited journals and this distracts them from reflecting on their research areas, innovating and engaging in practical activities aligned to their outputs.

While Sarakinsky acknowledges that there is no silver bullet to keep within targets for acceptable global warming levels, he says universities need to be leaders in showcasing, refining and testing solutions for a planet under pressure.

“We can disagree but we need to be having the kind of rational, engaged and evidence-based dialogues that lead to the actions that can help us manage the crisis of our time,” he says.

It's the old adage of thinking global and acting local and Wits as an entity with a constituency and a responsibility will have to step up to the plate.

# WITSIES AROUND

## THE GREEN LIFE IN DUBAI

*Heather Dugmore  
follows three alumni  
on their diverse career  
journeys ...*



# THE WORLD



It's fascinating to see the city's rampant growth and development over the 10 years that we have been here, and its complete transformation over 30 years. From a desert with one road it painted itself into life as a mirage of glass and steel with a network of superb roads



Image: ZQ Lee/Unsplash



[TOURISM]

# NAEEM PATELIA

Occupation:  
*Travel Counsellor*

Location:  
**DUBAI**

**BCom 2000**

**Naeem Patelia** is one of many expatriates in Dubai – only 15% of its population are Emiratis.

“The majority of the expats in Dubai are labourers from India, Pakistan and the Philippines, while the professional and business class expats are from the UK, the US, South Africa, Australia, and any other country you can think of. About 20 000 South African families are here,” says Patelia, who has been in Dubai since 2010. They don’t feel like foreigners, he adds, because the population of 4-million is so cosmopolitan.

The expats are the main market for his travel agency, a global UK-based franchise called Travel Counsellors, which he started five years ago. Prior to this he worked in IT and accounting in a business he helped establish in South Africa and which subsequently opened an office in Dubai.

“After five years with the business in Dubai, I took up the opportunity to open Travel Counsellors. There is a considerable amount of bureaucracy and cost in Dubai to open your own business, so it takes a while to get going, but



02



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01 Naeem Patelia and one of the latest developments in Dubai - Bluewaters Island - in the background

02 With Witsie wife, Zeenath Bhoola, skiing in Aspen Colorado, US

03 Naeem at the annual Travel Counsellors conference in Dubai

we're established now and doing well, with a repeat customer rate of 70%."

He runs his business from his home office in a gated community on the outskirts of Dubai called Green Community. "My family and I moved here 10 years ago because of the schooling – we have two children, Muhammad and Aisha – as well as for the beauty. It's surrounded by gardens, trees and parks. It's a 95% expat community because expats are able to buy here, but we do also socialise with the Emiratis in areas where a mix of locals and expats stay."

Patelia is married to Witsie alumna Zeenath Bhoola, an engineer who works as an air traffic controller at Al Maktoum International Airport in Dubai. "It is quite normal for professional women to work here, and not uncommon to find both partners working," Patelia says.

The couple studied at Wits at the same time and were at the same school together in Lenasia. "We share a similar social and cultural circle and we

are both from an Indian Muslim background. Our families got together and it was agreed that we could marry at the end of 1999, the year we finished studying. Zeenath's last engineering project was due the day before the wedding."

He majored in IT and financial accounting: "It was always my interest and has remained so. It was an obvious study path for me at Wits and, besides, when I was there we didn't have all the options that our kids have today. Growing up in Lenasia in my era you studied to become a doctor, accountant, lawyer or engineer, and 60% of my matric class at Lenasia Secondary School went to Wits and studied in those fields. A group of us were in a lift club and we would travel from Lenasia together. We learnt so much about managing freedom and self-motivation at Wits, and we loved our time there."

His degree has served him well in his travel business. "As with all businesses, you need a financial background. And because of my IT background it was easy to use

technology to grow and market the business."

To compete with online bookings he offers a highly personalised service. "We know our customers well; we know their preferences and budgets and the kind of travel and destinations they enjoy." He travels a lot with his family to the destinations his business offers "so that I know what I'm selling".

He does many "halaal-friendly" bookings and South Africa is one of the favourite destinations. "South Africa is a very cosmopolitan country and it is easy for people to wear a scarf, hijab or face-covering there without prejudice. The whole country caters for halaal needs – from Cape Town to the Garden Route to Kruger National Park."

Trends in travel, he says, include "sustainable travel" – hiking trips in Patagonia, research ships to Antarctica, or simply choosing hotels that recycle, use less plastic, conserve water and operate on solar energy.

Patelia explains there is a huge emphasis on sustainability and



Climate change is a major concern in Dubai. Here we are in the desert where most of the water is from desalination plants that run on gas and wherever you go it is air-conditioned because in summer it gets up to 50°C with 90% humidity



Dubai's famous landmark, The Burj Al Arab

renewable energy in the UAE. At the 2019 Dubai International Air Show, for example, the Abu Dhabi-based Etihad Airways and Boeing launched the Etihad Greenliner. A modified Boeing 787, it currently operates with a 30% blend of biofuel, achieving 50% less carbon emissions than regular jet fuel.

“Climate change is a major concern and there are many conferences about it in Dubai, especially about water,” he says. “I mean, here we are in the desert where most of the water is from desalination plants that run on gas and wherever you go it is air-conditioned because in summer it gets up to 50°C with 90% humidity. People aren’t worrying about burning up – not yet – but they are definitely looking at minimising global warming and the impact on the environment.”

Because of the heat they stay indoors during the summer months: “Our homes and all the malls are very well cooled. The malls are huge so we walk there for exercise in summer, while in the cooler months you can walk

outdoors in the evenings. It’s strange but you really don’t need to go outside. The whole city is geared for indoor facilities, from entertainment to sports.”

Patelia says one of the advantages of living in Dubai is safety: “We don’t stress about locking up our house, we feel safe driving at night and we know our kids are safe. We really appreciate this.” Other than this he says their lifestyle is very similar to how they lived in South Africa – though prices are higher.

“It’s fascinating to see the city’s rampant growth and development over the 10 years that we have been here, and its complete transformation over 30 years.” From a desert with one road it painted itself into life as a mirage of glass and steel with a network of superb roads. Even if you own property in Dubai you can only be there on a visa or work permit, you cannot become a citizen. “If you lose your job or business you cannot stay there, which is harsh – but it’s also why Dubai is so wealthy and fast-moving, with a 0.5% unemployment rate.”



UNIVERSITY OF THE  
WITWATERSRAND,  
JOHANNESBURG



100 **1922**  
**2022**

Wits Centenary Campaign

Understanding yesterday | Shaping today | Building tomorrow

[www.wits.ac.za/givingtowits/wits-centenary](http://www.wits.ac.za/givingtowits/wits-centenary)

FEATURE:

*Witsies Around The World*

# A doctor's journey



I wanted to understand the mind's true potential, apply it in my life and help others to do the same



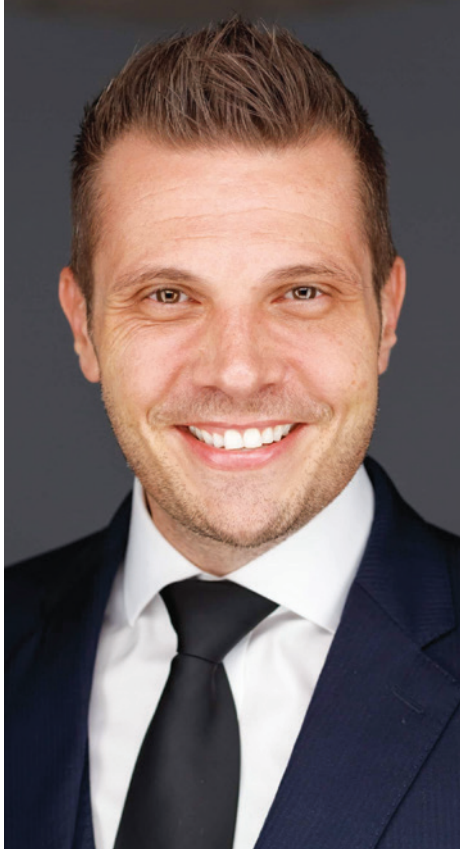
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Image: Joseph Vary/Unsplash



[MEDICINE]  
**SPENCER  
POOL**

Occupation:  
**Consultant**

Location:  
**UK**

**MBBCh 2001**

Instead of healing bodies, Wits-trained medical doctor **Dr Spencer Pool** helps people discover the power of their minds to improve their lives.

- 01 Sunset on the Kent coast (UK), home of the Pool family
- 02 Pool with Grant Cardone, author, international social media influencer and real estate mogul
- 03 Pool with fellow Proctor Gallagher Institute consultant Brian Dalmaso at a training session for 300 people

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**H**e switched from medicine in 2017 to become a human potential consultant with the Proctor Gallagher Institute. “The work I do now is about using our minds to achieve our potential,” says Pool.

“I faced huge challenges in the course of my career change. But I see the roots of it going back to my schooling at Crawford College, where they taught us how to think differently.” He started at Crawford College in Killarney the year it opened in 1993, when he was in Standard 9 (Grade 11). “The founder, Graham Crawford, was such a special person and the teachers were incredible. Because of them I smashed matric and was admitted to Wits Medical School.”

From 1997 to 2001, during years four, five and six of medical

school and his internship, he worked in state hospitals, and was directly exposed to how bad things were then for patients with HIV. “No treatment was being given for HIV and my internship at the Joburg Gen was harrowing. There were people lying on the floor, some dead, as they were not able to get treatment in time. Others were actively fitting from meningococcal meningitis, which was common among HIV patients. There were so many patients to see that we would have to leave the ones who were dying and focus on the ones who had a chance.”

He felt like an undertaker rather than a doctor, as he didn’t have access to what he needed to help his patients. “The last part of my internship was in the paediatric ward and that totally destroyed me. So many of the babies and

children had HIV. They would get terrible infections like PCP pneumonia and we would only be able to give them oxygen and supportive medicines, and several little beings would die terrible deaths every day.

“It was absolutely destroying me. To self-preserve I went to England to do locums in 2002. They are very receptive to South African doctors as we are excellent, and I slotted in well.”

Pool noticed how many South African doctors were arriving to do locums in the UK and in 2004 he started his own locum agency. “My agency was called The Comfort Group, and it was all about transitioning South African doctors into the UK in the most effortless way possible,” he explains. “I knew from personal experience how hard this can be.”

Five years later, in 2007, Pool moved back to Johannesburg and used the pounds he had earned to set up two community clinics – in Melville and Highlands North – to help people without means to get quality medical and dental care.

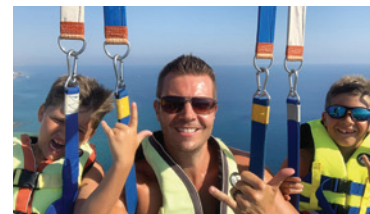
“Regrettably, the clinics were raided and all our medications confiscated because the Department of Health officials said our dispensing licence wasn’t valid, even though it was. It was clear that they wanted bribes, which I refused to pay. It went to court and we won the case, but unfortunately all of the medications, amounting to a huge sum of money, had apparently



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- 01 Pool with his family at the Eiffel tower in Paris
- 02 With his wife, Wits alumna Angie Mazur, and family in Poland
- 03 Enjoying the outdoors with his sons, in Cyprus
- 04 With his mentor Bob Proctor of the Proctor Gallagher Institute
- 05 With clients Rachel Sands and Dr Amanda Sands who consulted Pool on how to grow their Arbonne businesses
- 06 His kids Maximus (left) and Cooper (right) with his clay owl
- 07 Pool and his brother, author Mark Pool

been ‘destroyed’.”

It left him disillusioned, but there was some light in 2008, as he reunited with Wits alumna Angie Mazur, who is now his wife. “I met her in first year at Wits. From the moment I first saw her, I knew she was the one. I felt such a strong connection with her, but being young and foolish, we split when I went to the UK in 2002.”

Angie completed four years of medicine but she realised it wasn’t for her and she switched to architecture.

They both married other people, and subsequently got divorced. They reunited after getting in touch on Facebook, got married and emigrated to the UK in 2011. They live in Kent and Angie now works as a property developer. They have three children: daughter Kayla (15, from Angie’s first marriage) and two boys, Cooper (9) and Maximus (7).

In 2017 Pool started doing the Proctor Gallagher Institute (PGI) training while working as a doctor at a hospital in Margate. “I wanted





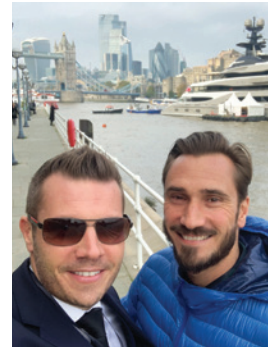
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to understand the mind's true potential, apply it in my life and help others to do the same," he says. Now he works for himself in collaboration with PGI founder Bob Proctor. Pool's clients include doctors in the UK, the US and Canada. "Things are changing for doctors throughout the world. They have to work more for less pay," Pool explains. "In the UK the National Health Service is taking strain and I help doctors to rekindle their passion for medicine and to discover or rediscover who they are and what they want from life, and to go about creating this. What most people want is happiness, health and wealth, all of which create more freedom.

"Most of us don't achieve this because our subconscious paradigms or 'mental programmes'

keep us stuck where we are, repeating the same patterns. I experienced this myself for nine years, plagued by self-defeating thoughts like 'how am I going to make it, I have a family of five to support'."

He has been a fulltime consultant since May 2019. "I don't have a scarcity mentality anymore. I realised there are 7.5-billion people on the planet and many of them need a mentor who has shown through their own results that they know what they are talking about."

He consults from his home office and does both face-to-face and Skype and Zoom sessions with clients all over the world. "I am able to spend far more time with my family than ever before. I'm a massive family person.

"We have a beautiful home for which we are very grateful, we go swimming at the public leisure centre, I cook pancakes for my family on Sunday, and we watch movies together. We're Marvel movie fans and we enjoy romantic comedies and talent shows. What we have stopped doing is watching the news as it can be very destructive to your psyche when you are constantly told how bad things are."

One of his dreams is to move to Florida in two years' time. "I resonate with people from the US and Canada and I like the space and weather there. My family said they would be very happy to relocate. It's good to see the world, and if Elon Musk believes he can get to Mars, surely we can get to Florida!"

[EDUCATION]

# PATRICK DEANE

Occupation:  
*Vice-Chancellor*

Location:  
**CANADA**

BAHons 1979

Images: Bernard Clark



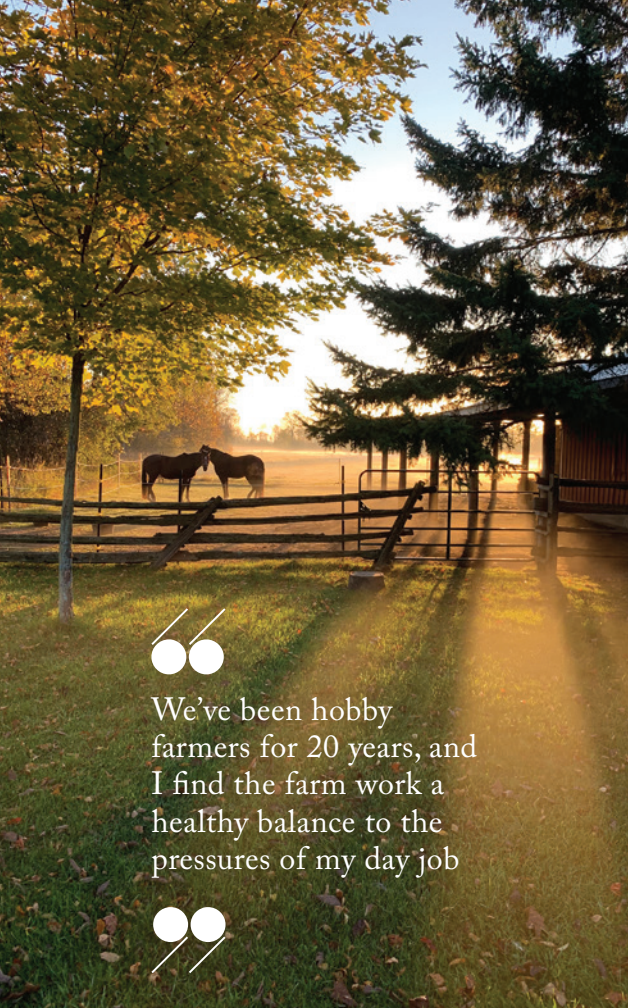
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## Self-knowledge settles the soul

"I've been in Canada for more than 40 years now, yet my South African memories and associations are still so strong," says Professor **Patrick Deane**, the Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University in Kingston, Canada.



02



We've been hobby farmers for 20 years, and I find the farm work a healthy balance to the pressures of my day job



Images: Colin Deane

04

- 01 Vice-Chancellor Patrick Deane at Convocation
- 02 Patrick on the grounds of Queen's University
- 03 His farm, 20kms north of Kingston
- 04 With his border collie Toby

03

“I feel a powerful continuity with my life back in Johannesburg, with Wits especially, and with my high school years at King Edward VII. I'm a little surprised by this, frankly, because four decades is a long time. But then again, those were very intense times, and as I've grown older I have come to understand more clearly their formative effect on me.”

Deane's most powerful Wits memory was a protest meeting on the library lawns in 1976, presided over by senior leaders in full academic dress. “They were so attired because one means of circumventing the Riotous Assemblies Act was to assemble

the university in a kind of special convocation. Two figures from that day are etched in my memory: Professor Phillip Tobias and Vice-Chancellor Professor GR Bozzoli.

“At the time, I had very little understanding of what their actions really meant for themselves, their families, and – most important – for our country. Today I have a better understanding of what was at stake on that occasion, and I realise that my own career has been largely about seeking to serve the pursuit of a just society through educational leadership.”

Deane never intended to be an academic, still less a vice-chancellor. His chosen career

was law on the basis that “there were few areas in which a person committed to social justice and equity could be more effective”. Yet his love was English, and what was to follow has informed the advice he has given to countless students over the years: “to be open to the opportunities that life presents you”.

Recounting “the somewhat quirky trajectory of my own career”, he explains he left South Africa for Canada, deserted law as a vocation, took his PhD in English, taught English literature, and then became an academic administrator. “I am struck by the unpredictability of it all. Yet I am also aware of deep continuities,

not the least of which involves the discovery that you can serve the interests of social justice, equity, and the broader human good in many different ways.”

Canada was an obvious choice for Deane as his mother was Canadian. She met his South African father when he went to Canada on business. They married in 1947, set sail for South Africa almost immediately and lived in Johannesburg for the rest of their lives.

Deane left South Africa in the wake of the Soweto riots. “I was just a young guy trying to understand what my role could be in the struggle for social justice and at the same time wanting to see the world and have an adventure.”

A large part of life’s journey is about gaining self-knowledge, which, as Deane puts it, “if it isn’t delusional, settles the soul and is a source and condition of wisdom”.

In July 2019, he took up his third post as vice-chancellor, this time at Queen’s. This is one of Canada’s major research-intensive universities, founded in 1841 and modelled on the University of Edinburgh. His previous post was at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, for nine years. Before that he was Vice-Principal: Academic at Queen’s from 2005 to 2010 and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Winnipeg from 2003 to 2004.

Knowing both Hamilton and Kingston well, he describes them: Hamilton is a steel-manufacturing



Image: Bernard Clark

01



02



Image: Colin Deane

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- 01 Patrick Deane interacting with students at the Smith School of Business, Queen's University
- 02 The Douglas Library at Queen's University
- 03 On his farm with wife Sheila
- 04 Patrick's installation as Principal and Vice-Chancellor in November 2019
- 05 With Sheila on their farm north of Kingston
- 06 On the farm

city and fell on hard times in the late 1990s. Lately, says Deane, the city “has found a new identity as a centre for advanced and high-quality healthcare, a favoured home for the arts community, and a centre for education and research. Also, international migrants have gravitated towards



Image: Bernard Clark

04

Hamilton, finding Toronto too expensive. The result is that the city is wonderfully diverse, rich in restaurants and centres of cultural interest.”

Kingston is a beautiful, small, historic city at the northernmost end of Lake Ontario. “It was the seat of Canada’s first parliament and has a significant indigenous population, especially in nearby Tyendinaga. The traditional users of the lands on which Queen’s stands are the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe nations. This is acknowledged at the start of most meetings and all formal university occasions.”

Deane says the university is making serious efforts to address the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which several years ago produced a powerful report on the abuses suffered by Canada’s indigenous peoples through the residential school system, which

sought to expunge their cultural identity.

“The role of education has been singled out as especially important in redressing the injustices. For universities this means increasing access for indigenous students, as well as curriculum reform to include indigenous ways of knowing and knowledge about the indigenous peoples in Canada.

“My Wits experience taught me about the critical relationship between universities and their communities.”

To ground himself, Deane has created two worlds: an academic and a farming life. He and his wife Sheila McColm Deane live on a farm 20km north of Kingston. “We’ve been hobby farmers for 20 years, and I find the farm work a healthy balance to the pressures of my day job,” he smiles.

Sheila is a Canadian, and was a professor of English and of Women’s Studies before retiring.

She now works as a writer and is an enthusiastic spinner and weaver, as well as being the driving force on the farm.

Their son Colin is an instructor in education at the University of Winnipeg and their daughter Petra is a genetics researcher in Vermont.

The extended family includes 50 animals ... “horses, sheep, chickens and five border collies,” Deane explains. “This is again not something I would ever have predicted, being a resolutely urban boy from Johannesburg!”

He plans to visit South Africa more frequently in future. “I’m excited to be coming to Johannesburg for the international Conference on Thinking in 2020. I am very keen to build partnerships with South African universities, and to see whether I can find a way to contribute to justice, prosperity and well-being in the land of my birth.”



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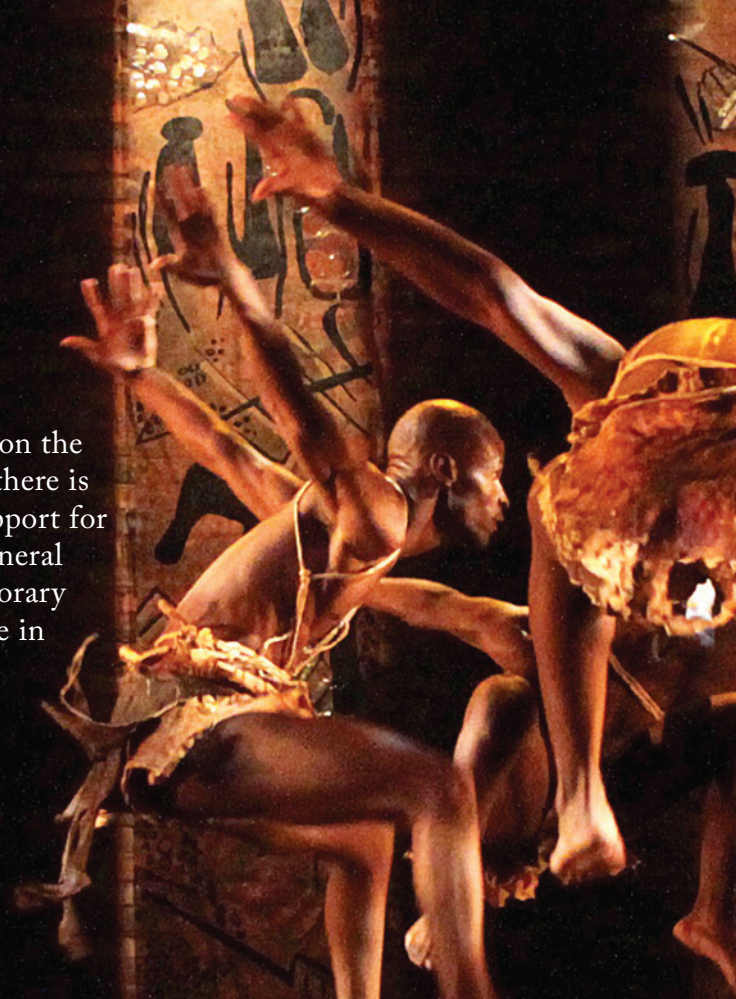


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Image: John Hogg



The book is a commentary on the tragedy that there is shrinking support for the arts in general and contemporary African dance in particular



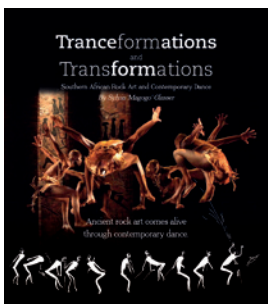
# BOOKS

## TRANCEFORMATIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONS

– *Southern African Rock Art and Contemporary Dance*

By Sylvia Glasser

Staging Post, 2019



It seems exactly right that Sylvia Glasser’s book *Tranceformations and Transformations – Southern African Rock Art and Contemporary Dance* should come almost 30 years after she created the dance work that features in the book’s title.

The long wait has allowed a gaze back on an extraordinary career and more specifically on Glasser’s deliberate choices to make dance about impact, and about merging different ways of understanding people. Images in the book juxtapose rock art with dance, illustrating how meaning can be transfigured.

In her book Glasser reflects on how the dance piece *Tranceformations*, first performed in 1991, became the “pinnacle” of her choreographic career. It would confirm her own transformations too – personal evolution driven by internal and external dynamics.

She had to be changed, as were the dancers she worked with and audiences who saw them.

Her book includes a DVD of when *Tranceformations* was first performed, transporting today’s readers and



viewers back to the original work to glimpse the movement and form, the play of shadows, lights and projections, and the music arising from the sounds and rhythms of the human body.

It includes interviews with and biographies of the dancers who have performed the piece over the years. Their words reflect a connection to the first peoples of this land, to the world of our ancestors, and the troubled heritage of political and social disruption that has become an inevitable modern-day burden of all South Africans.

In the book Themba Nkabinde sums up how Glasser's dance piece evoked all of this. Nkabinde was part of *Moving into Dance*, the non-racial dance company Glasser founded in 1978 in the garage of her Johannesburg home.

He says of the profound churn of emotions felt by some of the dancers: "When they realised this dance work was not an ordinary 'dance' then they started putting it in their hearts, then it disturbed them.

"I remember ... paramedics came back stage in Munich, Germany, wanting to assist but it was a situation that didn't need that kind of a treatment." Glasser allows the telling to come from these multiple voices and it makes *Tranceformations and Transformations* an important social record.

The book is primarily a fusion of two of Glasser's great loves: contemporary dance and southern African rock art. It tells her personal journey as a "quite conventional dance teacher" in Joburg who joined her husband, Professor David Glasser, on sabbaticals in the US. (David was Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at Wits in the 1990s and head of the department of Chemical Engineering for many years.) Glasser enrolled in dance classes with top teachers and dance schools in the US, deepening her own practice and giving expression to her Africanness.

When she and her husband returned to South Africa after the 1976 Soweto uprisings they



Image: John Hogg



I learnt to understand the irrevocable connections between the social, political, economic and cultural systems of any society and to delve into these relationships even when they were not immediately apparent

Sylvia  
Glasser



decided to make an impact. She also returned to study in 1987, and chose social anthropology at Wits, with lecturers such as David Webster and David Hammond-Tooke. Furthering her studies in social anthropology would prove, she says, to be an “essential landmark” that introduced her to Southern African rock art and with it trance dancing and the ritual ceremonies of the San: her inspiration for *Tranceformations*.

The Director of the Rock Art Research Centre, David Lewis-Williams, said of her piece at the time: “She called the dance *Tranceformations* but the transformations were not only those of the San in their religious life and their history. Those who took

part in the sequence and those who were privileged to witness it were also transformed. They came to see the San in a new and more sensitive light and to develop an empathy with one of Africa’s greatest traditions.”

She writes: “I learnt to understand the irrevocable connections between the social, political, economic and cultural systems of any society and to delve into these relationships even when they were not immediately apparent.”

Glasser says she knew that being a white, middle-class Jewish South African woman she was not the most obvious person to explore San trance dance formations represented in rock art. But she was determined to break boundaries, with respectful awareness of the complexities and challenges of cultural appropriation.

She says writing the book, like choreographing the dance, has been about deep consideration, context and then checking and rechecking herself. “I had to have the trust of the dancers I was working with and to understand their challenges. I was aware of these things then and more so when I wrote the book. It didn’t stop me because I think my work has been premised firstly on a deep respect for what I was working with, what I was entering into in investigating another culture and another people’s belief system.

“Secondly, I think that we need to have deep knowledge of what we are working with and, thirdly we have got to do it with the right motivation – it’s not about political correctness.”

The book is a reflection of turning points, of looking on difficult truths in South Africa’s history. It is also a way of giving thanks and voice to the people who have been part of her distinguished career. Finally, it’s “a commentary on the tragedy that there is shrinking support for the arts in general and contemporary African dance in particular”, she says.

Today *Tranceformations* is part of the matric dance syllabus in South African schools. But the book is partly self-published with support from the National Arts Council and The Ar(t)chive, an independent archive currently based at Wits University’s School of Arts.

Reviewed by Ufrieda Ho



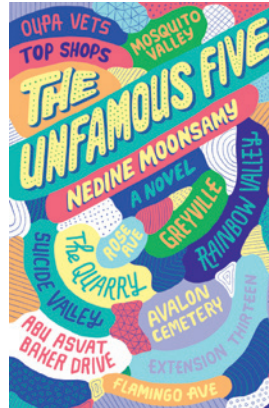
# THE UNFAMOUS FIVE

By Nedine Moonsamy

Modjaji Books, 2019



One could read Moonsamy's novel as being critical of society's expectations on individuals



Nedine Moonsamy

One of the critical functions of literature is to open worlds that have been hidden. It has always been the task of writers to illuminate the world in ways that surprise and amuse, and that is why reading Nedine Moonsamy's debut novel, *The Unfamous Five*, is such a pleasure.

The novel is set in Lenasia, an Indian township south of Soweto, and follows the lives of five friends: Janine, Kumari, Neha, Shejal and Devon. The novel takes place between 1993, right before the onset of South Africa's democratic dispensation, and 2003. Moonsamy (BA 2006, MA 2010, PhD 2014) is particularly skilful at showing how lives are affected by history and what the consequences of violence are on children.

The five friends come from families of different classes. While Kumari comes from a well-off family that affords a certain level of safety and an opportunity to go to university after high school, other characters, like Janine, do not have such privileges. What the novel shows is class, like in other communities, is prevalent in the Indian community. Interestingly though, despite these class differences, the "Five" are able to maintain their friendship and enjoy each other's company, showing genuine friendship can triumph over differences that often lead to divisions.

Another interesting theme the novel explores is sexuality. Devon, who discovers he is gay, comes from a religious family and this leads to him having a sense of shame over his sexuality. Even though he aspires to serve the church and become a priest, this aspiration is made difficult as he is unable to reconcile his sexuality with his religion. Devon struggles with himself as the expectations of a heteronormative church restrict who he can become.

One could read Moonsamy's novel as being critical of society's expectations on individuals. Apartheid was premised on the notion that there are pure identity categories and the novel challenges that idea as it shows the characters' complexity.

*The Unfamous Five* is a novel illuminating the challenges of friendship over time. Is it possible to maintain childhood friendship and if it is, what kinds of risks do these include? What do friends provide that family, and other social institutions, cannot?

One of the things that Moonsamy says she wanted to achieve with this novel was to offer a more complex representation of Indian people in South African literature and to put Lenasia on the local literary map. With this novel, she achieves that. *The Unfamous Five* is a much-needed intervention in the literature of post-apartheid South Africa.

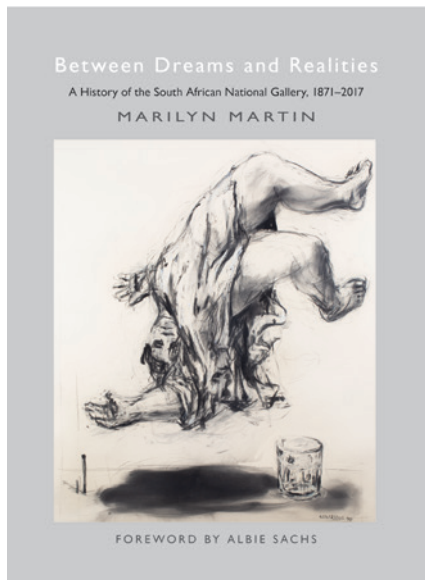
Reviewed by Manosa Nthunya, PhD candidate at Wits

## BETWEEN DREAMS AND REALITIES

– *A History of the South African  
National Gallery, 1871 – 2017*

By Marilyn Martin

Print Matters Heritage, 2019



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**W**hat value does an art museum add to a society? This is one of the questions which Marilyn Martin (**M Arch 1980**), a former director of the South African National Gallery, explores in *Between Dreams and Realities: A History of the South African National Gallery, 1871 – 2017*.

Martin tells the engaging story of South Africa's pre-eminent art museum based on extensive research and experience. Her book revisits important exhibitions, events and forgotten controversies as well as highlighting the achievements of directors, who often faced political agendas that strained relationships within and outside the institution.

Martin's narrative begins in 1871, with a bequest of 45 paintings and money for the establishment of a public art gallery in Cape Town, and ends in 2017,

a time of extraordinary changes in South Africa's art and museum sectors. Richly illustrated with key art works, installation shots and photographs of individuals and groups, *Between Dreams and Realities* considers the aspirations and role of civil society in creating and maintaining a national institution for the common good.

Albie Sachs writes in the foreword: "Meticulously researched and carefully written, this book is more than just a rich repository of information about an important public institution with high intentions. It is the pained life story of an organic body that was dedicated to idealistic pursuits and yet found itself bedevilled by egotism, materialism and official indifference. In making a striking and substantial contribution to the history of the South African National Gallery, Martin presents a rich story, with



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Martin presents a rich story, with perhaps more agony than ecstasy, of our constantly evolving South African aesthetic imagination



perhaps more agony than ecstasy, of our constantly evolving South African aesthetic imagination.”

Long-standing government disinterest and neglect of the museum is explored, as are the difficulties that confronted directors in acquiring a collection worthy of its status. It also tells the story of excellent public cooperation and support, and of boards of trustees, directors and staff together overcoming the realities of budget cuts, government interference and severe space constraints.

Martin’s peers acknowledge the issues raised, and support the crucial role that a cultural institution such as the South African National Gallery plays in our society. “As chronicled here, SANG’s history is told as one of triumph over adversity, and I agree with Martin that, with the museum’s precarious status at present, the book provides a convincing



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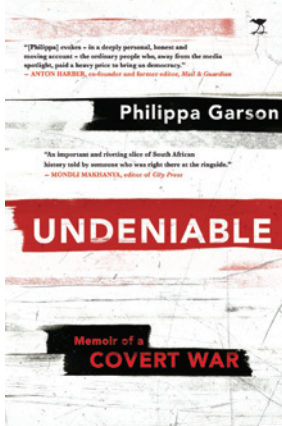
- 01 William Kentridge, *Leviathan*, 1990, charcoal and gouache, 1055 x 885, courtesy of the artist; image provided by Iziko Museums of South Africa; photographer Nigel Pamplin
- 02 Marilyn Martin
- 03 Irma Stern, *Arum Lilies*, 1951, oil on canvas, 900 x 650.02
- 04 Pancho Guedes: *An Alternative Modernist installation*, 2008; photographer Pam Warne
- 05 Albert Adams, *Cape Town Harbour*, 1959, oil on canvas, 1220 x 910; courtesy of Edward Glennon; photographer Pam Warne



05

argument for its crucial importance as a cultural institution. By charting its history, Martin concludes with her hope that it provides a road map for its future as well,” writes Pamela Allara, Associate Professor Emerita of Brandeis University.

Martin was a senior lecturer in the Department of Architecture at Wits University. After 11 years as director of the South African National Gallery, she was appointed director of art collections for Iziko Museums in 2001. She retired in 2008 and has since worked as an independent writer, curator and lecturer. She is an Honorary Research Associate at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town. In 2002 Martin was admitted to the Legion of Honour of the Republic of France at the rank of Officer and in 2013 she received the medal of the Fondation Alliance Française in Paris.



Increasingly, I felt driven to shed light on this blood-soaked chapter in the country's history, one that has been airbrushed out of our collective consciousness



## UNDENIABLE:

*Memoir of a Covert War*

By Philippa Garson

Jacana Media, 2020

**P**hilippa Garson (**BA 1986, BA Hons 1989**) is a journalist and writer who began her career as a trainee reporter at *Weekly Mail* (later *Mail & Guardian*) in 1989, covering the civil war between Inkatha and ANC-aligned communities.

*Undeniable: Memoir of a Covert War* is an account of that period, in which she and colleagues Mondli Makhanya, Kevin Carter, Eddie Koch, Anton Harber and others, tracked and discovered the involvement of a Third Force, which was fuelling the killing frenzy during the 1990s. The book is dedicated to the memory of the thousands killed during the season of violence that preceded South Africa's first democratic elections.

Written in the spirit of non-fiction, the book recreates scenes from memory and the articles she wrote at the time. It is an account of her story, which charts a loss of innocence and an attempt to make sense of events years later.

"The more I revisited this time, the more I tossed and turned at night. It was as if I was tapping into a momentous river of anguish that runs silently under

the soil of this country. Increasingly, I felt driven to shed light on this blood-soaked chapter in the country's history, one that has been airbrushed out of our collective consciousness.

"The transition to democracy was indeed a miracle: the country was spared the full-scale revolution that many saw as inevitable. But during the years preceding it, the nation swung between optimism and despair as breakthroughs in negotiations between the apartheid government and the ANC were punctuated by massacres on trains, in homes, shebeens, hostels and elsewhere. The relentless and indiscriminate attacks on communities, often by unidentified gunmen, left deep scars on the land."

Garson lives in Brooklyn, New York. She reported extensively on HIV/AIDS while completing a Media Fellowship at Wits University's Journalism School. She writes about global development, health, human rights and humanitarian issues for a range of publications and clients. She has won two media awards and was selected to participate in four UN Foundation Press Fellowships.



A great, yet upsetting story, its language is fresh, descriptive and poetic in parts

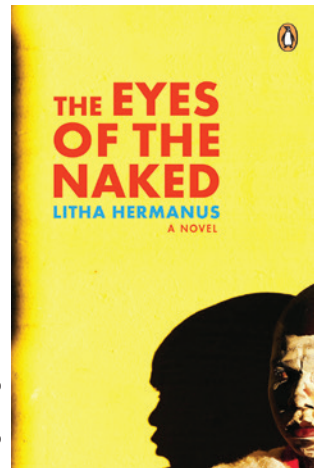


Image: Penguin

Left: Litha Hermanus with his son Zazi, to whom the book is dedicated

## THE EYES OF THE NAKED

By Litha Hermanus

Penguin Random House, 2019

“All boys want to become men the ‘real’ way,” writes Litha Hermanus. “However, for most, it’s parents who decide which side of the blade their manhood will fall on – the side of ‘the spear’ or that of ‘the scalpel’.”

In Hermanus’s fast-paced urban adventure, *The Eyes of the Naked*, released last year, he uses the narrator Nakedi Solomon to explore topical issues such as circumcision schools, xenophobia and life in many informal settlements across South Africa.

Nakedi flees in the dead of night to Mthatha after becoming embroiled in a robbery with only the clothes on his back and his young son. The Eastern Cape offers no refuge: his young brother has run away from home, possibly to a suspicious circumcision school. Nakedi is drawn into the hunt for a sibling while he evades the law. He questions

what it means to be a man and a father.

*The Eyes of the Naked* has been described by reviewers as “a great, yet upsetting story” and its language is as “fresh, descriptive and poetic in parts”. Hermanus argues in a recent article that parents should be duty-bound to the lives of their children, before they are servants to culture. Their decisions should hinge highly on the state of safety evident or lacking within the ritual.

This Witsie has had many rich life experiences to draw from, having worked as an international flight attendant, a language teacher, a radio producer and co-presenter. He holds a joint honours degree in Media Studies and English Literature, as well as a Master’s degree in Creative Writing. A speaker of Japanese, he is currently a development consultant at the Embassy of Japan in Tshwane.

# IN MEMORIAM

*Wits University fondly remembers  
those who have passed away*

## Elliot Chesler

(1932-2019)

Born in Johannesburg, Wits-trained Dr Elliot Chesler (**MBBCh 1955**) became the youngest South African physician to qualify as a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, and later the American College of Cardiology. He spent five years in the Department of Cardiology at Groote Schuur Hospital and on the staff of the University of Cape Town's medical school, before becoming Chief of Cardiology and Professor of Medicine at the University of Natal.

In 1977 he and his family emigrated to the US and he spent 22 years as Chief of the Cardiovascular Division of the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota and Professor of Medicine at the University of Minnesota. One of his valuable innovations was to hire very experienced nurse specialists from whom medical students could learn. He published a book, *Clinical Cardiology in the Elderly*, as well as editing editions of *Clinical Cardiology*.

Dr Chesler retired from full-time practice in 2004 and moved to San Antonio, Texas to be closer to his grandchildren. Among his retirement interests was gardening and he travelled to gardens all over the world with his wife, Wits alumna Rosalind ("Babsie") Chesler, who died in 2015. He died aged 87 and is survived by their sons Alan and Louis and their families, as well as his sister Barbara Gavronsky.

Source: *Star Tribune*, Minnesota

## Sidney Setzer

(1937-2019)

Professor Sidney Setzer (**BDS 1960, MSc Dent 1984**) passed away on 11 April 2019 at the age of 81. Born and raised in Nigel, he showed his intellectual abilities at an early age. He was an active member of the University's staff from the time he qualified and acting Dean for a period, making an immense contribution to the Department of Dentistry and to the advancement of paediatric dentistry internationally.

Not only was he a pioneer and world authority in his field, Prof Setzer focused on charity and kindness. He actively looked to do good and volunteered to operate on children from the Avril Elizabeth Home for the Handicapped, Children of Fire and in his later years the Sandringham Gardens old age home. He was also the South African representative for the Special Olympics for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

His professional achievements, which placed him at the pinnacle of dentistry, were always secondary to his intense devotion and dedication to his wife and family. His best moments were those surrounded by his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by all those who knew his kindness and love.

Source: Adam Setzer

## Tessa Hochfeld

(1972-2019)

Dr Tessa Hochfeld graduated from Wits with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work in 1996 and from the London School of Economics with a Master's degree in Gender and Development Studies in 2000. She started her professional career as a social worker for the Johannesburg Jewish Community Services in 1997 before moving to Wits as a lecturer in the Department of Social Work. She spent a year at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research and then moved to the University of Johannesburg in 2006, where she found her academic research home in the Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA). After obtaining her PhD at Wits in 2015, she was promoted to Associate Professor at the CSDA. The focus of her PhD was the child support grant and she was viewed internationally as an expert on the administration of welfare assistance for children. She developed strong working relationships with the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Uppsala, Sweden and the University of Southern Denmark in Odense. In addition to her daily work, looking at issues of social welfare, protection and justice, Dr Hochfeld was supervising Master's and PhD students in South Africa and in Sweden, and was working on 11 journal articles at the time of her death. The body of intellectual work that she leaves in her written contributions and public engagements will continue to shape social development thinking, policies and practice for years.

Dr Hochfeld died at the age of 46 in a cycling accident on 17 August 2019 in Johannesburg. She leaves her husband, Rafi, and two children, Jordan and Asher.

Source: Penny Hochfeld



## Francis Legge

(1942-2019)

Traver Francis Hugh Legge, better known as Prof Francis Legge (**BSc Eng 1970**), was a significant advocate for the Civil Engineering profession. After matriculating from St John's College, he went to Wits University to study Physics but soon realised this wasn't for him and decided to study Civil Engineering instead (following in his father's footsteps). He graduated in 1970 and went on to work at Watermeyer, Legge, Piésold and Uhlmann (WLPV). He married Helen in 1972 and they moved to London so he could complete a Master's degree at Imperial College. He graduated cum laude in geotechnical engineering, an area which had always fascinated him.

Professor Legge worked for Golder's and WLPV in the UK and during this time his daughters Angela and Janet were born. He also worked on the Bobbejaans Bridge on the N2 in the Western Cape (completed in 1983), and in 1987 the family returned to South Africa. Professor Legge started his own consulting business and in 1990 was approached to lecture at what was then Rand Afrikaans University (later the University of Johannesburg). For the next 20 years he lectured geotechnical engineering and became well known and loved as "Prof". He loved his time teaching students, taking them on excursions and sharing his knowledge.

In 2012, he finally retired from UJ and moved to Plettenberg Bay. He spent a lot of time working with the South African Institution of Civil Engineering and Rotary, and supporting the local school. He was passionate about South Africa and about education and encouraging those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Source: Angela Legge



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## Santu Mofokeng

(1956-2020)

Acclaimed photographer Santu Mofokeng died on 27 January at the age of 64 from a degenerative disease.

Mofokeng was born in Soweto and his first encounter with photography was at the age of eight. His mother, a garment worker, had him photographed with his younger brother to model jackets she had designed and sewn for them using leftover material from the factory that employed her. Mofokeng admitted that envy was one of the motivators that steered him towards photography. At the time, cameras were considered the “preserve of specialists”—journalists or government workers, the wealthy or educated. At the age of 17, he began taking portraits on the streets of his neighbourhood before gaining employment as an assistant in a darkroom.

In 1985 he joined the Afrapix Collective and started shooting pictures of the anti-apartheid



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struggle. Two years later, in 1987 he joined the *New Nation* newspaper. From 1988 to 1998 he worked as a documentary photographer and researcher for the African Studies Institute's Oral History Project at Wits, and focused on producing images representing the lives of ordinary people in their daily life.

Over four decades, Mofokeng developed a unique visual language that has had significant impact on the African continent and globally. This visual language crosses portraiture and the political and spiritual meanings of landscape. Wits University acknowledged Mofokeng's distinguished contribution to the field of photography when he was awarded an honorary doctorate in literature in 2016.

- 01 Afoor family bedroom, Vaalrand (1988)
- 02 Overcome/ Spiritual Ecstasy (1986)
- 03 Supplication Soweto - Johannesburg line (1986)
- 04 Shebeen, White City, Soweto (1986)
- 05 Buddhist Retreat, near Ixopo (2003)
- 06 Eyes-wide-shut, Motouleng Cave - Clarens (2004)

Images: Santu Mofokeng Foundation

## Yvonne Blake

(1926-2019)

Dr Yvonne Blake (**BSc Hons 1955, PhD 1958**) was the psychotherapist's therapist for many decades in Johannesburg. She had an extraordinary influence on psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

Following matriculation at the age of 16, she obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science at the University of the Free State in 1945. She worked therapeutically with young children at the Play Centre Department of the Johannesburg City Council. In 1949 she obtained her Honours in Psychology at Wits. She then completed three years of child psychotherapy training at the renowned Tavistock Clinic in London. In 1953 she returned to South Africa, where she immediately became influential, offering a keen awareness of child emotional development especially in the sphere of separation anxiety. Drawing on her Tavistock training in infant observation, she earned her PhD at Wits in 1958.

Her psychotherapeutic approach was a blend of Donald Winnicott and Melanie Klein together with her essence as a "salt of the earth" South African. Having established a successful private practice in

Johannesburg city centre and then Hyde Park, after many years she moved her practice to the farm in Broederstroom where she resided.

Many of her devoted patients and the therapists she mentored continued their work with her. This involved attentive driving on an unpaved, pot-holed road to reach her consulting room on the farm. She used to joke that she did not need to administer the Rorschach test because people's reaction to the undulating, red, dusty road was in itself diagnostic!

Several years later she retired together with her husband, Oswald, to the family farm in Carolina in Mpumalanga.

She always had a twinkle in her expressive eyes, a delightful sense of humour, remarkable observation and recall of detail, incredible insight and heartfelt compassion. She was matter of fact about her clinical acumen and expertise, and understated about her pioneering accomplishments. Many regretted that she did not publish more widely. But her impact will endure as she was a positive, strong, internalised authentic figure for those fortunate to work with her.

She died peacefully at the age of 93 and is survived by her sons Edwin and John and their families.

**Source:** Diane Wulfsohn, Stephen Bloch



## Michael Kimberley

(1934-2020)

Michael John Kimberley (**BA 1955, LLB 1959**) studied law at Wits and was President of the Students' Representative Council. After graduation he began his legal career in 1960 in what was then Salisbury, Rhodesia, in the Attorney General's Office. He became legal advisor to the City of Salisbury in 1963. In 1975 he became legal advisor to the country's power utility. He joined the law firm Honey & Blanckenberg in 1993, became a partner and retired in 2013. He died in Harare, Zimbabwe in January 2020.

He was married to Rosemary (Lighton), who died in 2012. His two sons survive him.

**Source:** Chris Kimberley

# Stanley Victor

(1929-2019)

Stanley Victor (**BArch 1952**) worked as an architect in Johannesburg for 55 years. He was a founding member and partner in Christelis Stanley Victor Architects, with fellow Wits graduate Dimitri Christelis.



As well as erecting many beautiful buildings and changing the fabric of both Johannesburg and Germiston, Christelis Stanley Victor Architects were committed to mentoring and supporting Wits architectural students in their offices. In any gathering of architects, one is certain to find a few who did their time in the Rosebank office who will share fond memories of their experiences there.

The firm's buildings were always cutting edge – Victor had a fascination with modern technology and computers, and he made it his business to stay abreast of the latest trends in architecture.

The buildings were richly textured, with cast concrete panels, decorations scratched into plaster and all sorts of gymnastics with face bricks. Some were a result of collaboration with artists. They also used many natural materials and blended seamlessly with the landscape.

Victor was the first member of his extended family to earn a university degree. Education was of paramount importance to him and his wife Barbara (Marks), who graduated from Wits as a physiotherapist. They ensured that all their children had at least a primary degree from Wits, and the family's many degrees span all five faculties.

Victor was almost 91 years old when he passed away on 14 December 2019. He is survived by Barbara, his sons Graeme and Trevor, his daughters Marian and Andrea, and their families. (*pictured above*)

# Stanley Kaplan

(1926-2019)

A consulting civil engineer, Stanley David Kaplan (**BSc Eng 1947**) worked primarily in the UK, Southern Africa, Israel and the US. He was the founding partner of Stanley Kaplan, Bahr & Jacobs Consulting Engineers, who pioneered the use of pre-stressed concrete in South Africa. Some of the notable projects he was involved in were the Central News Agency building, the Johannesburg Civic Centre, Whitbread Brewery, Waterford School, numerous bridges and apartment buildings.

Kaplan was a past president of the South African Association of Consulting Engineers and a member of the Agrément Board of the National Building Research Institute. He was active in redesigning the code of practice for reinforced concrete, as well as formulating new standards for contracts and other engineering documents. He was the author of many influential professional papers and organised a World Conference on Development.

The subject of his Master's thesis was "Reducing the Risk of Construction Failures", a topic to which he was wholeheartedly committed throughout his professional life. As a senior lecturer in the Building Science Department at Wits, he imparted to architectural and engineering students a general systems methodology approach to preventing building failures.

Having volunteered to serve in the Israeli army in the War of Liberation in 1948, in an engineering field unit, Kaplan had a lifelong connection to Israel. Arriving with his young family in Israel in 1967 just before the Six Day War, he spent a year working and living in Haifa. In 1979 he and his wife emigrated to Israel and he worked for the municipality of Herzlia on urban renewal projects.

From 1988, working in San Francisco as a risk management consultant, he further developed his multidisciplinary methodology to prevent, reduce and analyse failures in building construction. He was instrumental in introducing Total Quality Management in the construction industry.

Kaplan died on 18 November 2019 in Chicago and is survived by his wife Bluma, three daughters, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Source: Dina Kaplan

## Dudley Jacobs

(1924–2018)



Dudley Jacobs (**MBBCh 1948**, **MMed 1953**) was born in Kroonstad. His father was the local medical officer and mayor, the latter unprecedented for a Jew in rural South Africa at the time. After matriculating, he left for Johannesburg to study medicine at Wits.

As a student, in addition to poring over his textbooks, he spent any available time in the wards learning about the patients. This contributed to Dr Jacobs topping his medicine class in 1948, enabling him to become the intern for the Professor of Medicine. His ward rounds as a registrar frequently attracted up to 100 students keen to learn from him. He was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship and furthered his studies at the Heart Hospital in London and Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh, eventually returning to academia and then private practice in Johannesburg.

He was a superb diagnostician, had a caring bedside manner and practised medicine in the mould of an old-school gentleman physician. He had a longstanding heart problem, however, and found the work schedule unsustainable. Although he left private practice to become Medical Director for the pharmaceutical company Geigy, he still maintained his clinical skills as a cardiologist and physician at Discoverers' Hospital.

In 1979, at the age of 55, he and his wife Bea emigrated to Sydney. He was medical director for the pharmaceutical company Upjohn, while building up a practice in cardiology and general medicine. He retired at age 80 still at "the top of his game".

Though Professor Jacobs achieved so much in his long medical career, it was his family that he was most proud of and he called his 69-year marriage his finest achievement.

Professor Jacobs did not view himself as a religious man but his words and actions were always aimed to help people, a living embodiment of the practice of "tikkun olam" (to heal a fractured world).

**Source:** Dr Neil Jacobs

## Herbert Judes

(1941–2019)

Dr Herbert Judes (**BDS 1965**) was born and grew up in Springs. His father wanted him to follow in his lawyer footsteps, but his passion was dentistry and he devoted himself to building an illustrious career in this field.

In 1965, as a new graduate, he left South Africa for London. In 1967 he and his wife, the former Ruth Jaffe, a physiotherapy graduate from Pretoria, and their son relocated to Israel, where his second son was born. In Israel he was instrumental in building an excellent Prosthodontic Department at Tel Aviv University. He became Head of the Department and will be remembered as an outstanding academic, teacher and mentor to all the students. He was at one time Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at Tel Aviv University, and he established a dental clinic for children with special needs.

After Ruth passed away he married Lili. Their children and grandchildren continue to live in Israel, where he died of cancer in March 2019.

**Source:** Prof Russel Lurie

# Jennifer Davis

(1933-2019)

Jennifer Davis (**BA 1954**) was born in Johannesburg and grew up in what she described as a Jewish middle-class household. Her father was a paediatrician and her mother a pharmacist.

At Wits, she became deeply engaged in the struggle to transform South Africa. The debates at university, her study of the role of foreign capital in South African and colonial development, and her introduction to the Unity Movement all shaped her future work. After university, Davis continued to support union struggles. But the Sharpeville Massacre and the banning of most political organisations led her into exile in the US with her husband and two children in 1966.

In the US she joined the staff of the American Committee on Africa, where she championed the movement to cut financial ties with the government in South Africa. She testified before Congress and before the United Nations on the way US corporations were maintaining apartheid, and ultimately played a key role in convincing Congress to impose economic sanctions.

In the 1970s, Davis was a frequent speaker on college campuses, promoting the divestment movement and likening the South African struggle to worker movements in the US.

In 1981, she became the Executive Director of the American Committee on Africa and its non-profit affiliate The Africa Fund. With her South African colleague Dumisani Kumalo, she guided the divestment movement as more institutions began to divest from US corporations collaborating with apartheid.

Davis worked closely with the African National Congress, the labour movement in South Africa and the United Democratic Front. She also worked with cultural and religious leaders in the US.

When Nelson Mandela made his first visit to the US, Davis and Kumalo were part of the group that arranged for him to address Congress and meet



At Wits, she became deeply engaged in the struggle to transform South Africa. The debates at university, her study of the role of foreign capital in South African and colonial development, and her introduction to the Unity Movement all shaped her future work



national leaders, cultural figures and activists.

Following her retirement from the American Committee on Africa in 2000, she continued to consult on international issues and helped create the online African Activist Archive Project.

Throughout her life, Davis was known for her focus on achieving identified goals, refusing to respond to public provocations. Her ability to bring together broad coalitions of individuals working on a common goal was a key to her success.

In 2011, the South African government, recognising her contribution to ending apartheid, honoured her with The Order of the Companions of OR Tambo in Bronze.

A long-time resident of New York City, Davis moved to Washington, DC in 2000. She died at the age of 85 in Montclair, New Jersey. She is survived by her brother, Michael Heymann, her partner, Derek (Kered) Boyd, her daughter Sandra Horowitz, son-in-law Paul, her son Mark Davis, daughter-in-law Jane, and five grandchildren.

Source: [jenniferdavis.org](http://jenniferdavis.org)

## Hugh Paterson

(1926–2019)

Hugh Paterson (**BSc 1949, Hon 1951, PhD 1968**) obtained his BSc in 1949 and a first-class BSc Honours degree in 1951. He then spent a year in Oxford as a British Council Scholar while employed by the South African Institute of Medical Research (1952–1963) and as a WHO consultant (1961 and 1962). Notably, he proved that the primary malaria vector in Africa, *Anopheles gambiae*, comprises a complex of species, each with different capabilities in malaria transmission (and some with none). This had important consequences for malaria control.

Professor Paterson took up a lectureship in 1963 at the University College of Rhodesia, before completing his PhD on flies under the supervision of Professor BI Balinsky at Wits in 1967. After some time lecturing at the University of Western Australia, he returned to Wits in 1975 as Professor and Chair in the Department of Zoology. He returned to Australia in 1985 as Professor of Entomology at the University of Queensland and retired in 1991.

Professor Paterson was a singular figure among evolutionary biologists and academics. His formality and attachment to traditional ceremony (as in



Hugh and Shirley Paterson

graduations) could not long hide his iconoclastic mind, and this made him a rebel to large swathes of the establishment. Students, though, loved this! He encouraged students, indeed everyone, to think freely.

His own thinking was as deep and logically consistent as it was broad, and was coupled with an intense belief

in the “sanctity” of truth.

His development of the Recognition Concept of species came from a deep appreciation of organisms in nature. As a schoolboy, he roamed the forests and grasslands around Illovo Beach in KwaZulu-Natal, where he grew up, and knew the fauna and flora intimately, birds especially.

I can see him sitting quietly in his office, looking ahead, thinking profoundly about evolutionary biology and its foundational links to all other sub-disciplines in biology.

Anyone who knew him would remember the quiet, understated and sustaining support, through 62 years of marriage, provided by Shirley, whose intellect matched his very closely. He is survived by his daughter, Ann, and son Michael.

Source: Dr Gimme Walter



## Michael Scholes

(1944–2019)

Michael Kenneth Scholes (**BArch 1970**) was born in Durban and received his high schooling at King Edward VII School in Johannesburg. In 1962 he started to study civil engineering at Wits but abandoned it after 18 months and joined Rhodes-Harrison Hoffe and Partners as a draughtsman. Inspired by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, he switched to studying architecture in 1965. He proved to be a gifted student and won several prizes.

Scholes graduated in 1970 and lectured at Wits before entering private practice. He was experienced in domestic scale design commissions, for which he received several awards. His interest in local historical and vernacular buildings and pre-19th century European architecture manifested in work that responds to this heritage, the urban context, and the natural environment of the region.

Source: Prof Paul Kotze

# Samuel Ludwin

(1944–2020)

Born in Johannesburg and schooled at King Edward VII School, Dr Samuel Ludwin (**MBBCh 1967**) qualified as a doctor at Wits and enjoyed a distinguished medical career.

In 1975, he and his family moved to Kingston, Ontario, where he became a Professor of Pathology at Queen's University and an outstanding neuropathologist at Kingston General Hospital. His erudition, warmth and generous teaching style inspired generations of students and residents. Dr Ludwin devoted his professional life to studying degenerative diseases of the brain and nervous system, and made important research advances in multiple sclerosis.

Despite his international reputation, he was best known for his modesty and efforts to nurture the professional growth of others. His infectious energy extended well beyond his professional life; he was interested in everything and everyone and will be remembered for his loving, whimsical, and mischievous spirit. He collected antique maps of Africa, among other things, climbed mountains, enjoyed water-based activities and was passionate about music.

He died after a battle against the nervous system disease ALS on 21 January. His wife Vivien, sons Derek (Stacey) and Raymond (Karen) and grandchildren Andrew and Elizabeth survive him.

**Source:** Jack Metz; *The Globe and Mail*



At Wits, he became well known for his sharp mind, wit and oratory accomplishment as a debater



# Kevin Cron

(1956–2019)

Internationally esteemed lawyer Kevin Richard Cron (**BCom 1978, LLB 1980, LLM 1985**) died of cancer in August 2019. He left an exceptional legacy of legal excellence and mentorship, as well as being a family man with a love of reading, travel and wildlife.

Cron was born in Vereeniging, but spent his childhood in Benoni and matriculated from Benoni High School in 1973. At Wits, he became well known for his sharp mind, wit and oratory accomplishment as a debater.

In 1980 he did articles with the law firm Deneys Reitz Ridsdale and Guinsberg, and married Barbara (Hirschfeld) the following year. He remained with the same firm, now Norton Rose Fulbright South Africa Inc, until his death. As the recipient of a scholarship from Anglovaal, it was natural that he would start his career in the field of mining law under the guidance of Morris Kaplan, the leading author and practitioner in that field.

As circumstances in South Africa changed, Cron broadened his practice into the field of corporate and commercial law, building expertise in banking and finance, mergers and acquisitions and international finance. For 25 years he was consistently rated in the top tier of practitioners in these fields and was the lead lawyer in many of the notable commercial and banking transactions in South Africa. These included Barclays' stake in Absa, the creation and empowerment of Exxaro and the restructuring of Alexander Forbes.

His high rankings reflected his "virtually unrivalled reputation and the respect he enjoyed among commercial lawyers and clients". He was described as "an indispensable person for big ticket items".

He also participated actively in the management of the firm and will be remembered for his accessibility, mentoring many young lawyers over his career of 39 years. He took the role of Chairman until he became ill. His colleagues remember him as humble despite his brilliance, and calm and decisive in his professional life. In addition to his wife Barbara, he leaves his son Dylan, daughter Erin, daughter-in-law Pooja, and sister Glynis.

**Source:** Mike Hart, Georg Kahle, Glynis Goodman-Cron

## Edward Gale

(1929–2018)

Dr George Edward Gale (**MBBCh 1952, MRCP 1959, PhD Medicine 1964, Elected FRCP 1971**) was a specialist physician and cardiologist who made exceptional contributions to general

medicine and cardiology during his long career. His empathy, humility and gentle manner endeared him to all, as did his fun-loving nature and wit.

After his experience at Hammersmith Hospital in London and the Western Infirmary in Glasgow while studying for his MRCP (Edin), he returned to South Africa and was appointed physician at the Johannesburg General Hospital and Wits, and in 1968 senior physician at the same.

Dr Gale went into private practice in 1974 as a specialist physician, while maintaining his much-loved sessions each week at the medical school and the hospital.

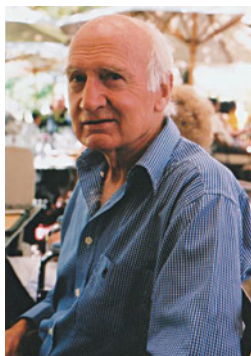
He was widely revered for his teaching in the cardiac catheterisation laboratory, where he shared his skills with younger colleagues, all of whom remember him with respect and fondness. He was much involved in the Johannesburg branch of the Southern Africa Cardiac Society and he examined candidates for the South African College of Physicians.

Dr Gale's diagnostic skills, which combined his excellent academic knowledge with a deep and rare insight, were world-renowned, and colleagues would often seek his advice to help assess complicated cases.

He treated – and cherished – each patient as a unique soul: with grace, humility, wisdom and deep compassion. His foray into medicine was a profound clarion call, from his early childhood, to heal the sick.

He leaves three daughters, Antonia, Caroline and Katherine.

Source: Caroline Bateman



## Anthony Graham Phillips

(1947–2020)

Anthony Graham Phillips (**MBBCh 1970**) practiced as a GP before qualifying as a radiologist in 1981. He emigrated to New Zealand, then permanently settled in Sydney, Australia with his wife, Vivien, and three children, Brad, Kenny and Robyn.

Radiation treatment for laryngeal cancer in 2001 led to significant vocal damage that forced Phillips into an early retirement. He sought to develop a new career in writing and his main focus was a book on theoretical physics, which he hoped would bridge the fields of science and theology. This effort, involving extensive research and the development of a theory of quantum physics, took 15 years to write. It was completed before he received a devastating diagnosis of untreatable hypopharyngeal cancer in July 2019. This was a recurrence of the disease that had first occurred in 2016 and been successfully operated on at the time. His family will now seek to have his book published.

Phillips was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. Though gentle, he displayed courage in the face of the terrible health ordeals he faced. He believed the best in people because of his integrity.

Phillips passed away in January 2020, leaving an immense hole in the lives of his family. They take comfort in the knowledge that the values he passed on will continue in the lives he touched over the years.

Source: Brad Phillips





## Cecily Sash

(1925-2019)

*Untitled, 1958, Enamel paint on board*  
Bequeathed in 2016 by Ulrich Louw to  
Wits Art Museum

Renowned artist and teacher Cecily Sash (**BA Fine Arts 1954, MA Fine Arts 1973**) died at the age of 94 in September last year.

She lectured for nearly 20 years in the fine art department of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and, according to the art historian Esmé Berman, “few South African artists of her generation exercised more influence”.

In the 1970s Sash settled in Britain, feeling threatened by the apartheid regime. She lived for the rest of her life in the Welsh Marches.

Daughter of Bessie (née Liverman) and Max Sash, she was born in Delmas in the Transvaal. Her father was a doctor, but at an early age Sash showed a prodigious talent for art. She studied under Maurice van Essche at the Witwatersrand Art School, and then, in London in the late 1940s, at Chelsea Polytechnic under Henry Moore, and Camberwell School of Art with Victor Pasmore.

While teaching at Jeppe Girls’ High School in Johannesburg, she began to arouse the interest of educationists and received commissions for mural designs at sites such as the Transvaal provincial administration building in Pretoria, the University of the Witwatersrand, and the Transvaal Institute of Architects.

Her styles were initially decorative and representational, in mosaic, paint or tapestry, but

she began to put more emphasis on semi-abstract qualities.

In the 1960s, Sash was a founder member of the Amadlozi Group, an influential group of artists including Cecil Skotnes, Guiseppe Cattaneo, Sydney Kumalo and Edoardo Villa, brought together by art dealer and printmaker Egon Guenther, mostly for exhibition purposes.

The group’s main concern was a quest for a modern SA artistic identity connected with the spirit of Africa. Amadlozi means “spirit of our ancestors”. The group is perhaps best known for the ways in which its members negotiated the international influences of modernism and even reacted to international movements such as Pop Art by searching instead for some kind of local identity and pursuing regional concerns.

Her teaching style was vibrant and dynamic, and was based on the methodology and discipline of basic design as taught at the Bauhaus. She enabled many people to achieve much more in the field of art and design than they had ever imagined, never accepting that one couldn’t draw, and her lifelong commitment to art was an inspiration to her students.

She is survived by her brother, Leonard, and her nephew, David.

Source: *Business Day* and *The Guardian*

## Eric Krystall

(1928-2020)

Eric Krystall (**BA 1957**) passed away in his sleep in January, just a few weeks before his 92nd birthday. He had been living in Kenya since 1971.

Nine years ago he published his autobiography, *Swimming Through Life*, which details the fascinating episodes of his life. Krystall was born in South Africa, to which his Jewish father had migrated from Lithuania in 1899. He lived there for the first 28 years of his life. It was during the rise of apartheid, and as the country moved further towards segregation, his stance moved further left.

When he joined Wits University, the government decided to extend its segregation laws to the campus. He was active in the protests against segregation and became one of the first students denied a passport. He pioneered and chaired the marvellous Wits Arts Festivals in the 1950s. Despite this, he managed to leave for England, to study at the London School of Economics. There he heard trade unionist Tom Mboya speak about the desire for Kenya's independence. Studying with him was Mwai Kibaki, who later became the third president of Kenya, and they organised a joint forum comparing the situation in South Africa to that in colonial Kenya.

During part of his time in London Krystall lived close to Baker Street. To help him pay for his education he took a job at John Bell and Croyden, the pharmacists to the British Royal family.

On graduating from LSE in 1960, he moved across the Atlantic with his wife Abigail Ruskin to the US. Here his post-graduate studies became deeply engaged in the civil rights movement. During his days in the US he prepared the arguments that successfully petitioned John F. Kennedy to allow African Americans into the Peace Corps, and he helped train Peace Corps volunteers before they set off for Africa.

His exposure to many emerging disciplines, from behavioural science to conflict resolution



When he joined Wits University, the government decided to extend its segregation laws to the campus. Krystall was active in the protests against segregation and became one of the first students denied a passport



and population studies, provided the base for his contributions to the social development of Kenya when he moved there nearly half a century ago.

The opportunity arose when he contributed to a proposal for an East African population programme. He was selected to lead the Kenyan element, which became the first to be funded by the recently formed United Nations Fund for Population Activities. For 40 years he pioneered and developed innovative approaches to public health projects in Africa and around the world.

Source: Mike Eldon and Paul Krystall

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## Places to visit

### THE ORIGINS CENTRE

[www.wits.ac.za/origins](http://www.wits.ac.za/origins) West Campus, Wits University, Corner Yale Road & Enoch Sontonga Avenue, Braamfontein. **T** +27 (0) 11 717 4700 **E** [bookings.origins@wits.ac.za](mailto:bookings.origins@wits.ac.za). **Hours:** Monday to Friday 10:00 – 17:00. Closed on Sundays. Saturdays and public holidays 10:00 – 16:00 (please call ahead to check times). Refer to website for rates. Please book online ([www.webtickets.co.za](http://www.webtickets.co.za)).

### ADLER MUSEUM OF MEDICINE

Wits Medical School, 7 York Road, Parktown. **T** +27 (0) 11 717 2081 **E** [adler.museum@wits.ac.za](mailto:adler.museum@wits.ac.za). **Hours:** Monday to Friday 09:00 – 16:00. Cost free but venue hire tariffs on request.

### WITS THEATRE COMPLEX

[www.wits.ac.za/witstheatre](http://www.wits.ac.za/witstheatre)  
East Campus, Wits University, Performing Arts Administration, 24 Station Street, Braamfontein. **T** +27 (0) 11 717 1376 **E** [bridget.vanoerle@wits.ac.za](mailto:bridget.vanoerle@wits.ac.za). Reception **hours:** Monday to Friday 08:00 – 16:00. Theatre costs vary according to programme. Tickets: [www.webtickets.co.za](http://www.webtickets.co.za)

### WITS RURAL FACILITY

**T** +27 (0) 15 793 7508 **E** [info.witsrural@wits.ac.za](mailto:info.witsrural@wits.ac.za)  
Refer to website for public rates.

### THE WITS CLUB

[www.olivesandplates.co.za](http://www.olivesandplates.co.za)  
Wits Club Complex, West Campus, Wits University. **T** +27 (0) 11 717 9365 **E** [info@olivesandplates.co.za](mailto:info@olivesandplates.co.za). **Hours:** Monday to Friday 07:00 – 16:00. Saturday 08:00 – 15:00 for breakfast and lunch. Booking is essential.

### PLANETARIUM

[www.planetarium.co.za](http://www.planetarium.co.za)  
East Campus, Wits University, Yale Road off Empire Road, Entrance 10, Milner Park, Braamfontein. **T** +27 (0) 11 717 1390 **E** [planet@planetarium.co.za](mailto:planet@planetarium.co.za). **Hours:** Kiddies' show (5 – 8 years), Saturdays 10:30.

### MAROPENG, THE CRADLE OF HUMAN KIND & THE STERK FONTEIN CAVES

[www.maropeng.co.za](http://www.maropeng.co.za).  
Directions: Off R563 Hekpoort Road, Sterkfontein, Gauteng. **T** +27 (0) 14 577 9000 **E** [website@maropeng.co.za](mailto:website@maropeng.co.za). **Hours:** 09:00 – 17:00 daily. Refer to website for rates.

### WITS ART MUSEUM | WAM

[www.wits.ac.za/wam](http://www.wits.ac.za/wam)  
University Corner, Corner Jorissen & Bertha Streets, Braamfontein. **T** + 27 (0) 11 717 1365/58 **E** [info.wam@wits.ac.za](mailto:info.wam@wits.ac.za). **Hours:** Tuesdays to Saturdays 10:00 – 16:00. WAM has a café and hosts regular events and exhibitions. Admission free. Donations encouraged.

Details accurate at time of publishing. Please contact facilities directly.

**Above:** Hannelie Coetzee's hyena sculptures, part of the *Synanthrope Series*, displayed at the Origins Centre.  
(Image: Schalk Mouton)