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Assessing the path we’ve travelled

As we celebrate the fifth edition of the Humanities and Social Sciences Book, Creative and Digital Collections Awards, we note with delight the increase in popularity that this initiative has enjoyed in the course of its short but growing lifespan.

T he HSS Awards provide an opportunity to shine the spotlight on those intellectual-creative scholars whose contributions often go unnoticed both in the academic sphere and in society at large. These include the tenacious authors and playwrights, the risk-taking poets and artists, and the dedicated curators and publishers who ensure that we can all view and enjoy these works.

Being Africans with a love of history and ancestry, we understand that what we do today builds on traditions and actions that have gone before, while also setting the scene for the future. While the achievements of the present have merit, they gain stature, durability and longevity when they become part of a greater context – when they strengthen the foundation laid by their predecessors and offer themselves as a platform for future layers of growth. It is so with the annual Humanities and Social Sciences Awards, and it is so with the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Our value to society lies not just in the contributions made in the immediate present, but also in the cumulative effect of contributions made in the past five years and the prospect of the rich array of contributions in years yet to come.

Five years also gives us an opportunity to look back and consider the impact we’ve made in dynamising the humanities – and to chart a course for the future.

Winning an HSS award is a wonderful achievement for the recipients, of which they can be exceptionally proud. But for the Institute, recognising achievement is part of an ongoing process, one that continues long after the lights have dimmed and the applause has faded.

Quite a number of the works and winners recognised at the annual HSS Awards have gone on to extend their influence in enduring ways. Much of the content of our award-winning books is suitable for incorporation into higher education curricula, and has indeed been used in this way. Many of the authors, playwrights, and performing and creative artists recognised at these awards since 2016 have gone on to produce other ground-breaking work, garnering recognition across Africa and internationally.

Who could forget the tragic, poignant and riveting account of black South African soldiers aboard the ill-fated World War II warship, SS Mendi, as told by Fred Khumalo in *Dancing the Death Drill*? He was declared a joint winner of the 2019 award for best fiction: single authored volume. At long last, the veil has been lifted on Africa’s unsung surviving heroes of the SS Mendi.

These awards have also encouraged literary and creative expression by people not usually associated with the HSS. A brilliant example was our 2018 non-fiction monograph winner, retired Judge Dikgang Moseneke. His memoir, *My Own Liberator*, charts his incredible journey from his humble childhood to being a 14-year-old activist who soon finds himself arrested, detained and incarcerated on Robben Island, to becoming Deputy Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court. Powerful, vivid, superbly written and underscored with deep empathy and compassion, this book should be compulsory reading for every South African wishing to truly understand the nature of our scarred yet resilient land.

Many other incredible journeys have been told, whether in words, images, dance or music, in and through the HSS awards. Some are still very much in the making. Look no further than Gabeba Baderoon, joint winner in the inaugural awards of 2016, who makes a welcome return to the 2020 awards with her fourth poetry collection, *The History of Intimacy*. As with this artist’s oeuvre, work in the HSS field is ongoing, evolving and transformative.

In Baderoon’s latest offering, she reflects on South Africa’s multi-textured past and present, all beautifully layered in a confectionery of poetic expression. Baderoon infuses themes such as risk, betrayal and memory with an intuitive understanding of our South African identity that is astounding. As she chronicles disturbing events in the life of a woman and of this country, her lyricism and richly descriptive historical accounts both challenge and move the reader.

**Challenging the status quo**

The recipients of HSS awards have never been afraid to break with convention and challenge norms. The 2020 winners do not disappoint. This year, literature in the non-fiction category is characterised by its focus on challenging the status quo at tertiary institutions in terms of demographic representation and their revered position as repositories of knowledge and research production. Recent publications have emphasised the decolonisation of knowledge and art, and the intersectional nature of black and African lived experiences. These continue to be prevailing themes.

A case in point is the book *Black Academic Voices: The South African Experience* by Grace Khunou, Hugo Canham, Katijah Khoza-Shangase and Edith Dinong Phaswana (HSRC Press). The fact that 90% of the contributions in this book are from women is telling as this offers possibilities for deconstructing hierarchies of authoritarianism that are sexist and patriarchal. Women are the bedrock of our families and communities, and it is interesting to note that their biographical sketches here are not individual but communal. Yet their individual experiences matter, and their voices must be heard.

The representation of women in the fictional work *Lacuna*, by Fiona Snyckers (Pan Macmillan SA), is just as powerful. This book examines rape and the appropriation of stories. Given the prevalence of gender-based violence in South Africa, the intimate details that the protagonist,
Lucy, shares with readers when recounting her traumatic experiences and the way she copes with daily life make for compelling reading. Furthermore, the question of who has the right to tell whose story could, and should, be given the attention it deserves. This book describes in visceral detail the effect that rape has on the victim. It is raw, honest and brutal in the way it exposes the sense of violation and shame suffered by a woman who has been subjected to abuse. The book is a timely addition to the growing collection of South African feminist works.

Over five years, the NIHSS has seen an increase in biographical book submissions. With the passage of time comes a greater examination of the influence of the past on the present to help us better navigate the future. South Africa has many unsung heroes who were pioneers of the liberation struggle, and it is fascinating to read of their trials and courageous activism. There are also “life's like that” accounts, such as the sexual and political awakening that Hester van der Walt experienced during the apartheid era, which she recounts in her memoir Are you two sisters? (Modjaji Books). Reading such biographies helps us to learn more about what it took to achieve the democracy that we all enjoy today.

**Future plans: More collaboration, exciting programmes**

The essence of these awards lies in recognising and promoting fresh voices, voices that are bold and original in the ways in which they interrogate society. Issues of race, gender, justice, morality, freedom, history and transformation continue to be touchpoints that require constant re-examination. We see ourselves and our common struggles and aspirations in some of this year’s works; and we see beyond ourselves in others.

Surely the time has come for many more South Africans to have opportunities to read, view and enjoy the works of our country’s finest, most original intellectual-creative scholars. Would we not all benefit from having our eyes opened and our minds broadened to different interpretations and other ways of thinking?

From the perspective of the NIHSS, the time is ripe to ensure that the tenacious authors and playwrights, the risk-taking poets and artists, and the dedicated curators and publishers whose works we celebrate through these awards can reach a wider readership. With this in mind, the NIHSS will partner with various publishers to turn PhD theses into book manuscripts that will enthrall and enchant members of the public in the same way that they have enthralled and enchanted us.

The NIHSS is proud to be associated with the creators of such wonderful works. We thank the judges and all those who have worked so hard to make these awards possible.
HSS Awards at a Glance

The fifth instalment of the Humanities and Social Sciences Awards: Book, Creative and Digital Contribution (HSS Awards) honour scholarly works based on their social relevance and contribution to the humanities and social sciences.

THE JUDGING PANEL

Books:
- Non-Fiction
  - 6 Entries
- Fiction
  - 6 Entries

Creatives & Digital Contribution
- 13 Entries

TOTAL ENTRIES
- 105 Entries

CATEGORIES

- Fiction
  - Novels
  - Poetry
  - Short stories
- Creative Collections
  - Musical compositions / arrangements
  - Public Performances
  - Visual Arts
- Digital Humanities
  - Visualisations
  - Infographics
- Non-Fiction
  - Biographies
  - Monographs
  - Edited Volume

Books:
- Non-Fiction
  - 64 Entries
- Fiction
  - 22 Entries
- Creative and Digital Contribution
  - 19 Entries
As the NIHSS awards team, we extend our gratitude to the publishers for supporting the awards.
HSS Awards Catalogue, capturing outstanding, innovative and socially responsible scholarship through the years
MEET OUR JUDGING PANEL: HSS AWARDS 2020
Meet Our Judging Panel: HSS Awards 2020

Andile Khumalo
Andries Oliphant
Angela Makholwa
Bongani Ngqulunga
Coral Bijoux
Diana Ferrus
Fred Hendricks
Hendrik Kotze
Hlonipha Mokoena
Jessica Murray
Joyce Myeza
Luvuyo Dondolo
Malika Ndlovu
Mantoa Motinyane
Mcebisi Ndletyana
Michelle Williams
Molly Brown
Neo Ramoupi
Nhlanhla Maake
Sabata-Mpho Mokae
Sazi Dlamini
Thembela Vokwana
Thoko Mnisi
Tinyiko Maluleke
Zoliswa Twani
“At a deeper level, we also look to our social scientists, philosophers, historians, artists and others to help us rebuild our sense of nationhood, our independence and our ability to take our place proudly in the community of nations.”
– Dr Nzimande, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Celebrate the journey
National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences

2010 – 2013

LAYING THE FOUNDATION
• Minister Dr Nzimande conducts a consultative process on the social sciences.
• A charter for the Humanities and Social Sciences is set up and led by Professor Ari Sitas.
• In April 2012, the Department of Higher Education and Training (as it was then known) accepts the charter, and the formation of the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences is announced.
• A steering committee is established to determine the future of the Humanities and Social Sciences.
• On 5 December 2013, the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences is launched.

2014 – 2015

SETTING THE WHEELS IN MOTION
• The NIHSS Board is appointed.
• Operations commence under the Institute’s CEO, Prof Sarah Mosoetsa.
• Strategic objectives for 2015 to 2020 are tabled.
• Twelve catalytic projects are launched, along with the first Humanities Hub.
• The NIHSS makes a call for applications.
• Funding for 118 South African PhDs is awarded.
NIHSS: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The institute aims to:

1. Advance postgraduate scholarship through a range of innovations.
2. Dynamise the fields of research and teaching in the HSS in South Africa through a range of catalytic projects and Humanities Hubs.
3. Promote the integrity, reputation and recognition of the HSS within the higher education community and the science and technology community.

4. Build and strengthen networks and partnerships with organisations working in areas related to the HSS.
5. Foster international research collaborations between South Africa and countries of the Global South.
6. Act as a dynamic broker between the worlds of knowledge and policy action.
7. Co-ordinate and manage all BRICS Think Tank-related activities on behalf of South Africa.
HSS WINNERS: 2016

Book • Creative • Digital

Winners of the first South African Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards:

- **BEST NON-FICTION MONOGRAPH**
  - *Askari* (Jacana)
  - Jacob Dlamini

- **BEST NON-FICTION EDITED VOLUME**
  - *Class in Soweto* (UKZN Press)
  - Peter Alexander, Claire Ceruti, Keke Motseke, Mosa Phadi and Kim Wale

- **BEST FICTION SINGLE AUTHORED VOLUME**
  - *Tales of the Metric System: Telling South Africa’s History One Day at a Time* (Penguin Random House)
  - Imraan Coovadia

- **BEST FICTION EDITED VOLUME**
  - *Adults Only* (Mercury)
  - Joanne Hichens
HSS WINNERS: 2016

2016

BEST PUBLIC PERFORMANCE

Live Festival

Jay Pather

BEST MUSICAL COMPOSITION/ARRANGEMENT

Insurrections

Sazi Dlamini, Ari Sitas, Sumangala Damodaran, Neo Muyanga and Jurgen Brauninger

BEST DIGITAL HUMANITIES (DH) PROJECT FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Forging Solidarity

Popular Education at Work

Astrid von Kotze and Shirley Walters (Eds.)

BEST DH TOOL OR SUITE OF TOOLS

Future Body: Technological Embodiment in Digital Fashion Media

Nirma Madhoo
HSS WINNERS: 2017

Book • Creative • Digital

Winners of the second South African Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards:

NON-FICTION MONOGRAPH: (JOINT-WINNERS)
Declassified - Moving beyond the dead-end of race in South Africa (Jacana Media)
Gerhard Maré

Regarding Muslims: From slavery to post-apartheid (Wits University Press)
Gabezha Baderoone

NON-FICTION EDITED VOLUME
Changing Space, Changing City: Johannesburg after Apartheid
(Wits University Press)
Alison Todes, Chris Wray, Graeme Gotz and Philip Harrison

FICTION SINGLE AUTHORED (NOVEL)
What Will People Say (Jacana Media)
Rehana Rossouw

FICTION SINGLE AUTHORED (POETRY)
A Half Century Thing (Black Ghost Books)
Lesego Rampolokeng
2017

BEST PUBLIC PERFORMANCE
BodyTech - The Ar(t)chive: co-founded
Jessica Denyschen and Adrienne Sichel

BEST MUSICAL COMPOSITION
Explorations: South African flute music
Liesl Stoltz

BEST VISUAL ART
Penny Siopis Time and Again,
edited and co-edited
by Gerrit Olivier and Penny Siopis

DIGITAL HUMANITIES CONTRIBUTIONS
South African History Online Website
Omar Badsha
Winners of the third South African Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards:

**NON-FICTION MONOGRAPH**
- *My Own Liberator* (Pan Macmillan South Africa)
  - Dikgang Moseneke

**NON-FICTION EDITED VOLUME (JOINT-WINNERS)**
  - Brian Willan, Janet Remmington, and Bhekizizwe Peterson

- *Hanging on a Wire* (Fourthwall Books)
  - Rick Rodhe and Siona O’Connell

**FICTION SINGLE AUTHORED**
- *Tjieng Tjang Tjerries and Other Stories* (Modjaji Books)
  - Jolyn Phillips
HSS WINNERS: 2018

BEST PUBLIC PERFORMANCE
Kafka’s Ape
Tony Miyambo and Phala Phala

BEST MUSICAL COMPOSITION
Noem My Skollie
Kyle Shepherd

BEST VISUAL ART
When the moon waxes red
Sharlene Khan

DIGITAL HUMANITIES CONTRIBUTIONS
Joshua Pulumo Mohapelo Critical Edition in Six Volumes
Christine Lucia
Book • Creative • Digital

Winners of the fourth South African Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards:

**BEST NON-FICTION MONOGRAPH.**
*The Man Who Founded the ANC*
(Penguin Random House)
Bongani Ngqulunga

**BEST FICTION SINGLE AUTHORED VOLUME (JOINT-WINNERS)**
*Dancing the Death Drill (Umuzi)*
Fred Khumalo
*Shadow Play (Jacana Media)*
Alison Lowry

**BEST FICTION IN THE EDITED VOLUME**
*Recognition (Wits University Press)*
David Medalie
HSS WINNERS: 2019

**BEST NON-FICTION EDITED VOLUME**
*From Protest to Challenge Volume 4: Political Profiles, 1882–1990*
( Jacana Media)
Gail Gerhart, Teresa Barnes, Anthony Bugg-Levine, Thomas Karis, and Nimrod Mkele (eds.)

**BEST EXHIBITION CATALOGUE**
*Athlone in Mind*
Heidi Grunebaum and Karl Campbell

**BEST MUSICAL COMPOSITION/ARRANGEMENT**
*Insurrections III: The Storming*
Reza Khota

**BEST VISUAL ART**
*Abénaa/Alzire/Dandara/Tsholofelo (working title)*
Kitso Lelliott
Enhancing our HSS disciplines will entail holding a series of non-exploitative conversations with our country's thought leaders and drivers of creativity.
Deon Meyer is an internationally renowned author of crime fiction. His work has been translated into more than twenty languages and he has won numerous awards both locally and abroad, most recently the ATKV Prose Award for Prooi in 2019. At a breakneck pace Meyer’s novel takes the reader on a thrilling adventure that ranges from a puzzling murder on the Rovos Rail to a carefully plotted assassination attempt in the French capital.

**Reviewer’s comments:**

Prooi is a crime fiction novel written by Deon Meyer which reveals the intricate dealings in state security modus operandi. In the latter part of the South African democracy all eyes were on the so-called state capture.

Because South Africa is now a free and democratic country most of its citizens are active commentators on how the country is run. The idea of state capture has caught the imagination of many a citizen. They rely heavily on newspaper reports, television- and radio news broadcasts. Coupled with this is their interaction with fellow-citizens and armchair-politicians. This obviously lead to a great deal of speculation and eventually uncertainty of what to believe. In Prooi Deon Meyer either further confuses or confirms for the citizens that state capture exists or do not exists. By demonstrating in-depth knowledge of how state security agencies like the SSA, the Hawks work, Meyer expands the imagination of the citizen, gives the citizen much more to think of, to put two and two together. The book consists of 452 pages and Meyer expertly manages to keep the reader’s interest throughout. The story happens concurrently in South Africa and France, told in different chapters. Towards the last quarter of the book the chapters are not as divided, it seems to run into each other, increasing the pace and urgency to come to a conclusion. The writing is crisp, the pace constantly fast. The characters come from all South Africa’s race groups. An unimaginable amount of research must have been done to make up this story. **“The writing is crisp, the pace constantly fast. The characters come from all South Africa’s race groups. An unimaginable amount of research must have been done to make up this story.”**
A feminist narrative, Called to Song is a compelling and beautifully written story of a woman coming into herself. Qabila, the lead character, finds creative purpose and self-actualisation following a marriage that was emotionally abusive. The novel explores relationships, gender, race, racism and religion (Islam) in post-apartheid South Africa. Mohamed bravely tackles the issue of racism between coloured and black people, which is not written about often. In the story, Rashid married Qabila after she became pregnant while they were still at university, even though he had been seeing another woman, Thandi, at the time. All through their marriage of many years Qabila never felt the full measure of Rashid’s love and yet he kept denying that anything was wrong, making her feel crazy. But then Qabila finds out that he has been having an affair with Thandi all along. Too afraid of his family’s reaction if he were to marry a black Christian girl, Rashid used Qabila as his cover. Even now, with Qabila demanding a divorce, he resists. As she tries to pick up the pieces of her life, Qabila rails against the persistent legacy of discrimination in post-apartheid South Africa. She rediscovers family and her Muslim faith on her own terms as a feminist and finds her calling in song-writing.

Reviewer’s comments:
There is a refreshing poetry, a lyricism threading throughout this wonderfully written and easy flowing yet captivating novel. There is an intimacy and immediacy right from the start, where we as readers are unknowingly brought into the heart of the primary story and themes, artfully introduced by the description of the funeral of the lead character Qabila’s mother and the tension created her suspiciously absent husband. For the reasons expressed into the criterion above - as well as the fact that this “delicious” novel contributes to the contemporary wave of Black women writer’s works, gaining much needed and deserving attention by SA publishers and readers alike, it is most certainly substantive SA content.

By virtue of being the work of a writer who grew up on the Cape Flats under Apartheid, choosing to write her debut novel about the very spaces she navigated and the particular characters, traditions and voices she consciously chooses to represent in this work, the original Muslim communities she stemmed from - spaces that would not have been made visible or given insight into via mainstream published literature/fiction back then and still remain peripheral voices now - this book does indeed bring a uniqueness and novelty to the SA literary landscape.
Lucy Lurie is deeply sunk in PTSD following a gang rape at her father’s farmhouse in the Western Cape. She becomes obsessed with the author John Coetzee, who has made a name for himself by writing Disgrace, a celebrated novel that revolves around the attack on her. Lucy lives the life of a celibate hermit, making periodic forays into the outside world in her attempts to find and confront Coetzee. The Lucy of Coetzee’s fictional imaginings is a passive, peaceful creature, almost entirely lacking in agency. She is the lacuna in Coetzee’s novel the missing piece of the puzzle. Lucy Lurie is no one’s lacuna. Her attempts to claw back her life, her voice and her agency may be messy and misguided, but she won’t be silenced. Her rape is not a metaphor. This is her story.

Reviewer’s Comments:
Fiona Snycker’s novel Lacuna is a direct response to J M Coetzee’s novel Disgrace. The traumatized Lucy Lurie takes issue with the highly acclaimed and respected writer’s unproblematic way of writing about her gang-rape in his novel. In the novel the two were work colleagues and the writer J M Coetzee who must have heard about her gang-rape wrote about it. However, Lucy Lurie finds this problematic because the writer knows nothing about her condition, what rapes does to a woman and the resultant trauma she suffers. It is her aim to confront the writer but that never really happens. The novel Lacuna is an innovative way of talking back to an existing novel or the writer of that novel. Coetzee’s novel Disgrace evokes extreme reaction from fury to great admiration because it seems as if Coetzee uses the rape of Lucy as a metaphor for the overthrow of white power or the loss of white supremacy. Fiona Snyckers the author of Lacuna regard this metaphor used by Coetzee as utter rubbish as Whites in South Africa have flourished even more after the advent of democracy. Lacuna is a brave effort to take on a famous writer but also to sketch life in the new South Africa and the complexities that comes with new found freedom. The novel asks a very important question viz who is allowed to tell whose story, who is allowed to make profit of whose story.

In praise of the book:
“A powerful and brilliant critique of both JM Coetzee’s Disgrace and contemporary South Africa. Snyckers makes the reader ponder deeply one minute and laugh loudly the next. A must read.”—Zukiswa Wanner
Twenty-six years is a long time not to be alive. Since The Accident that ruined her life, Catherine has lived on autopilot, going through the motions of work and motherhood without being fully present. Trying to fill the gap, her adult daughter, Julia, is looking for love in all the wrong places, and wreaking havoc on the lives that she touches along the way. Just what will it take to shock Catherine back into life?

Reviewer’s Comments:
The novel reads like a study in psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, sociology of family, marriage and inter-generational relations, heterosexual and homosexual relations and counselling, all woven into one beautiful and neat Persian rug of classic quality of a novel. The novel is subtly didactic, aesthetically pleasing while at the same time highly entertaining. The brevity of the narrative span of time, chapters, and narrative perspective of major characters are a stroke of seduction. When one characters narrates their perspective, it is mesmerising how it overlaps or does not overlap with the thought, feelings and perspective of another. The coincidences and disparities are a master stroke of reflecting on misunderstanding, self-doubt, superiority and inferiority complex, hypocrisy, sincerity, and honesty a whole gamut of human flaws and strengths. The style merges the narrator’s texture into harmony with the characters mellifluously, such that narration and dialogue are in perfect sync. The unexpected twists of plot and suspense are not contrived but flow with narrative integrity. This is a story that makes one laugh, and then suddenly a lump in the throat. The characters of the story are patently middle class, but the writer has depicted them in such an mesmerising way that even for a reader who stands outside the social class can be immersed in their habits, hobbies, interests, motivations, motives, frustrations, failures, humanity in general and minutiae of their class that makes them universally interesting, which blurs the class footprint. The writer’s ability to make the weak look strong, and the strong vulnerable, the villain sound sweet and the heroine arrogant is deliciously efficient. The characters assert their independence from the author as their creator.

In praise of the book:
“Schimmel has the rare gift of having great material for a story, but also being able to craft it into a story that feels real. Expect a lot and you won’t be disappointed.”

– Pretoria News
Bantu Bonke is an accomplished and revered jazz trumpeter, composer and band leader in decline an absent present and inadequate spouse. He lives for art at the expense of all else, an imbalance that derails his life and propels him to the brink of madness and despair. A story of direct and implied betrayals, Illumination is an unrelenting study of possession and loss, of the beauty and uncertainty of love, of the dangers and intrusions of fame.

Reviewer’s comments:
Nthikeng’s Illumination is a unique reflection on how art can influence and consume the artist to a point of obsession. It is a philosophical meditation on music; friendship, politics and existentialism. While it touches on a number of interesting themes, it's slow build up and lack of narrative structure tends to lose the reader along the way. Nthikeng is an undoubtedly gifted author with a strong authoritative style. His beautiful prose is captivating and his powerful observations and deep philosophical insights set him apart as one of the most outstanding writers of our generation. As a meditation on art, the book has a strong social relevance to those who are fascinated by how art defines our humanity.

Q&A WITH AUTHOR
Nthikeng Mohlele on finding inspiration and writing Illumination…
The love of music. And people. And life.

The writing process, how long it took you to write the book?
Illumination was thought about for eight years or so - took just over three years to write and complete, and a further year or so to refine. It was, in fact, written before Michael K.

Where did the idea from Illumination come from?
Books are, for me, never a single idea. The lowest common ‘denominators’ for Illumination has been love and music.

Nthikeng Mohlele on his characters...
I am connected to and can relate to all the characters in the book. I don’t have a hierarchical view of any of them, for there are no minor characters in narrative.

In praise of the book:
“Illumination is a glorious celebration of the unfathomable nature of friendship and a deft appraisal of a complex individual and South Africa’s most pressing ills.”

– Tsitsi Dangarembga
Alettie van den Heever’s Stof is a ground-breaking novel in the sense that it is that rare breed, an Afrikaans dystopian science fiction novel. Young Amper must go in search of lost love, while keeping her cargo of seeds from Meconium they aim to control all plant life, for in 2081 seeds are a strict taboo and Amper’s heaviest burden. It is an earthily poetic exploration of a uniquely beautiful Afrikaans, leading to its being shortlisted for the Jan Rabie-Rapport Debut Prize.

In praise of the book:
To wrestle with a "difficult" book is like learning to waltz, I read somewhere. First you find it hard to beat your rhythm and your dance partner to stop her toes from getting caught too badly. Then, one day, it’s as if something is taking its place and your head and your body are starting to work together. You get carried away by the music, your feet obey in perfect match with your partner and suddenly you realize you are. Alettie van den Heever’s debut novel, Stof, is not a waltz. It’s a tango. A wild ride of a dance with a much more experienced partner who then sets the pace for you, then surrenders to your own mercy and does not really care whether you keep up or not.

Source: www.litnet.co.za/ Elzette Steenkamp

“A brilliantly original novel by a talented new writer. Van den Heever uses the plant lore of South Africa to create a richly textured dystopian future, in which diversity and the knowledge of indigenous plants are essential to the survival of the survivors of climate change. Ampersand must protect the stories and seeds entrusted to her by her grandmother from the draconian Meconium, an enclave that uses biogas to fuel its continued technological superiority and to enforce its monopoly on food production.” - Janita Holtzhausen via www.goodreads.com
In this enchanting urban fairy tale for grownups, the delighted reader will be overtaken by belly laughs and made to think some uncomfortable new thoughts. To escape her nightmarish relationship and job with Pretoria’s vilest lawyer, Hanna becomes a TEFL teacher in Moscow, with the help and advice of writer-character Fransi Phillips, who is also teaching English in Moscow and has her eye on Hanna as a story character.

In praise of the book:
Probably the greatest asset of Love in the age of the internet is that the Russian world of life is to a large extent written in Afrikaans. The impact of the novel, the bohemian texture, would not have been nearly the same as the fairy tale played on the spot. The most fascinating parts of the novel are created precisely by depicting a life in Russia for the reader. The reader is also confronted with Russian politics. Phillips, who shares on Facebook her pro-Putin, and anti-American sentiments, puts her beliefs in the mouth of Wolf79.

Love in the Age of the Internet reads easily and captivating - just the right reading material for the summer holidays.
Source: www.litnet.co.za/Theo Kemp

Reviewer’s comments:
The book is an expression of what we already know, that love can be lived through the internet. The main character Hanna is trapped in a relationship which makes her feel like a whore. She does not work and is dependent on her advocate partner to whom she provides sex. The book allows a peep into a relationship in which many women today find themselves in. The abuse experienced by a woman without power is portrayed. There is much to learn about that in this book. The book also tells of how the internet can be used to get out of a relationship that is oppressive. Hanna makes contact with a TEFL teacher in Russia, she qualifies herself as a TEFL teacher, is guided through the internet by her friend in Russia. She escapes to Russia, finds students to teach and so finds herself a handsome, rich Russian who helps her to confront her ex-lover who managed to trace her through the internet and threatened her.
In the mysterious world of the Congo River, we meet Chrisnelt, a young Congolese boy who grows into manhood shaped by the vast leaves held in the branches of tropical forests, all the while battling a ravaged world of globalized greed and death. Chrisnelt is a gardener of unusual genius: he learns from birds, insects, and foreign weeds. Chrisnelt is guided by the ancient journey of water in his part of Africa: the constant flow to the ocean, and the rise back into the sky of mists. This powerful story at the edge of damnation bends a reflection of all of us through the eyes of a birdwatcher who sees wings fly like escaping leaves on streams of eternal water and air for all. The genre of ‘Nature Writing’ is relatively under-appreciated and under-represented in the South African literary world. Perhaps because of the reasons mentioned by Zoe Gilbert in her article on Nature Writing in the Guardian of May 2019. Nature, as both a place and an idea, has become fraught with issues of privilege. Not everyone can access it, nor can they always afford to romanticise it. As biodiversity plummets, our attention becomes bittersweet, leaving nature lovers trapped in an increasingly tragic love story. Yet for any difficulty we may have in facing up to our collective destruction, writing about nature is booming. As readers we relish these secondhand wanderings, recounted in gorgeous prose. We witness the authors wonder, and aspire to similar experiences: the natural world as cure, as balm, as wise mentor; wilderness as a fount of authenticity in which we might find our wilder realer selves. Vernon Head’s exquisite prose accomplishes more for conservation and a world without borders than any number of more academic tomes.

Reviewer’s comments:
The beauty of this book is in its patient exploration of mankind’s relationship with nature and the perfect balance of our ecological system in a time when our natural resources are in great danger of complete annihilation due to the impact of humankind’s carelessness in exploiting our natural resources. Told in a moving, poetic style that sees beyond what the eye can perceive, the style and content of this book is breathtaking. The book is a love letter to mother nature. It is necessary, urgent and beautiful. Although the book is not set in South Africa, it tells a story with universal appeal centred on a theme that is relevant throughout the lifetime humankind. The writer’s keen observations on nature often left me dazed. His writing style is powerful and potent.
In Medusa, Rudie van Rensburg taps a dark new vein for detective Kassie Kasselman. There’s psychopathy and human traffic to counter, and children’s lives at stake. Van Rensburg is a bestselling Afrikaans crime fiction author and this is one of his most successful novels to date.

Reviewer’s comments:
Ugly Lila Liebenberg was poor and mocked as ugly by her schoolmates, teachers and peers. She married an old farmer, murdered him and became a rich woman. To maintain her rich woman lifestyle she becomes involved and manages an underground business of human trafficking and child sex rings. The book shows how what happened to Lila as a child influenced the life choices she made as an adult. She becomes Medusa, her code name.

The book clearly demonstrates what exists in the world of trafficking. There are a number of practices that human traffickers are involved in to make tracking them down difficult. These are all entailed in the book and it surely contributes to the book’s theme of child-trafficking which only recently came into the spotlight again after the Bird Island revelation, makes it necessary reading. The in-depth research could be used as guidelines by NGO’s and state-departments to stop the ever-rising scourge of child-trafficking. This is an important book to read for those working with kids, at schools, social agencies and also for parents. It provides insight into how criminals lurk on the internet and allure unsuspecting children."

“...waar onheil bakkop staan..."
The aim of the HSS Awards is to breathe life into the ideas expressed in the Charter for the Humanities and Social Sciences. It does so by increasing the recognition afforded to book and creative outputs, and repositioning these scholarly contributions in the public space to enhance our appreciation of the role they play in building sustainable social cohesion and re-imagining the HSS framework.
Asleep Awake Asleep, Jo-Ann Bekker’s debut collection of short stories, explores the edge between the public and private, and between commitment and complicity. This is not the tired trope of a racist white South African seeing the light. The narrator, Rip, whose semi-objective voice links many of the stories in this collection, was raised in a family that regarded apartheid as evil.

As a journalist, Rip witnessed (and experienced a taste of) the violence and repression of apartheid’s police and legal system. But as a white South African, Rip was always privileged and remains so.

Some people see crime and violence in our country as a post-apartheid phenomenon. Asleep Awake

Asleep is a significant book because of its insistence by demonstration, as opposed to preaching, on the continuity of violence: violence across time – in this collection, from the 1961 Sharpeville massacre to the present – and violence across geographical space, between sheltered white areas and the world outside.

By the last page, this back-and-forth in time and space is no longer about the crossing of walls, boundaries and prejudices, at least not for Rip. She has crossed and integrated these barriers, understands the continuum of violence and cannot avoid her own culpability.

Asleep Awake Asleep has been described as fresh, original and different. Along with conventional stories, the collection includes micro fiction, fairy tales, hybrid texts incorporating post-mortems, and a story written as a quiz. The different forms are never used artificially or self-consciously, and always serve to further the narratives.

The language is spare, unsentimental and powerful. The style of short sentences and the structure of short pieces means the book accumulates weight page by page. The use of rhythmic repetition creates urgency and is often poetic. Everyday objects and activities, such as clothes, hair, nature and cooking, are employed to describe moods and drive the narratives forward.

Reviewer’s comments:
“Later stories bring their lens and focus to South Africa’s geopolitical landscape and evoke memories of the apartheid epoch. It is in this setting that they gain gravitas, but they add only a journalistic-autobiographical touch to the myriad works that have been written about the atrocities of the regime.”
In 2019, South Africa celebrated 25 years of democracy and the freedom that turned the country from a political pariah to one warmly embraced by the world. Nowhere was the welcome more visible, or more emotional, than in sport.

Vuvuzela Dawn tells the stories of that return. From Bafana Bafana’s Africa Cup of Nations win to the fabled Proteas “438” game – referring to the 2006 One Day International match between South Africa and Australia, which the Proteas won by one wicket with one ball to spare – the authors go behind the scenes of the great moments and record-breaking triumphs from 1994 to the present. From Caster Semenya and Wayde van Niekerk to Benni McCarthy and Kevin Anderson, from twin World Cup rugby victories to the traumas of Kamp Staaldraad and Hansie Cronjé, Vuvuzela Dawn reveals the sporting dramas and passions that defined a quarter century.

In praise of the book:
“A fresh spotlight on an exhilarating journey, and some much-needed reminders of how sport has enriched lives and opened minds in South Africa over the last 25 years.” – Lucas Radebe, former South African professional footballer.

Reviewer's comments:
“This work deepens and broadens our understanding of the South African sports landscape and its intersections with arts and culture, the media and socio-political history over the past two-and-a-half decades. It does not simply document the events and accomplishments of the country’s national teams and stars/players, but is also compiled in a rich yet compact style, making it widely accessible.”
Reviewer’s comments:

The author takes many risks with this novel, weaving stories with stories and using beautiful prose to link all the characters and stories tighter.
Gabeba Baderoon’s fourth collection of poems, *The History of Intimacy* won both the 2019 Elisabeth Eybers prize for poetry and the 2019 UJ Main Prize. In this collection, she explores contemporary questions of gender, race, religion and sexuality, as well as historical injustices and their reverberation into the present.

Breath-taking intimacies and private hurts are crafted into lyrical form – in poems on desiring what is furthest from you, memories of a midnight swim, how children work out the laws of existence, the stakes of speaking a forbidden word, elegies to a jazz prodigy and a beloved poet, and how not to be alone.

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**“” In this collection, she explores contemporary questions of gender, race, religion and sexuality, as well as historical injustices and their reverberation into the present. “”**

**In praise of the book:**

“Baderoon’s poems are finely crafted objects of art, delicately shaped and containing rich emotion and thought. She is building a powerful body of work in Africa and reaching line after line to the wider world.” – Kwame Dawes, author of *City of Bones: A Testament*

“An exquisite new collection from one of South Africa’s finest, most treasured poets.” – Nadia Davids, author of *An Imperfect Blessing*

**Reviewer’s comments:**

“When one turns the cover from back to front clockwise, the lone sparrow seems to be trailing the flock that is flying way ahead (migration?) on the front cover. These images and colours evoke a sense of poignancy that characterises all the poems in the anthology. This ambience is reinforced by the birds looking down, in addition to their blurriness, as if in sadness or mourning.

“The poems may serve as windows of collective historical moments: imprints of haunting images of slavery in the Cape (*Koggelbaai* and *Hangklip*) and of race, gender and femininity; connections of South Africa and the world, modernity and post-modernity (*Ghost Technologies*); and of mourning; and yearning for freedom, and the despondency that comes with it (*Promised Land*).”
The poems articulate with ferocious figurative style the marginalised voices of women, eyeing the world with an assertive feminine gaze. Some poems have titles; others do not. This seems to be a deliberate technique by Gantsho to lead the reader, via semantic priming, to delve into conversation (listening?). The personal names she uses, along with some place names, are uniquely South African, but the themes have one foot located in the parochial sphere and the other in the universal sphere, in equal balance. The poems are lyrical and have a cryptic, elegiac feel to them.

Red cotton pushes all boundaries in terms of poetry, form, spirit and even the physical book. It is written as a poetry novella; read from cover to cover, it tells a story, but the poems speak individually as well. The themes in the book flow through the voices of daughter, mother and granddaughter, and are always rooted in the spirit, giving the collection a dimension beyond words.

Red cotton is written for and about black womxn. The poems carry strong themes of the feminine in their expression of pain and healing, joy and lust, love and loss. Evocative as each work is, it is in the finer details and integrity of the language where the reader is most challenged, enticed by the potency, fluidity and dynamism that combine to give Gantsho her unique voice.

This work challenges readers to look and exist beyond themselves. There is no guiding map but rather rivers and streams aplenty that flow into oceans.

As publishers, we are proud of this book and of the way it has reached out to readers. The first print-run of 500 copies sold out fast, and the collection has travelled in its short life to several continents. It has also been used as teaching material for Rhodes University’s Master’s programme in Creative Writing. We believe that this speaks to the value of the poetry and its message, as well as to the underlying search for the spirit that is arising in South Africa and beyond. This book is for every little girl, every mother and every grandmother.
Creative Collections

The HSS Awards submissions deliver new texts and narratives that not only showcase South Africa and her diverse people but also delve into the complexities of what makes us human.
Mantombi Matotiyana adds her contemporary voice to a long-established Eastern Cape tradition of bow song, documented by ethnomusicologists such as David Dargie of Fort Hare University. Drawing on the traditional formula, Mantombi gives a clean-cut performance using solo instruments to create contemporary music. Each track begins with uhadi or umrhubhe, before Mantombi’s voice provides a rendition of the song; sometimes ending simply with the sound of her voice. This fluid transposition from voice to instrument and back, characteristic of the bow song, illustrates that Xhosa-speaking people must have sufficient skill to both vocalise and play the instruments.

There are three reasons behind this album: firstly, a contribution to the preservation of bow music, a project that started with the work of Professor David Dargie in the 1960s; secondly, a contribution to the preservation of bow instruments; and finally, the preservation of Mantombi’s personal contribution to the genre, which has previously never been recorded.

Many indigenous musicians consider bow music to be a dying tradition, and though this isn’t quite the case, it is important that continuing efforts are made to preserve it as a living tradition; not something to be relegated to a museum.

Mantombi is one of the great legends of Xhosa music, which dates back over several centuries. UCT’s African music specialist Dizu Plaatjies has noted Mantombi’s influence on him personally, teaching him to play the umrhubhe. She has also performed and recorded as a member of various bands, in South Africa and internationally, for many years, and has now had the opportunity to record her own album, mostly consisting original songs.

Appropriately, this album consists items of greeting, healing and heritage. Archiving, heritage and preservation lies at the heart of much of the work at Stellenbosch University’s Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation.

The Africa Open Institute funded this project, which was facilitated by honorary professor Michael Blake with a team of musicians, technicians and musicologists from four departments across two universities.

**Reviewer’s Comments:**
The repertoires chosen by the artist represent an insightful intersection of the individual, female experience with social constructions of gender – whether these are of indigenous or industrial-capital imposition.

“Drawing on the traditional formula, Mantombi gives a clean-cut performance using solo instruments to create contemporary music.”
Liminal is the follow up to the Quartets debut album Transmutation (2014). It sees the group reaching new musical territory as a natural progression and reflects the time and space each member currently occupies. The album explores themes of nature, politics and sounds that look toward different African music identities. Album opener Event Horizon refers to the boundary around a black hole from which no light can escape, the point of no return. It alludes to the current state of the planet, enduring challenges such as global warming and extreme social injustice. The idea of liminality is highlighted in album titles and in composition structures, such as in Dialectic which is built around a counterpoint between melodies that are in two different keys. Lost is a Place continues this further. The idea of being lost, drifting between the overwhelming sea of ideas, news, opinions, internet culture and the shaped perspectives embedded within the ubiquitous technologies of our time. Delhi Haze was composed on Khota’s recent trip to Dehli. It reflects on his experience of pollution as a metaphor for the cities complex history and the relentless challenges of populous cities. There are also nods to Nigeria legend Fela Kuti and Ethiopian jazz composer Mulatu Astatke. The album closes with a four movement collective improvisation titled Ghosts. Its final movement is a vigil for the ghosts of Marikana miners, not at rest and haunting us as a society. Khota’s current oeuvre coalesces between his exploration of African groove traditions, extended harmony, jazz phraseology as well as Indian classical tonal and rhythmic principles. Reza’a research both as a performer/composer and as an academic situates around rethinking static notions of tradition. His work probes the colonial influences on music and asks us to imagine what musical legacies might have been overshadowed by the devastating histories of colonisation. The music on this album also looks to the possibility of new forms of SA music as opposed to repeating crowd pleasing formulas that inhibit creativity. In a nutshell, this work asks the question: what could art in the post-apartheid look and sound like.

"The album explores themes of nature, politics and sounds that look toward different African music identities."

Liminal

Reza Khota
(University of the Western Cape)
In trying to understand the appeal of this song, it's unclear whether it's the four-part harmony or the societal hopes and aspirations of blacks during apartheid. As one of the earliest gospel songs to grace our airwaves, its impact during this period of division was remarkable. Washington Sixolo (one of the original members of the King's Messengers Quartet) referred to Mama Tambo's appreciation of the group's music as a source of comfort during her family's time in exile. During a concert at the Bloemfontein City Hall in the 1960s, where some of the audience members were white. At the start of the performance, they sat at the back of the hall, however, by the end, they had moved to the front. A white gentleman asked Washington, who was also master of ceremonies for the group, to shake his hand. Upon doing so, the audience member confessed that it was his first time to shake the hand of a black person.

The King's Messengers Quartet were later asked to sing at the sickbed of a dying white man. Initially, the group were only allowed to sing from the passageway. However, by the time they sang their second song, they had been beckoned into the bedroom. With such a lengthy and impactful history in the country, Kgomotso Moshugi revisited and re-imagined this song in the modern post-apartheid South Africa, as tribute to these national heroes and icons of a cappella gospel. Employing extended harmonies, introducing mixed ranges and both male and female voices, as well as a variety of other compositional tools, Kgomotso has reframed the song in a new choral context.

There's No Disappointment in Heaven

The song There's No Disappointment in Heaven was composed by Frederick M. Lehman (1868 – 1963) in 1914. Originally popularised in America as a guitar accompanied duet, it reached South Africa in 1927, performed by Lester McFarland and Robert Gardner. In the early 1950s, Ms Bernece Pitman, a missionary teacher at Bethel College, in the Eastern Cape, formed the King's Messengers Quartet with four black students from the college. The group recorded this song and re-popularised it locally.

As one of the earliest gospel songs to grace our airwaves, its impact during this period of division was remarkable.
Yet to be determined, created and performed by Gavin Krastin, is a public performance that was supported by Rhodes University’s Department of Drama and its affiliated company, the First Physical Theatre Company, in 2018. During the year, the performance was presented at the National Arts Festival in Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown), UCT’s Institute for Creative Arts Live Arts Festival in Cape Town, and Rhodes’ Drama Department and Theatre in Makhanda. Objects and images pertaining to the performance have subsequently been exhibited at the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space in the Czech Republic.

An anti-narrative live art solo performance, Yet to be determined is a visual and performative ceremonial meditation on the irrevocable nature of change and the roles we play in such alternating conditions. The performance calls for audience involvement, who collectively play a part in determining the journey of the work.

A powerfully visceral performance calling into question presence, visibility and responsibility, it pushes the boundaries of what a body experiences when adorned as beautiful, but also when it endures pain and elicits empathy; an evocation of the body as a communal site of both disease and healing.

With the face covered, an androgynous nude body is on display, striking poses resembling the sculpture of David or Venus de Milo. The audience is invited to participate in a ritualistic, intimate application of honey onto the body as it slowly continues turning and posing. An embalming gesture of mummification, simultaneously healing and erotic in its massaging action. Armed with confetti cannons, each audience member shoots at the performer’s body; with each loud shot, an explosion of glitter is released and immediately sticks to the body. The audience is participating in both an execution-style shooting and a colourful celebration. The performer then dances, accumulating speed and release, until eventually revealing a face adorned with a crown of needles skewered through the forehead’s flesh. After locking eye contact with each audience member, the needles are gently removed, one by one, resulting in a stigmatic blood flow. In silence and stillness, the body bleeds in clemency and exuberance.

Reviewer’s Comments:
A heartfelt body of work that is decidedly personal, dealing with sensitivity and vulnerability in revealing and concealing the body.
The Tree Song challenges this practice and provides an example of how the performing arts can be used effectively to think across different fields: artistic practice, early language development, disability, access and inclusion.

While the work is non-verbal, The Tree Song offers the building blocks needed for language and cognitive development. The work bends towards possibilities for multi-modal learning, as it gives space for children and their caregivers to interact with each other in whatever language they share as a mother tongue.

Early years theatre and performance is a growing field of research, with very few practitioners in South Africa. Performances like The Tree Song could lead to imagining an aesthetic for early years performance from our unique South African perspective.

The Tree Song is choreographed by Kristina Johnstone and Nicola Elliott and performed by Silumko Koyana and Thalia Laric, with set by Chris Jones and lighting design by Andi Colombo.

**Reviewer’s Comments:**
The work provides a new way of looking at language, performance and audience within the arts. It’s impressive that the audience identified are children, as we seldom see them as a legitimate audience.

“"The Tree Song provides an example of how the performing arts can be used effectively to think across different fields: artistic practice, early language development, disability, access and inclusion.""
The Institute for Creative Arts (ICA) presented its flagship Live Art Festival, held in Cape Town over 16 days, in September 2018. Since its first iteration in 2012, this Festival has challenged and extended the public’s experience of live art in a non-commercial environment. It was initiated, in part, because prior to 2012, there were no platforms for South African and African artists with a practice of live, interdisciplinary performance to showcase their work on the continent. Within this vacuum, the Live Art Festival has established a world-renowned platform for live art practitioners to present their work to diverse publics, and to form and sustain relationships with a variety of organisations, places, and cultures. The 2018 Festival curated by ICA Director Jay Pather with co-curators Nomusa Makhubu, Nkule Mabaso and James Macdonald once again made publicly accessible the works of visual and performing artists who explore new forms, flout aesthetic conventions and challenge audiences. What was particularly notable about this iteration of the Festival was the extensiveness of the programme. It featured over 50 artists from across the world Mozambique, Ghana, Germany, Egypt, India, Switzerland and all corners of South Africa, including renowned figures such as Nelisiwe Xaba, Sethembile Msezane, Athi-Patra Ruga, Albert Khoza and Robyn Orlin. The 2018 Festival also attracted more audience members than ever before, attended by approximately 2000 people. Many of the works took place in public spaces, or opened up private spaces to the public, moving across the city from the Iziko National Gallery to Zeitz MOCAA, the Luxurama Theatre, Maitland Institute, the Cape Town Train Station, Company’s Garden and more. These site-specific interventions engaged with incidental and heterogenous audiences as well as intentional audiences who knew about the Festival through advertising. This unique formula probes the notion of Cape Town’s ostensibly public spaces by bringing together diverse and multiple publics.

**Reviewer’s comments:**

“The Festival becomes a place of engagement which challenges institutional practice to extend beyond its walls - a trajectory to re-position the contemporary discourse away from institutional histories and narratives.”
The artwork Prides and plights makes a profound, yet sensible acknowledgement of senior women’s struggles and difficulties, especially in South Africa where most cases of abuse go unreported and unacknowledged. The artwork creates necessary momentum to conscientize its audience to honour senior women and pave the way for their rights of social equality. In so doing, it creates a platform for necessary public engagements on the unjust and unfair conditions that senior women are so often subjected to.

Currently, elderly women in South Africa are faced with different struggles and abuses. These include physical and emotional assault, rape, denial of food and necessities, physical or drug-induced coercion and restraint, psychological trauma, the infliction of mental anguish, financial and material abuse, the illegal or improper exploitation or use of funds or resources of the older person, and neglect through the refusal or failure to fulfil a caregiving obligation.

**Reviewer’s comments:**
Daniel Rankadi Mosaka has produced an exhibition that addresses senior women and their challenges – abuse and not being acknowledged for their contributions within their villages, townships and living spaces. From the submission, Daniel has applied for the category of Best Visual Art and has highlighted his attitude to this concept.

The layout is socially symbolic to the communities in which the artwork is centred around, and in so doing the artwork is an excellent attempt to represent the origins of both the artist and what inspired the study. It’s also crucial in referring to the social, moral roots in African culture. While the layout has imperfections in it, they aren’t mistakes and represent failure to get into the perfect world of the digitalization that characterises urbanity. The shortcomings in sharpness and layout are a creative way of representing the imperfect world image that we live in.

“...It creates a platform for necessary public engagements on the unjust and unfair conditions that senior women are so often subjected to.”
Asymmetries consists of images projected onto mobile sculptures designed in the motif of the icosahedron suspended on beams. The multiple mobile screens offer various registers of mapping contemporary urban beings and their objects. The installation project demands a different conception of the relationship between the screen, the image and the viewer. I present the assemblage of images from various cities which requires a framing; reframing; and deframing that defies a totalising whole. Instead, the experience evokes tentative, incomplete and constantly moving-evolving ideas that at times move together, move against each other and on occasion allow for coalescence.

Asymmetries Exhibition

The large-scale installation Asymmetries, is a creative submission for the PhD research project titled Itinerant /Iterative Cartographies: Explorations in Cinematic practices. The installation in its entirety functions as a series of experiments and explorations of the relationship between cinema and the city through cartographic propositions stemming from theories of the Global South. Asymmetries offers tentative, situated, epistemic sketches explored through various artistic practices. These practices contest normative and oft-canonized registers for conceptualising and visualising African urbanity. The work, mobilising the modes of artistic research, explores and disrupts the coordinates of what is known about the Global Cities of the South. To achieve this, the work progresses from the point of the unknown, the marginal, and the uncanonised. Through acts of cinematographic cartography, the project insists that when a spectator opens herself to multiple and fragmented points of views, the practice might raise interesting questions and conjure up new epistemic possibilities. As a multi-channel installation;
Harmonia: Sacred Geometry – The patterns of existence

GORDON FROUD
University of Johannesburg
(Sculpture)

Harmonia: Sacred Geometry – The patterns of existence is a mid-career showcase by Gordon Froud featuring more than 150 works created over a two-year period. Shown at the Standard Bank gallery in Johannesburg from April to June 2018, it consisted of sculptures, drawings, photopolymer-etchings, embossings, digital prints, glass works and animations. Exploring sacred geometry, the show aimed to explore a greater pattern of existence, positing that geometry links the atoms in the smallest grain of sand to the expanding universe and everything in it, including humans, animals and plants. This link in humans goes beyond race, creed, gender or culture.

The show consists of four chapters looking at geometry in nature, the city and construction, the human body and in the spirit. Making use of ancient symbols like Metatron’s cube and the flower of life (both ancient diagrams still in use today), Gordon shows the connectedness of all things to mankind and the universe. In this show, he attempts to draw science and art to become one, pulling from the rich history of geometry from the time of Pythagoras through the dark ages and Renaissance, where the church split art and science, seeking to elevate artists like Leonardo and Michelangelo while persecuting scientists like Copernicus and Galileo.

Highly acclaimed, with a plethora of media coverage, the show was experienced by more than 4 000 visitors, with ten public walkabouts and workshops, alongside numerous school workshops and an accompanying education supplement. The show was also shown at Saheti School in honour of Advocate George Bizos' 91st birthday, with sales contributing to the Bizos education fund for art students at the school.

B.Tech students from the University of Johannesburg were also shown at the University of Johannesburg. The show was also shown at Saheti School in honour of Advocate George Bizos' 91st birthday, with sales contributing to the Bizos education fund for art students at the school. Students were graded by the university, and subsequently being awarded distinctions for their workplace learning module under Gordon. This extensive exhibition was an ambitious mid-career show at one of the most prestigious public galleries in the country, and aonce in a lifetime honour for the artist.
Longing for the old days

Being part of the awards will give me the opportunity to be an influence to young people in my village in Limpopo because art is less known. I believe more young people have creative skill, but lack motivation to be creative and I can be that motivation for them and this will also expand my knowledge and also my creative skill further."

**Reviewer’s comments:**
Maenetja has engaged his medium meaningfully and treats his pieces as a living archive. His ceramics are interesting and draws attention to forgotten spaces and places.

His body of work is well executed, it’s a narrative that is particular to his home, its personal and yet recognizable to those who live within a family space or a close-knit community. The work speaks in this way though he uses a contemporary material.

Maenetja speaks about his community and the necessary influence winning this award would provide for other young people there. I have no doubt that his work already will inspire young people in his community as well as his courage in submitting his portfolio for this challenging award.

Very good and engages directly with issues of memory, daily living experiences in South Africa.

The work is good and provokes renewed thinking of art spaces, communal engagement with art and other matters.
As an extension of this research, Black is Blue becomes a meditation on play. It uses ideas and methodologies of play and performance as ways to reflect on improvisation, make-believe, and staging as modes of survival, and ways in which people have historically recreated cultures through embodied, reflexive, and collaborative ways. The notion of play within the performance and installation goes beyond the assumed frivolity associated with the term, and instead activates multiple levels of reading, where the presentation of an embodied knowledge about the ocean is centralized, and the mapping out of how seawater travels inland is sketched out through threads that are present yet not immediately visible or readable. Central to this work is also the bodies that transport this bottled seawater inland, as well as hinting at materials related to divinity. It is a process of fishing for information that is unwritten, yet present. Black is Blue is the naked testing of academic language beyond the book onto a stage. In challenging existing modes of academic research, a central concern of the project is to present different ways of knowing seawater, in order to shift away from the modes in which the most prominent discourses around sea water (oceanography, science, and engineering) are spaces in which water is objectified as something alien and far from the human.

Reviewer's comments:

“This work will make a worthwhile contribution to acknowledging missing histories, rituals and cultural narratives.”

Black is Blue Bottled Seawater: A Sea Inland, is an ongoing series of explorations, inquiries, and engagements with the wealth of embodied knowledge surrounding shared cultural practices of bringing bottled seawater inland for health, spiritual and other reasons. It is specifically written through a body-centered method that speaks through my Nguni identity. The research is centered on knowledge systems that come from the people of water, the water-based diviners, and the presence of seawater inland in order to stay connected to the world of spirits; the human and ancestral world.

Black is Blue Bottled Seawater: A Sea Inland

Oupa Sibeko

(University of the Witwatersrand)
Msezane is an example to young audiences as well as mature generations who are interested in art as transformation. Being unafraid to ‘stake her claim’ requires courage, could be viewed as sensation, but which served its purpose. A positive thought provoking addition to the arts. Addressing contemporary and historical issues of negation, she is determined that her work will speak to the feminine omitted voice, the historical negation and the influences that will determine a new way for us to articulate the Africa / South African mind-set. A refreshing body of work that has already demonstrated informative documentation of a present and past which will determine the future.

Speaking Through Walls

Using both public space and finding value in the body as a site of inquiry and representation my work began to incite rigorous conversations around the significance of public holidays, engendered histories and the utilisation of public spaces as sites of memory. During my Masters in 2015 at the University of Cape Town I expanded upon these ideas as more conversations around statues and monuments surfaced. As an independent study void of the Rhodes Must Fall movement my work coincided with the day the Cecil Rhodes statue was removed on the April 9th 2015. This is when I realized the prescient and spiritual nature of work. As my practice has developed and the demands of producing is more apparent, I have had to be still as to not lose my spiritual antennas that have guided me in making remarkable work. My current work Speaking Through Walls became a site of listening to what the land has to say and the presences that lay beneath it in a time where the decision to redraft the constitution to allow for land reform became a reality late last year.

Reviewer’s comments:
Msezane is an example to young audiences as well as mature generations who are interested in art as transformation. Being unafraid to ‘stake her claim’ requires courage, could be viewed as sensation, but which served its purpose. A positive thought provoking addition to the arts. Addressing contemporary and historical issues of negation, she is determined that her work will speak to the feminine omitted voice, the historical negation and the influences that will determine a new way for us to articulate the Africa / South African mind-set. A refreshing body of work that has already demonstrated informative documentation of a present and past which will determine the future.
At a deeper level, we also look to our social scientists, philosophers, historians, artists, and others to help us to rebuild our sense of nationhood, our independence and our ability to take our place proudly in the community of nations.
This graphic novel is an exercise in the esoteric and is an extension of the author’s humanistic approach to life. It deals with many issues in the social sciences like the need to belong, interpersonal relationship management and personal motivation.

**Reviewer’s Comments:**
This is a well written novel with great illustrations. It has been packaged in both print and digital allowing all users to be able to choose the format that suits them best. It’s a story of love and personal courage. The use of digital tools advances and opens new avenues in the humanities and social sciences. The book facilitates the presence of Humanities and Social Sciences field in the digital world thus exposing the field to an even younger generation.

While the *Chronicles of Sketch and Etha* is a story of love and dealing with personal challenges, what makes this novel classic is how well the content is articulated and delivered. The author is a young emerging scholar who has shown enthusiasm in the writing area and has contributed immensely by embracing the digital publishing to reach the young audience.
The first digital atlases specifically designed for South African schools and SA curricula, offering thematic content, map skills teaching as well as interactive maps. The series enhances geo-skills in a context where teachers are often untrained and a lack of English skills can be a barrier to reading. There are three levelled atlases, each in two languages.

**Reviewer’s Comments:**
This is a great tool for teachers and learners at schools, which continues further when students take geography as a subject of choice in universities.

What makes this content high quality is the new packaging, which enables digital access. Now the content can be accessed anytime and anywhere. It also allows teachers some flexibility as a teaching tool as it facilitates participative learning with learners.

The packaging of these atlases in a way that allows technological accessibility opens up the content to a wider community. The presentation has been crafted to allow participation from both learners and teachers.

With the rise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, it’s imperative to see more digital content to allow greater participation. The packaging of atlases speaks to this new imperative.
Azimuth is an output informed by an awareness of politics of representation, which it explores for transformation in a digital humanities context. Fashion and its praxes are a system that constructs and forges bodies and identities; it's also a system that has traditionally participated in establishing Western cultural hegemony by naturalising the West and othering the rest. It is proposed that fashion, in its digital expressions, can be appropriated by a new, diverse guard of practitioners previously excluded from the system. With the relative ease of access to digital tools and networks, new narratives and positive representations can be articulated, which destabilise these elitist systems.

While Azimuth is not overtly political, it subtextually inscribes the identity of a black, empowered feminine, Noirwave aesthetic from a fashion lens by using new technologies within a traditionally male-gendered technological practice.

VR as a new medium has its limitations in terms of the production and dissemination of the media. However, it signals a way through which the inclusive and decolonising principles of digital humanities can be explored and applied through digital artistic practice in order to overwrite epistemological exclusions for a just, authentic re-scripting of our stories.

Azimuth is an output resulting from ongoing development of the creator’s practice as a fashion filmmaker. This practice is anchored in digitality and this Virtual Reality fashion film was produced following a residency with Electric South’s New Dimensions AR/VR Lab in 2018. The lab provided mentorship from a number of international experts towards the development of continental African artists for immersive digital storytelling.

Artistically, Azimuth explores instances of South African Brutalist architecture as technological sublime, and fashion performances informed by the new aesthetic of Noirwave as a popular culture phenomenon of diasporic black identity.

Conceptualised and produced in South Africa, Azimuth is testimony to collaborative practice and digital fashion expression from South Africa as part of a Global South.
The National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences, in partnership with individual scholars, publishers and universities, is undertaking the necessary work of transforming the HSS landscape and, in this way, contributing towards building a truly post-apartheid South Africa.
Drawing upon her grandfather’s war-time diary and photographs, Terry Kurgan builds a gripping memoir/detective story that follows her family’s epic journey across Nazi-occupied Europe through countries of the Middle East to India, and finally, South Africa. Presenting family images as repositories of dark public and private history, Everyone is Present is an account of a global refugee journey, and at the same time a powerful meditation on family secrets and photography that gives us startling insights into how photographs work: what they conceal, how they mislead, and what provocations they contain.

The book offers the reader three distinct narrative threads that are tightly woven together. At one level, it is an historical narrative about the origins of a sector of the South African community that begins during a particularly brutal epoch of world history, in which racial and religious discrimination were driving forces.

At another level, it is a universal story about the intimacies of a family, living in extreme conditions, who are subjected to sudden flight and forced migration. This speaks to the contemporary global conversation on refugees, xenophobia and dislocation. And finally, it’s a creative meditation on the meaning of photography – a critical cultural medium.

In praise of the book:
“Kurgan has achieved something rare in this book: a truly dynamic fusion of text and image. She brings a deep knowledge of craft to everyday images, whether she’s teasing fugitive meanings from a creased pre-war snapshot or taking the pulse of an apparently impersonal digital image. The result is both a moving family memoir and an illuminating reflection on photography and memory.”— Ivan Vladislavić, Distinguished Professor in the Creative Writing Department at the University of the Witwatersrand

“Kurgan has written a book which produces aftershocks and after shadows, which stayed with me for days after reading it, colouring my view of each part of my world for a while, the way a really good book does.”— Sarah Nuttall, Professor of Literacy and Cultural Studies and Director of WiSER (Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research)

“I consumed it in full, many gulps immediately, and then again and again in sips. The result: I felt engulfed, sharing in the experience of looking, discovering, stewing, and witnessing.”— Oluremi Onabanjo, former director of exhibitions and collections for The Walther Collection, New York
City of Broken Dreams brings the global debate about the urban university to bear on the realities of South African rust-belt cities through a detailed case study of the Eastern Cape motor city of East London, a site of significant industrial job losses over the past two decades.

The cultural power of the car and its associations with the endless possibilities of modernity lie at the heart of the refusal of many rust-belt motor cities to seek alternative development paths that could move them away from racially inscribed, automotive capitalism and cultures. This is no less true in East London than it is in the motor cities of Flint and Detroit in the US.

Since the end of World War Two, universities have become increasingly urbanised, resulting in widespread concerns about the autonomy of universities as places of critical thinking and learning. Simultaneously, there is increased debate about the role universities can play in building urban economies, creating jobs and reshaping the politics and identities of cities.

In City of Broken Dreams, author Leslie Bank embeds the reader’s understanding of the university within a history of industrialisation, place-making and city-building.

**In praise of the book:**
“City of Broken Dreams is a rich and fascinating exploration of the history and current shape of a neglected coastal city: East London. It certainly enhances one’s understanding of the city by situating it within a global rust-belt paradigm, as well as within a local context in which it serves as a homecoming city for the burgeoning Xhosa-speaking middle class.” – Professor Peter Alegi, Professor of History, Michigan State University, USA
Theorising Education shows basic theoretical moves for the educational imagination by stripping each move down to its most elementary function. The author opens out five basic theoretical moves, each one able to be used with the others, so that by the end of the book, you will have the beginnings of a theoretical tool kit. This tool kit will enable you to imagine possible educational worlds different from ones you may have already encountered. A first of its kind, Theorising Education is for the person who wants to learn how to think about education in an active, imaginative and systematic way.

The book is a basic step-by-step approach to learning how to theorise. The author sets out five theoretical tools for the educational imagination:

• how to break down an educational situation into separate variables and then work with how these variables can be usefully combined;
• how to think about different ethical principles and conscientiously regulate how and why we educate the way we do;
• how to actively track the process of conceptual integration that is at the heart of pedagogy;
• how to theorise levels in education and
• how to work with change in education

Reviewer’s comments:

"This book is based on solid scholarship and it offers a very practical guide to thinking systematically about education. It does, however, remain practical rather than theoretically ground-breaking. It does not really open up new avenues in the HSS fields. Rather, it makes existing avenues more accessible."
This book explores the history of Durban’s largest low-income housing estate through the oral histories of people who live or have lived on the estate. Despite the significance of this estate in terms of its size, history and social diversity, this is the first non-fiction book that has been published about it.

Through the stories that the narrators tell, the reader is exposed to the rich history of Kenneth Gardens and the complex ways in which residents cope with their precarious life circumstances. This is not a conventional academic book, as Professor Noor Nieftagodien states in the foreword: “The book is the product of protracted interaction between university-based scholars and the community of Kenneth Gardens, premised on a commitment to the co-production of knowledge.”

One of the book’s co-authors, Kira Erwin, grew up in Kenneth Gardens and reflects on this personal history in the book. Through the narratives we come to understand how a subsidised rental apartment becomes a home, and how relative strangers can form a neighbourhood based on shared circumstances, proximity and an urban planning design that fosters familiarity and belonging. “Hard living” is what bonds residents of Kenneth Gardens, creating unexpected forms of social cohesion.

It is for this reason that the authors avoid a one-dimensional interpretation of residents’ lives, premised on racial identity. Instead, they reveal, through the stories told, the multiple and complex identities and forms of solidarity that exist in post-apartheid South Africa. While the book focuses on Kenneth Gardens itself, it is more than just a case study. It is also about the history of social housing in South Africa, identity formation and change, urban planning, and state regulation. Through its analysis, the book provides critical insights into how social housing could (and arguably should) be imagined and, indeed, practised going forward.

While the authors are social scientists, Professor Nieftagodien recommends the book as “essential reading for anyone interested in urban history, social housing and the making of urban communities in post-apartheid South Africa”.

The oral histories and the authors’ scholarly essays are accompanied by an exquisite photo essay from Cedric Nunn, one of South Africa’s best-known documentary photographers. The photographs bring to visual life the people of Kenneth Gardens, its buildings and landscape, and the inside of individual homes – which, in itself, tells many stories.

**Reviewer’s comments:**

“While the book focuses on Kenneth Gardens, it is more than just a case study. It tells of the history of social housing in South Africa, identity formation and change, urban planning, and state regulation.”
Real & Imagined Readers revisits an important period in South African literary history, marked by apartheid censorship and the banning of important intellectual and creative voices. By focusing on the alternative, progressive book ecosystem that developed in the shadow of censorship, the author positions a literary history and readership, which was often marginalised, at the centre of the narrative on reading and literary cultures in South Africa.

Returning to the archive, Matsha offers a reader-centric view of the successive censorship laws, and the consequences of publication control on the world of books. In contrast to the mainstream book market, some progressive readers – aligned to various strands of resistance politics and ideology – curbed censorship and actively participated in independent literary and cultural movements, alongside oppositional writers, publishers, librarians and booksellers. Books and print culture created intersectional spaces of solidarity where ideas and knowledge were contested, mediated and translated into the socio-political domain.

In this regard, Real & Imagined Readers is a well-researched, carefully argued interdisciplinary study, presenting a vibrant discussion of how authors and publishers were the main actors in these principled tussles with the authorities. Far from being imagined, these authors, publishers and readers extended the literary space to trade union meetings, community halls, streets and basements in pursuit of their literary activism, blurring the lines between arts and politics.

Underpinning the book is the importance of remembering South Africa’s rich literary heritage and tradition. This is shown in the author’s deft use of archival material to better make sense of the present. By understanding reading as a complex and dynamic activity, this highly readable study stresses the importance of appreciating books in relation to the social context in which they are written, and most importantly, read. It also discusses the complex entanglements between arts, culture, politics and the role of books in society.

Because of, and in spite of, stringent censorship, various definitions of literature and readerships emerged as real readers engaged in an elusive dialogue with the censors’ imagined readers. This led to the formation of literary canons that inform literary criticism and reading politics to this day. The book is a tribute to the authors, publishers, booksellers and readers who engaged in this highly politicised literary space with bravado and creativity, elevating the status of books in the national consciousness.

Reviewer’s comments:
“Returning to the archive, Matsha offers a reader-centric view of the successive censorship laws, and the consequences of publication control on the world of books.”
Adrienne Sichel has, over the past 40 years, painstakingly documented contemporary dance in South Africa pre and post democracy. The book is a blend of her journalistic writing and experience, combined with a vast collection of research material on the evolution of contemporary dance in South Africa.

Sichel presents some important milestones, and sketches the eras and genres which make up this art form in South Africa. Her fingerprinting exercise connects some of the dots in how a valuable and unique heritage has taken shape. As she explains: “This book is the only existing blueprint of contemporary dance in South Africa … Embedded in the statistics and histories lie a ganglia of complex narratives and aesthetic alchemies inextricably connected to, and emerging from, a still fractured society in constant transition.”

Body Politics: Fingerprinting South African Contemporary Dance is an attempt to map this artistic terrain in a socio-political context. Whilst being aware of the gaps, Sichel aims to be comprehensive in the way she frames, traces and tracks a remarkable, intrinsic component of our cultural ethos. Featured in this one-of-a-kind book are a host of artists, from the early dance pioneers to contemporary players, as well as various companies and festivals.

In 1987, Sichel co-founded Dance Umbrella as a free, non-racial platform for all forms of South African choreography and performance.

And, in 2012, she co-founded The Ar(t)chive with filmmaker Jessica Denyschen. The two have created an archive that reflects the politically and culturally diverse nature of South African contemporary theatre dance as it has evolved over the past 40 years. Sichel worked as a visiting researcher in The Ar(t)chive from 2012 to 2019, when she formally retired. In 2017, The Ar(t)chive was acknowledged for its research with a Humanities and Social Sciences Award in the Creative Collections Best Public Performance category for BodyTech (2016).

Sichel is the recipient of various awards recognising her stellar contribution to arts journalism. Her pioneering spirit, courage and integrity have placed her among an influential generation of skilled journalists who lived through an intense period of our South African history; who took risks to cover stories and created connections among the communities they reported on. Through her book, she has inspired several artists involved in dance to start work on their history, methodologies and processes with a view to publication.

Reviewer’s comments:

“"The book is a blend of her journalistic writing and experience, combined with a vast collection of research material on the evolution of contemporary dance in South Africa."
In presenting his socio-cultural analysis of the lawn on the South African highveld, Jonathan Cane explores the complex relationship between landscape and power in the country’s colonial, modernist and post-apartheid eras.

The lawn, Cane argues, is not quite as innocent as we may think. Besides the fact that lawns suck up scarce water, consume chemicals, displace indigenous plants and reduce biodiversity, they are also part of a colonial lineage of dispossession and violence. They reduce the political problem of land to the aesthetic question of landscape, thereby obscuring issues of ownership, redress, belonging and labour. The question then becomes: Who takes care of whose lawn, in what clothes, under what conditions and for what reward?

Civilising Grass offers a detailed reading of artistic, literary and architectural lawns between 1886 and 2017. The eclectic archive includes plans, poems, maps, gardening blogs, adverts, ethnographies and ephemera, as well as literature by Koos Prinsloo, Marlene van Niekerk and Ivan Vladislavić. In addition, the book includes colour reproductions of lawn artworks by David Goldblatt, Lungiswa Gqunta, Pieter Hugo, Anton Kannemeyer, Sabelo Mlangeni, Moses Tladi and Kemang Wa Lehulere.

This book shows that even if the enchantment of a green, flat and soft lawn is almost universal, there are also unexpected moments when alternatives present themselves, occasions when people reject the politeness of the lawn, and situations in which we might glimpse a possible time after the lawn. Drawing on theory and conceptual tools from interdisciplinary fields such as ecocriticism, queer theory, art history and postcolonial studies, Civilising Grass offers the first sustained investigation of the lawn in Africa and contributes to the growing conversation about the complex relationships between humans and non-humans on the continent.

In praise of the book:
“Civilising Grass is compelling in its interdisciplinary and scholarly breadth, its sophisticated use of critical theory, and its persuasive analysis of cultural objects. This book makes a significant contribution to the study of the political relevance of landscapes and their representations, as well as to the study of South African society and culture.” – Byron Caminero-Santangelo, Professor of English and Environmental Studies, University of Kansas, USA
Most personal histories of apartheid in Southern Africa tell the story of the armed struggle. This book is about opposition to apartheid within the law and through the law. The successes and failures of civil society and lawyers in this endeavour are described in the context of the discriminatory and oppressive regime of apartheid. South Africa achieved notoriety for its apartheid policies and practices, both in the country and in Namibia. Today Israel stands accused of applying apartheid in the Palestinian territories it has occupied since 1967. Confronting Apartheid examines the regimes of these three societies from the perspective of the author’s experiences as a human rights lawyer in South Africa and Namibia, and as a UN human rights envoy in occupied Palestine.

John Dugard describes the work he undertook in defence of human rights in these three places. Each country is dealt with separately, accompanied by an introduction designed to ensure that the reader is provided with the necessary historical, political and legal background material.

The strength of the memoir lies in the fact that although Dugan deals with the fraught history and contemporary issues of three separate countries, his tone is understated and reasoned, often even gentle. In addition, he is careful to acknowledge his point of view, and hence ideological constraints, as a privileged white South African imbued in the liberal political tradition.

The memoir portions integrate well with the author’s main objective of illuminating apartheid in the three countries covered. Dugan explains his aversion to apartheid and the death penalty, his lack of veneration for judges and his increasing devotion to the craft and principles of international law. The memoir sections, together with the history and analysis presented, add to the current debates and threads of political discourse in South Africa.

As time passes, we risk forgetting the complex details underpinning apartheid, the struggle against it, and the central role that practising lawyers and academics like Dugan played in opposing it. That risk is compounded by the gaping ignorance shown in our current discourse on the subject. Hence, Dugan’s record of the organisations and personalities that have contributed to resisting apartheid, and continue to do so, fulfils both a historical and a contemporary function.

His book emerges at an opportune time, as an appeal for the reassertion of liberal values in society.

Reviewer’s comments:

“"It is a treasure trove containing snippets of his biography as he presents his take on the histories of three countries that have had a profound influence on him – South Africa, Namibia and Palestine – and which he, in turn, has influenced as a jurist.""
This book tells how, for a quarter of a century, South African researcher Ian Glenn searched for François Levaillant’s notebooks and the fate of his collection, and tried to solve the mysteries of Levaillant’s life and times. Levaillant was the first and greatest South African birder, a noted ornithologist, explorer, naturalist, zoological collector and anthropologist of the Cape. He collected thousands of specimens of birds and wrote about them between 1799 and 1808. His contribution to modern ornithology in Africa was immeasurable, and some of his specimens still exist in museums in Europe.

Through his travels and writings, Levaillant also shaped a range of media genres: the hunting narrative; the safari; the illustrated and mapped first-person account of travel. He was also our first investigative reporter criticising colonial brutality. Hence, this book will appeal to natural history lovers, researchers, teachers looking for new South African literature, and anyone interested in the bush or birding who wants to know more about Levaillant.

This is an unusual book in that it offers authentic scholarship while addressing the reader directly. That’s why it will appeal to academics and the general public alike. Glenn’s authority on Levaillant shines through. Not surprising, since he has edited and co-translated an English translation of Levaillant’s *Voyage into the Interior of Africa* and has written or co-authored many scholarly articles about him.

Nevertheless, *The First Safari* functions independently of Glenn’s other work and makes for riveting reading because of the way he seamlessly melds scholarly information into a story, told with breathtaking range and determination. As Glenn puzzles through Levaillant’s life – including his two marriages and his emergence as a naturalist – we learn how European professionals like Levaillant were tasked with undertaking multinational projects for the Empire. We also learn about the commerce of nature collections and their politics in overlapping but competing Enlightenment and Romantic taxonomies.

In tracing the political value of Levaillant’s endeavours in revolutionary Europe, Glenn delves into the legacy emanating from the age of the collaborative economy, with its collections of specimens and report-backs from people like Levaillant. His extensive search takes him, and the reader, from the banks of the Orange River to the vaults of the Paris Museum. It makes for fascinating reading.

**Reviewer’s comments:**

“This is a meticulously researched book of solid scholarship. It certainly provides new insight into its subject matter, which is a fascinating one. It also offers innovative ways of looking at Levaillant.”
also competed for the mantle of liberation, espousing different visions of freedom. These progressive movements were open to what Ian Macqueen characterises as the "shockwaves" that Black Consciousness created. It is only with such a focus that we can fully appreciate the significance of Black Consciousness, both as a movement and as an ideology emanating from South Africa in the late 1960s and 1970s. 

*Black Consciousness and Progressive Movements under Apartheid* thus presents an intellectual history of Black Consciousness in South Africa in terms of the comparative perspective that Biko originally called for.

The book is a particularly important contribution because of its direct engagement with the history of Black Consciousness, a political discourse that has re-inspired popular thought, particularly since the Fees Must Fall protests of 2015. Macqueen provides a timely analysis of Black Consciousness that re-emphasises its origins in South African civil society and reasserts its continued importance for South Africa's democracy.

The book calls for radical but tolerant politics and goes further to remind readers of the importance of discussions and debates that took place in the early 1970s – an aspect of our country’s history that tends to be forgotten in favour of more dramatic events.

**Reviewer’s comments:**

“This is a well-researched book of solid scholarship. The subject matter of the Black Consciousness movement is one that deserves to be widely researched, and this book contributes to existing scholarly debates in the field.”
Birding in South Africa’s National Parks

This is the first book dedicated to birding in South African parks. Ecotourism, including avitourism (visiting fragile natural areas to support conservation efforts and observe wildlife) has the potential to alleviate poverty by bringing money into the economy and creating jobs. This type of ecotourism attracts domestic and foreign tourists, who visit and experience the natural environments of a country, while promoting and supporting the conservation of its biodiversity.

South Africa hosts about one-tenth of the world’s bird species and almost a third of Africa’s bird species. Avitourism, or travelling birdwatching, is growing here, with an influx of international tourists visiting southern Africa.

The 19 national parks featured in this book are grouped within the four biogeographic regions: northern, arid, frontier and Cape regions. Pertinent facts about where to find birds, including the top 10 birds of each park and a description of general habitats, are presented in a readable fashion.

Over 100 photographs illustrate some of the special birds found in the parks. Of the 700 regularly seen terrestrial species in South Africa, at least 640 can be found in the 19 national parks, with 13 of the 15 species endemic to South Africa, and another 19 of the 20 species endemic to South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland.

The special birds listed at the back of the book for each park include iconic flagship species of the biome that the park represents, birders’ elusive bucket-list species and special southern African endemic species. Because of the conservation status and tranquil ambience of our national parks, many animals – including birds – are relaxed and quite accepting of the presence of visitors. Some birds can be fairly tame, such as the Cape spurfowl frequently spotted at Geelbek restaurant in West Coast National Park, and the Natal spurfowl seen at many camps in the Kruger National Park.

This book is a worthy addition to the bookshelves of bird enthusiasts, particularly birders and ecotourists visiting South Africa from across the world.

In praise of the book:
“This book offers a compact and concise introduction to birding in our parks, giving valuable insights into what species can be expected to be found in each park along with helpful guidance as to which habitats they may be associated with” – Dr Luthando Dziba, San Parks Conservation Services managing executive.

Reviewer’s comments:
“This book is a worthy addition to the bookshelves of bird enthusiasts, particularly birders and ecotourists visiting South Africa from across the world.”
President Cyril Ramaphosa is South Africa’s fifth post-apartheid president. He first came to prominence in the 1980s as the founder of the National Union of Mineworkers. When Nelson Mandela was released from prison in February 1990, Ramaphosa was at the head of the reception committee that greeted him. Chosen as secretary-general of the African National Congress in 1991, Ramaphosa led the ANC’s team in negotiating the country’s post-apartheid Constitution. Thwarted in his ambition to succeed Mandela, he exchanged political leadership for commerce, ultimately becoming one of the country’s wealthiest businessmen, a breeder of exotic cattle, and a philanthropist.

This fully revised and extended edition charts Ramaphosa’s early life and education, and his career in trade unionism – including the 21-day miners’ strike of 1987, when he committed the union to the wider liberation struggle – politics, and Constitution-building.

Extensive new chapters explore his contribution to the National Planning Commission, the effects of the Marikana massacre on his political prospects, and the real story behind his rise to the deputy presidency of the country in 2014. They set out the constraints Ramaphosa faced as Jacob Zuma’s deputy, and explain how he ultimately triumphed in the election of the ANC’s new president in 2017. The book concludes with an analysis of the challenges Ramaphosa faces as president.

Based on numerous personal conversations with Ramaphosa over the past decade, and on interviews with many of his friends and contemporaries, this new edition offers a frank appraisal of one of South Africa’s most enigmatic political figures. A commanding biography, it tells the full story of Ramaphosa’s life for the first time. It also situates his capabilities and shortcomings in the context of the tumultuous historical events that surrounded him.

“I have tried to allow Ramaphosa’s friends and foes the space to explain him in their own, often inconsistent, terms. I have correspondingly been sceptical about any overarching narrative that uniquely makes sense of his life. Perhaps fancifully, I hope that the diversity of opinions I present will allow readers some imaginative space in which to make a judgement of their own about the kind of political leader, and human being, they believe Ramaphosa to be,” says author Anthony Butler.

Reviewer’s comments:

“The arguments presented in the book are convincing and convey missing content about Ramaphosa’s life. In reading this book, you come out with enough respect, which is not generally accorded to him, because the media and ANC politicking have perceived him as a weakling.”
The Dance of the Dung Beetles brought together two authors marrying their disciplines of Science (Byrne) and Humanities (Lunn), into a narrative around a fascinating family of scarabs which have long served humanity in different roles. The book’s importance is reinforced with glowing reviews from diverse sources, such as Nature magazine. Adam Cruise describes it in Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa as an excellent and timeous book, demonstrating that without dung beetles many life forms, including humans, may never have evolved. A hit at major literary festivals with the dung beetle talks almost sold out, testifies to public appetite for books on unusual subjects. The combination of history and science encourages readers to learn about the evolution of history of science from the perspective of a dung beetle. The book starts on the shores of the Nile with the dung beetle god Khepri symbolising resurrection, moving through religion and mythology into the history of western science, towards our growing understanding of the dung beetle world. It takes readers into the early days of global exploration and the significant role artists played in depicting the natural world. African dung beetles still play a pivotal role in contemporary science, as it has evolved from a solitary, gentlemanly pursuit into the growth of international scientific teams. Finding their path guided by the Milky Way, revealing genetic switches and explaining how new species arise, has today renewed interest in dung beetles. If their navigational skills end up in our autonomous vehicles our lives may depend on them again. There is still a vast amount dung beetles have to offer and the authors suggest this is also true of the rapidly disappearing insect world. The book however doesn’t preach, but celebrates this indomitable insect group which performs many vital ecological services. These talents are illustrated in the beautiful pictures accompanying the text. Described as an entomological page turner, a brilliant, funny tour through mythology, evolution and the day-to-day innovations of scientific research, (Bruce Beasley Professor of English at Western Washington University) scientifically rigorous and highly readable (Sandra Swart, Professor of History, University of Stellenbosch) and a captivating compound of science, history and myth Andrew Robinson, Nature magazine, the Dance of the Dung Beetles is an unusual, popular and well timed work.
Elephants are in dire straits again. They were virtually wiped out from much of Africa by European hunters in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but their numbers resurfaced for a while in the heyday of late-colonial conservation efforts in the twentieth. Now, according to one estimate, an elephant is killed every fifteen minutes. This whilst the reasons for being especially compassionate and protective towards elephants are now so well-known they have become almost a cliché: their high intelligence, rich emotional lives including a capacity for mourning, caring matriarchal societal structures and that strangely charismatic grace. Saving elephants is one of the iconic conservation struggles of our time. As a society we must aspire to understand how and why people develop compassion or fail to do so and what stories we tell ourselves about animals revealing this delicate relationship. This book is the first study to probe the primary features, and possible effects, of some major literary genres as they pertain to elephants south of the Zambezi over three centuries: indigenous forms, early European travelogues, hunting accounts, novels, game ranger memoirs, scientists’ accounts, and poems. It examines what these literatures imply about the various and diverse attitudes towards elephants, about who shows compassion towards them, in what ways and why. It is the story of a developing contestation between death and compassion, between those who kill and those who love and protect.

**In praise of the book:**

“Dan Wylie combines a lifetime of experience and meditation with specialist knowledge of debates in ecocriticism and animal studies.” - Fiona Moolla, Department of English, University of the Western Cape.

“Death and Compassion is an original and highly informative analysis of scientific and non-scientific accounts of elephant ethics and ontology.” - Kai Horsthemke, Chair of Philosophy of Education and Systematic Pedagogy, KU Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany
The indomitable Dr Tlaleng Mofokeng affectionately known as Dr T is passionate about making sexual health and well-being services available to all, regardless of their sexual and gender identities and economic status. This book is filled with specifics of sexual anatomy and health as well as advice and facts about pleasure and sexual rights. Dr T, with her typically honest and warm approach, makes the reader feel comfortable reading about topics not always discussed freely, providing all the information that demystifies sex and sexuality in a way that is entertaining and enlightening.

Reviewer's Comments:
Dr T’s book addresses facts about sexual health and pleasure. The book is divided into sections which makes it easier for the reader to target an area that speaks to their special needs. Unfortunately much of the facts can also be accessed via a web-search.

The book is guide to a healthy sex life. Its main contribution is to open up in an accessible and friendly way issues of sexual health. But the book does not contribute new or innovative ways of seeing existing knowledge in the humanities and social sciences. It is not an award-winning book.

This book ignites a new research interest in an academic format of how to have safe sex and find pleasure in it. It touches on important topics such as sexual pleasure which emphasises that it should be reciprocated by both partners and not in the traditional sense where the woman should satisfy the man’s sexual pleasures. It is relatable to all, whether heterosexual males and females or the LGBTQIA+ community. In terms of research it touches on medical conditions affecting sex and offers the reader sexual education by removing stereotypes. It offers the reader an idea of well researched topics often ignored, such as sexual health, sexual medical conditions, sex workers, sexual rights and dysfunctionality of the sex experience.

“This book provides all the information that demystifies sex and sexuality in a way that is entertaining and enlightening.”
Like Family: Domestic Workers in South African History and Literature

Drawing on an extraordinary range of sources, Like Family provides rich insights into the contact zone of domestic service involving both intimacy and distance. Jansen deepens our understanding of how the institution reflects and reproduces the savage inequalities on which our society continues to be based. With these words Jacklyn Cock (Professor Emeritus, Department of Sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand and author of Maids and Madams: A Study in the Politics of Exploitation) places Jansen’s important book squarely within national and global debates around complex working relationships. This book unusually portrays domestic workers as literary characters. Like Family focuses on nationwide relationships, using Johannesburg specifically to illustrate the many restrictions black migrant women have to deal with.

Author Sindiwe Magona stresses the book’s importance with the hope it will lead to national dialogue and a reassessment of domestic work. More than a million black South African women are domestic workers occupying a central place in post-apartheid society. Precariously situated between urban and rural areas, rich and poor, white and black, these women are intimately connected and at a distant remove from the families they serve. But they and their employers know they can never be real family. Ena Jansen shows that domestic worker relations in South Africa were shaped by the Cape’s institution of slavery. This established social hierarchies and patterns of behaviour and interaction that persist. The chapters dealing with oral history and autobiographical material get as close as possible to the voice of workers themselves. In the second half of her book Jansen examines the representation of domestic workers in a range of texts in English and Afrikaans. Authors include André Brink, JM Coetzee, Imraan Coovadia, Nadine Gordimer, Elsa Joubert, Antjie Krog, Sindiwe Magona, Kopano Matlwa, Eskia Mphahlele, Sisonke Msimang, Zukiswa Wanner and Zoë Wicomb. Later texts by black authors offer wry and subversive insights into the entangled madam/maid nexus, capturing paradoxes relating to shifting power relationships since 1994. Theoretical and ethical issues pertaining to representation and appropriation in literature and visual arts are taken into account whilst Stuart Hall’s concept of the cycle of representation informs the analyses. Like Family is a rewritten and an updated version of the award-winning Soos familie published in 2015 and the highly-acclaimed 2016 Dutch translation, Bijna familie published by Cossee.

Author Sindiwe Magona stresses the book’s importance with the hope it will lead to national dialogue and a reassessment of domestic work.
Power in Action breaks new ground in understanding democracy in South Africa and the world. Chief among these understandings is the assumption democracy is the property of the West and South Africa should judge themselves by whether they approximate Western democracies or, what those democracies imagine themselves to be. A key target is the claim that Africans are not ready for democracy until and unless they adopt Western culture and develop their economies. Using analyses of Botswana and Uganda, it shows African citizens are fully aware of their rights and the value of democracy. Challenging current Western understandings, the book argues democracy gives adults an equal say in decisions affecting them. This goal enables us to judge democracies on whether they enable more citizens to share in more decisions, over more issues, rather than conforming to a particular form. It argues this power is achieved by collective action, with citizens working with others who share their interests or values to achieve common goals. While collective action is usually associated with strikes or protests, the most powerful forms are routine and require very little sacrifice, with lobbying the most obvious example. Why do more South African and African citizens not act collectively to influence decisions? Usually blamed on apathy or ignorance the book shows it is power which decides whether people use their democratic rights to influence decisions. Drawing on studies on three continents, it shows people fail to participate because they believe the powerful will ignore them or punish them for speaking and acting. They therefore prefer to undermine the powerful to avoid punishment. These perspectives require a need to think in very different ways about how to build democracy. The book concludes with how democracy here and in the global South can be strengthened. Academic responses to the book have recognised its contribution to breaking new ground. Professor Stephen Chan of the School of Oriental and African Studies described it as a critical and timely contribution to an urgent debate while Prof Adam Habib of the University of the Witwatersrand noted the book exposes the philosophical weakness and political hypocrisy of mainstream democratic theory. Professor Steven Robins of Stellenbosch University sees the book as a crucial resource for South Africans as the country seeks to rebuild the democratic state.
This book breaks new ground in the fields of media, culture and history in South Africa focusing on the enormous and under-explored contribution of radio drama in isiZulu in the shaping of engaged black listening communities during apartheid and post 1994.

Ubongilinda Mzikayifani (You must wait for me Mzikayifani) (1974, Bhekisisa Kunene) brought in the poetically rich language of courtship, with the ambivalent power of the occult and strong young woman. Umcebo owalahlekayo (The Lost Treasure, 1968, D.B. Z. Ntuli) tackled greed and the power of the older generation to ruin the lives of the young. The dramas in the democratic era lost none of their creative drive, fascination and ability to comment on painful themes like the lost son or marriage in an era aspiring to gender equality. Here Morris Vusumuzi Bhengu’s Bakikiza Buthule (Wedding Dances in the Silence, 2000-1) stands out. Broadcasting produced a distinctive popular culture carried out under the noses of a hostile regime. Iconic figures such as King Edward Masinga and Hubert Sishi, the early masters of the sonic voice of Zulu and African broadcasting were followed by men and woman who are still household names. The book makes an argument for recognising the huge influence of African American energies on building a culture of the black modern in South Africa. This long historical link, often insufficiently acknowledged, figures prominently in the book’s introduction and is picked up in other chapters. Radio, not an insular medium, made connections across continents and enabled global conversations. A section of the book traces the radio lives in London of two exiles, Bloke Modisane and Lewis Nkosi. Through them it shows the importance of shared transatlantic histories of race and oppression and the influence of writers and artists such as James Baldwin and Langston Hughes on Modisane and Nkosi.
The book analyses the extent to which South Africa is becoming a surveillance society governed by a surveillance state: a society where state relies on the extensive collection, sorting and analysis of data to maintain social stability. Motivated by a worldwide growing fear that contemporary societies are starting to experience unacceptably high levels of surveillance, my concern is that South Africa is no exception to this rule. This is the first time a book considers the relevance of Snowden's revelations for South Africa, which does not face any major terrorist threats, and yet inexplicably still engages in mass surveillance. Drawing on surveillance studies literature, it looks at what drives the worldwide assault on the right to privacy, particularly by state surveillance practices, and how these problems manifest themselves in South Africa.

The book examines why more governments are pursuing surveillance as a form of social control, relationships between this growth, technological innovations and corporate profitmaking, and its impact on democratic communications practices and democracy more broadly. It includes an analysis of how to fix the problem. It asks and answers: What resistance practices have succeeded or could succeed and what social forces and actors are most likely to mount successful resistance and under what conditions? The book contributes to existing literature on privacy, surveillance and resistance from a Southern perspective, with a particular bias towards working-class political and social movements. These questions are important because - in spite of some gains - the public outrage in the wake of the Snowden revelations has not translated into successful collective action against mass surveillance, exposing some limits of NGO-led privacy advocacy. The book provides an original account of surveillance in South Africa as it is transdisciplinary in nature, traversing sociology, politics, criminology, international relations and communication studies. It transcends disciplinary boundaries because it attempts a holistic approach to the study of surveillance. According to Tanja Bosch in a review in Communication, Stopping the Spies is meticulously researched, drawing on a combination of desktop policy analysis and qualitative interviews, as well as nuanced theoretical considerations of concepts such as surveillance and privacy. [It] is a must-read for anyone interested in South African politics and makes a valuable contribution to the literature on privacy, surveillance and South African political and social movements.
In 1937 a group of young Capetonians, socialist intellectuals from the Workers Party of South Africa, established a cultural society, the New Era Fellowship (NEF) for the purpose of discussing anything under the sun. They organised lectures, discussions, public debates and cultural events at the Stakesby-Lewis Hostel in Canterbury Street, District Six. This book is about the neglected contribution South Africa makes to thinking about the human condition and the NEF’s contribution to Cape Town’s intellectual life and how they came to constitute themselves as an alternative to The University of Cape Town. By the 1950s they had opened a window to an ontological alternative on how to be human in a capitalist and racist world. The NEF gave birth to many ideas which challenged hegemonic thinking such as the idea of non-racialism – the idea that conceptions of race not only had no scientific foundation but were central for the ideological project of white superiority and black inferiority. This white superiority took its most extreme expression in the rise of eugenics and racist beliefs which underpinned Nazism and barbarism of the Holocaust. Many such ideas were promoted by academics in Cape Town and Johannesburg. Critically this contribution, which makes this story so significant, is that it arose against and in the extraordinary social circumstances of extreme social marginality, its progenitors being young, black and disadvantaged. In spite of this marginality they offered a contribution still unrecognised, concepts and ideas of global significance. Non-racialism anticipated the kind of thinking around social constructionism that would make its appearance in mainstream sociology only thirty years later. The group included some of Cape Town’s and South Africa’s most talented scholar-activists. Among them were Isaac Tabata, Ben Kies, A C Jordan, Phyllis Ntantala, Mda Mda and members of the famed Gool and Abdurahman families. They were followed by most important but unacknowledged South African social theorists, Archie Mafeje, Kenny Jordaan and Neville Alexander. By the 1950s their ideas had spread to a second generation of talented individuals who would disseminate them in the high schools of Cape Town, again unacknowledged, the leading sites of public education in the country. Out of this contribution, South Africa presented itself to the world as one of the most important global culture-beds for thinking against the imperial project.
Wilder Lives uses ideas of wildness and rewilding to rethink human relationships with our environments in challenging but affirming ways. If the Earth is 4.5 billion years old, human life has only been around since the last Ice Age, seeing us single-handedly destroying our planet’s ecosystems, so we urgently need to reconsider and redefine our identities and behaviours. Can thinking wild help? Can it provide different ways of seeing, engaging, being human? Is wildness something that exists in gradations, or as quality rather than absolute value, and something with important ethical as well as biological dimensions? Can it lead to a world view locating humans in a satisfactory residence on this historic and storied Earth, as Holmes Rolston (1988) suggests? While the term wild is used widely in public and private discourses, a quick survey indicates there is a great deal of ambiguity, even contradiction in its meanings. The distinction between wild and farmed, wild and civilised, wild and tame, wild and domesticated, even the wild and reasoned, remains fundamental to how we understand and order our world. The distinction, sometimes understood as between the natural and unnatural, lurks behind the problematic distinction between nature and culture. Although most definitions describe wildness in terms of what it is not (the absence of humans and our influence) dissolves under the slightest interrogation. The philosopher Holmes Rolston says: Humans depend on airflow, water cycles, sunshine, photosynthesis, nitrogen fixation, decomposition, bacteria, fungi, the ozone layer, food chains, insect pollination, soils, earthworms, climates, oceans, and genetic materials. An ecology always lies in the background of culture, natural givens that support everything else. Some sort of inclusive environmental fitness is required of even the most advanced culture. To think wild would mean a profound humility on our part, as individuals and as a species. It would mean acknowledging our mess; a commitment to less hubristic action or no action if appropriate; a profound awareness other species do not need us, or would be better off without us, but that we need them; that with scientific knowledge we are still woefully ignorant about the interdependencies of life forms; yet it is possible, and desirable, to live more lightly on the earth. The argument in Wilder Lives is wide-ranging, inquiring, challenging, but finally inspiring.
Writing the Ancestral River: A biography of the Kowie

Jacklyn Cock
University of the Witwatersrand
(Wits University Press)

Writing the Ancestral River is an illuminating and unusual biography of the Kowie River in the Eastern Cape. This tidal river runs through the centre of what was the Zuurveld, a formative meeting ground of peoples who shaped our history: Khoikhoi herders, Xhosa pastoralists, Dutch trekboers and British settlers. Their descendants continue to live in the area and interact in ways decisively shaped by their shared history. Besides being a social history, this is also a natural history of the river and its catchment area, where dinosaurs once roamed and cycads still grow. The natural world of the Kowie has felt the effects of human settlement, most strikingly through the establishment of a harbour at the river mouth in the 19th century and the development of a marina in the late 20th century. Both projects had a decisive and deleterious impact on the Kowie. People are increasingly reconnecting with nature and justice through rivers. Acknowledging the past, and the inter-generational, racialised privileges, damages and denials it established and perpetuates, is necessary for any shared future. This book raises larger questions about colonialism, capitalism, development and ecology, asking us to consider the connections between social and environmental injustice.

In praise of the book:
“Jacklyn Cock has penned a love letter as hopeful as it is elegiac. Drawing on family connections to the Kowie going back to the 1820 settlers, Cock asks big questions about the relationship between nature and culture, humans and other forms of life, and about the place of rivers in human history. It is only by rethinking our relationship to nature that we can save ourselves.” - Jacob Dlamini, Assistant Professor of History, Princeton University

“Jacklyn Cock has made the story of a small and fairly insignificant river into a metonym of biological glories of South Africa and the ecological devastation they have endured, and continue to endure. The result is lyrical and trenchant. As a history rooted in the landscape of South Africa, it has few peers, and no superiors.” - Robert Ross, Professor Emeritus of African Studies, Leiden University

“An extraordinary work of engaged and imaginative scholarship. Writing the ancestral river will become a South African classic, accessible to the public but at the cutting edge of international scholarship.” - Edward Webster, Professor Emeritus, University of the Witwatersrand
WTF is renowned cartoonist Zapiro's account of the Zuma years in 400 brilliant cartoons and the stories behind them. It is much more than a collection of cartoons, it’s also a definitive personal record from a man uniquely positioned to reflect the serious craziness and the crazy seriousness of this bewildering time in our history. Zapiro’s career has been tightly entwined with the tale of Jacob Zuma for more than twenty years. He has sharply charted his rise and fall, and everything in between, including the corrupting presence of the Guptas and the destructive cancer of state capture. And he created the iconic showerhead which has become a nationally known symbol of Zuma. Zapiro was served with two law suits by Zuma, totalling R22m, claiming cartoons had invaded his dignity. And many times the cartoonist has been threatened in other ways by senior political figures because of his caustic and brilliant work. WTF recounts these experiences and gives a unique insight into how Zapiro goes about creating his cartoons. WTF will make you laugh and cry. Zapiro’s cartoons stand as an essential, bitter-sweet testimonial which captures Jacob Zuma and the wild ride he took the nation on. It also reflects and explains the significant presence Zuma still has in our politics.

Reviewer’s Comments:
It’s excellent material to spread information. People who would otherwise not read typical text, can easily read this book. Most importantly, it serves as good material with which to teach students.

The collection is also utterly professional. The black cover throws the white title into brilliant relief and turning the f into a shower is a stroke of visual genius. The cartoons are also cleverly and attractively grouped, so each cartoon is given due attention while the pages never appear overcrowded or messy. The book is perhaps a little big and heavy for comfortable browsing, but it is difficult to see how smaller pages could have done justice to the content. The cartoons are also crisp and the paper is of good quality. I appreciated the flaps on the cover which worked well to mark cartoons I simply had to share.

“Zapiro’s cartoons stand as an essential, bitter-sweet testimonial which captures Jacob Zuma and the wild ride he took the nation on. It also reflects and explains the significant presence Zuma still has in our politics.”
Democracy Works is directed toward leaders and citizens who want to address the extreme demographic and other challenges Africa faces.

In praise of the book:
“Clear, concise, incisive: Democracy Works deciphers a complex topic in explaining when democratic transitions stick and why democracy works better than the alternatives.” - Mcebisi Jonas, Presidential Investment Envoy, South Africa

“The world is at a crossroads between a populist, demagogic turn to state capture and failure, and the alternative democratic road to institutionalism and prosperity. Democracy Works is a fascinating guide to how leaders and citizens alike can better manage this democratic journey. Read it and learn from the best.” - Mmusi Maimane, Leader of the Democratic Alliance, South Africa

Reviewer’s Comments:
Democracy Works has an attractive and colourful cover that cleverly foregrounds the all too prominent names of its authors and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who wrote the introduction. Good use is made of graphs and maps and the clear font and the use of subheadings make the book very readable. It also has good endnotes and a useful index.
Survival: The state or fact of continuing to live or exist, typically in spite of an accident, ordeal, or difficult circumstances. Climate change: A change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular, a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels. This is a survival guide. It rests on the idea that we could possibly survive a changing climate. Temperatures are already climbing, sea levels are rising and parts of South Africa are on their way to being uninhabitable. Life is already incredibly hard for many people and nobody will be exempt from climate change. Circumstances are going to get a lot more difficult very soon, and we need a plan. This is a practical handbook exploring what climate change is likely to mean for South Africans, how we can prepare for it, and how we can, in our everyday lives, help to mitigate the impacts it will have.

Reviewer's Comments:
This book offers a practical guide with simple steps readers can follow to help tackle climate change. It addresses what is probably the most urgent issue currently facing humanity. Although undoubtedly an important and timely topic, the book is written by journalists rather than scholars and does not offer any type of sustained academic argument. There is nothing new or innovative here. These are all things that have been widely researched, debated and disseminated. The only possible novelty is in offering an easily accessible guide specifically aimed at South Africans. It does not significantly contribute to existing knowledge and rehashes well-trodden paths rather than opening up new avenues.

The book is of obvious social relevance, especially since the temperature in South Africa is increasing at almost double the global average.
From almost every vantage point, South Africa's history is uncomfortable to the beholder. This is the starting point for the authors of The House of Tshatshu: Power, Politics and Chiefs North-West of the Great Kei c. 1818-1828 (UCT Press, 2018). The book explores the conquest, dispossession, isolation and painful return of the descendants of Tshatshu, a senior abaThembu house that, in the wake of the Mfecane, led the expansion of the abaThembu across the Tsomo river to settle the territory beyond. It looks at conflicts among abaThembu groups and against white colonial incursion, with clashes between competing views of custom, gender and power. While a biographical history of one family and their neighbours, it opens a vista onto the north-western frontier, an exploration of a complex past, and contestations that continue today.

While a biographical history of one family and their neighbours, it opens a vista onto the north-western frontier, an exploration of a complex past, and contestations that continue today. The authors Anne Kelk Mager, a white historian who grew up where the amaTshatshu were forcibly removed in the nineteenth century and Phiko Jeff Velelo an agricultural economist who, like his parents and grandparents, is a councillor to the Tshatshu chief. Their characters appear as a community interested in the story for different reasons and perhaps, competing purposes. The authors' approach is critical and respectful, thoughtful and provocative, scholarly and compassionate. The book looks at processes and effects of conquest, colonialism and apartheid, discouraging rhetorical repetitions of conquest, colonialism, custom or chiefly rule in South African political debates. In issues of gender, the book discusses the leadership of powerful abaThembu queens Nonesi and Yiliswa, and also the radicalism of Mvulani, the Moravian missionary assistant who confronted chiefs about polygamy, violence against women, the gender division of labour and cattle rustling in the nineteenth century. Key political issues of this region include the rise of the right hand house among the westerly abaThembu, Bantustan manipulations of history and in the postcolonial era, the complex politics of land tenure and restitution. Concerned with why chiefly power has not disappeared in South Africa, the book sheds light on conflicts over land and identity. This deeply researched and innovative book tackles tough issues. Its authors have come together across a deep divide (discussed in the introduction) and achieved a book that is powerfully restorative of a history a colonial governor sought to wipe out. An outstanding example of what Humanities scholarship is about.
Good Capitalism, Bad Capitalism: 
The Role of Business in South Africa

RAYMOND PARSONS AND ALI PARRY
North West University
(Jacana Media)

ANC leadership into adopting mostly market-friendly policies, Prof Parsons' account will not be welcome. But he presents his case persuasively and notes, as a good academic should, that cocksure certainty is the source of much of what is wrong in South Africa today and of which the contemplation of history ought to cure us. He also warns against extremes that embody a refusal to accept the discipline of empirical and evidence-led observation, trial and error, and piecemeal rather than utopian change.

This book does not only look backwards, it also looks forwards to the challenges currently facing South Africa.

Reviewers' Comments:
This book makes a solid, if not particularly exciting, contribution to existing scholarship on South African business and economic history. The role of organised business in the South African economy and the politics of governance are important topics and the author offers useful historical overviews while also considering the implications for the future.

Prof Parsons has combined a sound knowledge of economics, economic history and his unique personal knowledge of organised business in South Africa to provide a scholarly account of business role under apartheid, during the transition to democracy, and after 1994. The book does not only look backwards, it also looks forwards to the challenges currently facing South Africa. It adds to economic history and does not whitewash history, noting that business's role in apartheid was not heroic and that business people are not usually of activist barricade material. So, the book adds to economic history; it addresses the theory of the structure and role of organised business in ways that are new. It also adds to the debate of what kind of policies are needed to rescue SA from its current economic constipation.

This book does not only look backwards, it also looks forwards to the challenges currently facing South Africa.
A thriving humanities and social sciences (HSS) course of study will ensure that the continent produces both the human resources and the innovative ideas needed to spur the creation of livelihoods and jobs, increase equality and alleviate poverty.
Are you two sisters? is a warm-hearted memoir about two ordinary women who led extraordinary lives. They worked as nurses from the 1960s to the ‘80s, and along the way became community workers, bakers, artists and life partners. Hester van der Walt tells of how the couple’s relationship and their work changed their lives and the lives of those they worked with. She identifies the key moments in her life that led her to leave the strictures of her upbringing in order to find out who she was.

Her decisions take her from the Free State to District Six and Venda, to the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, to Heideveld and Hanover Park and, eventually, to McGregor. Her humble story tells of the spiritual isolation of all “refugees” who leave the irreversible values of their “home” (whether physical or ideological) and find new ways to create a life.

As author Ena Jansen says, this memoir was written “so that everyone who wants to know, today and also in the future, can see how ridiculous and petty oppression can be, and how many layers of oppression there were”.

This is the story of an Afrikaans woman’s growing awareness in the 1960s of how wrong apartheid was, and that “Coloured” people are her people. Instead of falling in love with the brother of her fellow nurse, Lies, she falls for Lies. The book is a monument to love: for another woman, for your fellow man, for yourself, from 1967 in Bloemfontein to the Cape, and now in McGregor.

Reviewer’s comments:

“This is a story about a white, Afrikaans woman coming to terms with her sexual attraction to another woman. The story is neither a new one, nor is it told in a new way. It is, however, one that warrants retelling.”

In praise of the book:

“Warm at heart – this is how you feel when you read Hester van der Walt’s fascinating life story. She writes “so that everyone who wants to know, today and also in the future, can see how ridiculous and petty oppression can be, and how many layers of oppression there were”. It’s the story of an Afrikaans woman’s growing awareness in the 1960s of how wrong apartheid was, that “Coloured” people are her people. Instead of falling in love with the brother of her fellow nurse, Lies, she falls for Lies. The book is a monument to love: for another woman, for your fellow man, for yourself, from 1967 in Bloemfontein to the Cape and now in McGregor.” – Ena Jansen
**Reviewer’s comments:**

“Although several scholars have written about Archie Mafeje, Bongani Nyoka’s book is the first full intellectual biography to detail his contribution to African liberation. It traces his intellectual life and places it firmly in the political and academic context in which Mafeje grew up and developed. What is particularly commendable about the book is the manner in which Nyoka engages robustly with the existing literature on Mafeje: he shows his grasp of that literature while exposing its gaps and shortcomings. This is an important contribution to the scholarly works tracing the intellectual and political development of South Africa and the African continent.”

Part 1 discusses Mafeje’s intellectual and political influences. Part 2 consists of seven of Mafeje’s original articles and seeks to contextualise his writings. Part 3 reflects on Mafeje’s intellectual legacy.
A ward-winning novelist Karin Cronje has established herself as a fearless writer unafraid to expose issues usually considered off limits. *There Goes English Teacher* spans three years of her adventures and misadventures as an English teacher in a small Korean village, and later at a university, as well as her first scandalous year after returning home.

Cronje is searingly honest, heart-achingly funny and deeply sad as she reflects on the nature of identity and the loss of it; sexuality; ageing; displacement; belonging; and nationhood – all the while peppering her narrative with tongue-in-cheek observations of herself and her world. Her accounts of her confusion and incomprehension as she navigates the collision of two cultures that are worlds apart, are told with a mix of irony, pathos and humour. Yet behind the light-hearted narration, this intimate account shows how a disruption of the familiar can lead to fundamental change.

What further sets this memoir apart is that it is as close to first-hand as a reader can get. Cronje doesn’t give us a travel writer’s perspective, a dispassionate description of landscape. We inhabit this foreign place exactly as she did. Characters like Dae-ho, her guru man, who reminds her to breathe; dazzling Mae and her bar, Goldfinger; Leona with her rattle-snake tongue, and all the others she can’t understand are now the people in her life. While in Korea, she completed a novel, which ends up winning an award. She takes us with her through the various stages of writing it and we experience her inner turmoil.

Her return to South Africa, and her son, poses unforeseen troubles. We are right there with her as she makes one disastrous and scandalous decision after another.

And through it all Cronje hurts on her journey with an impatient, frenetic and, at times, enraged drive for self-preservation in the midst of raging existential storms – and as she does so, a transformation begins. But rather than recount her growth into maturity or acceptance, Cronje defines her experiences in terms of loss and the search for survival and regeneration.

*There Goes English Teacher* is ultimately a celebration of the gifts the world has to offer. Cronje will shock and delight you as she delves into the full catastrophe of being human.
Fatima Meer was an intellectual, academic, writer and activist – a tireless fighter for social justice and human rights, for which she variously suffered banning and detention by the apartheid government. Her intellectual work sought to intertwine place, identity and ethical commitment. In 1994, she declined a parliamentary seat, preferrring to continue her advocacy work in the non-governmental sector. She did, however, serve the ANC government in several capacities.

In 2010, at the age of 81, Meer died after a stroke. In her introductory essay, author Shireen Hassim deftly weaves a narrative in which Meer’s distinctive individuality as an academic and activist unfolds. In particular, the reader comes to understand how Meer’s sense of a common humanity critically informed her stance in the world.

Fatima Meer, published by the HSRC Press, is the first book in the Voices of Liberation series that showcases an Indian woman who uniquely straddled the worlds of academia and activism. Each book in the series features an analytical essay by a scholar, a selection from the body of work produced by the eponymous subject, including interviews, as well as short introductions by the editor that contextualise each extract.

**Reviewer’s comments:**

““This is an excellent book, uncovering a history of someone who has received little attention. It is again an example of decolonising history, especially given how few women are included in the history of struggle and intellectual traditions. It tells the story of a remarkable woman who was a fiercely independent and principled voice at a time when it was not easy to be so, especially as an Indian woman, and given the dominant political traditions prevailing then. I thoroughly enjoyed the book.”
As Brian Willan puts it so aptly, a triumphalist new narrative can be as damaging to historical understanding as the distortions, or neglect, that went before. So, while it is one thing to trumpet praise of the far-sighted pioneers of black nationalist struggle, it is quite another to know what they were really like, to understand their hopes and fears, to restore to them the agency they exercised. To see them in the context of their own times, not ours.

The author’s sensible opening is the thread that weaves through this lengthy biography. Willan throws light on hitherto ignored aspects of Sol Plaatje’s life, from his links with the Christian Brotherhood Movement to his handling of expenses and his social world in London. Plaatje.

Today, Plaatje is celebrated as one of South Africa’s most accomplished political and literary figures. He was a pioneer in the history of the black press, editor of several newspapers, one of the founders of the African National Congress in 1912, led its campaign against the notorious Natives Land Act of 1913 and twice travelled overseas to represent the interests of his people.

Willan tells the story of Plaatje’s remarkable life, setting it in the context of the changes that overtook South Africa during his lifetime and the huge obstacles he had to overcome. It draws upon extensive new research in archives in southern Africa, Europe and the US, as well as an expanding scholarship on Plaatje and his writings.

The book sheds new light not only on Plaatje’s struggles and achievements but also on his personal life and his relationships with his wife and family, friends and supporters. It pays special attention to his formative years, looking to his roots in chiefly societies, his education and upbringing on a German-run mission and his exposure to the legal and political ideas of the 19th-century Cape Colony as key factors in inspiring and sustaining a life of ceaseless endeavour.

Reviewer’s comments:

“This book delivered on its promise. Brian Willan’s second biography of Sol Plaatje (the first one was published in 1984) offers an updated and invigorated history that doesn’t just focus on Plaatje as an African Nationalist (the first book), but also brings to the fore Plaatje’s multiple roles as court interpreter, journalist, editor, husband, father, poet, etc.”
Parrotia-based journalist Gaongalelewe Tiro recounts the little-told life story of his uncle, Onkgopotse Abram Tiro, the first South African freedom fighter the apartheid regime pursued beyond the country’s borders to assassinate with a parcel bomb.

On 29 April 1972, Tiro made one of the most consequential revolutionary addresses in South African history. Dubbed the Turfloop Testimony, Tiro’s anti-apartheid speech saw him and many of his fellow student activists expelled, igniting a series of strikes in tertiary institutions across the country. By the time he went into exile in Botswana, Tiro was president of the Southern African Student Movement (SASM), permanent organiser of the South African Student Organisation (SASO) and a leading Black Consciousness proponent, hailed by many as the godfather of the June 1976 uprisings.

*Parcel of Death* uses extensive and exclusive interviews to highlight significant influences and periods in Tiro’s life, including the lessons learned from his rural upbringing in Dinokana, Zeerust; the time he spent working on a manganese mine; his role as a teacher; and the importance of his faith in shaping his outlook. It is a compelling portrait of Tiro’s story and its lasting significance in South Africa’s history.

**Reviewer’s comments:**

“This book expands our knowledge of Tiro and deepens our appreciation of the anti-apartheid struggle of the 1970s, particularly its Black Consciousness dimension. The use of the Turfloop archive of speeches and correspondences; the painting of a vivid historical context; and the interviews with Tiro’s family and key colleagues and friends, both at home and in exile, makes this a solid monograph.”
Henry Selby Msimang was one of the great South Africans of the 20th century. Born in 1886 in Edendale, Pietermaritzburg, he was a founding member, interpreter and assistant to the secretary-general of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1912; a president of the pioneering Industrial and Commercial Workers’ Union in the 1920s and 1930s; general secretary of the All African Convention in the 1930s; a member of the Natives Representative Council and provincial secretary of the Natal ANC in the 1940s and early 1950s; a prominent member of the Liberal Party in the 1950s and 1960s; and thereafter, a founder and executive member of the national cultural liberation movement Inkatha Yenkululeko Yesizwe in the 1970s.

Such a long and diverse political career would make any person noteworthy, but Msimang was also an intellectual figure of remarkable talent – a prolific author and writer, journalist and public debater – and a man who, despite great trials and tribulations, did not compromise his principles and fundamental values, or his commitment to the struggle for freedom, justice and human rights.

In this first comprehensive political biography of Msimang, Sibongiseni Mkhize draws on a rich array of unpublished sources to tell a multi-layered story of pragmatism, contradictions and ideals. His book not only shines new light on Msimang and his milieu, it also deals with the universal subject of political decision-making and the complicated journey of individuals within political formations in the struggle for political liberation, human rights and social justice.

In praise of the book:
“What a gripping, well researched and well-paced book on Selby Msimang. This book reveals the rich and eventful political life of “contradictions and consistencies” that he led, telling of a complex individual whose involvement in multiple and often contradictory struggles defies conventional coverage of the fight for African liberation.” – HSS Awards 2020 Judge
In October 2015, the Gupta brothers offered Mcebisi Jonas the position of Minister of Finance in exchange for R600 million. Jonas, who was then the country’s deputy minister of finance, turned down the bribe and a period of deep introspection followed for him. What would be the future of South Africa, democracy and the economy, and how did we reach this point?

After Dawn, Jonas analyses the crisis at the heart of our current system, which places politics at the centre of policymaking and implementation, at the expense of growth. In this important and authoritative book, Jonas first unpacks and analyses the current badlands of the South African economic and political landscape.

In the second half, he proposes a series of workable and practical solutions for transitioning South Africa into a vibrant, job-creating country. Action points include:

- Putting inclusive growth at the centre of economic policy;
- Rapidly expanding new technological capacities and knowledge to transition to a 21st-century economy;
- Expanding human capabilities at scale;
- Developing new sets of trade-offs and measures to accelerate economic inclusion;
- Nurturing a corruption-free, high-performance state built on meritocracy and innovation; and
- Changing the nature of politics.

Time is of the essence and the window of opportunity is narrowing for all South Africans to work together towards the South Africa we all imagined was possible in 1994.

Reviewer’s comments:

“... The book is an insider’s honest and insightful appraisal of the state, the ANC (and other parties), and the economy. It provides an analysis of how the country got to its current crossroads. In the second half, the author provides possible solutions. It was refreshing to read an insider’s account; Jonas provides many important contributions to our recent past and its ramifications for politics today and beyond.”
The HSS Awards serve as a platform to celebrate, recognise and honour outstanding, innovative and socially responsible scholarship that enhances and advances the disciplines represented in the HSS.
Over the past few years, it has become clear that the path of transformation in schools since 1994 has not led South Africa’s education system to where we had hoped it could be. Through tweets, posts and recent protests in schools, it has become apparent that in former Model-C and private schools, children of colour and those who are different don’t feel they belong. Following the astonishing success of How to Fix South Africa’s Schools, the authors sat down with young people who attended former Model-C and private schools, as well as principals and teachers, to reflect on transformation and belonging in South African schools. These filmed reflections, included on DVD in this book, are honest and insightful. Drawing on the authors’ experiences in supporting schools over the last twenty years, and the insight of those interviewed, A School Where I Belong outlines six areas where true transformation in South African classrooms and schools can begin.

**Reviewer’s Comments**
The writing is lucid and the topics covered guide the reader on how to apply the most important aspects of transformation in schools. A particular innovation is the inclusion of an appendix which covers fostering civil discourse and gives a guide for classroom conversations. Readers can also download the guide for free in PDF. I fully agree with the authors who state: “Civil discourse in South Africa is critical to our ability to function as a democracy. This resource provides some tools to help prepare classrooms and learners to practise civil discourse, an essential skill for effective participation.”

Some of the interesting suggestions to facilitate the fostering of civil discourse in the classroom are, for instance, to create a classroom contract, which includes clearly defined rules or expectations for participation and certain consequences for those who don’t adhere to the rules, to provide for learner reflection, and so on. This is an innovative guide for discussions around sensitive topics. The quality of the presentation is lucid and inspiring.
Acts of Transgression: Contemporary Live Art in South Africa was born out of the Institute for Creative Arts (ICA) at the University of Cape Town. It's a ground-breaking collection of critical essays, in which 15 writers explore the interdisciplinary and radically transgressive field of contemporary live art in South Africa.

Set against a post-apartheid society that continues to grapple with material redress, land redistribution and systemic racism, Acts of Transgression finds representation of the complexity of this moment within a performative art form that transcends disciplinary boundaries and aesthetic conventions. The book came about, in part, in response to the fact that no book or collection of essays dedicated to live art in South Africa existed, which meant that the provocations, depth and complexity of live art works tended to exist as fleeting moments in time. Acts of Transgression has begun the critical work of filling this gap.

The book also makes an essential contribution to the study of live art on the continent by articulating an Afrocentric history of experimental performance. Situating live art firmly within a precolonial and decolonial African genealogy of ritual, ruptures and experimentality, the book refutes the notion that South African live art is a Western import. Acts of Transgression paves the way for future scholarly engagements that excavate the intricacies of our own performance heritage.

The book's diverse essays provide analysis of more than 25 artists, accompanied by a striking visual record of photography. The authors include emerging voices in arts criticism, as well as nationally and internationally acclaimed curators and artists, with a particular focus on young black women, including manager of the Standard Bank Gallery, Same Mdluli; art historian and artist, Nomusa Makhubu; multidisciplinary artist and 2019 Standard Bank Young Artist award winner, Gabrielle Goliath; and theatre-maker and educator, Mwenya Kabwe.

The book has already received critical acclaim from Professor Megan Lewis, writing in the American journal, Theatre Topics, and the late Okwui Enwezor, former director of Haus der Kunst, and artistic director of the 56th Venice Biennial.

The significant and entirely original contribution that Acts of Transgression makes to arts research in South Africa distinguishes this book as a worthy recipient of the NIHSS Book Award.
Black Academic Voices
The South African Experience

Black Academic Voices captures the personal accounts of lived experiences of black academics at South African universities in the context of the ongoing debate for transformation and decolonisation of higher education. This debate has not only raised epistemic, ideological, relational and identity issues in the academy, but also offers possibilities for deconstructing hierarchies of authoritarianism that are racist, sexist, patriarchal and colonial.

While many scholars have had the opportunity to explore the challenges of higher education transformation since 1994, very few black academics have had the chance to tell their stories in biographical form. This book fills this gap, defining what it means to be black in the South African academy post-1994. South Africa has presented us with a plethora of structural and relational challenges that perpetuate the precarious state of black people in many institutions, including the academy.

The book has been crafted in such a way that the contributors find themselves oscillating between the different life trajectories as students and as members of faculty in historically white universities where being black seems to be a challenge. While it seemed evidently difficult at this point in the history of the academy for black academics to capture positive experiences of our universities, the emerging consensus among all contributors illustrate that the academy is a worthwhile endeavour.

The broader intention of this book is to present evidence demonstrating why black academics leave the academy. Furthermore, to illustrate how subtle and at times overt exclusion continue to be part of the everyday experiences of black academics. Black Academic Voices is in three parts: the misrepresentation of black bodies; the heterogenous black experience; and affirmation of self through empowering and inspiration of the other.

Reviewer's comments:
This book should be compulsory reading for administrators and academics, especially at historically white universities. I fully agree with the following statement on the back page: “The insights presented through these personal accounts raise possibilities for deconstruction hierarchies of racist, sexist, patriarchal and colonial authoritarianism and embracing difference, diversity and humanity as a whole”. This is indeed a necessary endeavour for South Africans.
This volume shows how central and revealing conspicuous consumption can be to fathoming the history of Africa’s projects of modernity, and their global lineages and legacies.

Conspicuous Consumption in Africa is a collection of essays that explores the ways in which conspicuous consumption is foregrounded in various African contexts and historical moments. These include: early department stores in Cape Town; gendered histories of sartorial success in urban Togo; contestations over expense accounts at an apartheid state enterprise; elite wealth and political corruption in Angola and Zambia; the role of popular religion in the political intransigence of Jacob Zuma; funerals of big men in Cameroon; youth cultures of consumption in Niger and South Africa; queer consumption in Cape Town; middle-class food consumption in Durban; and, the consumption of luxury handcrafted beads.

In 1899, Thorstein Veblen coined the phrase ‘conspicuous consumption’ to describe status-seeking in the obscenely unequal world of late-nineteenth century America. Many of the aspects he described in The Theory of the Leisure Class are still evident in our world today. While Veblen’s crude denunciation of material extravagance finds echoes in media exposés about the lifestyles of the rich worldwide, it is particularly recognisable in reporting on Africa. Here, images of conspicuous consumption have long circulated in local and global media as indictments of political corruption and signs of moral depravity.

The essays in Conspicuous Consumption in Africa put Veblen’s concept under robust critical scrutiny, drawing on theorists like Mbembe, Guyer and Bayart by way of critique or addition. They delve into the pleasures, stresses and challenges of consuming in its religious, generational, gendered and racialised aspects, revealing conspicuous consumption as a layered set of practices, textures and relations. The authors resist the trap of easy moralisation, pointing to more complex ethical and political registers of analysis and judgement. This volume shows how central and revealing conspicuous consumption can be to fathoming the history of Africa’s projects of modernity, and their global lineages and legacies. In its grounded, up-close case studies, it is likely to feed into current public debates on the nature and future of African societies; in particular, South African society.
Increasingly, global economic wealth and decision-making power rests with fewer and fewer people, while acute socioeconomic inequities continue to afflict large rural communities in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Land inequalities remain a burning question for rural communities. *Equitable Rural Socioeconomic Change* brings together original reflections on the intricacies of economic and social transformations that are unfolding in the rural areas of developing countries, and in so doing, provides a fresh and authentic perspective.

This compelling book revisits dominant and exhausted conceptions of rural livelihoods to expose their analytical flaws and thematic limitations. In this book, the interacting themes of land, climate dynamics and technological innovation are brought into a coherent whole through a re-examination of the lens of unequal ownership, control and use of a society’s productive means. *Equitable Rural Socioeconomic Change* is the first multidimensional and integrated analysis of rural socioeconomic change anchored around rising structural polarisation in the 21st century.

**Reviewer's comments:**
This text has great social relevance, through being a statistical piece on the important social issues faced in South Africa, particularly because most of the land in the nation is rural. It shows the reasons how these social and economic problems are going to be changed in the near future. The book takes into consideration the real issues, such as climate change, ownership, rural investments and the economy itself. This gives answers to the many challenges faced in trying to upgrade and make the rural landscape profitable in a modern economic climate. It brings about a new conversation on whether there is a possibility that rural landscapes can be renewed through innovation.

This book has social relevance as it promotes rural development in the context of complex land issues, climate change challenges and technological innovation.

"The interacting themes of land, climate dynamics and technological innovation are brought into a coherent whole through a re-examination of the lens of unequal ownership, control and use of a society’s productive means."
The Hidden Voices project emerged out of an interest in left intellectual contributions towards discussions on race, class, ethnicity and nationalism in South Africa. The project seeks to examine and make available writings on leftist thought under apartheid. The aim is to look at voices outside of the university system, or academic voices suppressed by apartheid pressures. The Hidden Voices series seeks to publish key texts, books, documents and other materials that were never published, or seminal books that have gone out of print, in the hope to reinvigorate the humanities and social sciences, and contribute to the decolonisation of knowledge production in South Africa and Africa.

The Story of One Tells the Struggle of All: Metalworkers under Apartheid is the third volume in the Hidden Voices series. Comprised of two booklets, first published under Raven Press's Worker Series, it aims to tell the lived experiences of workers during apartheid.

In *The Sun Shall Rise for the Workers*, Mandlenkosi Makhoba tells the story of a rural man who came to Gauteng hoping for work and a better life. It’s a tale of alienation from family, the unfair treatment from factory bosses and hopes for a more humane life for the worker. “The countryside is pushing you into the cities to survive, the cities are pushing you into the countryside to die. You get scared. It’s a fear that you come to know after a week without any food. This is the impasse that workers still find themselves in.”

Petrus Tom’s autobiography, *My Life Struggle*, tells the story of his life and work in the Vaal Triangle, first as a metalworker in a cable factory and later as a full-time union organiser. Extraordinarily detailed and intensely political, it covers wide swathes of ground – from family history and forced removals to workplace organisation and conflict, and internal trade union politics. This is an extraordinary record of events woven together in one life and yet emblematic of lives shared by so many South Africans who have lived through these times.

Despite the passing of over thirty years since they were first published, the stories continue to be relevant today as they point to the ongoing struggle against exploitation and oppression, which still remains in place across the globe.

“Despite the passing of over thirty years since they were first published, the stories continue to be relevant today as they point to the ongoing struggle against exploitation and oppression.”
Generations of people from across Africa, Europe and Asia have turned metal from the depths of the earth into Africa’s wealthiest, most dynamic and most diverse urban centre, a mega-city where post-apartheid South Africa is being forged.

Using oral histories collected through a collaborative approach designed to unsettle public and scholarly concepts and presumptions around xenophobia and migrancy, this book reflects immigrants and South Africans to their history, their future, and to each other. Built around incidents of xenophobic violence, the narratives ask readers to take time to listen, not judge.

This book unsettles many old assumptions, like who is host and who visitor, who belongs and what indeed it might mean to belong at all. It does this simply by creating a space in which people bear witness to their lives. Journalists, scholars, activists, and artists conducted a series of in-depth interviews, transforming the words of their narrators into compelling accounts with imbricate perspectives from across the country and the continent.

While many of the immigrant stories include elements of tragedy and displacement, they’re also fundamentally humanising, addressing people’s agency and contradictions, along with their alienation and excitement. But perhaps more powerful are the South African stories. Through Nombuyiselo Ntlane, whose teenage son was shot dead in 2015 by a Somali shopkeeper in Snake Park; Papi, a freedom fighter and activist in Katlehong, working to educate the youth on issues of tolerance; and Ntombi, whose family has lived in Alexandra for generations, who pointedly directs her anger at foreigners in her community, we understand how the violence and deprivation so many face are shaping the future of South Africa’s politics. It helps explain why Manyathela Mvelase, an induna in a Johannesburg hostel, looks wistfully at the status and order apartheid once offered him. For him, xenophobia and violence is a way of reclaiming a status lost in Johannesburg’s churning transformation. Others see it as continuing their struggle for justice.

The book speaks to the meaning of rights as principle and practice among populations whose voices are rarely heard while drawing attention to how the right to belong and work, to live in peace and in place, are articulated across generational, social and international boundaries; how historical struggles shape contemporary campaigns and how people once persecuted by an oppressive state now actively exclude others.
This is the first book to focus specifically on South Africa’s most devastating epidemic – the Spanish flu epidemic claimed the lives of 6% of the population in two months in 1918 – and it does so through the words of 127 survivors collected 40 years ago. Graphic and awesome; their recollections tell of the horrific scenes they witnessed in town and countryside as the epidemic engulfed the entire country, paralysing its day-to-day functioning as everything was directed towards resisting the epidemic’s onslaught.

The book’s oral testimonies come from a wide array of South Africans in terms of geography, race, social and economic class and gender; it’s not often that we can hear juxtaposed the voices of peasants and doctors, migrant workers and domestic servants, nurses and school pupils, pharmacists and farm labourers, nuns and chiefs, all recalling their particular experiences of a dire episode which occurred over 100 years earlier. Their words fully restore to South Africa’s historical record a landmark event in the history of every family and institution in the country, for neither was left untouched by what was called Black October.

In a wide-ranging introduction to these vivid recollections, the editor puts South Africa’s encounter with the Spanish flu into a global perspective, explaining why the country was the third-worst hit in the world. The book also spells out the epidemic’s lasting effects in terms of, inter alia, shattered families, public health policy, medical research, the provision of state housing, measures to deal with the nearly one million orphans it produced and its effect on the insurance industry, burial societies and religious beliefs. As one of the aged survivors said, it was worse than a war.

As a means to explain those grim tales about ‘ifeva’ or ‘die groot griep’, which have survived in folk and family memories to this day, and as an example of how oral history can uncover a barely remembered past event and make it comprehensible and meaningful to generations facing a different epidemic threat today, this book breaks new ground in South African history. No less does it help to put current epidemics into perspective, as one AIDS counsellor commented after reading the book: “It’s reassuring to know that we have made it through equally bad epidemics before.”
a form of expression through words, performance, dance and rap. This has, in turn, influenced and brought about a culture among the youth—a culture of music, language and identities, which create a way of life and help form political opinions. It also breaks the stereotype that hip hop is destructive and rebellious, but it can be a form of expression used to speak against social ills and oppressive aspects of life.

The book discusses how hip hop influences the youth to become conscious about society and using literacy in order to express an understanding that there is power in knowledge. Hip hop gives a voice to the youth, which has long been silenced from speaking on political issues. Neva Again is useful to not only scholars and researchers, on youth culture, education, activism and contemporary musical activism, but it is also useful to researcher on the question of race, colouredness and blackness.

This book has great social relevance since it gives a voice to a new subculture, which has been created in society. It sheds lights on the hip hop space, which has grown in South Africa and has become increasingly influential. Neva Again also shows the many unorthodox ways that people can use to relay messages, speak on history or even protest. This enhances the various aspects of how the right of freedom of speech is exercised in society.

Reviewer’s Comment:
This book is the result of the accumulation and influence that the decades of hip hop culture and activism have had in South Africa. The book highlights the contribution by hip hop scholars, artists and activists in making hip hop
South Africa has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment and is renowned for being one of the most unequal societies in the world. In this context, training and education play critical roles in helping young people escape poverty and unemployment. *Post-school Education* offers insights about the way in which young people in South Africa navigate their way through a host of post-school training and education options. The topics range from access to (and labour market transitions from) vocational education, adult education, universities, and workplace-based training. The individual chapters offer up-to-date analysis, identify some of the challenges that young people face when accessing training and education and also point to gaps between education and the labour market. The contributors are all experts in their respective fields but write with a holistic view of the post-school education system, using an unashamedly empirical lens. *Post-school Education* will be of interest to all researchers and policymakers concerned with the transformative role of further education and training in society.

**Reviewer’s Comments:**
The timing of the publication is perfect, as there are fundamental questions being asked about the quality of education in public schools and the disjointed nature of post-schooling (universities and TVET colleges) to the labour market that have taken the centre stage in recent times. Its significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge and understanding of the subject matter is valuable as it contributes to the broader policy development, transformation and re-adjustment of the post-school education and training in the country. It locates the subject matter very well. The prominence of secondary school quality of education, financial barriers, post-education performance, graduates dimension (choice of degree), student aspirations in an unequal society, work-based study (learnerships) and a series of demographic, spatial and socioeconomic factors in exploring access to tertiary education and job market are well presented. It’s a unique contribution that covers a range of aspects of both secondary and tertiary education system, and the job market needs.
Zoë Wicomb (b. 1948) is one of South Africa’s most significant writers, author of three novels – *David’s Story*, *Playing in the Light* and *October* – and of many short stories. She was awarded the Donald Windham-Sandy M. Campbell Literature Prize for fiction in 2013. Wicomb is also one of South Africa’s most significant public intellectuals and critics, as evidenced by this collection, the first to make readily available her most important essays, articles, and speeches. Leading commentators, including Mark Gevisser, Mandla Langa and Dorothy Driver, have welcomed the volume.

Just as Wicomb’s fiction offered a critique of apartheid and its legacies, so her non-fiction offers a brave and unstinting analysis of the new nation’s cultural and gender politics. Wicomb was born to a family that would have been classified coloured, and her resistance to the revisionism she has seen at work in the politics of this community drives such work, which finds its formal expression in her fiction in a deep scepticism of omniscient narration or of texts that don’t reveal their own limitations and inevitable investments.

In her non-fiction, Wicomb is repeatedly concerned with questions of race and gender politics, the relationships between textual and visual literacy, the politics of memory and nostalgia, the lessons of linguistics for reading, writing, and teaching, and the ethics of intertextuality. She poses such questions as: What might culture mean in post-apartheid South Africa? How might women serve the new orders’ cultural imagination? What is the future for the country’s rich oral heritage?

The volume contains a selection of Wicomb’s literary critical essays, in which she offers illuminating readings of the work of a range of important South African writers who, like her, have a claim to world literary significance, including Bessie Head, Nadine Gordimer, and J. M. Coetzee. The essays promise payoffs for scholars and students of postcolonial studies, world writing in English literature, and cultural studies more broadly, as well as for the general reader interested in the cultural production of late- and post-apartheid South Africa.

In a world once more witness to rising nationalist rhetoric and to populist movements that declare themselves the enemy of diversity and pluralism, Wicomb’s assessments of cultural politics in the present speak powerfully to many national and regional contexts, and prove her to be a trenchant and prescient critic and thinker.
The family has become a significant and growing focus of study across a variety of disciplinary perspectives in the humanities, social sciences, and law. In South Africa, there has been controversy and substantial debate over an apparent crisis of the family during the last two decades. Ideological contestations have emerged over social morality and appeals for a return to traditional family values.

In order to provide a better understanding of the supposed crisis of the family, it is necessary to use public opinion data to explore family cohesion, family values and the promotion of family life. *South African Social Attitudes, Family Matters: Family Cohesion, Values and Wellbeing* promotes the family by drawing on unique data to offer insight into the diverse realities of contemporary family life in South Africa. It explores a series of family-related values and preferences, and also charts the basis and nature of support for policy intervention in the family.

**Reviewer’s comments:**

The subject of the book is very relevant for individuals and communities. The book sheds light on the changing evolution of the family and on the attitudes of South Africans towards this important institution.

This book mostly offers an overview of existing attitudes to, and understandings of, the family in South Africa. While this could be useful to other researchers and policy makers, I’m not convinced that it will open up new ways of thinking or change any minds.

This edited volume addresses a very important subject of family cohesion and its contribution to well-being. Although an edited volume, its singular focus on the subject of the family makes it coherent and the quality of various chapters is commendable. It is an important contribution to scholarship particularly on a matter that is critical for the wellbeing of individuals and the prosperity of communities.
While the world has seen a decline in absolute poverty, it has experienced a simultaneous rise in economic inequality. This is the case in all major economies as well as in emerging ones, including South Africa. Is there a South African explanation of poverty and inequality that is distinctive and different from one used in other contexts and countries? What are the familiar constants that characterise the interdependence of this ubiquitous pairing? How can the discussion on poverty and inequality be taken forward? Is wealth taxation a viable instrument to reduce wealth inequality in South Africa? In Poverty and Inequality: Diagnosis, Prognosis and Responses, the authors explore these and many other gritty questions as they analyse the complexity of poverty and inequality beyond an over-determination in terms of accountability of the state of the country. The book deals with poverty and inequality in a way that engages with the complexity of their production and reproduction. It locates poverty and inequality within the structural and psychosocial dimensions of the South African experience. The book provides new and innovative ways of looking at the existing knowledge and understanding of poverty and inequality in South Africa. Thus, significantly contributes to the existing body of knowledge and understanding. The book deals with poverty and inequality in a way that engages with the complexity of their production and reproduction. It locates poverty and inequality within the structural and psychosocial dimensions of the South African experience. The book has great social relevance in being a statistical piece on the important social issues faced in South Africa, whether it be financial political or social. It shows the reasons why these societal issues exist and where they originate from by painting a historically based story. This counters the reasoning of many misinformed people who have a skewed idea of the reality of South Africa and choose to blame every single problem on the government alone for the current state of the nation. It brings about the new conversation on whether the reasons why these societal issues exist and where they originate from by painting a historically based story. This counters the reasoning of many misinformed people who have a skewed idea of the reality of South Africa and choose to blame every single problem on the government alone for the current state of the nation. It brings about the new conversation on whether the reasons why these societal issues exist and where they originate from by painting a historically based story. This counters the reasoning of many misinformed people who have a skewed idea of the reality of South Africa and choose to blame every single problem on the government alone for the current state of the nation. 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The science of climate change calls attention to one of the most dangerous challenges facing life on earth. The operating parameters have changed with a 1 degree Celsius increase in planetary temperature since before the industrial revolution. A heating world is registering extreme weather shocks (droughts, heat waves, floods, tornadoes and cyclones), ecosystem stresses and accelerating tipping points in the Earth’s system. Climate breakdown has begun and the prospect of human extinction looms large.

Contrary to the dominant literature on climate change, The Climate Crisis South African and Global Democratic Eco-Socialist Alternatives (2018), the third volume in the Democratic Marxism series, harnesses the strengths of critical social science to explain the failure of the UN-led multilateral process to find genuine solutions to the climate crisis. The political economy of a carbon addicted global power structure and its ideological limits are explicated.

The volume brings together leading climate justice thinkers in the global south, including South Africa, working with systemic and socioecological understandings of the climate crisis. These thinkers have been shaping the critical perspectives of the global climate justice movement for the past decade.

For Mazibuko Jara, activist and director of Ntinga Ntaba kaNdoda, this volume convincingly explains how capitalism has caused the climate crisis and why it cannot solve the crisis. Naomi Klein, in her endorsement, notes this volume features some of the best thinking we have from the climate justice forces who are mapping the way to the next world.

The volume intervenes directly in South Africa’s national debate on the climate crisis. South Africa has the highest carbon emissions in Africa and several chapters in this volume provide a critique of the country’s addiction to a carbon-based minerals-energy complex. It provides a counter discourse to ruling narratives and empowers society with another conception of decarbonisation alternatives to advance a deep and just transition. These alternatives span climate jobs, socially renewable energy, solidarity economy, food sovereignty and the basic income grant, for instance.

In her endorsement, Makoma Lekalakala, climate justice activist and director of Earthlife Africa, says: “South Africa’s National Development Plan supports resource nationalism, particularly more coal mines. Our drought is a window into the future. This volume helps us think how our society should change, if human and non-human life is to survive.”
These Are the Things that Sit with Us

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What was the impact of apartheid on the lives of South Africans? How are people living with painful memories in their day-to-day lives? How do we conduct research in a manner that respects the dignity of research participants? These are some of the questions that are explored in the book *These Are the Things that Sit with Us*, edited by Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, Friederike Bubenzer and Marietjie Oelofsen, and published by Fanele.

This book makes visible undocumented everyday experiences that shaped the lives of ordinary South Africans during the country’s brutal and painful past. It is a record of things that sit within all of us. By sharing their memories, the storytellers map the scope of the wider, and difficult, conversation about the meaning of justice and the missing parts of the discourse of reconciliation in South Africa. It creates a space for a conversation about South Africa’s history and what it means to talk to and to hear the other.

The book shows a different approach to positioning the participants in the research process: it acknowledges that they have something to say, and that what they have to say is important enough for other people to acknowledge.

Each story has been published in Xhosa, Afrikaans and English, the languages used by the storytellers. Translating each story in three languages is a commitment to the editors’ belief that South Africans need to see that their stories exist in other vocabularies. A Xhosa story takes on a different meaning when it also exists in Afrikaans. When people see stories emanating from their own language community in a different language it can serve as a bridge between the diverse experiences that make up our South African nation.

Presenting the stories alongside photographs carefully chosen by the storytellers and sensitively taken by two emerging young photographers, Noncedo Gxekwa and Botswele Mogotlane, the book aims to show agency, dignity, and humanity behind the stories of suffering. In publishing these stories, the authors hope that the book will stimulate conversations among South Africans across languages, and enable South Africans to connect with one another in a manner that seeks mutual understanding about the complicated aspects of our shared history and the continuing impact of this history on the lives of individuals and communities.

"The storytellers map the scope of the wider, and difficult, conversation about the meaning of justice and the missing parts of the discourse of reconciliation in South Africa."
The book *Transforming Research Methods in the Social Sciences: Case studies from South Africa* intentionally engages with the politics of research and knowledge production by presenting the challenges associated with knowledge production in the Global South. More significantly, it offers strategies to deal with these challenges that are, for the first time, executed in this book. For example, this book presents case studies of actual research that have been conducted by a variety of distinguished South African scholars, ensuring that it is an entirely African book, focused on methods for the Global South.

Each case study presents a novel way of responding to Global South contexts, characterised by diversity, racial and political tensions, socioeconomic disparities and gender inequalities. The book is open access and contributes to open access knowledge production and the broader knowledge production project. The open access nature of the book resolves challenges that Global South scholars, researchers and students experience relating to access to research, as it strips away barriers such as payment for publications and access being limited to university portals.

The book is a response to two fundamental issues facing the social sciences in South Africa, namely the active production of knowledge relevant to the South African context and access to this knowledge beyond those with subsidised access to scholarly publications.

The book is collated in such a way that theory and methodology emerge through actual case studies. This is a unique framework that goes beyond previous attempts of theorising methodology and ensures that the book is both application-based and offers examples of how to deal with research challenges in real-world contexts.

*Transforming Research Methods in the Social Sciences: Case studies from South Africa* presents a range of quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods and transformative approaches to research, thus offering a diverse range of case studies applicable across the social sciences.

This book is an important resource for any Global South scholar, researcher, methodologist or student and makes an excellent contribution to the emerging literature on transformative African-centred methodologies for Global South research.

In the first three months since the book’s open access launch, it was downloaded 1613 times. This is far better than the general open access average of 343 downloads per book over 12 months.
We Are No Longer At Ease surveys the landscape of recent student protests, highlighting key concerns of the moment. Essays challenge constitutionalism and its limitations for transformation because of the importance of property rights, read the Freedom Charter alongside Higher Education policy and undertake localised readings of Intersectionality theorists. Personal experience and theoretical engagement create a palimpsest of the movement through the voices expressed within. We Are No Longer At Ease offers a poignant means for reflecting on the contemporary significance of Youth Day.

Reviewer’s comments:
The #FeesMustFall movement is located within the broader context of the nature of South African universities, underpinned by colonial concepts of racism. For instance, it is argued: #RhodesMustFall, the foundation of which #FeesMustFall was built, was born in the corridors of historically white institutions of learning. The movement was a tool of resistance against pervasive institutional racism that defines higher education. The strength and weaknesses of the movement are presented in a systematic way. The content is well argued and presented. The subject matter is located within the student needs of free education and decolonised curriculum on one hand and an intellectual struggle that was seeking justice for the epistemological onslaught that African intellectuals have been have subjected to by the academy that is deeply resistant to change, on the other.

It provides new ways of looking into the subject matter – the movement as a contested space (continuous battle for hegemony of ideas and ideology political, philosophical and otherwise).

The book deals with the subject that is very socially relevant. It addresses issues that affect individuals, communities and the country in significant ways.
Whose History Counts

Decolonising African Pre-colonial Historiography

JUNE BAM, LUNGISILE NTSEBEZA AND ALLAN ZINN

University of Cape Town

(African Sun Media)

Reviewer's comments:

The book is undoubtedly relevant to the current issues of epistemic and structure decolonisation of knowledge in South Africa, African and anywhere Africa phenomenon is a subject of studies. It marks and signposts what decolonisation of knowledge means and what it entails. It is therefore useful for academic students at any level and anyone concerned about epistemic injustice more broadly.

This book is very socially relevant in the South African context. It speaks to the many problems that still exist in our institutions, whereby the education system is still white-washed and is told in the context and from the perspective of a European and not of indigenous African acceptance. As such, this issue has become a significant problem in South Africa and can be seen through the #FeesMustFall movement, which erupted in tertiary institutions where one of the bigger problems was the lack of inclusivity of African based education and ideologies. This movement also countered how bigger institutions paid homage to colonisers by erecting their statues. This brought about questions among academics around how exactly institutions can bring equity in terms of shaping institutional curricula into one inclusive of the African historical narrative and transformed teaching.

"Whose History Counts challenges the very concept of ‘pre-colonial’ and explores methodologies on researching and writing history."
Winners of the fifth South African Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards:

**BEST NON-FICTION MONOGRAPH**

*Dance of the Dung Beetles: Their role in our changing world* (Wits University Press)
Marcus Byrne & Helen Lunn

**BEST BIOGRAPHY (JOINT WINNERS)**

*Sol Plaatje: A life of Solomon Tshekishe Plaatje 1876–1932* (Jacana Media)
Brian Willan

*A political biography of Selby Msimang: Principle and Pragmatism in the Liberation Struggle* (HSRC)
Sibongiseni M Mkhize

**BEST VISUAL ART**

*Asymmetries Exhibition*
Nduka Mntambo

**BEST DH VISUALIZATION OR INFOGRAPHIC**

*Azimutha: An Experiment of Virtual Reality for Fashion Film Genre*
Nirma Dolly Madhoo
2020 HSS WINNERS:

BEST FICTION NOVEL
Lacuna
(Pan Macmillan SA)
Fiona Snyckers

BEST NON-FICTION EDITED VOLUME
Black Academic Voices: The South African Experience
(HSRC)
Grace Khunou, Katijah Khoza-Shangase, Hugo Canham, Edith Dinong Phaswana

BEST FICTION POETRY AND SHORT STORIES
The History of Intimacy
(Kwela)
Gabeba Baderoon

BEST MUSICAL COMPOSITION
Mantombi Matotiyana
Songs of Greeting, Healing and Heritage
Mantombi Matotiyana & Michael Blake

BEST PUBLIC PERFORMANCE
Institute for Creative Arts (ICA) Live Art Festival 2018
Jay Pather
TC Maila gets the picture

“I was born in a small village called gaMaila in Limpopo. When I was about six years old, we had to relocate to the Free State. Moving from a village to the township of Zamdela in Sasolburg was a new world for me. The language was different, the social life was different, the geographical sites were different and the air was totally different. Just like any other kid, I had to make friends. While trying to do so, I discovered that I had to explain why I speak a different language (Sepedi) as everyone spoke Sesotho. I quickly learnt how to speak the language and could fit in as a township boy.

However, I found myself longing for the village. I’d take my friends out in the bush a few kilometres from the township, trying to compensate for my longing for village life. My friends did not understand what a village is, let alone what it looked like, since most of them were born in the township. For them, a village was a farm. I spent my youth trying to explain the difference, but they couldn’t get the picture. I picked up a camera only 10 years ago. Little did I know what a great tool it would be to narrate what I’d been trying to explain throughout my youth. I could then show the harmony, the peace, the freedom, the landscapes and the unity that exist in the village. It was time to stop talking and rather let my pictures tell the stories.

1. It is not a dance......but a language only known by few.
2. Unique walking libraries.....we should never let burn down unread.
3. Africa need no guns.....only drums.
4. It is not up to us what music does to us.

5. You might not know your roots but they know you.

6. Through our songs we can trace our past.
What are some of the challenges and triumphs of photographing in remote parts of South Africa?
Some places are just impossible to get to by vehicle. However, that makes the journey more interesting for me as I get to interact deeply with life in the village. I experience the rawness of the environment by talking to people, using alternative modes of transport, being accommodated by strangers in their homes, and offered food without anything expected from me. So far, I’ve faced more beautiful situations than challenges.

What personal attributes or qualities do you believe make a good travel photographer?
Make sure you empty your cup when you’re about to travel. You can only come back with a cup full of rich experiences.

What do you look for when choosing a new travel location to experience/photograph?
Since I discovered that I enjoy being around people and nature, my destinations are always influenced by that. However, I always keep an open mind, as beautiful moments can present themselves at any time.

Can you highlight the best story told through one of your images?
As a travel photographer, I always come across people/strangers randomly asking if I can take pictures of them. I was in a village, and a man walked up to me and asked for a picture. I lifted my camera, and he had a smile, but when I was about to click, his face changed and he dropped his head. I took the picture, but he did not even want to see the image. He walked away. The picture I took captured the most moving raw emotion, and to this day, it isn’t easy for me to look at the picture without my eyes heating up.

What skills are required in pre-empting a spontaneous moment that will translate strongly in an image?
I avoid capturing rehearsed moments. They have a short lifespan, in my opinion. One thing I don’t do is take pictures I would not enjoy drawing.

Travel is a big part of your work; where are some of the best places you’ve been and what remains on your bucket list of places to go?
All the villages I’ve been to have been memorable. Even though there are challenges, I still appreciate how life isn’t manipulated and forced there. I would love to visit all the small towns and villages across the world, starting with Africa, of course!

How do you think you have evolved as a photographer through your body of work?
While visiting the village my uncle lives in, I took some pictures of him, and everyone kept on telling him he looked so good in the picture. He was happy to hear the compliments. And, while everyone gathered around me to see his picture, he then asked: “Now how am I going to see this picture everyone is raving about?” His question was a very difficult one to answer, as my uncle is a blind man. This, in turn, posed a bigger question for me: Why am I a photographer? It was then that I made a promise to myself to take pictures with a deeper meaning, beyond what the eye can see, and instead take pictures that a mind can never get tired of seeing. So, I stopped taking pretty pictures and focused rather on taking pictures that tell a story.

What has been your biggest lesson learnt through travel?
The biggest lesson I’ve learnt through travel is that people who travel are less troubled.

Any secret tricks of the trade you can share with aspiring travel photographers out there?
Don’t go where everyone is going or has been before. And, if it happens that you find yourself where everyone is, then don’t take a picture of what everyone is looking at. Take a picture of what you are feeling, when looking at what everyone is looking at.

What are your future goals in the photographic industry?
I would love to see my work hanging in buildings and homes in all four corners of the world, so I can afford to buy myself a home and hang some of my work on my walls.
For almost two decades, Natalia has created and implemented creative strategies to help women and youth in ‘unlocking and using their voices’. She uses poetry and other creative writing methods to create women-centred, LGBTQI safe spaces of healing and self expression.

Natalia is an award-winning poet, writer, MC, recording artist and producer. Her audio works are Natalia Molebatsi & the Soul Making (2015) and Come as you are: poems for four strings (2013). She is the author and editor of numerous books, including: We are: a poetry anthology (Penguin books); Sardo Dance (Ge’ko); Elephant Woman Song (Forum); and Wild Imperfections: A global womanist anthology of poems (forthcoming in 2020 from Penguin Random House). She also completed an MA thesis titled An Analysis of the Representations of Women in SAfm’s Poetry in the Air, based on research about the ways in which feminist poets represent themselves and other women on the radio.

In 2020, she will pursue her Ph.D in Performance Studies with the provisional title: Time Travel Poetics: Queering Black Feminist Performance Poetry on Decoloniality, Violence, Gender and Sexuality.

Her academic writings are included in among other journals and books: Scrutiny2, Rhodes Journalism Review, Agenda, Muziki and SASINDA AND SISELAPHA (STILL HERE): Black Feminist Approaches to Cultural Studies in South Africa’s Twenty-Five Years Since 1994 (forthcoming in 2020 from Africa World Press).

Natalia’s passion about the intersections of academia and the arts is seen through her scholarly and artistic interventions work against racism, patriarchy and homophobia as she builds bridges within communities and carves spaces for the visibility of feminist and queer stories.

BLACK WOMAN WORDS

black woman has a face
a face with a mouth
her mouth carries words
that fall out of silence and other nooses
insisting to be heard too

black woman’s words seen
climbing and stumbling off of themselves
fixing and re-shaping the world

now, it will be known that
black woman is tired
of apologising for her rage
and her disappointment is
no longer asking for permission
to be sick of your shit

one man said
that she is too loud
too obvious
too open too angry too direct

another brother said
that her words
emasculate men
ostracise men
ridicule men
undermine, men

and none sees the meaning
of a language of liberation
that these words are planting
that they are grandmothers dancing
to honor utterances
that belong to every past and future
even forgotten generations of our tide
With the move of the Constitutional Court to the infamous prison site in Braamfontein, what was once a place of injustice and brutality has become a place of solidarity and democracy for South Africa. Constitution Hill opened its doors as a museum in 2004. Before the dawn of democracy, this precinct housed a collection of notorious prisons, including the Old Fort, a high-security prison built in the 1890s; the Number Four prison block; and the Women’s Jail.

The Women’s Jail at Constitution Hill

The Women’s Jail was built in 1910. For 73 years, this jail imprisoned thousands of women who came to Johannesburg to make a living. Some were common criminals; others were detained for protesting against the system of apartheid. Mothers, wives, prostitutes, domestic workers, nannies, jazz singers, political activists, models, telephonists, murderers, teachers, typists, journalists, factory workers, hairdressers, fraudsters, students, cooks, nurses and others were detained here.

Most inmates were short-term prisoners, serving sentences of less than three months. White and black women were held in separate sections of the jail under

Constitution Hill

The transformation of the three infamous prisons into a beacon of hope
very different circumstances. In the black women’s section, in 1935, cells built for 132 prisoners held 250.

In 1966, Member of Parliament Helen Suzman commented that the prison was “hopelessly overcrowded and, for non-white prisoners, the facilities are really primitive. It is a jail which should really be razed to the ground.”

According to a wardress who worked there in 1959, “this place was not suitable for human habitation”.

When the jail was closed in 1983, the last prisoners were moved to the new Johannesburg Prison outside Soweto.

Once a place of incarceration, the Women’s Jail forms part of what is now known as Constitution Hill, a mixed-use precinct in the inner city of Johannesburg, and a national Heritage Site.

Today, the jail forms part of the Visitor Experience and Exhibitions One site, while other areas in the precinct have been redeveloped to incorporate offices and spaces for lekgotla activities to take place.

The Women’s Jail is the only place in South Africa that specifically honours the memories of female prisoners who suffered under colonial and apartheid regimes. The jail houses permanent exhibitions that tell powerful and moving stories of the former prisoners. They pay tribute to the incredible strength and resilience shown by these women, enabling them to triumph over adversity and move forward in the face of brutality and hardship. The Women’s Jail also houses the offices of the Commission on Gender Equality, the Public Protector and other non-governmental organisations.

In line with the vision of Constitution Hill, the Women’s Jail highlights the transgressions of the past while embodying the hopes of the future. In this way, the space becomes an uplifting testament to the human spirit and the transformative potential of our society.

The exhibitions include stories of ex-prisoners, as well as artefacts and exhibits that give insight into their lives behind bars.

The specific mission of the exhibition is:

1. To recognise women as the makers and tellers of history, and the integrity of women’s stories.
2. To pay tribute to the contributions of women in the struggle for democracy and the building of constitutional values in South Africa.
3. To reveal how the prison experience is different (or the same) for women as for men, and to acknowledge the suffering and resilience of women in South Africa.
4. To explore what the experiences of women in prison tell us about the place of women in society, and their means of survival, inside and outside the prison.
5. To examine the role of women in society – politically, socially and economically, and how it is changing in present-day society.
6. To make space for South Africans to talk about women, race and patriarchy.
7. To create the potential for the exhibition and the jail building to be used as a place for activism around gender and gender-related issues.

**The Visitor Experience**

The permanent exhibition in the jail is made up of a constellation of mini experiences and exhibitions that are mounted throughout the jail:

At the jail’s entrance, a 10-minute orientation film is screened to provide visitors with the historical context of laws that affected women in apartheid South Africa and women’s resistance and struggle for human rights.

The walk through the jail is defined by a series of glass panels, on which appear first-person accounts from ex-prisoners and warders about what happened in that space when the jail functioned as a prison.

A footprint of the tin shacks in which the political prisoners of 1976 stayed serves to commemorate the cells that were demolished by the Johannesburg Security Department. It is also a monument to women’s contributions to the struggle for freedom.

Fatima Meer’s paintings – which are the only images that exist of the jail – have been enlarged and mounted in prominent places in the northern courtyard of the jail. These paintings, which were secretly smuggled out of the Women’s Jail, are the only images that exist of the prison while it operated.

In the jail’s central hall, visitors will simultaneously experience the architecture and beauty of the place, but also the brutality of what went on in the atrium, through the quotes that shine onto the walls.

On the upper floor of the atrium, visitors will be taken on a journey of the jail’s history, told through a series of iconic objects, such as a pass book, shopping bag and panties. Each object is brought to life with interpretive text, quotes and images from prisoners and warders.
Two life-size screens have been mounted in the communal cell. On these screens, a dialogue is set up between ex-prisoners about the conditions they experienced in jail. In addition, the women engage in conversation about what has and hasn’t changed in the new South Africa.

Each of the isolation cells will display a more personal and individual narrative of how the women ended up in the jail. As with the western communal cell, their past experiences will be juxtaposed with their lives today.

Each of the women who feature in the 10 cell stories (six black women and four white women) has been selected because she represents a wider range of experiences. Together, these cells speak to the experiences of thousands of other women who suffered, resisted and survived racial, economic and gender oppression. Each of the 10 women returned to this jail to share their memories of the past and their anticipation of a future free from needless hardship and indignity.

**The women**
- Nolundi Ntamo (arrested for a pass offence)
- Sibongile Tshabalala (arrested for beer brewing)
- Albertina Sisulu (arrested for political resistance, 1950s experience)
- Deborah Matshoba (arrested for political resistance, 1970s)
- Yvonne Mhlauli (arrested on grounds of “immorality and the greying of Hillbrow”)
- Lilian Keagile (arrested for political resistance, 1980s)
- Esther Barsel (arrested for political resistance, 1960s)
- Sheila and Violet Weinberg (political families)
- Barbara Hogan (arrested for political resistance, 1980s)
- Daisy de Melker (convicted and eventually hanged for murder)
- Fatima Meer, was a South African writer, academic, screenwriter, and prominent anti-apartheid activist.
- Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu was a South African anti-apartheid activist, and the wife of fellow activist Walter Sisulu.

In the white women’s section, a small part of the garden has been recreated to represent the original scene. The apple tree and peach tree will be replanted in the places where they once stood. These sections of garden will provoke visitors to imagine life in the building when it functioned as a jail – the strange juxtapositions of beauty and cruelty that characterised life behind these high brick walls. The trees will also signal the new life that has arisen out of the desolation and brutality of the former landscape.

5. Joe Slovo used to offer legal counsel in this courtyard.

6. The chamber of the Constitutional Court is open to the public, who are welcome to enter.

7. Fatima Meer, was a South African writer, academic, screenwriter, and prominent anti-apartheid activist.

8. Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu was a South African anti-apartheid activist, and the wife of fellow activist Walter Sisulu.
"I decided to participate in the HSS Awards by entering my work, Abénaa/Alzire/Dandara/Tsholofelo, which is an iteration of 'After the boat has sailed'. My artistic practice is about fluidity: the different pieces flow in and out of each other. Part of my PhD work involved a lot of travel to places of historic significance. I’m preoccupied with epistemologies (studies of the nature of knowledge, justification and belief) and explore the parameters of varying realities as they are shaped through differing epistemes. I work with history as material and think through ways of entering into engagements with pasts as they are informed by varying knowledge systems.

"Winning this award and being recognised within this academic art space has been a confidence boost. It has also made my work more visible in terms of exhibitions. I am currently part of an artists-in-residency programme at the University of the Western Cape. The programme caters for artists with an academic background. Winning the HSS Award made me more eligible to secure a place on the programme.

"Exciting things are happening in the humanities and social sciences space. These disciplines are essential in fostering our creativity and getting us to engage with what’s happening around us. They also encourage us to theorise and articulate ideas, broadening the scope for thought leadership and collaboration in society. We need to create more spaces for these activities in South Africa. In other parts of the world, there is greater openness to different forms of expression.

"It’s exciting that the awards have a category for creative collections. It shows that there’s enough scope and demand for these works. Many people are still stuck in traditional art forms, and it is wonderful to see the NIHSS promote this initiative, supporting work that’s unconventional and that differs from the norm.

"I would like to see people who are not necessarily part of the academic space – the broader public – to be afforded more access to opportunities for artistic expression. This is partly why I decided to study art: to create work that would be accessible to the broader public. Art is inclusive; it isn’t just for people who went to a certain type of school and were taught a particular way of thinking and art-making.

"Having said this, my work does conform in part to academic demands. For example, in keeping with the artist-in-residency programme requirements, I have to position whatever I am working on in a proposal, in which I explain the purpose behind this work and make a strong case for why my output will work better in an exhibition format than another type of artistic format. Sometimes it feels as if people are still committed to traditional outputs. I make a point of ensuring that my work is accessible; people must be able to walk into a gallery and see artworks that resonate with their reality and ignite a spark, a thought, an inspired response."