



Drama and Performance Studies Programme (Howard College)

**College of Humanities, School of the Arts
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa**



COLLOQUIUM:

***“Decolonising Shakespeare?” Contestations
and re-imaginings for a post-liberation South
Africa.***

**30th September & 1 October 2016 (Friday and Saturday)
Durban, South Africa**

**VENUE: Studio 5 Drama and Performance Studies Programme
(UKZN - Howard College Campus)**

**Programme, Abstracts, Biographies of participants,
and acknowledgements**

Colloquium Programme



30 September (Friday)

- 9 – 9.45am: registration
- 9.45 – 10am: **WELCOME AND PROTOCOL: Lliane Loots**
- 10 – 10.30am: **Official Welcome by DVC of Humanities (UKZN) and Dean Mccracken (school of the Arts)**
- 10.40 – 11.30am: **KEY NOTE ADDRESS #1: Welcome Msomi**
Title: “From the origins of uMabatha”
(Mr. Msomi will speak for 40mins and have 20mins for questions)

FACILITATOR: Lliane Loots (UKZN: HCC)

- 11.30 – 12noon: tea and comfort break (Drama Library)
- 12noon – 1.45pm: **PANEL ONE: *Shakespeare’s Men and Politics in Contemporary Africa***

(3 papers of 20 mins each + 30 mins for questions)

1. Mbongeni Z. Malaba (UKZN – PMB) - *Coriolanus* and Africa
2. Joseph Tertsea Ikyoive (UKZN – Edgewood) - *Macbeth* across Africa: Re-conTEXTualising the TEXT
3. Thys Heydenrych (University of Free State) - Reflection on a contemporary adaptation of *Hamlet*.

FACILITATOR: Noxolo Matete (UKZN: HCC)

- 1.45 – 2.30pm: **LUNCH (Drama Library)**
- 2.45 – 4.30pm: **PANEL TWO: *Star-crossed lovers in the present: Conceptualisations of Romeo and Juliet in South Africa***

(2 papers of 20 mins each + 30 mins for questions)

1. Chandré Botha and Chris Broodryk (University of Pretoria) - *A South African Romeo and Juliet: Gender Identity in Minky Schlesinger's Gugu and Andile*
2. Sarah Roberts (Wits) - *Manhattan’s West Side on Africa’s East Coast: Re-Imagining West Side Story on stage in Durban 2013.*

FACILITATOR: Prof. Marie-Heleen Coetzee (University of Pretoria)

- 5 – 5.30pm: *“The Birth of Caliban”*
[Performances Installation (Square Space)]
Created By Tamantha Hammerschag (UKZN – Pietermaritzburg)

“The Tempest, with its colonial subjects Caliban and Ariel, is central post-colonial discourse around Shakespeare. Using Shakespeare’s text as a spring board, we will concentrate on the relationship between Miranda, Caliban and Prospero and discover how these dynamics resonate within our space. Engaging practically with the text within a South African socio-political context, we will reimagine and re-appropriate it.

A current second year student writes in an essay about how whites perceive her in numerous negative ways. I am shocked at the degree to which she has internalized racism. To grapple with this visually I decide to reverse this. I will begin the Tempest project with a box and invite students to write their perceptions of whiteness on pieces of paper. They can acknowledge authorship or keep their comments anonymous. I will gather numerous notions, numerous ideas and use them as the basis for a visual projection.

A nest of twigs.

An egg.

A man and a woman sit upon the egg.

She is in her seventies. He, perhaps 28. They are both naked. A man with a projector tattoos their skin with words. Together with pre-created text, those watching have an opportunity to type their own messages. To write down what they would like emblazoned on the actor’s skin”.

Participants: Wayne Reddiar, Hazel Barnes, a man, Tamantha Hammerschlag.

POST PERFORMANCE (optional): we will make a conference dinner booking for 6pm at a local gourmet Pizza Restaurant (PIZZETTE in Davenport/Clark Road) - *those who wish to join please indicate at registration. [Please note that this dinner is at your own expense].* Transport assistance available on request.

1 October (Saturday)

- 10 - 11am: KEY NOTE ADDRESS #2: Prof. Chris Thurman (WITS)
Shakespeare: We Need New Names
(Prof. Thurman will speak for 40mins and have 20mins for questions)

FACILITATOR: Tamar Meskin (UKZN- HCC)

- 11.15 – 1pm: PANEL THREE: *Black Women Speak Out – Reflecting and Recontextualising Shakespeare in Performance in South Africa*

(3 papers of 20 mins each + 30 mins for questions)

1. Noxolo Matete (UKZN – HCC) - Reflections on a Black Paulina: A Personal Post-apartheid Black South African Female Tale recounted from a post-colonial feminist retrospective perspective
2. Pumelela Nqelenga (UKZN – PMB) - Iago is Black; Queer; Woman and Woke! Performing Iago and her crucial role in layering critical meaning to South Africa’s issues of race, gender and power in the play *Moor* (2013). A performer’s reflective analysis.
3. Ayanda Khala-Phiri (UKZN – PMB) - Transformation’s Tempest: the Academy as the cultural Diaspora

FACILITATOR: Miranda Young-Jahangeer (UKZN- HCC)

SPECIAL SESSION: 1 – 1.30pm: “THE ROBBERN ISLAND BIBLE”

[Facilitated by Devaksha Moodley (UKZN – HCC)]

At the centre of “The Robben Island Bible” story are the incarcerated political prisoners who were forced to work long hours chipping stones from the island quarry over three decades. But in their spare time they debated strategy to overthrow apartheid, and eventually studied and read whatever they could find to assist in the process. One of the books that they read and debated for many hours was a copy of the Complete Works of William Shakespeare, which was sent to Sonny Venkatrathnam by his wife Theresa.

The book was initially impounded but later returned to Venkatrathnam when he convinced a sympathetic warder that it was the “*the Bible by William Shakespeare*”. Coming from the Hindu faith, Venkatrathnam later disguised the cover of the book with Diwali (Hindu festival of light) greeting cards. The book became one of the most treasured documents on the island.

Six months before he left the island in 1978, Venkatrathnam asked his 32 fellow-prisoners in the single-cell section, which included the most senior leadership figures of the liberation movements, to choose their favourite passage from Shakespeare and sign their name alongside their chosen quote. The names in the book include the political icons of South African Liberation movement, such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Saths Cooper, Strini Moodley, Neville Alexander, Ahmed Kathrada, to name a few.

“I knew that I would be released in April 1978 and I asked all the comrades to select lines, pages or passages in the Complete Works of William Shakespeare and autograph it. I sent the book around the single cells and that is how it got all the famous guys in it.”

The legacy of “The Robben Island Bible”

The anniversary of William Shakespeare's death this year carried with it a particular resonance for Sonny Venkatrathnam, who said a copy of the playwright's works helped him through the dark days on Robben Island. As part of a year-long commemoration by leading international cultural, creative and educational organisations to mark the 400 years since Shakespeare's death in 1616, Venkatrathnam returned to Robben Island on 23rd of April with the book almost 39 years later. The book was exhibited at the Pre-Parliament Opening event in Cape Town earlier this year. Both events were coordinated by Educape Trust and Shakespeare Schools Festival SA.

Sonny Venkatrathnam will be addressing the delegates at the Colloquium on Saturday, 30th of September. His talk will reflect on some memories about his time on Robben Island, the story how the “*Complete Works of Shakespeare*” was the chosen reading material by Sonny, and the journey of the “Bible” on the Island amongst the fellow prisoners. Q&A session will follow the 15-minute talk. The Book itself will be on display with digital content of the signed pages available to browse on Ipad.

For more info, contact info@educape.co.za

Mr. Venkatrathnam will join the colloquium lunch and be available for further questions

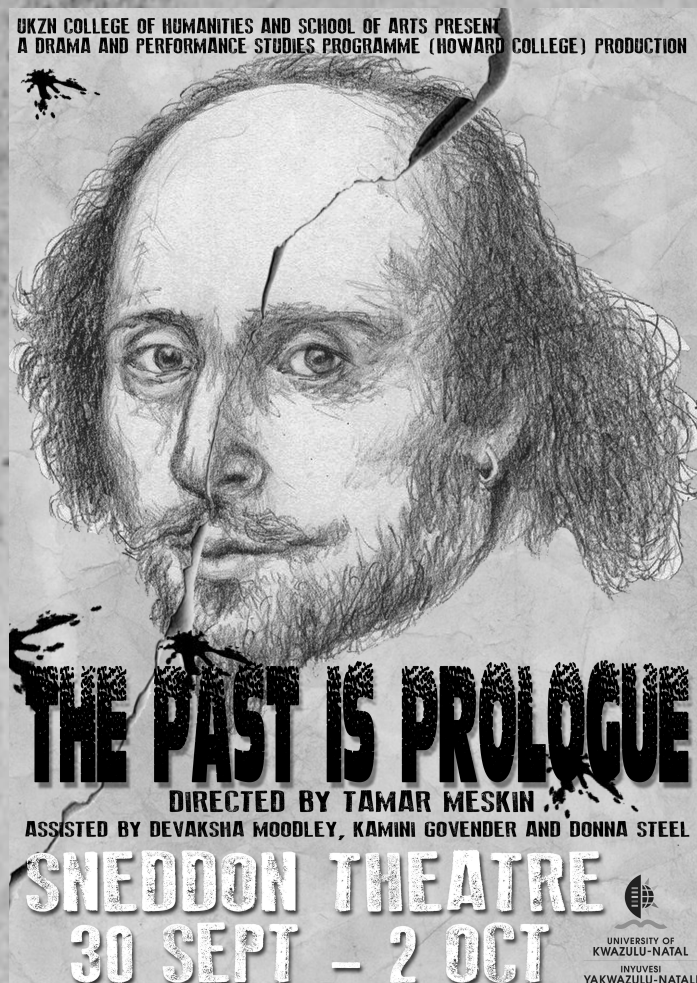
- **1.30 – 2.30pm: LUNCH (Drama Library)**

- **2.30 – 4.15pm PANEL FOUR: *Resonance and Relevance: Shakespeare across the Globe***
(3 papers of 20 mins each + 30 mins for questions)
 1. **Tamar Meskin (UKZN – HCC) - To play is the thing: (re)imagining Shakespeare on a post-colonial stage**
 2. **Deborah Arlene Lutge (Durban University of Technology) - “A rose by any other name ...”: Multiple Directorial Readings Across Histories and Cultures**
 3. **Sandra Young (University of Cape Town) - Shakespeare’s transcolonial solidarities: Global Shakespeare as seen from the South****FACILITATOR: Mbongeni Malaba (UKZN – PMB)**

- **4.15 – 5.15pm: Conclusions, beginnings, thanks and ways forward ...**
FACILITATOR: (Lliane Loots)

- **5.30pm: (pre-performance) Informal drinks at the Sneddon Theatre bar**

- 6.30pm: **"THE PAST IS PROLOGUE"** (Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre)
Devised by Tamar Meskin, with Kamini Govender, Devaksha Moodley and Donna Steel (UKZN - HCC)



“What would happen if Shakespeare were propelled into a future not unlike our own, possessed of nothing but his own words, and finding himself in a world where his works have been reduced to museum-like artifacts of a great tradition? What would happen if he was given the opportunity to speak to this present and in so doing shatter the glass that separates his works from his living audience? These two questions are at the core of *The Past is Prologue*. The title is taken from *The Tempest* and is ambiguous: it offers both the potential to abandon the past in favour of the glorious future waiting ahead, but also may point to the importance of the past in shaping both the present and future. The production plays with this ambiguity in seeking to ‘decolonise’ Shakespeare by reinscribing his works with newly imagined meanings, viewed through newly created lenses, which can speak to the ethos of our time. Taking a whistle stop tour through a number of Shakespeare’s most famous works, and reimagining them in performance, the production seeks to revitalize and ‘resurrect’ the theatrical Shakespeare, the one that existed before he became canonized by the gods of high art. We do so to engage the stories and characters that can speak to and for us through time, but we also make them vehicles for commentary on our present. In our South African context, Shakespeare might say, the “time is out of joint”; John Kani suggests that “This is the winter of our discontent’ - [there is] ... something rotten in the state of Denmark. How these men have hijacked our democracy, why we paid for it with our own lives, is this what we fought for?’ We cannot change the present by pretending the past did not happen or removing its symbols- abandoning memory is dangerous - we have to understand the past to change the present and shape the future we seek”.

- Tamar Meskin (director)

Abstracts and Biographies of participants

Key Note Address 1:

Welcome Msomi

From the origins of *uMabatha*

Abstract:

The focus of my presentation will begin at a time when I was inspired by Shakespeare's various plays. Out of his plays that I was able to read and perform, *Macbeth* seemed to find a home in the culture of the Zulu people. Having spent time in Nongoma at KwaKhethomthandayo, the palace of King Cyprian and the father of the current King Zwelithini, I was lucky to spend time with izinduna and warriors of the king's regiments who shared with me events and significant milestones of Zulu history.

I will explain and share the excitement of discovering that what Shakespeare wrote many centuries ago was the perfect story for a Zulu setting. *uMabatha* is set in the early 19th century (the historical model is the legendary warrior-king Shaka Zulu. How his brothers plotted to kill uShaka inspired by their aunt uMkabayi kaJama.) In *uMabatha*, kaMadonsela is the one who urges uMabatha to kill King Dangane.

The journey will highlight some of the similarities that stand out between the Scottish play and *uMabatha* such as ambition, greed and assassination.

The journey will also be about the performance of *uMabatha* during the apartheid era and how various audiences reacted to the production, including contestations and re-imaginings for a post-liberation South Africa.

Bio:

Welcome Msomi is the Founder / Director of IZulu Dance Theatre and Music, established in 1965 in Durban, South Africa. In 1979 Msomi established the extension of the Theatre in Brooklyn, New York. He started writing at the age of 15 and his name has become synonymous with Zulu literature as an accomplished author.

Msomi has won international acclaim as a playwright, choreographer and director. Mr. Msomi's significant success, *uMabatha* (a Zulu adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*) staged at the Aldwych in 1972 and in 1973 at Sir Peter Daubeny's World Theatre Season, became an instant hit. *uMabatha* is hailed as the only cultural classic to come from South Africa. For 30 years *uMabatha* was performed in many parts of the world including all the major cities in the USA and the UK.

Msomi contributed to the revival of *Tamburlaine The Great*, a Royal Shakespeare Company production. He directed *Nelson Mandela 75th and other Mandela significant Birthday Celebrations* and the 10th May 1994 *Nelson Mandela Inauguration (Many Cultures, One Nation)* in Pretoria.

Mr. Msomi is chairman of *MsomiAfrica Communications, MsomiFranco Intelligent Solutions, Blue Moon Corporate Communications* and is the director of *Meropa Communications* and *Jenni Newman Public Relations*. Msomi is a recipient of the KwaZulu-Natal Premier's Excellence Awards. In 2008 Msomi was awarded the Naledi Lifetime Achievement Theatre Award, in 2010 the Johnnie Walker Celebrating Strides prize in the Arts Category, in 2012 the Lifetime Achievement Award for Theatre by the Arts & Culture Trust and in 2013 the Tribute Concerts Award for his contribution to entertainment activities in South Africa. Msomi is currently the chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal Film Commission and is also chairperson of the Living Legends Legacy Project.

Panel One: Shakespeare's Men and Politics in Contemporary Africa

Name: Thys Heydenrych

Affiliation: University of the Free State, Department of Drama and Theatre Arts

Title: Reflection on a contemporary adaptation of *Hamlet*.

Abstract:

During my studies for my Master's degree in Theatre Directing at East 15 Acting School, London, a question constantly asked was: "If you were to direct a Shakespeare play now, why would you do it?" This led me to think: "if I were to adapt a Shakespeare play into a South African context, what would the play then say?" This paper is a reflection on my adaptation of *Hamlet*, which I directed and acted in, at the University of the Free State with a professional cast in October 2014.

Hamlet is one of Shakespeare's best-known tragedies. Mention *Hamlet* in artistic and scholarly circles and immediately there is a debate about what the play is all about. Bates (2008:4) calls *Hamlet* a "political drama as well as a play about the journey of an individual self". Crystal (2013:3) summarizes *Hamlet* as a play of "murder, grief, guilt, possible suicide, incest, fratricide, regicide" and adds that it is about a prince struggling with abstract ideas about morality and philosophy. What if Hamlet was gay? In most cases productions of *Hamlet* either focus on his repressed Oedipal desire for his mother Gertrude or his madness and ultimate desire to commit suicide. All of these productions/films however are still grounded in British culture. Although bound to this, *Hamlet* has had recent South African adaptations. In 2015 a production of *Hamlet* by Fred Abrahamse and Marcel Meyer was staged at the National Arts Festival and was inspired by the earliest recorded performance of *Hamlet* related to South Africa. Off the East Coast of South Africa, *Hamlet* was performed by the crew of the East India Ship. Here a cast of six male actors performed as sailors on a ship who in turn perform *Hamlet*. This year, the Tshwane University of Technology's Department of Drama and Film staged a contemporary South African adaptation of *Hamlet*, Mosiuoa (the abandoned one).

I focused on Hamlet as an individual, a young man struggling with his father's death and his mother's hasty marriage. While examining the character I realized that his friend Horatio is present in key moments of the play. Perhaps there is more to Hamlet and Horatio's relationship. My adaptation explored Hamlet and Horatio in a gay relationship and how that would affect the interpretation of the "To be or not to be" speech; Hamlet's rejection of Ophelia and her consequent madness; the Mousetrap scene; Claudius' immediate decision to exile Hamlet; Horatio's eagerness to share the poisoned wine in the final scene, reminiscent of the tomb scene in *Romeo and Juliet*. My paper will reflect on new nuances found in the play, the characters and their interactions with each other, still keeping to the original text.

Bio:

As a professional actor and director, Thys Heydenrych was involved in various productions. In 2008 he directed and acted in *Enige Iemand vir Ontbyt?*, an Afrikaans translation of Derek Benfield's *Anyone for Breakfast?* He also did the translation. In 2009 Heydenrych directed and acted in Nico Luwes' *My Liewe Meneer Malan* and in 2010 he directed and acted in *O, Komdoom, Daar's 'n Kat in my Boom!* with Ilne Fourie.

Heydenrych started his *M.A. Theatre Directing* degree at East 15 Acting School, University of Essex, London, UK in September 2012. During his studies he completed modules on *Directing Shakespeare*, *Assistant Directing* and *Design Collaboration*. As part of his studies he was the Assistant Director for George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, adapted and directed by Glen Wilford, in the Tristan Bates Theatre, Covent Garden. He also completed a module in *Meyerholdt & Bio-Mechanics* at the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts (GITIS) in Moscow from February - March 2013.

In September 2013 Heydenrych directed an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Richard III* in modern English with students. In October 2014 he directed and acted in *Hamlet*, for which he also did the adaptation, with a professional cast. Heydenrych also performed at the Vryfees in *S(t)out en Peper* in the same year. In 2015 he performed in *Tjekhov Triptiek*, which won 'beste Vrystaats Produksie' at the Vrystaat Arts Festival.

Heydenrych is currently a lecturer at the University of the Free State, Department Drama and Theatre Arts, and is still busy with his PhD.

Name: Joseph Tertsea Ikyoive

Affiliation: University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education, Edgewood Campus

Title: *Macbeth* across Africa: Re-conTEXTualising the TEXT

Abstract:

Shakespeare's *Macbeth* has enjoyed a level of critical reflection in world literatures. Its appeal has received academic reception by critics as well as in film and stage dramas. The concern of this paper however, is not to look at the global impact of *Macbeth*. Rather, it focuses on a critical investigation of its impact on the African continent, particularly looking at what makes *Macbeth*, as a text, have a relevant re-contextualized approach to the African setting. The study adopts the textual analysis as its methodology. The approach being descriptive also helps to understand why there have been many re-contextualizations of *Macbeth*. In South Africa the play has been adapted into the contentious *uMabatha* by Welcome Msoomi, in Nigeria as *Macbetus* by Femi Osofisan and *Aare Akogun* by Wale Ogunyemi etc. This paper has therefore examined these adaptations and discovered that the social realities, political attitudes and cosmic totality as demonstrated in *Macbeth*, are closely-knit and intrinsic to Africa hence the re-contextualization. The paper concludes that contemporary realities in the social, political and economic spheres in some African countries still reflect what Shakespeare conceived so many years ago.

Bio:

Joseph Tertsea Ikyoive holds a Bachelor of Arts Honours degree in Theatre Arts from Benue State University. He also holds a Master of Arts degree in Theatre from Nigeria's premier university, the University of Ibadan. He has completed his thesis for the award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree with the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. He also teaches drama at UKZN's Edgewood campus. He has presented at and published papers in local and international conferences and journals. He has also published a book titled *Playwriting and the Playwright in Nigerian Drama*. He is a poet, public speaker and essayist. His works of fiction include *The Touch of a Prostitute*, *So short a letter and other letters* and *The Convict*.

Name: Mbongeni Z. Malaba

Affiliation: University of KwaZulu-Natal, English Programme, Pietermaritzburg Campus

Title: *Coriolanus* and Africa

Abstract:

Studying Shakespeare helps us understand what it means to be human. This paper highlights the universal impact of the Bard by analysing the political significance of his Roman plays, with particular reference to *Coriolanus*. The study foregrounds Shakespeare's scrutiny of various forms of governance, and in considering their merits and demerits, he reveals the murky nature of politics and focuses on the fact that mastery of "policy" (political machinations) is essential to leaders' survival. In *Julius Caesar*, the imperial model is subtly undercut by Caesar's colossal ego and the populace's expectations. In *Antony and Cleopatra* the notion of 'collective government' is undermined by the triumvirs' personal ambitions and Antony's dereliction of duty. *Coriolanus* explores, humorously, the complex notion of "honour" through the portrayal of a protagonist who is constitutionally incapable of dissembling. Coriolanus's integrity proves to be the source of his undoing. Unable to dissemble, Coriolanus is outmanoeuvred by the wily Tribunes, Sicinius Velutus and Junius Brutus, who manipulate the fickle citizens into refusing to confirm the election of Coriolanus as a Consul. Deceit and double dealing, which lie at the heart of political activity are anathema, to Coriolanus, and his visceral hatred of commoners render him unlikely to succeed as a politician. This play, along with Shakespeare's other tragedies and "history plays" have stood the test of time as they address the dilemma of which mode of governance is best suited to the human temperament.

Bio:

Mbongeni Zikhethale Malaba is a Professor of English Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. Prior to joining UKZN, he was an Associate Professor and Head of the English Department at the University of Namibia. He lectured at the University of Zimbabwe for many years. He has published extensively on Shakan, South African as well as Zimbabwean literature and Namibian poetry written in English.

Panel Two: Star-crossed lovers in the present: Conceptualisations of
Romeo and Juliet in South Africa

Name: Chandré Botha and Chris Broodryk

Affiliation: University of Pretoria

Title: A South African *Romeo and Juliet*: Gender Identity in Minky Schlesinger's *Gugu and Andile*

Abstract:

This paper examines how gender identity has been represented in a filmic adaptation of Shakespeare's play text *Romeo and Juliet*. By examining Minky Schlesinger's South African adaptation entitled *Gugu and Andile* (2009) and comparing it to Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) and Baz Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* (1996), comparisons can be made and points of overlap and divergence can be found. This paper explores a number of facets concerning the conceptual conversation between Shakespeare and South Africa. Specifically, I emphasise how 'Shakespeare' (a term unpacked in the paper) informs notions of gender identity and how postcolonial studies serve as a framework in which to locate relevant discourses on Shakespeare and South Africa. The definition of gender identity used is based on the intersections of the discourse on identity and gender by Erving Goffman, Judith Butler and Michel Foucault.

Focusing on the use of Shakespeare with constructions of power (in terms of race, culture and gender) in mind and how colonialisation itself may be modelled upon power relations of femininity and masculinity, this paper interrogates filmic adaptations of *Romeo and Juliet* prior to Schlesinger's adaption and how these films shape a critical reading of *Gugu and Andile*. The analysis of the three films examines the *mise-en-scène* in order to establish how each film commented on, subverted or maintained notions of gender identity. The textual analysis also focuses on two specific scenes: Act 2, Scene 2 (the famous 'balcony scene') and the closing scene of each film.

This paper found that, despite obvious differences in language and spatiotemporal setting, Zeffirelli and Schlesinger's films reproduced outmoded representations of gender identity. In contrast, Luhrmann's film commented on and subverted traditional notions of gender identity and experimented with homoerotic undertones. Postcolonial productions of Shakespeare often only move the plot to a specific spatiotemporal context and do not address the ideological or aesthetic issues of Shakespeare in colonised countries. The story of *Romeo and Juliet* is moved spatiotemporally, but the political issues of the era are not addressed, merely acknowledged as being present. The same can be said for the constant way that gender is portrayed in the film.

Bios:

Chandré Botha started her academic career with a degree in Drama and Film from the University of Pretoria with an additional major in English Literature. In 2011 she completed her BA (Honours) in drama and film specializing in acting, directing and digital media. Botha completed her MA (Drama and Film Studies) in 2015 at the University of Pretoria. Her dissertation focused on Minky's Schlesinger's filmic adaptation of Romeo and Juliet to a South African context focusing on the representation of gender in the film. At present, she is a freelance performer.

Chris Broodryk lectures Drama and Film Studies at the Drama Department of the University of Pretoria. He holds a doctorate in Film Studies from the University of Cape Town. He has delivered conference papers and published on political cinema, specifically in relation to Afrikaans and South African cinemas. While he continues to explore these topics, he is also interested in documentary filmmaking, depth psychology, the intersections between film and theology (particularly the failures of evangelical filmmaking), and the Digital Humanities. Broodryk is currently supervising a number of postgraduate research projects, ranging from film studies and adaptation studies, to screendance and modes of intermedial performance. He has appeared on kykNET and e.tv to discuss issues pertaining to particular films and cultural events, and has been interviewed by RSG a number of times about visual culture, film festivals and media events.

Name: Sarah Roberts

Affiliation: University of the Witwatersrand

Title: Manhattan's West Side on Africa's East Coast: Re-Imagining *West Side Story* on stage in Durban 2013

Abstract:

This paper is prompted by the production of the Robbins/Bernstein's classic on the Kwa Zulu Natal Opera stage which I had the privilege of designing. This task epitomizes the extent to which creative practice requires a synthesis of a rigorously disciplined audit of the text's requirements, a thorough understanding of how to mobilize the mechanics of a particular theatre along with an embedded appreciation of contemporary critical concepts and cultural debates. The opportunity to address the unique challenges of *West Side Story* entails accommodating the much celebrated choreography of Jerome Robbins. Recordings, both visual and aural, rather than a printed document become crucial reference points guiding the way a new production might be imagined. Visualizing the production in relation to the South African *Soweto Story* (2007) stimulated my thinking through a number of conceptual questions regarding local theatre making, specifically in relation to staging Shakespeare or any classic text today.

This illustrated paper reflects on core questions being opened up by this colloquium: as early as 1957 *West Side Story* is a clear example of decolonizing Shakespeare in a radical way, contesting the exclusive association of Shakespearean dramaturgy with literary scholarship and demanding that the theatrical languages of sound, space and the body are manipulated, taking precedence over printed/spoken word. *West Side Story* is a ready transposition from a Renaissance Anglo-European order into the so-called New World. I argue that this "musical" is an iconic example of re-writing Shakespeare in terms of popular culture and idiom: it is a bold dismantling of the school classroom associations of Shakespeare with laboriously studying the text as a literary and poetic masterpiece.

I anchor my approach to both Shakespeare and *West Side Story* in the propositions of Jonathan Miller regarding the "afterlife" of a text. Reflecting on the origins of *West Side Story* and its extended process of development reveals a number of issues that enable problematizing what is at stake in traditional notions of the authority of the word and the status of Shakespeare within the literary and dramatic canon. More crucially, these reflections provide penetrating insights into the nature of theatre as a medium. Both Bernstein (music) and Sondheim (lyricist) are provocative in deliberating issues central to the collaborative creative process that is theatre-making. Identifying core propositions from their collaboration, I will briefly address the *Soweto Story* initiative. I then address some design choices for the local production in response to the challenges of text and context.

Bio:

Sarah Roberts has enjoyed a distinguished career in South African theatre and is the recipient of numerous awards for set and costume designs, among them nominations and awards for *West Side Story* and other major productions staged at the KZN Playhouse. She had the privilege of being invited to design costumes for the Wexford Festival Opera production of *Koanga* (2015), has just designed *Saturday Night Fever* (State Theatre, Pretoria) and is working on the forthcoming production of *The Sound of Music* (KZN Playhouse 2016). A graduate of UKZN (Durban), she completed her MA and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Theatre Studies in Cardiff (Wales) and her PhD at the University of the Witwatersrand where she is an Associate Professor in the Division of Theatre and Performance. Her areas of expertise synthesize critical thinking and creative practice in the areas of design, contemporary dramaturgy/theatre writing and improvised performance. She is currently working on developing the libretto for a multi-lingual opera for female voices under the auspices of the MA Creative Writing programme at the School of Literature, Languages and Media at Wits University.

Key Note Address 2:
Prof. Chris Thurman
Shakespeare: We Need New Names

Abstract:

This paper takes its title (rather cheekily, and perhaps inappropriately) from NoViolet Bulawayo's 2013 novel. It is based on the premise that the way we *talk* about Shakespeare – the vocabulary we use – affects the way that we *think* about Shakespeare. Of course, the reverse is also true, but I want to propose that “we need new names” when it comes to discussing Shakespearean manifestations around the world.

This raises a number of questions in light of the theme of our colloquium. What is the relationship between the project of “decolonising Shakespeare” and categories such as “postcolonial Shakespeare”? Is this category, like “foreign Shakespeare” or “global Shakespeare”, just a variation on the old saw about Shakespearean universality – or, alternatively, one that is limited by challenging “colonial” Shakespeare on its own terms? Have we reached the point of “post-postcolonial Shakespeare”? How can we reconfigure the notion of Shakespeare “for all time” – a supposedly *timeless* Shakespeare – so that, instead, we can understand the nuances of a *timely* Shakespeare?

Recently I have been exploring the possibilities of a framework based on Shakespearean “singularity” – or, rather, “singular” Shakespeares. Singularity has previously been employed in assessments of what it is that made Shakespeare distinct from his contemporaries and has made him distinct from all other writers since. But if, instead of applying singularity as a working concept in understanding the *creation* of Shakespeare's dramatic works, we consider their *reception*, we may find that “singular” performances, adaptations, interpretations, translations and pedagogical readings of Shakespeare are in fact the opposite of “universal”.

When it comes to singular Shakespeares, to put it crudely, Shakespeare is the means and not the end. I wish to consider the implications of such an assertion for actors, directors, scholars, audiences, teachers, learners and (crucially) translators in a South African context.

Bio:

Chris Thurman is an Associate Professor in the English Department at the University of the Witwatersrand. He is also a columnist for *Business Day* and a freelance arts writer.

Thurman is the editor of *South African Essays on 'Universal' Shakespeare* (Ashgate, 2014) and *Sport versus Art: A South African Contest* (Wits University Press, 2010). His other books are the monograph *Guy Butler: Reassessing a South African Literary Life* (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2010); *Text Bites*, a literary anthology for high schools (Oxford University Press, 2009); and *At Large: Reviewing the Arts in South Africa*, a collection of his arts journalism (Common Ground, 2012), with a follow-up collection, *Still at Large: Dispatches from South Africa's Frontiers of Politics and Art*, coming out with Unisa Press in 2017.

Thurman has edited the journal *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* since 2009 and was recently elected president of the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa. He is a former adjudicator of the *Sunday Times* Fiction Prize, the University of Johannesburg Literary Awards and the M-Net Literary Prize, and was inaugural chair of the judging panel for the South African Arts Journalism Awards.

Thurman's research is supported by the National Research Foundation (South Africa) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Germany).

**Panel Three: Black Women Speak Out – Reflecting and
Recontextualising Shakespeare in Performance in South Africa**

Name: Ayanda Khala-Phiri

Affiliation: University of KwaZulu-Natal

Title: Transformation's Tempest: the Academy as the cultural Diaspora

"Although no contemporary white academic would dare to use the crude language of their forebears, the core assumption that informed the school Kaffir image- that Africans will assert competence when they have none- is very much alive and well"

Zine Magubane

Abstract:

This performed paper re-imagines Shakespeare's *The Tempest* as a site for exploring the effects of an ailing transformation agenda on the black Higher education student. For the purposes of the research, this student, Miranda, is framed as the "School kaffir"- a protagonist practice-as-researcher, an academic-illiterate and a student of previous and present disadvantage. The antagonist is the island academy- a space of violent displacement and cultural diaspora, the catalyst the ensuing storm of curriculum responsiveness to changing knowledge economies.

This study attempts to demonstrate how a learned [and embodied] language of otherness, pedagogical alienation and a desperate desire to learn begin to intersect in the intimate educational space of performance studies. What role does the performance studies curriculum play in contesting institutional culture that is violent to black bodies and minds? How are notions of redress, power and dislocation manifested in the ways in which education is performed within our approaches to theatricality and performance? Demonstrated in and through the body in performance, this research attempts to interpret the tensions in the experience of belonging and not belonging, education and miseducation in the post-liberation, post-merger South African higher education institution.

KEYWORDS: School kaffir, cultural diaspora, institutional violence, institutional culture, curriculum, language, belonging, transformation, performance studies

Bio:

Born in Pimville, Soweto, Mandela Rhodes fellow Ayanda Khala-Phiri is an Education and Development Studies doctoral researcher at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Her areas of expertise are in Performance Studies as well as Applied Theatre. Khala-Phiri is an accredited IGCSE Drama teacher whose experience in education includes work as a Performance studies lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand (2011-2014) and the University of Pretoria (2013). In addition she has served as curriculum co-ordinator and secondary school theatre arts educator at Maru-a-Pula School in Gaborone, Botswana (2008-2011) as well as a part-time Drama teacher at St Peter's College in Sunninghill, Johannesburg. Khala-Phiri also served as Programme Manager at the reputable NPO Themba Interactive where her skills as performer, writer and director were utilised in HIV/Aids related social redress programmes including peer-education in correctional centre facilities in Limpopo, the North West Province and Gauteng.

Khala-Phiri is a skilled and innovative theatre facilitator and director, passionate about embodied forms of knowledge and the role of the arts in advocacy and social justice work. She has directed various productions including *My Father's Hat* (Grahamstown Arts Festival, 2009), Robin Malan's *The Boy Who Walked Into The World* (Maitisong Festival, Gaborone, 2011) and *Touch* (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2014). Most recently, she performed and co-created a performed research conference paper titled *The Last Commission* (Inter-Disciplinary.Net Conference, Budapest, 2016). Khala-Phiri continues to be an avid theatre studies scholar. Her academic qualifications include a certificate in Broadcast Television, a BA in Dramatic Arts and an MA in Dramatic Arts: Theatre as Education, Activism and Therapy.

Name: Noxolo Matete

Affiliation: University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus

Title: Reflections on a Black Paulina: A Personal Post-apartheid Black South African Female Tale recounted from a postcolonial feminist retrospective perspective

Abstract:

While Elizabethan England society was predominantly Caucasian, the racial landscape did indeed include people of colour. Writing around the presence of black people in Elizabethan England, Gustav Ungerer states:

We must, moreover, bear in mind that the Elizabethans had witnessed the haphazard attempts made by the authorities to accommodate the presence of black Africans and Moors to the structure of Elizabethan society (Ungerer, 2008: 19).

Schultz (2002: 6) similarly notes that 'Shakespeare knew people of color. He walked through their neighbourhoods every day.' The presence of Black persons, or 'blackamoors' as they were often referred to, caused apprehension within wider England society. In a chapter titled *Surveying 'race' in Shakespeare*, Hendricks notes that 'in the writings of the day, the Moors were described as subtle, 'stubborn', 'bestial' and 'intolerant' (Alexander & Wells, 2000:3). Even some of Shakespeare's own work bears an awareness to the racial dynamics of the society in which he existed, as he 'himself would incorporate race into at least eight of his plays' (Schultz, 2002: 5).

Even against the backdrop of the negative connotations that were predominantly ascribed to people of colour, Shakespeare's characters of colour were not marginalised, powerless and voiceless. In an article titled *Shakespeare in Black and White*, Gontar Notes:

In scripts featuring European people in their dealings with Africans he [Shakespeare] is centuries ahead of his time. Instead of portraying blacks as poor oppressed bondsmen bereft of culture and education, in three plays he gives us well-developed black characters, Aaron in *Titus Andronicus*, the Prince of Morocco in *The Merchant of Venice*, and Othello, all models of breeding, intelligence and *savoir-faire*, full of promise but increasingly tragic (website 1)

Interestingly however, is that these aforesaid black characters, although tragic heroes, are also only male figures. While the presence of black women is not explicitly mentioned in any of the aforementioned plays, their absence can be presumed when considering their black male counterparts, whose blackness becomes a key factor within the respective narratives in which they are constructed; further, these are male characters, who, despite their blackness occupy positions of social status and influence.

If the process of colonization located the black woman as the epitome of marginalization, then a postcolonial feminist interrogation of Shakespeare calls for the significant inclusion and voice of this historically relegated identity. This

paper employs Narrative Inquiry, and is an auto-ethnographic, retrospective study around my personal experience of playing Paulina in a 2007 University of KwaZulu-Natal production of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, as a Black South African female in a post-apartheid context. From a postcolonial feminist perspective, this paper seeks to give voice to my personal experience of representing a colonial European woman on a post-apartheid stage and to explore the meanings that are then unearthed when this character was re-imagined through my blackness.

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Bio:

Noxolo Matete (nee Malimba) studied at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), where she obtained a Masters cum laude in Drama and Performance Studies. Her dissertation, titled *Writing Black Sisters: Interrogating the Construction by Selected Black Female Playwrights of Performed Black Female Identities in Contemporary Post-apartheid South Africa in Contemporary Post-apartheid Theatre*, argued that while apartheid legislation and discourses have often perceived 'black women' as a homogeneous category of identity, there indeed exists differences and specificities within female identities and specifically, Black South African female identities. Exploring six post-apartheid plays by six South African Black females, her dissertation focused on the articulation of the performed identities of South African females within the historically contrived racial categories of 'Bantu' Black/ness, Coloured Black/ness and Indian Black/ness in a post-1994 South African theatre context. She has worked as a lecturer at the Durban University of Technology's Drama department, tutored across various subjects at UKZN from 2008 until present and worked as Publications Officer at UKZN's Centre for Creative Arts from 2011 until 2014. Since 2014, she has been employed as a permanent lecturer in the Drama and Performance department at UKZN on Howard College Campus. As an actress, she has played several lead roles in Shakespeare and Greek theatre stage productions, has written a play and directed three plays.

Name: Pumelela Nqelenga

Affiliation: University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus

Title: Iago is Black; Queer; Woman and Woke! Performing Iago and her crucial role in layering critical meaning to South Africa's issues of race, gender and power in the play *Moor* (2013). A performer's reflective analysis.

Abstract:

Bianca: To what end, Iago. For what purpose?

Iago: (long pause, thinking) When I have tried to talk to him I realized that, though ties of blood made us kin, though I could see a shadow of my face in his face, though there was an echo of my voice in his voice, we were forever strangers, speaking a different language, living on vastly distant planes of reality. He who is reluctant to recognize me opposes me.

In 2013, I performed William Shakespeare's Iago who is a black queer woman in *Moor* directed by Jess Harrison at the National Arts Festival 2013. The play is an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Othello* and Charles Marowitz's black power inspired *Othello* (1974). In Marowitz's version Iago is a black man "who is made to challenge Othello as the model of all blacks who, by capitulating to the values of the white world, offer themselves as scapegoats to racial bigotry" (Neill: 2008). *Moor* adds more layers to this with writings from black consciousness authors from the United States of America and South Africa. Furthermore, *Moor* translates Shakespeare's English to the idiomatic language of isiXhosa. Additionally *Moor* subverts Marowitz's black man Iago to a black queer woman who speaks both English and isiXhosa. This play is loosely based in South Africa but has references to the Elizabethan era and the Civil Rights era. This liminal setting helps place focus on the themes and the political economy of race and gender. This will be analyzed through an intersectionality lens. In *Moor* the notion of invisibility has a price and speaks to violence *of* and *to* the invisibility.

This paper will attempt to unpack the multiple layers that a black queer woman Iago brings to the play and the meanings it has for a contemporary South African audience. From a performer's perspective, I aim to theorize the process of creating a black queer woman Iago who speaks to the complexities of blackness in post-Apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, I will speak to the relationship between Iago (originally a white man), who masks himself to the point of invisibility, and him being replaced by a black queer woman who is rendered invisible in the South African socio-political context. Lastly this paper will look at language as a tool of power and meaning in the play *Moor*. This paper will be presented as a performance and oral presentation.

KEYWORDS: Othello; Shakespeare; intersectionality; queer; black consciousness; moor; Iago; Charles Marowitz

Bio:

PUMELELA 'PUSH' NQELENGA was born and raised in East London, Mdantsane. She matriculated from Clarendon Girls' High School in 2007. Nqelenga graduated from the university that is currently known as Rhodes University in Grahamstown, Eastern Cape. She graduated with a Masters in Drama (Contemporary Performance) with Distinction. Her other qualifications include an Honours Degree in Drama majoring in Physical Theatre, Applied Theatre and Contemporary Theatre and a Bachelor of Journalism and Media Studies majoring in Television and New Media.

While studying, Nqelenga co-founded the Upstart Self-Development workshops, which are designed to equip young people, from the townships of Grahamstown east, with the ability of personal awareness as well as skills needed to deal with issues they face daily through the medium of voice projection, physical training and theatre devices. For her work in the Upstart Self-Development workshops, Nqelenga was awarded the 2012 Community Engagement Gold Scholarship Award at Rhodes University for her service learning with Upstart.

Nqelenga has a deep interest in Oral Performance and Nguni Performance. She has created lecture series both at Rhodes University and the University Of KwaZulu-Natal on the use of Oral Poetry in South African Contemporary Theatre. Subsequently, Nqelenga presented a paper on this topic at the University of Botswana in 2014.

Ms Nqelenga is a versatile theatre practitioner who has been performing since 2008 in productions ranging from professional work that has been performed in festivals around the country and post-graduate student productions. In 2015 she performed in the National Arts Festival in the Standard Bank Award winning production *Inqindi*. She has worked with theatre companies such as Ubom! Eastern Cape Theatre Company and First Physical Theatre. She has had the privilege of performing under the mentorship of award winning performers, choreographers and directors such as Andrew Buckland, Mandla Mbothwe, Janet Buckland, Alex Sutherland, Alan Parker, Gavin Krastin, Acty Tang and Nomcebisi Moyikwa.

Currently, Ms Nqelenga is a drama lecturer at the University of KwaZulu Natal in Pietermaritzburg and she is the coordinator for Movement for undergraduate and post-graduate studies. She has founded a new festival called New Movement that showcases young student choreographers.

Panel Four: Resonance and Relevance: Shakespeare across the Globe

Name: Prof Deborah Arlene Lutge

Affiliation: Durban University of Technology

Title: "A rose by any other name..." Multiple Directorial Readings Across Histories and Cultures

Abstract:

"Dialogism reneges on purist persistence, while the purist contextualizes the reframing."
Genbia Hyla

Context has become pivotal in connecting agency and ownership across histories and cultures in a realignment of paradigms. In *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture*, Bharucha alludes to acknowledging the fundamental principles as imperative guides to underlying traditional narratives embedded in residual texts prior to reconstructed interpretations concluded via the theatrical idiom (1993: 74). Construction, Deconstruction and Reconstruction all signify points of departure from boundaries and traditional restrictiveness. Don Johnson in *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare: The World's Shakespeare 1660-Present Volume II* refers to the multiple worlds encoded in Shakespearean interpretation and the current dramatic function as political critique and mass agency (2016: 1240). Dialogism acknowledges shifts and counterpoints in interpretation as well as negotiates how the reinterpretations function as valuable social signifiers.

Examining four productions of *Much Ado About Nothing* performed at one 2016 Festival elicits a comparative analogy revealing socio-culturally distinct identities that evidence the influences of both national boundaries and directorial concept. The interplay between written text, production text, and audience reception then acts to qualify and justify relevance, irrespective of creative intention. Annia Loomba and Martin Orkin in "Introduction: Shakespeare and the Post-colonial Question" concur:

Current scholarship has offered sophisticated readings of the webbed relations between state power, the emergence of new classes and ideologies, the reshaping of patriarchal authority, the development of the idea of an English nation, sexual practices and discourses, and the real and imaginary experiences of English people in the Americas, Africa and Asia" (2003: 4).

In multiple readings is it possible to remain true to the intentions of the originating text? In theatre is truth owed to the writer, the artistic rereading or the audience? In reimagining a world splintered by the contexts - articulated, recalculated or rephrased – who owns transmission? In appropriated Canonical texts are colonially entrenched notions remarginalizing or narrativising Diasporas anew?

Bio:

DUT Drama and Production Studies under Associate Professor Deborah Arlene Lutge's leadership was acknowledged as "... forward thinking ..." and:

"... among the most visionary, effective, industrious and productive drama departments in the country."

Lutge and students under American Prof Richie's observation received these accolades:

*"The experience was deep, profound and transformed my life,
my
teaching, and probably my own work...."*

In 2014 Lutge was honoured in the production *Reunion* by her institution and students after 25 years of service, a tribute carried by Durban papers.

Intercultural Educational Contributor on Great Lakes Theatre Complex's *The Dybbuk* and serving on 1994 ATHE Conference Forum with Oscar Brockett, award-winning international performer/director Lutge was the first South African to direct: *West-Side Story*; *A Dance of the Forests*; *People of Heaven* with "the potential to find its place on the list of major South African drama works"; the "unusual" and "profound deconstruction" *Hamlet Deconstructed*; a "ground-breaking" *Coriolanus* written up in the 2016 Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare; the first professional production of Lewis Nkosi's *The Black Psychiatrist* (nominated in 2013) etc.

The first African director invited to present at the prestigious Folkwang Shakespeare Festival in 2016, her numerous, highly-lauded productions cross genres: *The King and I*; *Threepenny Opera*; *EVITA* staged at the Playhouse Drama; *Conduct of Life*; *Campbell's Collage*; 2007 Mahatma Gandhi International Peace and Reconciliation Awards entertainment at Durban City Hall; Deputy President Jacob Zuma's 60th birthday celebration the Hilton Hotel, Durban; the picturesque award-winning *Rashomon*; *The Serpent* (Assistant Director) commemorating 25 years since the Kent State Shootings [USA].

Lutge, regional professional theatre judge for fifteen years, is credited with: the DUT Drama Conservatoire approach; initiating 90s Campus Street-Theatre; founding three festivals. Lutge, holding a MA/MFA [KSU: USA], serves as Board Member of Twist, RITE Studios, and as CCIFSA KZN General Councillor (Arts Education/Training).

Name: Tamar Meskin

Affiliation: University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus

Title: To play is the thing: (re)imagining Shakespeare on a post-colonial stage

Abstract:

In 1938, Antonin Artaud declared that there should be “no more masterpieces” (1974); as Brustein (1967: 186) observed, this is a demand to “free the energies of great classical plays, . . . [and] to liberate these works from libraries and museums”. Given this perspective, the only way to engage Shakespeare is to (re)imagine and (re)invent its purpose for this time and place. In this paper, I will use a self-study methodology (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2010; Samaras, 2011) to interrogate my own work as a theatre-maker, directing Shakespearean plays in South Africa, starting from 1995 and culminating in the work I am staging at this Festival.

The process begins with the question: why do Shakespeare at all, given its baggage-laden status? One cannot ignore the fact that “in the mission of colonization ‘Shakespeare’ was reframed and appropriated by the British Empire to tout British literature, culture, and white Europeans as superior to non-European people, culture, and literature” (Eward-Mangione, 2014: 2), or that Shakespeare is tainted with apartheid’s legacy. Given this history, the post-colonial project of writing back (Ashcroft *et al*, 1989) becomes a critical element in the practice of playing with Shakespeare. If we are to remove from it its ‘masterpiece’ status, if we are to take it out of the museum of literary and theatrical history, and (re)invigorate, (re)animate, and (re)imagine it for our time and space, we must do so with a consciousness of that baggage and legacy, without being crippled by it. The Shakespeare text is clearly not neutral in our space. Nonetheless, I contend that there is something in the theatrical power of the Shakespearean narrative that offers a profoundly important weapon in the post-colonial theatre-maker’s arsenal. Shakespeare’s plays provide a window into addressing some of the key questions of our time. It is possible to use the works in profound political ways; Shakespeare is malleable, not locked into one correct meaning. It therefore offers us the possibility to foment the decolonization of the mind (Ngugi, 1986).

For me, this is what doing Shakespeare’s plays is about –making us think differently; when we (re)invent, (re)inscribe, (re)write that meaning, we are, in essence, decolonizing that play for our own time and space and purpose. In doing so, I suggest, we are taking Shakespeare out of the museum, and (re)imagining it, (re)positioning it, for our own purposes. We must, after all, play with and through Shakespeare in order to give it new meanings and make it speak to and for us, or, as Marowitz (1999) so aptly suggests, restart the stopped clock; if we play enough, we may just find the spark that kindles the muse of fire.

Bio:

Tamar Meskin is a lecturer in the Drama and Performance Studies programme at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, where her primary research areas are directing, acting, writing and multi/intercultural performance practices. She is currently pursuing self-study doctoral research investigating her directing practice as a theatre-maker in a university context, and is particularly interested in the applicability of self-study approaches to practice-based/led research in the performing arts. Her undergraduate studies were conducted at the University of Natal (Durban) where she graduated *cum laude*. Awarded the Emma Smith Overseas Scholarship, she then went on to complete her MFA in Acting at the University of California, Los Angeles. Since returning to South Africa, she has directed over 40 productions, including seven major Shakespearean productions, as well as the critically acclaimed inter-institutional *FrontLines* project with colleague Tanya van der Walt. She has co-written productions and also performs when she can. She has presented papers at several national and international conferences, most recently at the IFTR Conference in Barcelona, Spain (2013) and the South African Educational Research Association Conference (2015). Recent publications include papers in *Perspectives in Education* and *Educational Research for Social Change*, as well as book chapters in *Applied Drama/Theatre as Social Intervention in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts* (Barnes & Coetzee, 2014) and *Volicing Trauma and Truth: Narratives of Disruption and Transformation* (Bray & Bray, 2013).

Name: Dr Sandra Young

Affiliation: University of Cape Town

Title: Shakespeare's transcolonial solidarities: Global Shakespeare as seen from the South

Abstract:

The emergence of 'global Shakespeare' has already gone a long way to making it possible for Shakespeare studies to acknowledge some of the struggles around race and anti-colonialism across the globe. And yet, while global Shakespeare thrives as a field of interest, its current place within the discipline makes it possible for it to remain somehow circumscribed. The celebration of Shakespeare's cultural evolution across the world would seem to affirm Shakespeare's global influence and it certainly adds variety to the more familiar shape of Shakespeare studies. However, this does not necessarily lead to a revision of the critical landscape and it is not clear to what extent the development of the field has transformed the cultural politics of 'Shakespeare'. Certainly, the preoccupation with the global signals a critical openness to non-traditional centres of Shakespeare scholarship and theatre practice. However, the real value of an expanded vista is arguable in the shifts it generates for the whole field. The value of a transformed Shakespeare that is recognizably global and plural is not simply the richer variety of the subject matter it can accommodate or its celebration of difference in – what Ania Loomba has dismissed as the 'simplistic "all is hybrid multicultural"' approach to cultural studies, in her critique of a certain mode of uncritical postcolonial scholarship. Rather, the expanded view generated by a more encompassing methodology has the potential to transform some of the fundamental assumptions underpinning the field, and in the process liberate scholars, theatre-makers and Shakespeare himself.

In this paper, therefore, I would explore what it would mean for us to take seriously the critical frame of the global south and the lateral view it privileges, across the Indian and Atlantic Ocean worlds. How does Shakespeare's work resonate culturally and politically in contemporary Africa, and beyond the oceans on either side of its coastlines? While scholars have celebrated Shakespeare's availability as a resource for writers, activists and politicians during anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggles, contemporary theatre-makers have used Shakespeare in a manner that complicates the dichotomies of earlier histories. Shakespeare's evolving cultural presence across the global south speaks to the renewal that it is possible when he ceases to be thought of as the privileged route to creative and humanist affirmation or a mainstay of English colonial education. Contemporary writers and theatre-makers, alert to what Françoise Lionnet calls 'transcolonial solidarity' – creative and political empathy across oceans of difference in time and place – have helped to reanimate Shakespeare's work.

Bio:

Sandra Young convenes the Masters Programme in the English Department at the University of Cape Town. Her first book, *The Early Modern Global South in Print: Textual Form and the Production of Human Difference as Knowledge* (Ashgate, 2015) traces the emergence of the early modern global south. She has published on Shakespeare (race in *Othello*, recognising *Hamlet* in the global south, the Africanisation of *The Tempest*, 'Shakespeare without Borders'), race and the public sphere in the nineteenth-century New York, and testimonial narratives in the aftermath of apartheid. She has been a Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the Global Shakespeare Programme, Queen Mary University London, and a Research Fellow at the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. Her current book projects consider the resonances of 'Shakespeare in the Global South' for contemporary cultural studies and 'An Intimate Archive: Life Narrative in the Aftermath of Apartheid'.

PANEL CHAIRS – (additional) BIOS

Lliane Loots:

Loots is a lecturer in the Drama and Performance Studies Programme on the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Durban) campus. She has a master's degree in Gender Studies and is presently pursuing her PhD on African contemporary dance performance. She works, part-time, as the dance journalist for *The Mercury* – a local daily newspaper in KwaZulu-Natal, and is delighted to hold the founding position of Artistic Director for the Centre for Creative Arts's annual *JOMBA! Contemporary Dance Experience*. She is the artistic director of the 13 year old and award winning *FLATFOOT DANCE COMPANY*.

Prof Marié-Heleen Coetzee:

Prof Coetzee is head of the Department of Drama at the University of Pretoria. Her research interests include drama/theatre-based methodologies, embodied learning, and cross-cultural theatre and performance praxis. She has presented papers and workshops at national and international conferences, contributed scholarly publications, received the Paddy Crean award for her work on stage combat, and directed/choreographed productions on various platforms.

Devaksha Moodley

Moodley is a part time lecturer in Drama and Performance Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Howard College Campus. She has previously lectured in Drama Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Edgewood Campus and at AFDA in Durban. Devaksha graduated with her Bachelor of Arts undergraduate and honours degrees *cum laude* from UKZN. She then completed her Masters in Dramatic Arts with distinction at the University of the Witwatersrand. Her research focused on using theatre as a medium to confront racial tensions between Indian and black South Africans. Her play *Race Trouble*, which was part of her research, was staged at the 2013 Musho Theatre Festival and in 2016 at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown. In 2016 she begun pursuing her studies and playwriting further by starting her PhD full time at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, as one of the recipients of the NIHSS PhD / Doctoral Scholarships.

Dr. Miranda Young-Jahangeer

Dr. Young Jahangeer is the current Academic Leader for Literary Arts at UKZN. Her research is primarily in the area of Applied theatre, Prison Theatre, African popular performance, post-colonial studies, gender and identity. She has been working and publishing in these areas for over 10 years. She has an ongoing participatory theatre programme in Westville Female Correctional Centre which has been running since 2000.

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