

Newsletter

21 MARCH 2022

To mark the one-year anniversary of the *Uncovering: Women's Invisible Labour in the Cape* symposium and to celebrate Human Rights Day, this newsletter shares highlights by the team and our esteemed panelists, from the past year. It has been an exciting year for the UCD project, with new life breathed into it by the contributions of the symposium.

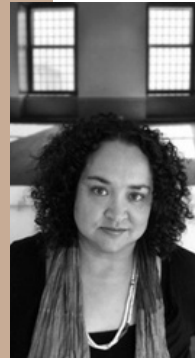
On 6 April 2021, the team presented their project as part of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam's CLUE+ webinar series, Black Lives Past and Present. Carine presented the *Under Cover of Darkness* exhibition and discussed the curatorial strategies employed in this show, whilst Jade and Nina presented the symposium and discussed their methodology and the legacy of servitude in the city of Cape Town. You can watch the webinar, [here](#).

Toni Stuart's moving *Krotoa-Eva's Suite – a cape jazz poem in three movements* is now live on the website. Toni originally performed the work in conversation with the exhibition on September 24, 2019, as part of Heritage Day celebrations.

The team continues to develop a small publication reflecting on the symposium and its layered discussions. We hope to publish it later this year and look forward to sharing it with you. As a prelude to this publication, we present: *Uncovering Slavery in the City*. A digital curation engaging with the public-access Google Maps platform that seeks to uncover legacies of slavery in the city and question criterias of memorialisation.

We hope that 2022 is a year filled with moments that deepen our understanding of what it means to be human, and one in which we expand our capacity for compassion and empathy.

The Uncovering Team



Carine Zaayman contributed an essay on *Under Cover of Darkness* to *Revisualizing Slavery* (edited by Nancy Jouwe et al.), a volume exploring the visual sources on slavery in the Indian Ocean area. As an associate of the Research Center for Material Culture in Leiden, she regularly contributes to public events focusing on the afterlives of slavery and colonialism, especially as narrated in museum spaces, as for example in *The Future of the Dutch Colonial Past*.

She designed and presented workshops on her conceptual framing of the anarchive for the *Inward/Outward* symposium organized by the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision.



Nina Liebenberg has completed her PhD dissertation and is awaiting her results. She is currently busy with post-doctoral research which she is jointly doing through UCT's Archive and Public Culture initiative and the Centre for Curating the Archive. This involves multiple digital archival curations for the APC's re-source and the CCA's digital Bleek and Lloyd project.

In April this year, she is curating an exhibition, *Diagnosing Loss*, in collaboration with the University of Oxford (*Ethox*), the Wellcome Trust, the Michaelis School of Fine Art and the Health Humanities and the Arts programme, UCT.



Since June 2021, **Jade Nair** has held the position of interim curator at Michaelis Galleries. Currently, she is co-curating the UCT Jagger Library memorial exhibition, *Of Smoke and Ash*, due to open at Michaelis Galleries, 20 April 2022.

On Friday, 25 April, she will be presenting her *Redressing Vogue* project at *Printing Fashion 2022* a digital event presented by Parsons Paris. *Redressing Vogue* uses strategies of collage to disrupt a 1955 issue of *Vogue South Africa & Rhodesia* and, more broadly, critique issues of sexism, racism and classism in the fashion industry.



**Professor
Siona
O'Connell**

The lessons of the symposium *Uncovering: Women's Invisible Labour in the Cape* continue to haunt and inspire. The conversations then, reminding us now, of the weight and traces of colonial, imperial, slave, and apartheid mapping of bodies and lives. Constitutions appear inadequate, a feeble foil in the face of unconscionable levels of violence against women and children and xenophobic attacks. As Tsitsi Dangarembga writes in her powerful novel, 'This Mournable Body' (2020), violence begets violence.

I have drawn on the rich conversations of this symposium to inform two projects: *Ballie Boys*, a documentary that examines the history of St Columba's High School, the first Christian Brothers High School for coloured boys in Athlone, Cape Town, as well as a forthcoming book, *Elandskloof: A Chronology of Loss*. The latter looks at the history, heritage, climate, risk and vulnerability of Elandskloof in the Cederberg.

"This moment gestures towards the necessary work of the creative and the imagination. We are dared to hold the past to account but equally, to continue the project of freedom and emancipation so that the legacy we bequeath is of our making."



**Zayaan
Khan**

I feel moved to share the work we did (pictured below) at the Simon's Town Museum, rethinking the initial display room, 'Before Simon's Bay'. The Simon's Town Museum collects and exhibits the history of the people of Simon's Town and their global connections.

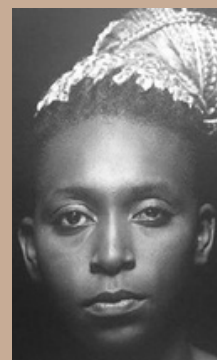
The displays at the museum have recently had a re-imagining as the multiple narratives and layered histories of Simon's Town and the diverse heritage of the area remained hidden. We reinterpreted the interrelated histories of the area looking at our ancient history embedded in land and sea and telling anecdotal stories that have become forgotten. Stories told through Salt, Tools, Kalk, Ritual, Food and so on.

We also focused on recipes, blending the traditional with recipes reclaimed from violent colonial epistemicide. The room opens up to ecological stories and histories that share realities of ecocide experienced through the brutality of colonial entry.



2021 was a long year. It took me out of my comfort zone. I am still a Sex Worker Consultant and work as the Sonke Justice Research Assistant. Last year, we compiled a report, Side-lined, which shared the experiences of sex workers throughout lockdown. I also recently completed my training as a field worker with NACOSA and their Impact Consulting Process Evaluation of Modalities, Uptake and Retention PREP in the Global Fund National Sex Worker Programme.

I am still a member of the SW Theater group, as well as the Southern Africa Sex Worker Alliance, and of KAAX (which works actively against xenophobia and all forms of discrimination). As a Human Rights Defender at WLC, I was awarded R25 000 at the SAWLA WC Gala Dinner event this year. In my free time, I am sharpening my DJ skills. It's hard to be a female, further more a Queer DJ, in a patriarchal system and we don't support each other, women, and non-binary folk enough. Please like, share, and subscribe.



**Ruvimbo
Tenga**



**Toni
Stuart**

Toni's *A Litany for Homegoing*, written in response to the *Under Cover of Darkness* exhibition, formed part of the 2021 Infecting the City festival. As pedestrians walked down Spin Street, or across Church Square, they could hear the poetic audio installation played from the Slave Lodge.

Fashion is mostly overlooked as a key site for social justice, healing and repair, but through the work of members of the African Fashion Research Institute and the Research Collective for Decoloniality and Fashion, a new kind of politics is being explored. Drs Erica Greef and Angela Jansen convene a monthly online Conversations on Decoloniality and Fashion series that brings together activists, makers, thinkers and curators to contribute towards kinder and more pluriversal, fashioning systems. Siviwe James, a researcher with the African Fashion Research Institute, will be participating with a co-curated work at the State of Fashion: Ways of Caring Biennale in Arnhem from June 2022, with a project that prompts a reflection on industrialization and excessive labour conditions as continued acts of the colonisation of indigenous, native and global south communities?

Design Futures Lab 2022 is an exciting programme that sees nine teams of selected South African creators and artists developing experiential, provocative and immersive digital narratives about sustainable fashion aimed at shaping kinder, socially-engaged, inclusive and earth-friendly futures.



**Dr Erica
de Greef**