

Johannesburg Working Group

The main case study/story of the The Johannesburg Research Group is a focus on the work of the Medu Art Ensemble (1977 - 1985)

Our research story/starting theses/theories informing study/research questions are across three research strings, namely, 1) travelling concepts, 2) radical models of arts education of the 1970s and 3) the activation of historical experiences in claiming histories. The central string is that of radical models of arts education.

The project exists as part of a wider recuperative project that seeks to map histories of arts education in southern Africa with the view to producing a more comprehensive understanding of how imported colonial models have come to assert a particular understanding of “arts education” that has often marginalised or attempted to erase the presence of existing local models. The research group aims to demonstrate the active presence of a series of local models that challenge the hegemonic status of imported models. Here we take our cue from Eduard Glissant’s understanding of histories as:

The history you ignored – or didn’t make – was it not history? (The complex and mortal anhistorical). Might you not be more and more affected by it, in your fallowness as much as in your harvest? In your thought as much as in your will? Just as I was affected (cit) by the history I wasn’t making, and could not ignore? (1969, 23)

In an earlier document the Johannesburg Research Group described its focus in the following ways:

The Johannesburg Working group finds resonance in the themes and aims of the international cluster project, ‘Histories’ which are broadly; modes of ‘inhabiting’ histories, history as a ‘resource’, disturbing hegemonial narratives of history and animating, activating counter-hegemonial narratives. The map/timeline conflation can do several things:; deconstructs the idea of progress, disrupts the idea of a calendar/rhythm, articulates questions of social justice and visualises time differently. (2015)

And:

At the same time, the research seeks to identify what might be termed “local” models of “arts education” that have emerged from this space of southern Africa. The intention is to physically map, in as detailed a fashion as possible, all these models to try and understand the evolving of arts education as a surface of jostling, overlapping, receding and dominating moments and processes that have existed with varying degrees of proximity, in their contestatory, contradictory and, at times, complementary states. In doing this, the Johannesburg Working Group seeks to establish a series of counter and complementary narratives to those that often exist as central to an understanding of arts education in

southern Africa. Just as much as the “mapping” seeks to identify models, it will include moments, events, individuals and collectives in order to reveal legacies critical to an understanding of how “arts education” might be re-imagined and practised. The presence of resistances to imported and migrated models is critical to the research project. (2015)

It is within this framework that the Johannesburg Research Group focuses its attention on the work of the Medu Art Ensemble during the period 1977 to 1985. The following excerpts from the SAHistoryOnline website provide a brief framing for the organisation and their work:

In 1977, a group of "cultural workers" from the townships fled into exile in Gaborone, Botswana; including Molefe Pheto, from Mhloti Theatre. Thami Mnyele followed in 1978. In Gaborone they established the cultural organisation Medu Art Ensemble (Medu is a SePedi word meaning roots). Medu ran units specialising in music, theatre, graphics and visual arts, photography; and "research and production" (writing). Over the eight years of its existence, Medu varied from 15 to as many as 50 members. Most were South Africa exiles.

Medu members preferred to call themselves "cultural workers" rather than "artists". The term implied that art-makers should not see themselves as elite and isolated individuals, touched by creative madness or genius; but simply people doing their work, whether painting, music or poetry.

Medu saw its aesthetic and cultural approach as rooted in the strands of South African resistance and Africanist culture...

These strands came together in principles proclaiming: our art should speak to the immediate community, to the people who brought us up, who speak to us, who are living through what has made us as we are. The arts should build self-awareness and self-image, link our people's experiences, create new understandings of our lives, and pass on these understandings. From this should come a vision of how to take our community and our people forward.

It was in this context that Medu hosted the 1982 Gaborone Culture and Resistance Festival.

After the Culture and Resistance Festival, however, Medu's position in Botswana became increasingly tenuous. SADF raids into Lesotho, Mozambique, and Swaziland, and attacks on individuals in Botswana, increased dramatically after 1982. The Botswana government, while sympathetic, pressured people to play down links with the liberation movement.

On June 14, 1985, the SADF raided Gaborone, killing twelve people, including artist Thami Mnyele, and Medu treasurer Mike Hamlyn; a number of other houses of Medu members were destroyed, and people killed in them. Medu ceased to exist overnight. Many Medu members left the country; others remained in Botswana as members of the

underground, not as artists in residence. (See more at:
<http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/medu-and-culture-liberation#sthash.D3a7pr15.dpuf>
)

The Johannesburg Research Group seeks to provide a detailed engagement with the work of the Medu Art Ensemble in order to understand how these practices speak to a reconceptualising of arts education and pedagogy in southern Africa. At the same time, following Glissant and other historians such as we situate the work of the Medu Art Ensemble in relation to, and in tension with, other informal, non-formal and formal arts education moments in existence at the time.

To this end, the Johannesburg Research Group has conducted interviews, a series of 're-enactment' (education programmes, Silkscreen Workshop In a Suitcase made the JWG and seven others by students, re-reading of Prof Kgositsile's keynote address at the 1982 'Culture and Resistance' conference, Medu Newsletters in a Time Of...made by students etc) arts-based research, education programmes with Keep The Dream Arts and mapping exercises as their key methodological strategies.

In these pages you will find unchronological moments of the past three years, mapping the work that has taken place. We see this zine as a work-in-progress document towards a Medu Art Ensemble Reader.

Tumi Mogorosi
Puleng Plessie
David Andrew
Tammy Stewart
Tracy Murinik
Rangoato Hlasane
Wits School of Arts
Keep The Dream Arts
Keleketla! Library

Traveling Suitcase



The JWG Silkscreen Workshop In a Suitcase en route to Maseru.

One of these attempts of the Medu Art Ensemble includes the conception of a mobile printing unit through the 'silkscreen workshop in a suitcase' that could produce posters on the run. The South African History Online expands:

'Medu searched for methods of producing graphics that used materials and skills that could be made available in community organisations and townships. Silkscreening could be developed as a relatively low-cost and available technology. Medu explored ways to adopt newer silkscreen (such as photo stencil) technologies to township conditions, where people might not have running water or electricity. By 1984 the graphics unit proposed producing and distributing the silkscreen workshop in a suitcase. This would be a portable box (50 cm x 75cm x15cm) with an silkscreen press that could print A2 posters, ink, squeegee, and stencil material. This would enable township organisations to make posters even under ill-equipped or illegal conditions' (SAHO)

The 1980's claimed two 'official' state of emergencies in South Africa. What has changed? The mobile printing unit, through the use of silkscreen without a darkroom was part of extended

imaginings to forge access to cultural production in a time of political suppression. The Johannesburg Working Group (JWG) of the Another Road Map Africa Cluster has imagined how this traveling suitcase would look like and what its functions could be today.

In December 2017, with the assistance of the Wits School of Arts wood workshop technician Godfrey Mahlangu, the JWG members made a 70 x 45 x 21.5 cm wooden suitcase ahead of the Another Roadmap School meeting in Maseru, Lesotho in January 2018, where its initial use took place. The suitcase was an aspect of the JWG learning unit. To date, the suitcase has been used on various occasions including:

- Rangoato Hlasane with students of Wits School of Arts, Drawing and Contemporary Practice III (Johannesburg, South Africa; February 2018)
- Rangoato Hlasane and Puleng Plessie with Wits School of Education PGCE students (Johannesburg, South Africa; May 2018)
- Another RoadMap School colloquiums (Zurich, Switzerland; June 2018)
- Wits School of Arts, Drawing and Contemporary Practice III students group (RethINK) with group of artists at Polokwane Art Museum, self-organised micro-residency (Polokwane, South Africa; August 2018)
- Puleng Plessie with students at Walter Sisulu University (East London, South Africa; September 2018)
- Wits School of Education PGCE students as part of reading Freire self-organised workshop and final exam equivalent experience (Johannesburg, South Africa; November 2018)
- Zinhle Gule with learners of Kgoro Ya Thuto as part of Artucation (Ekurhuleni, South Africa; June 2018)
- Protest t-shirts in a museum (Wits Art Museum) with learners from New Model Private College and Providence Academy (Johannesburg, South Africa; October 2018)

Additionally, between February and March 2018, students in Drawing and Contemporary Practice III at Wits School of Arts were challenged to create suitcase/s responses to Medu Art Ensemble. Led by JWG member Rangoato Hlasane, lecturer in the Fine Art department at Wits School of Arts, five groups from the 2018 cohort responded with unique suitcases, made to hit the ground in varying interest contexts (including high schools and primary schools, various university grounds, public parks and museums) in Johannesburg and Polokwane.

JWG Workshops: How to facilitate printmaking workshops by using the *Silkscreen Traveling Suitcase*.

Activation 1 - Poster Invites In 3 easy steps: Using Charcoal and ink

9 January 2018 with members from Another Roadmap School. Maseru, Lesotho.

Step 1: Prepare your space. Make sure you have a trestle table (covered so it won't get dirty), water and the *Traveling Suitcase*.



Members of Another Roadmap School setting up a table in Maseru

What is inside the *Traveling Suitcase*?



Some essential contents in suitcase

Everything you need to make a silkscreen workshop, including but not limited to: silkscreen(s), water-based silkscreen inks (no oil or acrylic), clear base extender, squeegee(s) (that fit the size of silkscreens, paper, coloured chalks, charcoal, watercolour paints, cutting knife, masking tape(s), sponges and cleaning rags etc

Notes from the suitcase...

As the SWS is a mobile activity, it is based to be located to running water. Where you are unable, bring some water in bottles. Have with you cleaning rags (old cotton shirts will do), some brushes for cleaning nails (even old toothbrush will do), a bar soap. It is also useful to have turpentine to remove some stubborn sections of the screen while still fresh.

Step 2: Draft your idea for the design in relation to theme or prompts. Prepare your compositions and designs onto the screen with charcoal, coloured chalk, watercolour paints, masking tape, paper stencils or a combination as you please. For best results, attach paper stencils and any 'positives' such as masking tape in the bottom section of the screen i.e not the inking side of the screen. The inking side is best used for direct application of charcoal, coloured chalks, watercolour paints etc.

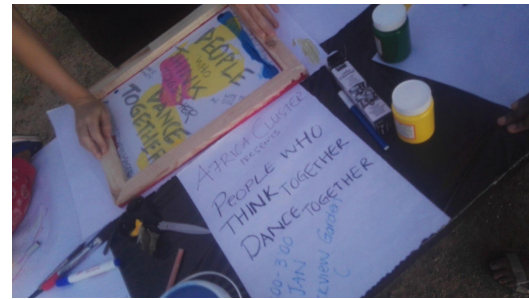
Notes from the suitcase...

When coloured chalk, charcoal and watercolour paints are used by themselves or in combination, clear base extender must be poured onto the screen. The clear extender replaces the role of ink; when the squeegee is run through, the coloured chalk, charcoal and watercolour paints transfers the image onto the paper below. Of course, as in the ARAC poster below demonstrates coloured chalk/charcoal/watercolour paints may be used in combination with inks. In this case, pour ink(s) as you wish, and add clear base extender.

Step 3:

Pour modest amounts of ink(s) as per required for the size and surface of the screen/image.

Silk-screening is a collaborative process and is best when involving at least two persons working together on one screen. Place the paper below the screen. As one holds the screen in a stable position to avoid shifts on the paper, the other applies the ink on the screen and uses the squeegee to apply the ink on the paper. First 'flood' the image surface with the ink/clear base extender, without applying strong pressure with the squeegee. Then apply moderate pressure, transferring ink/clear base extender across the image area evenly. Should you sense that the ink was not evenly distributed, then, with your collaborator still holding the screen in the original place, in a stable position, collect all the residue ink/clear base extender and pour onto the screen again, and squeegee again.



Members of ARAC making a poster for the People Who Think Together, Dance Together ritual

And there you have it



Another Roadmap Africa Cluster *People Who Think Together, Dance Together* posters up

Activation 2: A very long letter to Bra Geoff

Inauguration of newly made silkscreen in a suitcases by students in the Drawing and Contemporary Practice III at Wits School of Arts courtyard.









Wits School of Education PGCE students return the suitcase with stencils from a reading of Freire, a self-organised workshop and final exam equivalent experience (Johannesburg, South Africa; November 2018)

Activation 3 – Silkscreen as Letter Writing

3 June 2018 with participants from *HiStories Symposium*. Zurich, Switzerland.

Session 1:

Umlando and *Inganekwane*: Letter writing through collaborative storytelling

Umlando - In IsiZulu there is no HIStory, no masculine, or feminine but rather *Umlando*, a word used to define a stem of a plant or a story. This stem-story represents time, the beginning or the core essence of the story.

Inganekwane -. *Inganekwane* is an indigenous folk tale which not only tells a story but is in itself a learning tool, re-enactment and *Inkulumo-Mpendulwano* encounter, probing questions and allowing for interaction and engagement.

The *Umlando* and *Inganekwane* workshop will be facilitated by Puleng Plessie. Exploring current themes in arts education, participants will be encouraged to participate in a story telling, letter writing session, which explores an imaginary, secret and mixture of languages.

Session 2:

Travelling Suitcases: 'Silkscreen Workshop In A Suitcase' as a letter in the expanded sense Using *Umlando* (History) as a starting point to discuss The Medu Art Ensemble concept of the *Travelling Suitcase* and localising content through language, the Johannesburg Working Group aims to facilitate a printmaking session that mobilises the Travelling Suitcase - Silkscreen Workshop In A Suitcase.

Activation 4 - Protest t-shirts to address issues (3 day workshop)

25 – 27 September 2018 with students from Walter Sisulu University. East London, South Africa.

Day 1: Historical Content, Brainstorming and Discussion.

Introduction to the *Traveling Suitcase* History and discussions around Abuse. Participants are to create one sentence using a maximum of 4 words in a preferred local language. Participants present their choice of words and give reasons to the selection. A facilitated discussion around these issues begins to emerge.



Day 2: Sketching and Stenciling.

Participants are to make stencils of the 4-word sentences in preparation for the t-shirts. These stencils are made with paper, pencil and anti-cutter which found in the *Traveling Suitcase*. Note to facilitators: Must make a demonstration of the positive and negative spaces, as well as sizes for each word to be visible.



Day 3: Printing on T-shirts

Facilitator is to demonstrate the silk-screening process on a t-shirt (See Activation 1). Students are encouraged to produce their own t-shirt prints from the stencils they have produced.

Activation 5 - Protest t-shirts to in a museum (5 day workshop)

1 – 5 October 2018 with learners from New Model Private College and Providence Academy. Johannesburg, South Africa



Day 1: Kwasukasukela (Once Upon A Time) Kwasuka Sukela... Cosi - Kwasuka Sukela means 'once upon a time' and Cosi is a response for the storyteller, teacher or facilitator to continue with the story. The session will start with a storytelling session of the exhibition 'The Art of Lithography: A Collaborative Expression of LL Editions'. This was a walk about of the exhibition facilitated by the co-curator Tshegofatso Mabaso with Puleng Plessie. For each artwork learners respond with one

word.

Day 2: Cosi (Response) embodiment through Image Theatre. Learners reflect on their story and create an image that best describes this story using their bodies, this is shared with the class.



Day 3: Inganekwane Yakho (Your story) - Drawing Workshop. Inganekwane - Inganekwane is an indigenous folk tale which not only tells a story but is in itself a learning tool and re-enactment encounter, probing questions and allowing for interaction and engagement. Learners started the session with reflections of their stories and moments which allow them to capture personal narratives. This was reflected through a drawing workshop where learners were encouraged to make their stories visual on paper.



Day 4: Silk Screen Workshop



Day 5: Public Presentations



In 2016, The Johannesburg Working Group initiated one of our research modalities 'reenactment' and below is the text that served as an announcement and framework for an event, followed by a transcription of the conversation.

*

#longstorySHORT Speshal Edition, in partnership with Keleketla! Library and Wits School of Arts as part of the Another Roadmap School presents:

Khuli Skenjana reads Prof Keorapetse Kgositsiles's 1983 'Culture and Resistance in South Africa'

Sunday 9 October 2016

2-6pm

Keleketla! Library

King Kong Building, 6 Verwey Street, Troyeville.

Prof Kgositsile present as respondent, facilitated by Masello Motana

Follows with a set by Muntu Vilakazi

About Prof Keorapetse Kgositsile

Professor Keorapetse Willy Kgositsile is South Africa's National Poet Laureate and Special Adviser to the Minister of Arts and Culture.

Kgositsile has taught at a number of universities in the United States and in Africa including the University of Denver, Wayne State University, the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), and the universities of Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Fort Hare.

Kgositsile has worked in various structures and departments of the African National Congress (ANC). In exile he was a founding member of the ANC's Department of Arts and Culture and that of Education. He was also the Chairperson of the Regional Political Committee in Zimbabwe. In Botswana he worked in the underground structures of the Political/Military Council (PMC). He is a founding member of the ANC Veterans League and was a member of the ANC National Centenary Task Team.

Kgositsile is one of the most internationally acclaimed and widely published South African poets. Some of his work has been translated into many languages. His poetry collections include *My Name is Afrika*, *The Present is a Dangerous Place to Live*, *Heartprints*, *When the Clouds Clear*, *To the Bitter End*, *If I Could Sing*, *This Way I Salute You*. He has been the recipient of a number of literary awards including the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Prize, the Harlem Cultural Council Poetry Award, the Conrad Kent Rivers Memorial Poetry Award, the Herman Charles Bosman Prize. In 2008 he was awarded the National Order of Ikhamanga: Silver (OIS). He was awarded the degree Doctor of Literature and Philosophy (DLitt et Phil) (honoris causa) by UNISA in 2012.

About Khulu Skenjana

Actor extraordinaire

About Masello Motana

Masello Motana practices various artistic disciplines with zeal and originality. She is a multi-disciplinary performer that works in a variety of mediums including television, theatre, film, street performance and live music. Her diverse experience ranges from acting, singing, poetry, storytelling and intervention satire. Motana is most popularly known for her acting and presenting work on television, most recently for her lead role in the film *A Million Colours*. Her

television credits include the Emmy nominated series Home Affairs, the multi award winning soapie Isidingo, Justice For All, One, Yizo Yizo 3 and Artchaar. She was also part of an international ensemble cast of Rough, which subsequently won 9 Canadian Emmys for Best Mini Series among others. She has most recently merged presenting and comedy for the new SABC 2 show Democracy. The passionate linguist also worked as a language supervisor on set and post production, this involved coaching top South African actors in various African languages. Masello on songs and struggle:

<http://mg.co.za/article/2015-01-29-the-struggle-is-in-the-songs>

About Muntu Vilakazi

Auti e ratang music.

About #longstorySHORT

#longstorySHORT is a digital literacy project. Through interactive readings, celebs (we call them storytellers) read African stories that are then packaged into FREE podcasts for all to enjoy.

#longstorySHORT in its simplest incarnation, introduces readers to the vast community of African writers from all over the world. The podcasts are essentially "mini-adverts" for the writers and publishers featured in the series - but more importantly, the podcasts are also an important distribution channel for African writing. There's been lots of talk (and plenty screaming) about the literary value chain and how it consciously ignores African writers and readers. With the current state of affairs where our townships and rural areas don't have physical bookstores, #longstorySHORT is a pioneer in getting African stories distributed through mobile platforms. Find episodes here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr25DhgKIzOJ1HqjahMtUw>

About Keleketla! Library

Keleketla! Library is an interdisciplinary, independent library and media arts project that provides access to cultural resources and a forum in which to respond to them. Its aim is to foster cultural literacy through encouraging personal, free engagement with books, art, music, film and more.

www.keleketla.org

About Wits School of Arts

Through advancing excellence in research, teaching and learning, the Wits School of Arts combines critical inquiry with artistic practice in ways that engage in transformative ways with our contemporary urban, African and global contexts. The school houses departments: Digital Arts, Theatre and Performance, Drama for Life, Film and Television, Fine Arts, Cultural Management, History of Art and Music. More at:

<http://www.wits.ac.za/wsoa/#sthash.ugCWjFq9.dpuf>

About Another Roadmap and Another Roadmap School

Another Roadmap aims “to critically analyse cultural policies concerning arts education such as the UNESCO Road Map for Arts Education (Lisbon, 2006) and the UNESCO Seoul Agenda (Seoul, 2010) in terms of their history and terminology, subtexts and paradigms as well as their application in each geopolitical context. The groups draw on critical studies and practices in arts education in each region in order to develop paradigms for their field of practice and research.”

Intertwining HiStories is a border-crossing arts based research, action, and education project that brings stories of arts education seen from different locations in the world in communication with each other. Arts Education is traditionally thought of as very “local”, at the same time, current migration society and a globalized art field demand an understanding of educating through and in the arts in a global context. The Project proposes to contribute to this necessary development with a historical approach: because actually, the histories of arts and education have been intertwined globally for centuries.

Intertwining HiStories is a Cluster project by partners in the network Another Roadmap for Arts Education in Maseru, Johannesburg, Hong Kong, Lubumbashi, Nyanza, Vienna, Kampala/Namulanda and Geneva/Zurich. Between June 2016 and July 2018, the working groups will study histories of arts education and their global overlapping within particular case studies (“stories”). Our general research interest is: What does the intertwining of these stories mean for practices of education through and on the arts? The cluster’s work 1) examines the process through which the hegemonic narrative of history is written, 2) traces localised historical and contemporary counter-narratives to the dominant history 3) sets up a framework and builds critical tools in and through which the Cluster’s members can draw mutual benefits in view of the wider application of the respective findings.

Below is a transcription that fantastic in the middle of #FeesMustFall. Enjoy.

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Rangoato Hlasane: Medu Arts Ensemble, a network of artists, cultural workers and people working in Botswana between 1979 and 1985 [is the focus of the Johannesburg Working Group of Another Roadmap School]. Because this project is concerned with models it made sense that it’s not just a project that is concerned with writing articles and making them available in accessible spaces but rather that it actually recognises models that are here today, and one such model that we thought is absolutely fitting and also - is the #longstorySHORT project in which African literature is made available through a digital reading of texts which are made available online via YouTube.

So, this session is going to be recorded and it’s going to be recorded via this camera, and this camera, and sound. And it’s also therefor important that if people do not want to be visible to come to us at the end and we find a way, through editing and post production to find technical ways to block them out. But in a sense this is a request that please allow for this session to be recorded because Long Story Short does that to make African literature accessible.

So, I think that is the context and you are welcome here at home, hosted by Keleketla Library, it’s possible people are wondering where the books are, they are not banned, they are there and we know that we are all libraries and we hold knowledges and we share them.

So, in the spirit of Keleketla I am going to let people who bear knowledges, who share them to come on stage to share this afternoon with us. This is Professor Keorapetsie Kgositsile and this is Dr. Dalamba, this is Motana and my brother Khulu Skenjana, who is going to be the reader today. But also we also have Yewande Omotoso, who is going to take the role of introducing #longstorySHORT to everybody to understand it. Thank you, and welcome.

Yewande Omotoso: Thank you very much. Welcome everybody to this really exciting occasion. My name is Yewande Omotoso, I am an architect, I am a fiction writer as well and I had the sheer pleasure and honour to be asked to curate the first 24 stories, the first kind of ‘batch’ of what Long Story Short is. I was asked this by the brains behind #longstorySHORT, Kgaugelo, sitting over there but she wanted me to introduce it because she’s really committed to making sure that people know that #longstorySHORT is a product of a number of partnerships. So, even though the idea is hers and she’s the engine of the whole thing, there are many people who have supported, that keep the backbone up. And some of those people are the good people of Keleketla! and so it’s really exciting to be here and this is our first event, our first reading in the

city of Johannesburg, which means it's our first reading here and hopefully not our last. It is also our first reading of a non-fiction piece because up to now we have been performing the fiction pieces that I curated.

The people, the writers that have contributed to this stable, this initial of 24 stories are writers from the continent, some living in the Diaspora. They are brothers and sisters, they are Africans and the whole point of this is to speak back to the myths that firstly we are not producing work, and secondly that we are not consuming our own work. These are myths that we have to challenge really loudly and that's one of the tenets of Long Story Short. I am really excited to be here and I welcome everyone that is here and I want to do a little shout out to Professor Kole Omotoso, who is also my father, who is here. And to everyone else as well, you are all special, thank you very much and I hope you enjoy the afternoon.

Masello Motana: Oh, shem, people feel left out. Shout out to everybody, my friends, chomza [Lefifi Tladi], how are you guys doing? And the guy at the back, we see you. He works here and he still wants a shout out. My name is Masello Motana, I am the host of the Long Story Short readings, it's my pleasure to welcome you to this session. As Yewande was saying, we have been having many firsts, you know, we had our first reading in SeTswana, and then we had our first reading of flash fiction and the last reading people were asking what is 'flash fiction'. So we also introduce new styles, we upgrade this and you must download these things.

So, today's reading is really important not only because of the intersectionality of the collaboration, and today is very important because not only is it a non-fiction piece but it's also very reflective but a lot of people kept on saying it feels like de javu. And I think it's even more interesting that professor Kgositsile was part of a resistance and a part of policy making and he's also here in the aftermath of that revolution. So I think he's going to give us a lot to think and talk about in the panel after the reading. Normally at Long Story Short we have our performer who reads and afterwards we get into the discussion and for the sake of us getting a clear recording, please keep your phones on vibrate or silent because the last thing we want, imagine we are in the middle of this seriousness, next thing – ring tone – people have the weirdest ringtones. So, let's set our phones on silent and so that when it appears on YouTube the FOMO must be hardcore, so let's all get into the same website so that we can be in cruise control.

And our reader for us today, he's read for us before and he reduced people to tears because of that Thando Mqgolozana story. Khulu Skenjana is a very capable performer who dabbles across various medium from television, film, stage and platforms like live readings and so we are very looking forward to his interpretation of this important work. So, is everybody ready? Without further ado, ladies and gentlemen we are going into our reading now, please welcome Khulu Skenjana...

-----KHULU READS-----

Listen here:

<https://soundcloud.com/keleketla-library/ntatemogolo-speaks-prof-kgositsile-revists-medu-art-ensemble>

MM: Thank you very much Khulu, which was quite a journey. I think that we all have some opinions on it, I'd like to ask members of the panel to join me on stage so that we can get into our discussion segment. Please welcome professor Kgositsile Keorapetse and Dr. Lindelwa Dalamba.

Just a short introduction, Dr. Lindelwa Dalamba is a graduate of the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal and Rhodes and she specialises in areas of memory, exile, jazz. And you know jazz can be... so she's got it from A to Z. and then professor Kgositsile, I mean once you are the poet laureate of your country, I mean really, I don't know what else is the more to say, he has reached the peaks of the peaks.

Why are you so shy Ntate? Ok, let's see if we can work the, so which one is for the other children, the audience? Ok.

So, first up prof, I want to ask do you still feel the same about an artists' participation in party politics?

Professor Kgositsile: Yeah, let me see, let me say, to have a sense of social responsibility and retain your sense of relevance, I don't think there's a choice other than that even if it was reduced merely to survival let alone being vibrantly alive, otherwise cynicism becomes what I've repeatedly referred to as a dangerous cop out. I think what we need or should aspire to as artists all the time is integrity and clarity of vision, meaning that if we are not where we were planning to be we shouldn't lie about that.

MM: I'm given no choice but to ask a follow up, are 'we' the we in the sense of your peers, are you where you wanted to be within this dispensation?

PKK: I think only a retard would say we are anywhere near where we want.

MM: Ok, Lindelwa can we have your responses or your initial impressions to the paper please?

Dr. Lindelwa Dalamba: Thank you to #longstorySHORT for inviting me to the August happenings, thank you for that and thank you to Keleketla! and the school of art and to everybody who enabled this to happen.

So, my response is doubled, and it's doubled only because I want to speak to it only very briefly as a music historian and mostly because when I got this brief it took me back to Rhodes University, my fourth year at university when we delved into South African literature. We had been studying African literature throughout our undergrad years but it was only in the fourth year, the honours year when how to read, how to analyse and theorise and entry into this literary world became the major thing.

So, rather than start in 1982, so this piece was written before I was born I am happy to say, I want to start in 1990 and refer to a group of friends who are sitting in Britain watching Mandela

coming out of jail and when they saw that, one musician who I shall not name, said, 'thank goodness, no more benefit concerts'. And then also in 1990 of course there was that article by Albie Sachs, Judge Albie Sachs now which came out in 1990 published in **Spingens Rebellious** etcetera, which really informed my reading of today's main piece. And there of course Albie Sachs very controversially said that culture should no longer be used as a weapon of struggle, as a political instrument.

Just to quote briefly from him he said, "Do we have sufficient cultural imagination to grasp the rich texture of a free and united Africa that we have done so much to bring about?" This statement was not taken lightly, artists of different stripes and disciplines Pitika Ntuli, Prof. Kgositsile and others questioned the authority endowed upon Albie Sachs to make such a statement. And my reading of Prof's paper seems to me really empowering because it seems to have lasted longer in terms of its significance than Albie Sachs paper. Because Albie Sachs was presuming a post-apartheid utopia that many of us today would question. Moreover he was assuming that what we mean by the political is a narrow political character whereas professor's paper reminds us that the political is part of the social and part of life, so it may not be limited to the party political. And indeed those, and there were many, who followed Albie Sach's paper, if we remember Bertold Brecht since those who did follow this call abandoned art as instrument of social and political transformation they left it open for the more invidious element of our society because when we decided that art is no longer instrument of politics or social politics, others decided that well then we'll take it over. And so we see in post-apartheid south Africa that art is seen as entertainment, it's reduced to those pimps and prostitutes to which prof refers to in that article all those years ago, to the hustler priests who tell us to thank SABC or whatever and about that I don't want to talk too much. I want to perhaps highlight the universals in what professor wrote about in that piece about art by Alex Laguma and via his own work is in order to be moved to action and the deep philosophical observation of being moved by that. Because being moved is not a call for sympathy, it's a call for a very deep empathy and I think now we want to move to that bearing in mind that not all artists evince a ... perilous expectation or racism but what moved me the most in Professors paper is the talk about love. Love, as personal and love as social and how much love we do need because of what love is. The spaces that love enables, the pauses that love enables, the fact that love enables us to listen to one another which we are not doing much of today and we have new things to resist now, and they are not as singular and they are not as easily identifiable as the antagonists in professors' paper. And so since we now only have recourse to fight with new weapons to fight the resistance I would really call us to take note of professor's argument that we need to take our resources – resistance, what will teach us to keep resisting culturally really lie deep in our cultures, they lie in our indigenous languages, indigenous dramas, paintings and music.

But finally I wonder where in professor's paper it's such a multimedia text with pictures and the words and the poetry, let us all bear in mind, would we also have at our disposal so many examples to cite, to display or to sound for our struggles to today? And it is for this reason that the collaboration between Keleketla and Long Story Short which is archiving examples for us to cite, to quote, to display and to sound for our own struggles is so important. Thank you.

MM: I told you that I have educated friends. I don't hang out with stupid folk, thank you so much Lindelwa. Khulu can you give us your thoughts as an artist, as a performer, what were your reflections on the paper? What do you think in terms of the timing of the piece and the situation that we find ourselves in today?

KS: Firstly, thank you for calling me an artist and not a pimp.

MM: Celebrity.

KS: For regarding me as one. Firstly, this piece could have been written, the professor could have written this last year. My thoughts around this like when we speak we talk about culture and we speak of culture in the lives of these people who have been dispossessed and for me culture is interlinked with your psychology, so you know the mind, liberate the mind and so now within the mind, the mindset of the people, culturally at the very least, of African's if we seek to be free, and I'm asking myself, the one thing that I suppose I am at odds at perhaps with the piece is that if we are saying that we are seeking freedom, liberation and self-determination in African culture firstly people, we don't regard ourselves as 'black', we don't call ourselves 'black'. Blackness is not something that is attributed to humanness just in a psychological way of thinking, way of viewing self and the world, and so that's one – the blackness thing. If we keep saying we seek to be free but keep calling ourselves black people, it's at odds. Then the other one as well, culturally we had named our country, not South Africa, the name South Africa came with oppression and so if we seek freedom and yet still call it South Africa and so that's all. I can't fault the paper, I'm just wondering about certain things and I mean when we are talking about this whole thing of freedom and liberation and freedom and considering that it was written in the '70's and today – and so considering how long ago this paper was written and the fact that it is so relevant today I guess what I am getting at is what are the things in our quest for liberation that we are ignoring or failing to recognise, like one this thing of saying 'we are black people' we aren't black a person cannot be black.

MM: Professor, at the time where the ANC and its cultural wings were preparing, was there a discussion on, was there never a brainstorm on what we're going to call this country?

PKK: Maybe I should point out that even after '94 or especially after '94 we've adopted the habit of changing the label of things but not changing the social reality. So, also I might add to that, that without trying to promote Kgositsile titled, 'There's no serenity here' which starts off by observing that an omelette cannot be unscrambled, in other words, that omelette that was prepared in the crucibles of imperialism where these borders were decided upon without any thinking about how they affected Africans that the continent was carved up in the interests of Europe, of 18th century Europe that all these pieces of fiction, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria – whatever you want to call them – were not created by us. Ok, I'm not too sure if that can be unscrambled any time in the near future. The reality we have to deal with also is that there are these despots all over the continent whose interests have nothing to do with the liberation we talked of, that is a reality that we cannot shut our eyes against. Then the concept of blackness as it refers to people, I agree with you, it doesn't – it would be interesting or should be to note that in terms of the continent it is more heightened here than anywhere else. You are not going to find a

Tanzanian talking about being black and revolutionary black and proud but that is, I think that we should be careful about how we deal with this. At its most revolutionary potential it was when Steve Biko and them attempted to politicise the concept also with the influence of people like Fanon who pointed out how it had come in handy to identify us collectively for the oppressor and exploiter. But, to this day you can refer to people in any African language, you can refer to people as black only in translation from some European language, it's that simple.

MM: I think we can open up the floor, I think there are quite a few practitioners on the floor, so questions, comments just to keep the discussion going. I don't know Lindelwa how you feel about artists associating themselves with particular movements and whether... I mean I'm sure that someone might feel it's a conviction of some sorts but are you sure it's a wise choice for an artist to involve themselves that far?

DLD: When artists collect among themselves it's called a movement, when artists are respectable it's called a school. So, artists always associate, I mean there are so many of these, I'm not saying that's what you were saying your question was hard and I'm happy my answer was – but we've been bombarded by so many false questions because – that question you've asked me is founded on this false distinction that there is some sort of antagonism between movements of social justice and art. And that's the very first paragraph in prof's paper and we're seeing more and more of it in our petit bourgeoisie society because now because there's this idea that there's this antagonism between movements of social justice and the academy and when you sit there as a black lecturer and you say, 'well if it wasn't for movements of social justice I wouldn't be sitting here.' So I can't actually buy that distinction, I'm sitting there as a black lecturer in South Africa, there's no way that I wouldn't be sitting there if it wasn't for movements in social justice so do not expect that false distinction to be bought. So, yes I do think that artists associate in any way and at times that association isn't overtly politicised its sometimes by matter of sensibilities, by matter of genre. If you like to play free jazz you are going to hang around people who like free jazz and if your poetry is around Pinder or Es'kai Mqhayi those associations are going to happen but the depths of those associations occur when different biographies interact. So, again I guess I am a reluctant hippie, again I go back to love. Again, I'll go back to the ability to listen and to forge different kinds of dialogue. So, yes.

MM: I like that one. So, does anybody have anything to add. Eih, Lefifi Tladi is in the house. Shout out!! Ja, otherwise it's a nice day we have Tata Kgositsile, Tata Omotoso, Tata Lefifi – all three we are going to get blessings, some of us are going to get jobs tomorrow, we are going to get good luck.

Lefifi Tladi: But unfortunately your microphone works and mine doesn't work.

MM: Come use mine, chomi.

LT: My question is very basic because from this perspective of an acid tongue and I've always wondered how a South African writer can be outside the movement but hope to write anything of value. Does it stand to say that if you were not in the movement you work ain't worth shit, or...?

PKK: Ja, essentially what it meant also was that, ok, the question was being asked by someone who considered himself political but there were these proverbial fans to straddle which to me seemed opportunistic because the enemy had blown those fans out of existence and then there was no possible way you could claim to be struggling or be involved in the struggle of your people in some abstract non-defined manner. There were mechanism, even within the liberation movement there were different pockets that artists identified with some collective or other. The only South African writer I knew of who even claimed was leaving the country so he could write about it, was Peter Abrahams.

MM: Are you satisfied, do you feel answered or do you have a follow up question?

LT: Ja, but it seems as if there was a single movement but there were a lot of other movements, there were people in the PAC, unity movement and so forth and so it seems that the word movement is only used in the context, if you are not in the ANC, you understand. And at the same time I would like to amplify to my brother on the right, when it comes to the names thing, because there are four basic things that makes a country a country, when they country is born they give it a name.

South Africa was South-West Africa and became Namibia, Botswanaland became Botswana, upper Volta became Bukina Faso, Ghana and so on etcetera, etcetera, they got a new identity. And the second thing is that countries when they get independence they have their national anthem and this thing we are singing is not the national anthem it's the African National anthem and so it is the duty of the poets to create a South African National Anthem, you see?

And the third, I that we don't even have a flag, because the flag we are using today was called the 'flag of transition' and that's why for peaceful purposes they used the colours of the ANC and the colours of Nationalist Party. And then the Nationalist Party dissolved so what the hell are we pledging to and also the currency is a very important thing, you know even poor countries like Lesotho they've got their Malutis, even the poor Swati's they've got their Malangeni, you know. BaTswana's they've got their Pulas and here were are still struggling with the Rand. And these are things that are very important to give people some kind of identity and that's why we are still ethnic groups and that's why we are still struggling. It's not really important because we are always first Zulu or Tsonga or you know, but this thing that makes us South African.

PKK: You know I don't know I'm not sure about things that remain purely symbolic, I have a problem with that and that is why I have a problem with South Africa 2016 that it seems as if even when we talked about transformation that we did not seriously consider things like for instance, could we have social cohesion that is under capitalism. Why is it that today we cannot readily identify the problems we are facing with what would logically be expected from mechanisms that are built to promote capitalism, which means while we are talking transformation in the abstract that the few who were criminally wealthy can now accommodate a few from the former oppressed and exploited and say there is a change. I am trying to say that until that is addressed it does not matter how many Motsepe's or

Ramaphosa's you have that under capitalism the majority of the people will remain in misery and a few will remain criminally wealthy.

That is why even the content of the education cannot be changed because it would not serve the interests of the majority to transform it. There is more.

DLD: Following from what Prof is saying, what we have is a form of political feudalism because what this guy is saying is, 'ok well, here's the gate a little bit open and you can come on in,' but there's little debate about what you can do, what you are allowed to do once you are in. I guess we are a little bit screwed by what happened after the fall of the Berlin Wall and there was a lot of post-cold war optimism and Albie Sachs was a victim of that because he assumed the struggle was over and therefore prematurely assumed the role that art could play in society. You know just to speak to what Mr. Tladi was saying, yesterday I went to the Mail and Guardian literature festival specifically to speak on a panel celebrating Sol Plaatjie's work in and the centenary and the publication of the essay. One of the questions posed during that session was, 'what does the word 'native' mean? Why is even in the new publication of this book or the commemoration of the 100 year history of this book, that word 'native' is retained?' Right, so for example this is very different to the book by Percival Kirby which records indigenous music and it was called Bantu People's Music or something like and there was a new edition in the 21st Century – Indigenous South African People's Music Instruments, it changed. But the guys going on about Sol Plaatjie didn't change the title and the answers to that question were very interesting and long story short – hahaha – the point is they kept the word native because Sol Plaatjie in his use of it, it was a claim making device because for so long this particular piece of land on this continent was seen to be depopulated and absent. So, native was a claim to indigeneity and entitlement and I guess what Khulu was saying about the term 'black' it will have its moment and then become something else. But then what fascinates me is that there are always these terms and they never taken as essential or descriptive or normative but they tend to be claim making devices and your question brought that to mind in how symbols have failed to be indigenised. I guess the positive is to remind us that we don't yet have a nation and so the idea of cultural resistance is still very much in currency.

PKK: You know, I think what I was trying to say about what the Black Consciousness Movement was attempting to do, I think it could be seen as at that level as an act of resistance against white arrogance. And then the question would be, after the destruction of white arrogance would the concept of blackness still be relevant?

MM: So basically we have a so-so country, the anthem is so-so, the resistance is so-so and for me personally it kind of makes me very happy that not everything was not set in stone so that when someone enters an argument that is so-so you still have to redo the cement and so not everything is set in stone. It's a very interesting time to be an artist because people are not sure about this South Africa story, people in terms of outside of arts practice are starting to say, 'hey, hang on, what did you get us into here?' in terms of your worker struggles and students, people are starting to renegotiate what South Africa is about and there I see change. Does anyone have something? We can start there and then we can come back this way...

Respondent 1: Just on your so-so statement and about the national anthem, maybe the national anthem should be 'Hibidee in the Meantime!'

MM: Ja, for now.

Nthabiseng: Hello, my name is Nthabiseng and I was very interested in a moment in the essay where you talk about artists fooling around with brushes and paints, while he contemplates how he's going to mesmerize his liberal patrons at the next exhibition, so for an artist who is working and practicing now, how does one think about who has access to their ideas and to their work? Because now, and I'm speaking of the visual arts, any visual artist who is successful their work is mostly consumed by white capital and there seems to be an issue which is only something I picked up now when I was at the Ruth First lecture, I think a year or 2 ago and someone said 'Fuck White People' where white people or white liberals seek to consume the art that is critical of white people and how do we as artists or people working in the visual arts combat that? Because currently there is no way to combat that in the current system, you've mentioned that capitalism a lot of what happens is a symbol of capitalism, so I don't know how that an artist can change that in order for them to be successful their art has to be consumed and desired by white capital. But what is that an artist should be doing because a lot of what artists are doing is overtly political or personal, what is it that an artist or a person working in the art can be doing to combat that?

PKK: I don't know that what a person in the arts or an artist is doing is different from what anybody else in society has to do. If merely for purposes of survival people find themselves having to sell portions of themselves it will remain that way until they decide collectively 'enough of this!' but people get trapped, when I first returned home, one of the things that used to frustrate the hell out of me was some young writer coming to me asking how I could help them to get published. And I would want to know, what does that have to do with you being a writer? It seemed to me they should have been concerned with honing their skills, like being competent. I mean, as long as our eye is at the market place we will remain slaves to the market place.

MM: We are also suffering outside of the marketplace, I think it's a different kind of suffering because some of us decide to draw outside of the margins and you feel like you are being punished for defining your own marketplace because our market place must be ready. And so I think it's this thing of trying to perform short cuts all the time because unless the whole structure is changed we can't say 'black people are not buying our art, they are not coming to the theatre' you know that there's no transport, at 8 people are watching Generations but you want them to come to the theatre and then you write papers about how they don't come to the theatre. So it's this so-so vibe, I think it's starting to compromise us. We had a question this side, question or comment, or shout out. We'll do shout outs at the end.

Judy: Just to say I am Judy Seidman, I'm a graphic artist this is the first time I've read this piece, the first time was in 1982. I just wanted to say that the point that I pick up that hasn't been picked up yet and it's come up the second time, now, is that one of the key issues is that the artist is expected to be aligned to the mass movement. By the way it's not a political

movement, it was a mass movement, yes we believed that the ANC at that time was a political party to be aligned to but that didn't mean that you couldn't be aligned to any other mass movement, I think that was fairly clear a lot of time. But today if we ask the artists who are working now what are the movements they are working for, who are they aligned with we do have the Fees Must Fall movement, now, we do have service delivery movement now. Do we have artists who are really speaking to that for me is what this paper is speaking on and I'd like to know if anyone sees a way forward with that? Thank you.

MM: If I may answer that, I think we have a number of artists who have always spoken at the community level and there's a difference to the art that is taking place and the art that is reported on so we have a crises that just because it didn't show up in the Sunday Times it didn't happen. It's like now, if it's not on Facebook it didn't happen. So, when I take my band to a taxi rank in Daveyton there's no one there, except me and the audience, they know it happened, and for me that's what's important. They know it happened, I know it happened and for me that communication was there but I don't have a media house following me around. Our media houses they are not interested they want pretty girls.

JS: But you're pretty.

MM: Yes, but when it comes with brains you are at the very bottom of the line. So, there is quite a number of artists that are working and speaking to communities but we are not necessarily being recorded, that doesn't mean that it's not happening.

R1: I would also like to add that in the paper, professor quotes Dennis Brutus speaking about the need to cherish our humanity, which they seek to devour. So, now 2016 we look at media houses and the media and it is really geared to what is put out there, what we are bombarded with, in the name of art is really something that is geared to devour our humanity. What Masello was saying now that if you decide to do something draw outside of the borders and colour outside you feel as though you are asked, 'how dare you? How dare you go outside and not celebrate the things that mainstream media and so called art are about?'

PKK: Can I share with you something about how it used to be? For instance, when after Alex La Guma was banned working on a novel because he was not going to be destroyed as an artist, he would type one page and then have to go and hide it somewhere so that when the security police came all they could find would be the little bit that was on the typewriter, there were no computers at that time, that even under those conditions people were productive, there was no glamour in being an artist.

DLD: I feel so silly speaking after somebody so wise. But clearly from what you just said now, the issue is clearly commoditisation, right. It's commoditisation, and Judy is asking about who our masses are and Masello is saying we do know who our masses are, we do have our constituencies but then the issue is that there isn't a commodity they haven't found how that could sell. Let us ask the question, what is Soweto theatre doing in Soweto? Let's ask what all these buildings, all these structures, are they open, are they fluid? Prof says in the paper that Sakhile, Malombo, etcetera were playing at Wits, what is the bureaucratization of our

institutions to enable them to be open to these forms? Prof later says that art cannot be contained in an ivory tower, black or white, or in a typewriter or I don't know I don't remember your musical example but the commoditisation of art is precisely to trap artists into those things. And it's not for the lack of artists identifying what is to be spoken to or connected to but there is so much that is needed and this is not exceptionalising us or making us the whingy generation it's just to say that unless Masello is going to recognise that she needs to call her band at the taxi rank an installation and get it funded by a certain kind of institution but what are you going to do? So, you either stuck in this crass system that commercialises art or you have to haute bourgeoisie yourself as if you're in Germany in the 1920's. And then you can get some funding.

PKK: Again, I think Long Story Short is a good example of what people can do when you are doggedly determined because a patron we have tried to tap into, including government but – no resources – but that did not stop the project. Because the thinking went beyond the borders created in the mid-19th century in Berlin, that both La Guma and Brutus who I refer to their first, La Guma's first novels and Brutus' first novels were published in Nigeria. There was no way they would have been published otherwise.

MM: We have time for one more question. Oh you have a question; I just thought you were hyping us.

Professor Omotoso: I would like to say I am thankful to be here. I would like us to remember that that essay was written against a particular background when we read it today maybe we need to remember that background. Also, I see myself as belonging to 2 countries, or 2 places, a state without a country and a country without a state. One I have lived in South Africa, here 20-something years and lived in Nigeria as well. If we place this in Nigeria we begin to see what is the role of the artist in our societies, first of all as citizens of our societies and then as artists of our societies. A carpenter, a drummer who decides not to drum anything but who will feel conscientised to criticise a political decision. We spoke to you with our drums and we put down our drums and we spoke to you as a person and yet you did not listen. So the artist is playing, not just like a carpenter, a bricklayer has a responsibility in this society just as the artist does. But I think we need to emphasise what our languages say about the role of each profession as well as the role of each citizen in polity. Let me congratulate the #longstorySHORT people, I knew about it a year, 2 years ago and you people have been going on about it and it's fantastic. But don't expect the institutions that exist to back you because they are not there for you and that's the whole thing about commercialisation and what it's about. Our art is traditionally utilised it's not a fetish, we must always remember that we are speaking across levels and so we should know which level is relevant and when. Besides there's this question of this generation that's coming in and what they should do, they should choose what they should do, so that art is not something that is pinned down and permanent. Thank you.

Gwen Ansell: Hi, everybody I am Gwen Ansell I was one of the ham-fisted typists who used to try and type this out once or twice a year. I'm glad the word commodification came up because and I'm glad it's come up from a number of people and for me the most poignant thing in reading this and hearing this again, is that actually that quote from Alex La Guma, talking about

the pirates who sell buckets of water in the townships because we haven't gotten better in some aspects, we've got worse. Selling of water in the townships and in poor areas all over the world is now the system that has been adopted and even worse than that we are not commodifying what is physical anymore, if we look at what is happening in our universities we are in a grotesque way commodifying something like education and making it something that's bought and sold in a bucket and we've got to do something about that.

Phillipa De Villiers: Hi, thank you so much this is so amazing, it's such a breath of fresh air to hear something spoken by someone of your stature and we really need to hear this. I feel that a lot of what the present generation is dealing with is financial struggle of actually surviving as an artist and people speak to this and it seems as if a lot of what is pressed on them is against them actually surviving. And I mean this is not new, it must have been worse for new because everyone has to eat and I feel like, would you please speak a bit about the way that you make it possible to stay alive and survive, have a house, raise children and I don't know if those things are completely in contradiction because I wonder if you'd be here if they were completely.

I also wanted to know for me, the difference in terms of what's written in your paper and nowadays is that now in the social media space, I wonder about the value of words and weight because they proliferate and how long do we stick to them and stand behind them and what would you say about that challenge that we have at this time? Because this gift of technology makes us able to reach a number of people at the same time is not necessarily the best thing for us. Thank you.

PKK: You know talking about so much being said, at times you would be surprised, or a lot of people would be if in the middle of talking they stopped and tried to weigh that against reality because you can talk and sound very good and impress yourself but the relationship of that to life or thinking maybe highly, highly questionable. And that is common, that is very common in present day South Africa. But sometimes even the young pick it up, my youngest son is a rap or hip hop or whatever but dangerously articulate but when he was about 16 he was sent to a boot camp and at the boot camp at some point he was assigned to work with abused young women and then his comment was, 'you know sometimes language can be so far removed from reality' and that is when he practically met his nemesis one might say, even his lyrics changed and he got to a point where he said whatever following he had when he was young and talking a lot of garbage he was being relevant, good riddance if they stop listening to him after that.

So to me, the question of the choice of living and being productive as an artist has never bothered me. In other words, you make your choice, and you suffer the consequences of that choice or maybe I don't know. For instance, as a would be young journalist donkey years ages and ages ago, the late Can Temba who edited the post at Drum, offered me a job while I was trying to hone my skills and I turned down the job and my argument, and I didn't have a source of income and my argument was that I was not satisfied with my skill and I did not want any sub editor fooling with my... you know? So until I could write my stories in such a way that it would be difficult for any sub editor to mess with my copy that I was not taking a job. It's that simple.

DLD: Phillipa, I think what prof is saying and what professor Omotoso was saying was that with this proliferation of words it takes us back to art because then that moment of discernment is contained in the art itself because it's just words, words, words an almost Cartesian angst but the form, the work that goes into it, the integrity of the work because the mass movement did not call for bad art the idea was that the art must be good and have a social function. So, for me that is the only step up from drowning in social media words.

MM: Before we go to the next question, I just wanted to say something to Phillipa who just asked a question about wanting to eat, wanting to have a house, I don't think there's anything wrong with wanting to have a house but I think it's questionable if other citizens do not have the same right to access, then I'm not so comfortable to put my requests out there to the universe to say, 'I also want a house,' if the system is geared to making a lot of us not to have a house. I don't know if I'm making sense. Guys, I'm going to start winding down, so if anyone has a question, I still want to give Boet Muntu some time to give us a musical interpretation.

My comment is in response to the question about social media, I just think that it's very common for people to bring out a lot of criticisms about social media and how it can be overwhelming but overall I think you just have to ask yourself, is it better that it exists or is it better that it doesn't. and I would rather that there would be an overwhelming amount of content on social media that addresses a whole lot of issues and breaks the barriers around ideas and what I would think of those ideas, although 70% of it would be shit and I can encounter those ideas through people around me and I think that is kind of inevitable because social media is a space where people have their thoughts and then express them almost immediately, so I don't see it as a problem at all. I'd rather have the nonsense waiting around on social media.

MM: You can filter, some people you can filter. They need to make a quick filter button so we can filter, filter, filter.

Respondent 1: Ja, it's on. I have 5 questions, the first one is more a comment but I'll start. The lady that wrote the novel Americana, what's her name again? Adichie Ngozi?

MM: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

Respondent 1: Ja, on blackness she says, 'when I was growing up in Nigeria I didn't think of myself as black, I didn't need to. We have many identity markers in Nigeria: ethnicity, class, religion, but not race because everybody is black.'

My second question is to Prof Kgositsile. How did you feel when you first heard that you were going to be published? Publishing is tied with commerce because I suppose that is how the artist is going to get their revenue and stuff. I understand that the artist does not himself or herself do the art for those purposes but I just wanted to know how did you feel when you found out that there was going to be some commercial avenue to what you do?

My third question, if I can find it now. I'm sorry guys. It's about Nikola Machiavelli and he said this in 1513. If I were to personalise South Africa, I wanted all of you guys if you don't mind all four of you, I want you to comment on this and he wrote it in 1513:

"It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, no more doubtful of success, no more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things. For the reformer has enemies in all those who profit from the old order and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order. This lukewarmness arising partly from fear of their adversaries who have their laws in their favour and partly from the incredulity of mankind who do not truly believe in anything new until they have actually experienced it, thus it arises that upon any opportunity to attack his reformer they do so with the zeal of partisans, the others only do so half-heartedly so that between them. My fourth one, if I get a chance I will raise my hand up again.

MM: We are about to close, so... Prof, the first question the first question you remember it?

PKK: It was about getting published, what-what. I'm sorry I might disappoint you. You see, my attitude to those things, I guess you'll have to understand. What would have been my first collection of poems published by Mbarri in Nigeria, Chis Okibo who died a few years ago, a poet I respected highly, I don't know where he had seen my poetry and liked it and asked me to submit a manuscript which I did but without keeping a copy. Then the Biafra thing started and he ended up, ok, involved in that and at some point a Jamaican poet who lived in Nigeria at the time, writes to me and says he's seen a few of my poems in the yard blowing in the wind, at the Mbarri club and that was the end of that book because I didn't have a copy. But I wasn't even vaguely touched negatively or positively because I was writing. And then I don't know but maybe like a fool I believed that an artists' task is to be productive in whatever they are doing. The other things, commercial and whatever else, belong to some other people. It's not the artists responsibility, my task as a poet is to produce poetry, that's where it ends.

MM: So, the poet must just poet. And I think this there are other, there is a value chain in the arts that still needs to be discussed as we evaluate other things. The artist must just artist and then the other people must help.

But then on the quote you read about how hard it is to give new order right now we've got young people in this country demanding new order and the verkaamte attitudes that we are getting from some older people, I mean, really? Just resistance.... But those who are in the skemp they know themselves and I've been very disappointed especially by how some of these older people are responding because whenever there's a problem they say, 'the problem is that there is no education'. And then when we say ok, let's give it to everybody then it's 'nah, nah it's complicated' and so it makes me wonder, if all these people with degrees are so clever, how can they not figured out how to give it free to other children? You know it makes you wonder about these degrees if really they are degrees because it's closing them, it's opening but in some way it's closing. So the young people here are demanding something new and the attitudes that we are getting for me it proves that it is difficult getting a new order because they simply refuse to re-imagine, you know people just refuse to get up and go to work and

their children's children must get up and go to work. People find it difficult to imagine, they can't think outside of those lines.

Who's next? Next-door to Phillipa? Ok, you're the last one is you, next to Phillipa and after that we do a Vol. 2 outside.

R2: I'm going to touch on commodifying art, as cliché as this is gonna sound, being passionate about what you do kind of helps because as a young people I look at people who've made it and the things that they say, they say that they were just doing what they are good at and somehow, somewhere someone saw what they were doing and contacted them to help them do what they do at a larger scale because a lot of people do what they do passionately and that passion kind of feeds into it, it makes it better. Once a person starts doing something for profit, that's when it becomes kind of a problem because I feel like those as professor said, artist should 'artist' and then there'll be people who help them behind and all of that. I feel that makes sense because we don't know everything because we will need help along the way but artists should just stay in their zone and just artist.

And another thing, me as a young person, my parents don't support what I do, so it kind of makes it difficult and challenged every day and asked, what am I doing with my life. But then what I am doing is something I feel I should be doing because it's kind of like the only thing that I see, but then I have all these other things so that I can be where I want to be.

MM: We are going to take our last comment. We have to talk outside about 'making it' because you see this capitalist lingo, but we'll take it outside like Lindiwe Zulu, Sis' Ginger, 'we'll take it outside'. We are gonna Sis' Ginger it outside.

R3: So if education was different – Masello thank you for inviting me, it's an honour to be here. So, if education did look different because prof you mentioned that even the system is designed to feed the capitalistic mindset and even now the looks, Masello you said what if there was a holiday for a whole year and education was... so if we did change just the fundamental approach to education, what would that look like?

MM: First of all at my school, no one is going to come at 7 o'clock.

PKK: You know even when I said it earlier, these changes cannot occur in little isolated compartments, you cannot... there is nowhere in the world today or at any stage you can think of after the development that even in a place like the United States, education is a commodity because they are not interested actually in having people educated, they want people skilled to make more money. One of the biggest property owners in California is the University of California, Los Angeles. Where even the parking meters on the streets that form part of their property are more expensive than the parking meters of the CBD, which is walking distance from there.

That I think the sooner we realise, I was talking to someone from Wits and saying, I would be very comfortable if the leadership understood what was at stake and they were using this as a

tactic to heighten the contradictions, not realistically believing that it could be changed because of what is going on.

DLD: it's very difficult, I'm sure that the artists and the creatives would disagree with me here but I'm gonna go ahead and say it anyway, obviously artists and creatives are not angels and simply demanding to have a plate of food doesn't mean that you yourself have to become an economist. And I have to say, I'm coming from a jazz perspective here because jazz musicians say, 'I'm working' because there's also that other dynamic where certain forms of creative work and certain forms of practice are not seen as work and to emphasise that I'm working here and I must get paid, is beautiful. Duke Ellington got paid and his music is beautiful, Miles Davis got paid very much and his music is beautiful, taking care of your business doesn't mean that you're commercial. It means you are asserting the dignity of your creative labour and so much of artistic labour is sacrifice, people see you with your saxophone, they don't realise that's the only bling you have, you don't have anything else that is shining. And so I agree with you that we don't know everything and we shouldn't have to know everything you're not an economist or whatever, you're an artist but then there must be things set up around you to enable you to be an artist with dignity. We know in South Africa, we know the many amazing musicians died poor and it's that indignity that we need to focus on rather than claiming some sort of pure space in which an artist can be an artist.

And then the Machiavelli thing reminded me of what Gwen was talking about in terms of water and robbery and exploitation because in Syria the war is about water and we've become so base and the argument is that this is what separates us from animals, we've become so base that geo-politics is marked by essentials like water. And so when you were talking about leaders who are half-heartedly defended or unsupported I've now started looking at those suffering masses who are not even half-heartedly defended but I take your point. Thanks.

PKK: Maybe just the last comment I made, to put a little footnote on what I said about artists, I think that if, and this is outside of capitalism, if we are producing works of art and we are seen cleanly as part of production, it's social but it is part of production, then we wouldn't have these arguments. We are having these because under capitalism...

MM: Ntate Lefifi, then we are done.

LT: I would like to add a little bit to what my brother Oupa was saying about language. It's very unfortunate that we don't have language thinkers, in the sense that for example in South Africa we have two major language groups, it's the Nguni languages and then Sotho languages, if we could get people who could weave together all the Sotho languages and then weave together all the Nguni languages, Zulu, Bhaca, and so we have two official languages and that doesn't mean that other languages must die but we must have some language that can be called South African. But, unfortunately again the problem lies with, I'll give you an short anecdote of a guy who was supposed to be called professor of SePedi and I was telling this guy if you are a professor of SePedi I'm a fanatic of scrabble, could you design a Pedi scrabble and four years later he said that's too difficult. So, this language thing is so difficult, even my son was saying I would like to study astrophysics in Zulu, do you see how far removed it is? So, what I am

proposing here is could we have after the 10th organisation sit here to solve problems and not discuss them.

MM: There is a move towards to solve that, I know that there is a couple of think tanks that have started to practically address such. Timekeeper don't disappoint me.

R4: I'll replace him. I'm actually glad that I spoke immediately after uBaba because that was my question as well. I know that we've been speaking a lot about language and words and my question to you, I know that when you started you said our heritage really starts with our indigenous art practices as well as indigenous languages, so my question to you guys – before I ask my question – I actually like that you came up with this terminology of so-so South Africa. My question to you guys is how important is language and how can it be used not only to localise arts and culture and heritage but also in education?

MM: As someone who is a language practitioner, I think the problem most of the problem with language is us, you can't say there's a problem with a language you do not speak. So a lot of the time people are telling us there's a problem with a language but they don't speak it. We can't develop practice and get into how we are going into how we are going to do education structures when our own academics, teachers, practitioners do not practice our language. So, very often the problem of the language is us and a lot of people who speak English as a cognitive, that's number one. So, sometimes I'm not even sure if that's a conversation for them because they don't speak those languages anyways.

But I think also a lot of the times there are platforms where languages are being developed on a daily basis for example on the radio but if you don't listen to that station, you're not going to know what's advancing, what's the latest because our markets, the people who are going to teach they speak those languages, so the problem most of the time for me is within the class of people who claim to speak on behalf of other people but you first do not speak that language.

So, I think if we can search ourselves then we can say we've got a problem in practice I see it being a problem the lack of practice of languages and that becomes more problematic as time goes by.

PKK: Well, I would agree with that question, as serious as it is, is handles as if we don't have. I'll give you an example, in the mid '80's in Botswana with the family, no, it was early at the end of '82 December and the families were outside the country with their children. And with the one family, I won't mention the name because I think everybody might know who they might be, their teenage children were about the same age as mine. So after mine had been out with these, they come back and they say, 'Papa, what's going on at home? Aunt so-and-so's children, we tried SeTswana, they are blank, we tried Zulu they are blank, we tried...' you know these were children who grew up outside the country who spoke, in addition to South African languages spoke some other languages from some other African countries where we'd been. So they couldn't understand how a child growing up in South Africa, an African child, could not speak an African language.

I think also, certain things parents some blunders they make, they are not willing to face, like for instance the casualties of Model C schools. What did the parents think they would achieve when they sent their children to Model C schools? Let me leave it there.

MM: And they paid thousands, our parents paid lots of money in those schools, it was very expensive. Folks can we just agree that Volume 2 will be outside because we have gone over our limit but it's a Long Story Short tradition, we always go over our time. Guys, thanks it's an honour to have our patron as centre stage. Guys, enjoy the rest of the afternoon, Keleketla, Wits Arts School, #longstorySHORT, thank you. Now we are going to listen to the sounds of Muntu Vilakazi, you know we are trying to be... so we said people must send their bios and he just sent a sentence, 'I'm just a dude who loves music'. That's all he said, so here we go.

