Art Under Threat
at the University of Cape Town

A Dossier Compiled from Published Sources
by
The Editor of the South African Art Times
Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes... freedom of artistic creativity.

- Section 16 (1) (c) of the Bill of Rights, Chapter Two, of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act number 108 of 1996) Government Gazette (no. 17678)


Some members of the campus community have identified certain works of art as offensive to them – for cultural, religious or political reasons.”

- (UCT Vice-Chancellor Max Price, 11 April 2016)

It’s different fundamentally [from curatorship] because they did so selectively. They selected certain works. Now, to select certain works is to censor. You cannot do this selectively; either you do this to all of them or none of them.

- David Goldblatt

You have no chance of it (the work) being seen for what it is intended to be, no guarantee it will survive the orgies of destruction these institutions foster and no responsibility or accountability (let alone preservation) will be forthcoming from the ethnically and aesthetically spineless but oh so glib ‘collaborators’ running the universities.

- Breyten Breytenbach

Source: http://www.groundup.org.za/article/here-list-art-destroyed-uct/
Context and Introduction

At the University of Cape Town (UCT) over the past two years, both commemorative and fine art has been defaced, intentionally destroyed by fire, blacklisted, censored, covered up and removed from display. Additionally, photographic exhibitions have been attacked and closed down, and the Michaelis School of Fine Art was occupied by protestors for a number of weeks towards the end of 2016 and its students and teachers threatened.

Some 75 works of art from the University’s collection have been taken down or covered up “on the grounds of their vulnerability to potential damage” or because “some members of the campus community have identified certain works of art as offensive to them – for cultural, religious or political reasons”. The University has, until very recently, refused multiple requests to identify these blacklisted works or to specify which ones were destroyed.

Also in 2016, the University of Cape Town withdrew its invitation to Flemming Rose formerly of the Jyllands-Posten, to deliver its annual TB Davie Memorial Lecture on academic freedom.

In early 2017, the University suffered the loss of a priceless legacy when renowned photographer David Goldblatt decided to withdraw the archive of his life’s work because he “could not be persuaded out of his view that freedom of expression, artistic freedom and rights of artists were no longer protected at UCT”.

Taken together, these events have caused grave concern that artistic freedom at the University of Cape Town is in serious danger.

The evidence presented for your consideration is categorised chronologically, as follows:

1. (2014) A list of problematic artworks created by students.
2. (2016) 75 artworks censored by the University of Cape Town.
4. (2016) The withdrawal of an invitation to Mr Flemming Rose to speak at the University’s TB Davie Memorial Lecture.
5. (2016) Fine Arts students barred from their art studios and lectures by protesters.
7. (2017) The University Art Task Team demands that removed art stays off the walls indefinitely.
1. 2014 UCT Students create list of problematic artworks that they want censored/banned/removed

1.1 Evidence in the local South African Press press (Cape Argus)

http://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/little-at-uct-saying-black-child-be-proud-1720099

view link in appendix

1.2 A list of 10 or so artworks has recently been supplied by the University of Cape Town, detailing which artworks the students find problematic. This list is available in the appendix.

http://www.groundup.org.za/article/here-list-art-destroyed-uct/

view list in appendix

1.3 The artworks were removed in April 2016, or have been since covered up. Ramabina Mahapa, who was on the Student Representative Council in 2014 and its president in 2015, identifies eight specific pieces, and others in a general way. His comments on six of these pieces are as follows:

1.3.1 “As you walk in the UCT Oppenheimer Library, you are met with a portrait of a naked white man, on his lap is a black woman, they seem to be having sexual intercourse. The white man has a black mask and the black woman has a white mask.”
The work referred to is “Hovering Dog” by Breyten Bretenbach


See also: The artist’s reaction:


http://www.groundup.org.za/article/probably-list-art-works-uct-has-removed/#letter-1011

1.3.2 “One level up, you see a metal sculpture of the naked Sarah Baartman.”

See: The artist’s reaction:


The Sculpture work referred to is “Sarah Bartman”, by South African artist Willie Bester, was covered with cloth by protesting students on 9 March 2016
1.3.3 “As you turn to your right, you will be met with another portrait depicting a black woman sitting on what I assume to be a rock with her three children in their underwear in a plastic basin bathing – the surrounding is of a poor dwelling.”

The work referred to is “A Passerby” by Zwelethu Mthethwa and was removed in 2016

1.3.4 “As you continue with your tour around UCT walking into the Otto Beit building, coming from the food court on your left, you will be met with a portrait of a bull. Inside it is a black man with his genitals exposed, besides the bull is a little white girl and an Afrikaner man.”

The work referred to is “Pasiphaë” by Dianne Victor, seen here being boarded up on 7 April 2016

1.3.5 “If you go to middle campus, you will see several black painted sculptures also with their genitals out.”

*The work referred to is “Dialogue of the Dogwatch”, a bronze sculpture by David Brown*

[https://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/archives/?id=7768](https://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/archives/?id=7768)

1.3.6 “A similar portrait depicting the dwelling of poor black people can be found in the Mafeje room, where the university council meets.”

*The work referred to is “Untitled” by Andrew McIlreron*
2. **2016 Censorship and subsequent removal from public view of 75 artworks by the University of Cape Town**

2.1.1 List of removed artworks that are currently in storage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Justin Anschutz</td>
<td>Split path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Richard Keresemose Baholo</td>
<td>Mandela receives honorary doctorate from UCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Richard Keresemose Baholo</td>
<td>Stop the Killings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Esmeralda Brettany</td>
<td>Serialisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Breyten Breytenbach</td>
<td>FG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Robert Broadley</td>
<td>Flowers in a Vase</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Robert Broadley</td>
<td>Portrait of an Old Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Robert Broadley</td>
<td>Portrait of the artist, Nerine Desmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Robert Broadley</td>
<td>Roses in a Jug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Robert Broadley</td>
<td>Roses in a Vase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Robert Broadley</td>
<td>Tree in Blossom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 David Brown</td>
<td>Travelling icon; an artist’s workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Mia Couvaras</td>
<td>Untitled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 R Daniels</td>
<td>Perversion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 R Daniels</td>
<td>Pumpkin Aand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 R Daniels</td>
<td>The Dreamer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 P de Katow</td>
<td>Portrait of Prof James Cameron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Lyndall Gente</td>
<td>World in a Grain of Sand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Constance Greaves</td>
<td>Portrait of an African Smoking a Pipe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Charles M Horsfall</td>
<td>Portrait of Mrs Evelyn Jagger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Isabella Kneymeyer</td>
<td>A Quick Streamer Sketch, Fish River Canyon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Isabella Kneymeyer</td>
<td>Streamer Cross Hatch, Study Luderitz, Namibia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Neville Lewis</td>
<td>Portrait of JC Smuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Antonio Mancini</td>
<td>La Prighiera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Edward Mills</td>
<td>Portrait of Alfred Beit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 W G Parker</td>
<td>Portrait of Sir John Buchanan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

65: Steven Cohen, Five Heads
27 Henry Pegram  Beit, Alfred (1853-1906)
28 Michael Pettit  Siegfried’s journey down the Rhine
29 Joshua Reynolds (After)  Duchess of Devonshire
30 Joshua Reynolds (After)  Lady Compton
31 George Crossland Robinson  Portrait of Prof Renicus D Nanta
32 David Rossouw  Sunningdale
33 David Rossouw  Welgevonden
34 Edward Roworth  Portrait of Dr Thomas Benjamin Davie
35 Edward Roworth  Portrait of Prof Theo le Roux
36 Rupert Shephard  Portrait of JP Duminy
37 Lucky Sibiya  Village Life
38 Pippa Skotnes  The wind in //Kabbo’s sails
39 W T Smith  Portrait of Henry Murray
40 Irma Stern  Ballerinas at Practice
41 Irma Stern  Portrait of a Ballerina
42 Irma Stern  Portrait of an African Man Blowing a Horn
43 Mikhael Subotsky  Untitled
44 Mikhael Subotsky  Voter X
45 Philip Tennyson Cole  Portrait of an unknown associate
46 Hareward Hayes Tresidder  Bowl of Flowers
47 Karina Turok  Portrait of Mandela
48 Unknown, Continental School  Figure of a Standing Woman and a Study of an Arm
49 Unknown  Seated Woman and a Study of a Head in Profile and a Hand
50 Hubert von Herkommer  Sir Julius Charles Werhner

47: Karina Turok, portrait of Mandela (photograph)
2.1.2 List of removed artworks that have been returned to the lender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62 Breyten Breytenbach</td>
<td>Hovering Dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 Breyten Breytenbach</td>
<td>SA Angel black/white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 Christo Coetzee</td>
<td>Untitled (Ping pong balls)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 Steven Cohen</td>
<td>Five Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66 Pieter Hugo</td>
<td>Dayaba Usman with monkey, Abuja,Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 Vusi Khumalo</td>
<td>Township scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68 Twinki Laubscher</td>
<td>Seated angel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69 Twinki Laubscher</td>
<td>Reclining angel with cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 Christopher Slack</td>
<td>Twenty four hour service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 Andrew Tshabangu</td>
<td>Trance, Tzaneen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72 Andrew Tshabangu</td>
<td>Bible and candle, Zola, Soweto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.1.3 List of removed artworks that are unlocated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73 Herbert Coetzee</td>
<td>Portrait of Sir Richard Luyt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74 James Mac Donald</td>
<td>Triptych 1 (The Apostles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 Edward Roworth</td>
<td>Portrait of Prof William Ritchie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
60. Mamphela Ramphele Photograph by Sue Williamson

http://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/madiba-we-will-continue-to-do-our-job-1623080

http://www.goodman-gallery.com/exhibitions/344

Statement by the University Vice-Chancellor on the removal of artworks

https://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/?id=9669

Statement by the UCT Works of Art Committee

2.2 Public reactions to list of removed works


Reaction by the University of Ghent

http://www.litnet.co.za/pen-afrikaans-se-stellingname-oor-volgehoue-kunssensuur-aan-die-universiteit-kaapstad/

Reaction by the Human Rights Commission, South Africa

http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/e80c41804107d87098f4fc8dcb0b605f/HRC-investigates-removal-of-artworks-at-UCT-20170505
3. **16 February 2016** Removal, Defacement, Destruction of artworks by students and others at the University of Cape Town on the evening of 16 February 2016

Source: https://scontent-jnb1-1.xx.fbcdn.net/v/t1.0-9/12715733_453268451465168_5909713753286829059_n.jpg?oh=dd5de7cc5ef9d3af7a-3190f7afe9d91&oe=59B6CE73
Source: https://scontent-jnb1-1.xx.fbcdn.net/v/t1.0-9/12743752_453270234798323_5516132714628065877_n.jpg?oh=75cec73f8e6a3bd56cb-c5412a39d3882&oe=59C1E895
Destruction of paintings by Keresemose Richard Baholo on 16 February 2016

Source: https://www.facebook.com/pg/CapeArgus/photos/?tab=album&album_id=453267661465247
3.1 List of destroyed artworks and heritage poster displays

At least 23 works were destroyed.

http://www.groundup.org.za/article/here-list-art-destroyed-uct/

3.2 Other works that were destroyed include two framed collages with original photos and documents, celebrating the anti-apartheid activist Molly Blackburn’s life, taken from the Molly Blackburn Memorial Hall. Blackburn, a member of the Black Sash organisation, was killed in a car accident in December 1985 while travelling with colleagues in the Eastern Cape, recording events under the state of emergency, and taking statements.

https://www.uct.ac.za/mondaypaper/archives/?id=4594#.WM93f7tp2n8.email

Response to the burning of the collages

http://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/opinion/lets-heal-our-wounds-together-1989398
All of UCT graduate and prize-winning artist Mikhael Subotzky’s Pollsmoor photographs were removed from the Law Library in 2016. Protesting students had covered these with black bin bags, before they were removed by the university.

3.3 Defacing of photographic exhibition on 9 March 2016


Photograph by David Goldblatt defaced at exhibition

Source: https://www.facebook.com/transfeministcollective/photos/a.974273075972742.1073741828.973444259388957/1132209586845756/?type=3&theater
3.4 Sculpture and drawing censored by covering up

3.4.1 “Sarah Bartman” by Willie Bester covered 9 March by students

http://www.vgallery.co.za/2000article28/vzine.htm


3.4.2 “Pasiphaë” by Dianne Victor boarded up on 7 April 2016

4. 2016 Index on Censorship Statement on the withdrawal of the invitation to Flemming Rose

https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2016/07/index-censorship-condemns-decision-axe-flemming-rose-speaker-academic-freedom/

5. 2016 Fine Art students barred by students and others, from attending their classes and not getting access to their studios:


6. 2017 David Goldblatt removes his photographic archive to Yale on basis that freedom of expression is no longer protected at UCT.

6.1 UCT Statement on David Goldblatt Collection

News item quotes David Goldblatt on 21 February 2017

http://www.timeslive.co.za/sundaytimes/lifestyle/2017/02/21/Local-photographers-are-finally-getting-more-exposure-for-their-art

6.2 Student activist Chumani Maxwele taking credit for “political pressure to remove works of art” on 7 March 2017

https://www.facebook.com/chumani.maxwele

7. 2017: Art Task team Final Report

This Report mentions taking work out of storage for “‘special exhibitions’ of ‘controversial art’ shadowing the reminiscence of ‘entaertete’ art.

“The University of Cape Town must keep artworks that were removed from the walls in storage pending a broader consultative process. This consultation may take the form of displays of some of the contested artworks, (in dedicated spaces such as the CAS Gallery), debates and discussions around specific artworks and/or themes. Seminars that may involve artists of ‘contested’ works may also be hosted by the WOAC and other departments in the university around different artworks and symbols.”

Appendix of Links and References
Little at UCT saying 'Black child be proud''

Cape Argus | 15 July 2014, 3:11pm

There are many portraits, sculptures and paintings around campus which do not portray black people in a good way, says Ramabina Mahapa.

Cape Town - As you walk in the UCT Oppenheimer Library, you are met with a portrait of a naked white man, on his lap is a black woman, they seem to be having sexual intercourse. The white man has a black mask and the black woman has a white mask.

One level up, you see a metal sculpture of the naked Sarah Baartman. As you turn to your right, you will be met with another portrait depicting a black woman sitting on what I assume to be a rock with her three children in their underwear in a plastic basin bathing – the surrounding is of a poor dwelling.

As you continue with your tour around UCT walking into the Otto Beit building, coming from the food court on your left, you will be met with a portrait of a bull. Inside it is a black man with his genitals exposed, besides the bull is a little white...
girl and an Afrikaner man.

If you go to middle campus, you will see several black painted sculptures also with their genitals out. You will also find a similar sculpture in the Hoerikwaggo building.

At the entrance of the new Chemical Engineering Building there is a portrait depicting the poor settlements of what seems to be Khayelitsha or Langa. A similar portrait depicting the dwelling of poor black people can be found in the Mafeje room, where the university council meets.

I would urge members of the UCT community to be vigilant. Take a walk around campus in your free time and see for yourself what I speak of. There are many more portraits, sculptures and paintings scattered around campus which do not portray black people in a good way.

There is little from UCT institutional symbolism that says "Black child be proud" of your upbringing and who you are. If the institution really wanted to depict history, why are there no portraits and sculptures of Kwame Nkrumah, Miriam Makeba, Robert Sobukwe, Shaka Zulu, and individuals like Chief Albert Luthuli, for example?

Why is there no portrait of Timbuktu, the first university to be created? If it is history UCT wants to portray, let it not be a skewed one.

Institutions of higher learning, especially previously whites-only ones, should reassess all the paintings and sculptures. Some inappropriate paintings might have been put up before 1994 and institutions should be cautious about what is being displayed in the new dispensation. I share the same views with those who say art must be provocative and depict our history.

Granted, some of the portraits are not demeaning and humiliating in and of themselves, but concern is not necessarily with individual portraits but with the message the collective paintings are saying about someone of my pigmentation.

In the university, I could only find two portraits of the naked white body, and rarely will the portraits on the walls depict something demeaning or humiliating of white people.

Already the institution is filled with sculptures and statues portraying dominant white males such as Cecil John Rhodes. Even the names of buildings are dominated by white people.

I have noted two broad themes being recurrent in UCT’s paintings: poverty of black people and the naked black body – more so, the genitalia of the black man. These artworks reinforce the inferiority complex of the black student while concurrently reaffirming the superiority complex of the white student.

All this depiction of black poverty is meant to romanticise poverty. This reminds me of European exchange students who come to Africa for the sole purpose of experiencing poverty and thereby reinforcing their satisfaction about their privileged conditions.

I have heard quite a few of them boast over having lived for six months in poor conditions and then claiming to understand the living condition of black people. How absurd.

The institutional symbolism around our campus, with the institutional culture, constitute the most vivid form of UCT’s eurocentricity. How then can an African student identify with UCT?

* Ramabina Mahapa is a member of the UCT SRC.

** The views expressed here are not necessarily those of Independent Newspapers.

Cape Argus
In addition to a list of 75 art works removed by the University of Cape Town (UCT), GroundUp has now obtained a list of artworks destroyed (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/rhodes-must-fall-protesters-destroy-uct-artworks/) in the Shackville protests last year and a list of works deemed to be problematic by student representatives on the Artworks Task Team (ATT) in 2015. The list was obtained from the university via a PAIA request (Promotion of Access to Information Act) submitted by William Daniels, a UCT staff member.

The university refused to reveal the titles to GroundUp (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/probably-list-artworks-uct-has-removed/), but we have, with assistance, worked out most of the titles.

Various artists, including David Goldblatt, Willie Bester (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/sara-baartman-sculptor-speaks-out-against-art-censorship/), and Breyten Breytenbach (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/probably-list-artworks-uct-has-removed/#letter-3), have criticised UCT’s response to student pressure to remove statues, busts, and other works of art from campus.

“In September of last year I wrote to Max Price and said that I wished to revoke my contract with the university,” said Goldblatt, a world renowned photographer whose work exposed the oppression of apartheid. Goldblatt’s decision to remove his collection of photographs from the Libraries Special Collections, a centre that he helped to establish, came after "the throwing of shit onto Cecil John Rhodes’ sculpture… following that the burning of over 20 paintings and the burning, in particular of two photographs by Molly Blackburn." Blackburn was an anti-apartheid activist who died in a motor vehicle accident that some suspect was caused by the apartheid government.
Goldblatt said that the events signaled a new tide in the development of anti-democratic thought in today’s youth. “Differences are settled by talk. You don’t threaten with guns. You don’t threaten with fists. You don’t burn. You don’t destroy. You talk. These actions of the students are the antithesis of democratic action,” he said.

“For me, the essential issue was that [the university] was in breach of my freedom of expression. I couldn’t leave my work there… to leave my work there would be to endorse that policy,” said Goldblatt.

Breyten Breytenbach, whose *Hovering Dog* is on the list of works identified as unacceptable by students on the task team, has had three paintings removed and put into indefinite storage by the university.

Breytenbach wrote to GroundUp: “I fully support the decision of David Goldblatt and others to withdraw / remove / take back / take elsewhere (preferably out of the country altogether) whatever material or artworks they may have had at UCT, or were kept in custodianship by the university.”

He said: “If I could do the same, I’d do so.”

Unlike Goldblatt, Breytenbach’s works are part of the Hans Porer Collection at UCT. “None of these parties – collector, owner, executor or executioner – bothered to even have the simple decency of informing me,” he added.

One of the main concerns for both artists is what they call the university’s disregard for the protection of the freedom of expression guaranteed to all South Africans under the Constitution.

“The freedom of expression means the freedom of expression. You are free to express. And if you don’t have that, you don’t have freedom of expression,” said Goldblatt. “We do have laws in this country that allow the censoring of work if it’s regarded as being harmful in some particular way.”

Goldblatt insists that the university’s actions differ from the curatorship that takes place in museums around the world. Rather, he says that the administration is blatantly censoring selected works. “It’s different fundamentally [from curatorship] because they did so selectively. They selected certain works. Now, to select certain works is to censor. You cannot do this selectively; either you do this to all of them or none of them.”

He thinks UCT’s actions are dangerous. “At the end of the day, if this kind of attitude persists in the university, what will they do when a group of students come to the archive of photographs and say: ‘You’ve got photos there of Muslims. We’re not prepared to tolerate that. No Muslims, no Jews, or the Anglicans, or people with green eyes’, “ said Goldblatt.

“But, if I’m a painter and I choose to show Jacob Zuma with his penis showing, then the question arises – am I to be censored for that?” he asked.

“I strongly urge all South African artists, researchers, recorders of public life etc., and as well those of foreign origin whose products may end up at South African universities, even if inadvertently so, to make absolutely sure your work is not allowed to be acquired, loaned or otherwise used by South African universities,” Breytenbach wrote to GroundUp. “You have no chance of it (the work) being seen for what it is intended to be, no guarantee it will survive the orgies of destruction these institutions foster and no responsibility or accountability (let alone preservation) will be forthcoming from the ethically and aesthetically spineless but oh so glib ‘collaborators’ running the universities.”

**UCT reply**

We sent UCT the quotes by Goldblatt and Breytenbach and asked for the institution’s response. We were sent the same statement written by Vice-Chancellor Max Price in response to Professor Belinda Bozzoli, previously published on GroundUp (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/uct-and-art-exchange-between-max-price-and-belinda-bozzoli/).

**List submitted to the University by the Artworks Task Team in 2015**

The descriptions are by the students who objected to the works. GroundUp has added the artist and title of the work. (All images republished as fair use.)
1. *Hovering Dog* by Breyten Breytenbach (Student description: Portrait of white man with black woman on his lap having sexual intercourse)

2. *Saartjie Baartman* by Willie Bester
3. *A Passerby* by Zwelethu Mthethwa (Student description: Black woman sitting on a rock with three children with her all in their underwear in a plastic basin with an impoverished surrounding)
Otto Beit Building:

4. *Pasiphaë* by Diane Victor (Student description: Portrait of a bull inside it is a black man with his genitals exposed)
Kramer:

5. *Dialogue at the Dogwatch* by David Brown (Student description: A number of sculptures depicting black men with their genitals exposed)
Installation of one of the Dialogue at the Dogwatch pieces at UCT. Photo from David J. Brown's website (http://davidjbrown.co.za/dialogue-at-the-dogwatch/).

6. Unknown (Student description: Black people with HIV)

Hoerikwaggo:

7. Similar to the sculptures on the Kramer lawn by David Brown

Chemical Engineering Building:

8. A township scene by Vusi Khumalo (Student description: Portrait of poor black people)

EGS Building:

9. Courtyard outside tea room probably by David Brown (Student description: black man with genitals exposed)

Michaelis:

10. Dayaba Usman with the monkey clear, Nigeria by Pieter Hugo. (Student description: Black boy sitting next to a monkey made to replicate the monkey)
List of works destroyed in protests

1. James Eddie, Portrait of Mrs Joan Gie
2. Carli Hare, Portrait of Sue Folb
3. Harriet Fuller Knight, Portrait of Dr Rosemary Exner
4. Edward Roworth, Portrait of Mrs Barnard-Fuller
5. Edward Roworth, Portrait of Mrs Doris Spencer Emmet
6. Edward Roworth, Portrait of Mrs Anna Maria Tugwell
7. Roeleen Ryall, Portrait of Mrs Arlene van der Walt
8. Roeleen Ryall, Portrait of Mrs Rosemary Taylor
9. Rupert Shephard, Portrait of Mrs Marie Lydia Grant
14. Richard Keresemose Baholo, Graduation Day
15. Richard Keresemose Baholo, Extinguished Torch of Academic Freedom
16. Richard Keresemose Baholo, Release Our Leaders
17. Richard Keresemose Baholo, Rekindling the torch of Academic Freedom
18. Richard Keresemose Baholo, The girl witch
19. Kirsten Lilford, Intimacy
20. Nina Romm, Twee Jocks and a Lady
22. Stanley Eppel, Portrait of Prof Owen Lewis
23. John Wheatley, Portrait of Prof Alexander Brown
24. Molly Blackburn Collages (not identified by UCT, but confirmed)

Topics:  UCT and art (/topic/uct-and-art/)
Share:    (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/here-list-art-destroyed-uct/)  

Letters

More art destroyed: What I found

Dear Editor

(http://www.netwerk24.com/Nuus/Algemeen/kosbare-kunswerke-by-uk-vernietig-20160229)

These works were also destroyed: Many important females. The collages of Molly Blackburn were several photos of her, she was from the Black Sash. See the informations below from my article.

'n Borsbeeld deur die bekende kunstenaar Delise Reich van die eerste vrou wat aan 'n Suid-Afrikaanse universiteit gestudeer het, Maria Emmeline Barnard Fuller, is ook met verf beskadig.

Fuller het in 1886 onderwys aan die UK se voorloper, die South African College, gestudeer en 'n sleutelrol gespeel in die ontwikkeling van die kampus.

'n Portretstudie van haar is ook verbrand.

Twee unieke foto­collages van Molly Blackburn, 'n bekende lid van die Black Sash­beweging wat onder raaiselagtige omstandighede in 1985 in 'n motorongeluk dood is, is ook verbrand. Volgens History Online was daar 20 000 mense – meestal swart – by haar begrafnis.

'n Sanger wat internasionale roem verwerf het, Rosemary Taylor, se portret deur Rupert Shepard is ook verwoes.

Fuller se portret (deur Edward Roworth) is ook verbrand, saam met dié van ander vroue, naamlik Doris Spencer Emmett en Anna Maria Tugwell (albei deur Roworth), Joan Gie (James Eddie), Sue Folb (Carli Hare), dr. Rosemary Exner (Harriet Fuller Knight), Arlene van der Walt en Rosemary Taylor (albei deur Roolen Ryall) en Maria Lydia Grant (Rupert Shepard).

Anna Maria Tugwell was die eerste huismoeder van die eerste koshuis vir vroue by Groote Schuur. Sy het ook aan die South African College gestudeer.

Die ander portrettes wat verbrand is, was van Harry Frederick Oppenheimer (Bernard Hailston), Albert van der Sandt Centlivres (Neville Lewis), Jan Christiaan Smuts (Edward Roworth), prof. Theodore Le Roux (Robert Broadley), prof. Owen Lewis (Stanley Eppel), prof. Alexander Brown en Edward, Prins van Wallis (albei deur John Wheatley).

Dan was daar ook die vyf werke van Keresemose Richard Baholo wat in die 1990’s ‘n student by die UK se Michaelis­skool vir skone kunste was.
Art and UCT: an opportunity to encourage debate

We need more art, not less

By Nathan Geffen /author/20/
14 April 2016

These are tough times for art at UCT.

Paintings were burnt in a protest in January. An exhibition in Molly Blackburn Hall of events in 2015 was taken down when some students disapproved of it. In the past couple of weeks GroundUp has reported that over 70 works have been taken down or covered up by the Works of Art Committee (media/uploads/documents/WOAC%20on%20removals%20Feb%202016%20Peter%20Anderson.pdf) and the Artworks Task Team - the latter established by the university council in September. These include Willie Bester’s Saartjie Baartman and Breyten Breytenbach’s Hovering Dog, as well as works by Zwelethu Mthethwa, William Kentridge and Stanley Pinker.

In the 1930s Diego Rivera, a Mexican communist, friend for a while of the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky, lover of Frida Kahlo, and one of the great artists of the 20th century, was commissioned to paint a fresco titled Man at the Crossroads in New York’s Rockefeller Centre. Before it was complete, Nelson Rockefeller ordered its destruction.

Here is Rivera’s recreated version of it called Man, Controller of the Universe:
A careful look at the figure to the right of centre shows the reason why Rockefeller went apoplectic when he saw it. It’s Vladimir Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik revolution.

The 1999 movie Cradle will Rock (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0150216/?ref_=nv_sr_1) shows Rockefeller, played by John Cusack, deciding after this incident to invest in art that wouldn’t upset. Hence, the movie suggests, the rise of inoffensive abstract art. It is an interesting take of how artists like Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko became so popular.

Institutions of learning, such as UCT, should try to do a little better than petulant capitalists like Rockefeller.

Artworks are put up, taken down, replaced, refurbished and removed all the time. For the most part, few people, notice or wonder about the process by which this is done. The art displayed at UCT, much like the curricula of, say, philosophy or computer science, is determined by experts. Usually this makes sense. Most of us, including me, don’t know enough about art to make sensible decisions.

But what the Artworks Task Team is doing is not the normal work of curation. It is not replacing art with the aim of refreshing displays. It is not trying to enhance UCT’s art collection. It is not acting to challenge students, to make them question their views and prejudices. On the contrary: it is removing art and acting out of fear that particular artworks offend or will be destroyed.
UCT’s vice-chancellor Max Price has published a statement (http://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/?id=9669) explaining the purpose of the Artworks Task Team and the continued covering up and taking down of art that is deemed offensive for “cultural, religious or political reasons”. Price gives examples of what he calls “problematic curatorial issues” including:

- “Accumulated effects or weightings such as the number of works depicting black poverty and naked black bodies … an effect exacerbated by an absence of artworks that would encourage black people to feel proud of who they are”.
- “A passage full of portraits of white people creating an unconscious stereotype that academic excellence and leadership has a colour”.
- “Juxtapositions that create effects that might not have been anticipated, noticed or thought about, and may not be desirable”.
- “Forms of framing saturated in colonial symbolism”.
- “Lack of contextual information”.
- “Lack of stimulating, intellectually enabling and exciting curatorial engagement”.

These criteria are so wide-ranging that almost any painting or sculpture could fall foul of them, especially given how varied and personal responses to art are.

And the primary target of the Artworks Task Team has been the centre of academic life and learning at UCT: the main library and the adjoining Molly Blackburn Hall. It is here that nearly all the publicised acts of removal and covering have taken place. Under no reasonable interpretation can this space be described as perpetuating colonial or racist ideas. Interpretation of art is subjective but there’s a limit to the reasonableness of subjectivity. (There are areas which look like colonial relics on campus: Smuts Hall for example. But the library is not such a place.)

The art in the library clearly has been selected with care, with the intention of being stimulating, aesthetically and politically. What is being removed or covered up is art with sexual connotations. It is puritanism as much as anti-racism that appears to be determining what is culled.

Willie Bester’s sculpture of Saartjie Baartman has been covered up. Bester is a black artist. His representation of Baartman was described as “remarkable” by former UCT vice-chancellor Njabulo Ndebele in his book The Cry of Winnie Mandela.
Price, in this instance, has done the opposite of what needs to be done. In a time of unprecedented public interest in UCT’s cultural artefacts, instead of retreating in response to Rhodes Must Fall’s (RMF) criticisms and actions, he should take the opportunity to increase debate and discussion on campus.


Council should be encouraging debate and civil disagreement (not merely by inviting email correspondence), just as, to some extent, happened before the Rhodes statue came down. It should call for more artworks. It might consider issuing a challenge for depictions of the events on campus last year, and other imaginative ideas. It should encourage art to flourish, not be covered up or removed. It should have done this months, if not years ago. It’s still not too late.
Breyten Breytenbach's Hovering Dog has been removed from the library. He is a bit cross (http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016­04­05­letter­to­the­editor­breytenbreytenbachs­anger­with­uct/#.Vw65UiafFyQ) about it. What can be more galling to racists than a picture of love across the colour line?

Over the past year Price and members of the council have been insulted and condemned by RMF, black and white alumni, unions and academics and some newspapers, often unfairly. Price has been pelted with bottles and his office has been firebombed.

Price’s letter seems a consequence of being under constant siege, and believing that the university generally is under siege.

But it isn’t. If you walk down the main avenue of upper campus on a sunny afternoon, you find thousands of students, black and white – often together – doing what students do: dancing in the Molly Blackburn hall, studying in the library, sitting in groups on the plaza chatting, sometimes discussing politics or science, fretting over tests, loans and money, often holding hands and sometimes kissing. UCT is a vibrant place.

I am confident UCT can deal with open debate about its art and cultural monuments. Sure, there will be conflict and anger; and the outcomes of the debate aren’t knowable in advance. But UCT might also emerge a better institution for it. I wish the besieged administration could see this, because its current approach suggests it has a low view of the institution.

Correction: The initial version of the article stated that UCT's council supported Max Price’s letter. This is apparently incorrect and the article has therefore been updated.

Post-publication update: It was noted that the Works of Art Committee and the Artworks Task Team have together taken down over 70 artworks, and a link was added to the document that confirms this.

Geffen is GroundUp editor and a post-graduate student at UCT. Views are not necessarily those of other GroundUp staff.

Photos of art in UCT's main library and the Molly Blackburn Hall
good girl
Letter to the Editor: Breyten Breytenbach's anger with UCT

Dear Sir,

At the risk of being one of the “naughty children in class who do not know how to behave”, I nevertheless feel it incumbent upon me to react to the removal of one of my paintings from public display at the University of Cape Town. Please allow me to do so.

Dissident poet and artist Breyten Breytenbach, who spent seven years in prison for high treason in the 1970s, has written a letter conveying his “sentiment of disgust” at UCT’s decision to take down artworks and place them in safekeeping.

The buck starts here.

22 May 2017 12:54 (South Africa)

Photo of Breyten Breytenbach by Luigi Novi via Wikimedia Commons

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Photo of Breyten Breytenbach by Luigi Novi via Wikimedia Commons

Dear Sir,

At the risk of being one of the “naughty children in class who do not know how to behave”, I nevertheless feel it incumbent upon me to react to the removal of one of my paintings from public display at the University of Cape Town. Please allow me to do so.
Had it not been for Daily Maverick/GroundUp report (https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-04-06-groundup-report-is-not-a-safe-space-for-art/#VweQKBRLyqQ), I would not have known that a work of mine is involved. (There must be more. For instance – if memory serves me right – somewhere up there there is a painting depicting Goya at the time when he was producing his black series in the house of the deaf, showing a pair of red hands, and with the inscription, “this does not bear looking at”. Surely a prime example of offensive political incorrectness!)

In the light of the moral probity and civic courage of the decision-making instances of the university lowering their frocks – and what an admirable mess of crap emanating from the spokesperson quoted by you! – and the ethical, cultural, artistic and common garden variety illiteracy of the “protesters” (who probably did not even have to raise their obtuseness for the authorities to turn their submissive backsides to them), I really wish to make it known that I do not want to be associated with the University of Cape Town in any shape or form. Verily, this light of higher learning blinds me.

Unfortunately, the paintings in question no longer belong to me. If they did, I’d have withdrawn them long since.

I have no means of contacting Max Price or any of his stalwart minions directly to convey my sentiments of disgust, and can only hope for this missive to reach them through you. And while at it, I wish to thank them for the decency of having informed me about the incident, and the sterling bravery of their intellectual steadfastness...

Yours

Breyten Breytenbach

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Letter to the Editor: Breyten Breytenbach on vanishing UCT artworks and blank minds


South Africa (https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/section/south-africa/)
- 11 Apr 2016 11:08 (South Africa)
- 32 Reactions

Please allow me yet again to react to the spasms of abject annihilation of sense, meaning and self-respect being played out around the question of the vanishing artworks at the University of Cape Town. If the reasoning weren’t so sleazy and infinitely self-serving one could perhaps take pity and guide these spokespeople to the gallows of beatification. By BREYTEN BREYTENBACH.

One knows that to work at university is a form of sheltered employment, one takes it as given that these poor souls are there because they cannot survive in the outside world, and one even abides the fallacy which they are so keen to propagate – to wit, that they may be knowledgeable on the subjects they rend their upper garments for.

But surely it must be dangerous to public sanity to entertain the Orwellian Newspeak of Dr Peter Anderson (aping the sentiments of the UCT spokesperson Elijah Moholola’s sophistry about “creating an environment where a diversity of staff and students feel comfortable” – the grave’s a fine and private place…) who brilliantly suggests that covering the artworks (or removing them) actually brings about a conversation (ceci n’est pas une pipe), promoting “another mode of seeing the work, less flat and obvious, more thoughtful and imaginative…”

Ha! And (wait for the Eureka moment): “It should be read as an essay in creative curation, and strictly part of the dynamic spaces of engagement…” How lofty! This gentleman’s deep Dadaist thinking should make it straight into the Guinness Book of Immortal Donkeyspeak.

How sad that the uncomfortable ones who, ages ago, carved Buddhas in the rockface along the Silk Route did not save the Taliban the trouble of dynamiting the statues so as to create a space of conversation. What a pity the brave efforts at sustained curation of the Nazis when they banned Decadent Art and torched anti-hegemonic writings were not properly understood for its politically correct intentions.

Did the Salafists in Timbuktu and Gao not promote other modes of seeing when they pick-axed the mausoleums of the marabouts and threw the bones to the dogs? And how heartening to see the funds at the University of Cape Town being in synch with Boko Haram’s campaign to root out Western thought systems, or with attempts of the Islamic State cultural workers to cleanse the landscape of the vestiges of apostate (and probably colonialist) creation.

Swallow your beard, Da Vinci, for not making the Mona Lisa invisible! And please paint out those racist Picassos that so offend our sensibilities! And while at it — why not cover the lascivious, macho legs of our tables and couches with cloth from China? Let us breathe! Are we not then throwing off our shackles as we march into the brave new world with blank minds?

Attaboy, UCT! Go for it! Make fools of yourselves!

Breyten Breytenbach


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Hackers steal 17 million users’ data from Indian restaurant app Zomato
This is probably the list of artworks UCT has removed

University claims there are errors in our list that we obtained from a reliable source, but refuses to provide corrections

By Natalie Pertsovsky (/author/258/)
25 April 2017

Following a long deliberation process, the Artworks Task Team (ATT) of the University of Cape Town (UCT) published a report (/media/uploads/documents/Artworks_Report_to_CouncilFeb2017.pdf) in February that indicates the pieces of art removed and covered up in the past year will remain off the walls indefinitely.

The report appears to refer to a list of 75 pieces of works that were removed, the names of which GroundUp has received from a confidential source (list included at the bottom of this article) as well as 19 pieces of art determined to be controversial by student representatives on the ATT in 2015. The two lists, which most probably overlap with regards to certain pieces of art, in combination with the 23 works that were destroyed (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/rhodes-must-fall-protesters-destroy-uct-artworks/) during the Shackville protests in February 2016, leave a gaping hole in UCT’s sizable collection of artwork as almost 100 pieces will be collecting dust in a storage closet for the foreseeable future.

In response to GroundUp’s request for confirmation of the below list of 75 removed works, UCT said that, “the list of the 75 artworks provided by GroundUp is not entirely correct.” However, the university has refused to reveal the titles of the works that are incorrect.

The ATT was started in September 2015 to advise the university’s Works of Art Committee on policy for statues, plaques, and artworks.

In response to criticism of the Task Team in the media, the ATT responded with a “clarification” (https://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/?id=9692) of its role, distinguishing itself from the Works of Art Committee whom it said is “the body responsible for the development of policy for artworks.”
In the February 2017 report, the ATT published a list of “short- and medium- to long-term recommendations [that] were developed based on the outcomes of the audit of artworks, statues and plaques.” The first short term recommendation, to be implemented in one year, states:

“The University of Cape Town must keep artworks that were removed from the walls in storage pending a broader consultative process. This consultation may take the form of displays of some of the contested artworks, (in dedicated spaces such as the CAS Gallery), debates and discussions around specific artworks and/or themes. Seminars that may involve artists of ‘contested’ works may also be hosted by the WOAC and other departments in the university around different artworks and symbols.”

It is not clear if this “consultative process” has a time limit for how long the art will be kept in storage.

The report makes it apparent that some of the works were removed for safety reasons while others were removed for political reasons as “part of the transformation agenda” and calls on the Works of Art Committee to make clear the reason for removal.

“The Task Team [ATT] organised a joint meeting with the Works of Art Committee where it supported this initiative but advised that the motives for the removals should be made clear. For example, there needed to be public communication about whether the removals were only a measure for securing assets or if they were part of the transformation agenda. The lack of public communication by the Works of Art Committee incited widespread public speculation that removals amounted to censorship by the [ATT].”

One of the conclusions reached by the team discusses that although “there may not be a problem with individual artworks,” the overall effect of many works creates an unsafe, uncomfortable environment for certain people on campus.

“In our deliberations we found that while there may not be a problem with individual artworks, their cumulative effect, coupled with the lack of a considered curatorial policy, creates a negative feeling amongst some students and staff. We found that currently, UCT does not have a curatorial policy and would need to develop one that is transformation sensitive.”

Breyten Breytenbach’s Hovering Dog has been removed from UCT’s library.

In an interview with LitNet in April 2016, Tsumele said: “It is 100% a case of censorship, ironically in a democracy whose constitution allows for freedom of expression such as through art.”

When asked if South African art that is influenced from overseas trends can be viewed as a form of colonialism or neo-colonialism, Tsumele said, “Society should not attempt to dictate who should influence artists.” Further, “There should never be dictatorship with regard to how artists represent the human condition in their works; whether we agree or do not agree with such representation, it is none of our business as society.”

The report confirms the list of 19 works that were singled out by students on the team, though it does not name the pieces. In response to a query from GroundUp regarding the works, Elijah Moholola, Head Media Liaison for UCT said, “[the works] were identified as part of the plan of the ATT to initiate discussions and debates around the contested artworks but such plans were affected by the protest action in February 2016.”

The ATT report states:

“The initial student representatives on the Task Team identified a list of 19 works in 2015 that were deemed to be controversial. Before recommendations could be made, however, the #FeesMustFall protests began, resulting in the closure of the University.”

It goes on to discuss the paintings that were destroyed during protests, without naming them:

“On 16 February 2016, twenty-three artworks were destroyed on Upper Campus during the Shackville Protests.”

A 2014 article (http://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/little-at-uct-saying-black-child-be-proud-1720099) criticising the over-representation of black bodies in negative and often degrading positions in artwork displayed across campus refers to a number of paintings and sculptures, including Willie Bester’s Saartjie Baartman and Diane Victor’s Pasiphae (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/prominent-artwork-covered-uct/). Many of these were removed or covered up. These two artists are not on the list of 75 that GroundUp received, leading us to believe that the list of 75 is mostly separate from the 19 works. However, the reference to the “portrait of a
naked white man, on his lap is a black woman' identifies Breytenbach’s Hovering Dog, which is, in fact, on the list of 75 artworks we received. This indicates that though UCT has said the 19 works identified were not removed because of protest disruption, works identified as part of the list of 19 may also be part of the 75 works that were indeed removed.
UCT has declined GroundUp’s request for the identification of the 75 pieces removed, for the identification of the 2015 list of 19 works discerned as “controversial,” and for the identification of the 23 pieces of art destroyed during the Shackville Protests.

In response to GroundUp’s question of whether or not the removal of these pieces of art goes against UCT’s ideals of freedom of expression, the university responded: “UCT continues to uphold freedom of expression as enshrined in the South African Constitution. The removal of the artworks is only a temporary measure while there is ongoing dialogue and debates over creating an institution that is inclusive and reflective of the diversity of the country.”

### Table of artworks removed

If you find errors in the list below, please alert GroundUp via info@groundup.org.za.

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Topics: Art (/topic/art/), Freedom of Expression (/topic/freedom-expression/), Tertiary Education (/topic/tertiary-education/)
Letters

After Art Censorship, What's Next, UCT?

Dear Editor

Art censorship (and let's not be coy about what the removal of certain "offensive" artwork really is) is but one step further down the dangerous, and slippery, slope of content control at UCT.

Other steps have been taken, or are in contemplation - "banning" of lecturers (Ken Hughes), abrogation of free speech (disinvitation of last year's TB Davie's invited lecturer), renaming or defiling so-called "colonial" statuary and buildings, and the restructuring of syllabi.

Might we look forward in the not too distant future to pre-authorization of lectures themselves?

It's very sad....

Sincerely

Dr William Gild
26 Apr 2017

UCT violating core values of academic freedom

Dear Editor

In its statement in response to the withdrawal by David Goldblatt of his photographs and other artwork from UCT (see: https://www.uct.ac.za/usr/press/2017/2017-02-24_Statement_GoldblattCollection_AM.pdf), the UCT Communication & Marketing Dept stated that UCT is guided by the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), and is committed to academic freedom. But LIASA's code states, inter alia, that "Members should ensure the free flow of information, freedom of speech and freedom of expression and the right of access to information." UCT has consistently failed to abide by this code, and has also consistently violated the principles of academic freedom, by, inter alia, censoring works of art by removing them or covering them up, by disininviting the 2016 TB Davie invited speaker, Mr Flemming Rose, and by failing to sanction those who actively infringe on the rights of others. That the UCT Executive can continue to claim the contrary adds insult to injury and seriously undermines UCT's standing as an institution of higher learning. Universities should actively promote and defend freedom of expression. UCT is not only failing in these duties but is at times actively undermining them. This is nothing short of disastrous - both for the future of higher education in SA, and indeed for democracy itself.

Sincerely

Dr Elisa Galgut, UCT
27 Apr 2017

Breyten Breytenbach on the removal of UCT artworks

Dear Editor

What a prime example of the inherently South African expression of fascism! It is neither new nor original though: the late National Party already visited the same obscenities on us. Advancing under the banner of "righting injustices", "promoting Africanism", expectorating Western (sic) artefacts... we witness the condonation of classical fascist behaviour through the ages: doing away with anything that might challenge the closed and fearful mindsets of the mob. The world has seen this before in the book-burning orgies of the brave SA during the Nazi period (remember 'Entartige Kunst'?), in the courageous barbarism of China's Red Guards, in the ways the Pol Pot régime 'cleansed' Kampuchea, all the way through to the revolutionary ardour of Boko Haram. Welcome to the vomiting power of being human!

But why stop at such a piddling demonstration of effecting social and aesthetical justice?

I hereby declare my willingness to publicly put to the torch the three paintings that I had produced during the years of political blindness when I did not know what I was doing. I shall be naked, as behooves a penitent. I'm willing to grovel and kiss the smartphones of the revolutionaries. (I can't promise to flagellate myself, being somewhat of a coward.) The only favour I ask is
that such a ceremony should take place in the presence of Dr. Max Price and his cohort of professors and other flunkeys.

Yours in abject contrition

Sincerely

Breyten Breytenbach
27 Apr 2017

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<tr>
<th>➤ Replace emotion-based demands with rational debate at UCT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dear Editor</td>
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<td>Emotive declarations of &quot;pain&quot;, &quot;suffocation&quot; and &quot;outrage&quot; are not sufficient justification to 'ban' anything, especially within an institution that, for decades, fought for and still claims to be free of the shackles of unchallenged ideology, discrimination, beliefs, myths and politics. If statues, artwork, building names, seminars, publications, courses, even people are to be sidelined, banned or removed, show legal cause for such actions or, at least, require interested, affected and 'knowledgeable' protagonists to argue their cases - for and against - in an open, heckle-defamation-free, transparent and widely publicized manner. In an institution like UCT that was once founded on striving for universal truth hindered by nothing that violates &quot;absolute intellectual integrity pursued in an atmosphere of academic freedom&quot; (TB Davie), unilateral or narrowly 'collective' decision-making has no place.</td>
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<td>During the last two years especially, the actions (epitomized be the treatment of artwork) and inactions of the UCT Executive have effectively suborned the violation of South Africa's laws, internationally recognized human rights and personal freedoms in support of racially/nationalistically and/or ill-defined ideologies.</td>
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<td>Sincerely</td>
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<td>Tim Crowe, UCT Emeritus Professor and Life Fellow</td>
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<th>➤ What happened to thought at UCT?</th>
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<td>Dear Editor</td>
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<td>Since the removal of the Rhodes statue, UCT management has taken the easiest way out of debate: close down, remove. Hopefully discussion will disappear, let's duck intelligent argument. So much for a supposed institute of learning and academia. If &quot;transformation&quot; is a process – and it should be, and positive – surely it should be enlightening, not a move to the dark. The censorship of the university's art, the pathetic way in which it is being taken into hiding, necessitates protest in the fiercest term – for the good of the future of UCT itself. The banality and sophistry that &quot;explains&quot; the lists and process is an insult not only to the South African public, artists and the university itself.</td>
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<td>And then there is the big question: what are the artists going to do?</td>
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<td>Sincerely</td>
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<td>Melvyn Minnaar</td>
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<th>➤ UCT's removal of art is active participation in the process of learning</th>
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<td>Dear Editor</td>
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<td>It strikes me that in order to fully appreciate what is going on at UCT it would be good to see the removal of certain pieces as a work in itself. This is performance art of which the active participants can be proud, but only when they realise what it is they have inadvertently done. Similarly UCT can be proud of its role in bringing about their enlightenment - when it finally happens. After all, what is a seat of higher learning if it does not facilitate active participation in the process of learning? Mere sophistry, you say?</td>
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<td>Sometimes when a child can't stop being destructive it's a good plan to join in and break a few windows yourself. Too charitable a construction, you say?</td>
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Sarah Baartman sculptor speaks out against art censorship

“I was trying to understand my own suffering” says Willie Bester, whose work has been covered up at UCT

Artist Willie Bester, whose sculpture of Sarah Baartman in the University of Cape Town (UCT) library has been covered up, speaks to GroundUp.

“Hi, I’m Willie.”

The renowned artist is soft-spoken and unassuming, and it’s apparent almost right away that he’s most comfortable when at work. A flying car, metallic propellers suspended from lacquered pipes, and a rusting “BP super 93” petrol pump are only a few of the numerous art installations that greet visitors when they arrive at Willie Bester’s home, though ‘home’ doesn’t do it justice. Bester’s house is a living, breathing work of art. He built the house from scratch after apartheid ended. He is constantly adding to it, adjusting and re-adjusting, re-evaluating and enjoying his home.

Bester lives in Kuilsriver with his wife, Evelyn, and three children. His standard workday outfit consists of blue work pants adorned with reflective strips, well-worn croc shoes, and a comfortable, formless T-shirt – probably the least colourful thing in the entire house.
Walking into the house, you are met on the right by a water fountain with exposed pipes that extend from the ceiling down to the metallic bowl and tap. On the left is a sitting room. At first glance, it looks like a sitting room one might see in a family home, complete with two overstuffed couches and a routinely used coffee table. Except that the sides of the coffee table read: “For use by black persons” on one narrow edge and “For use by white persons” on the other.

Bester sits on a shiny, wooden chair. On the wall behind the chair hangs one of his works titled *Industrialisation*. The rest of the room is similarly filled with pieces he has created or collected from artist friends.

**Childhood and Sarah Baartman**

“I don’t accept the word ‘coloured’. It was a convenient label imposed on people from a mixed background,” Bester says. “I feel better when someone refers to me as ‘so-called’ [coloured] because I cannot take responsibility for somebody else’s label.”

Bester’s father was Xhosa and his mother was coloured (so-called). He says his family was put in a category “where you won’t get access to anything coming from the government”.

This aversion to labels seems to have stuck. Throughout his life as an artist, Bester has tried to defy the categories placed on him by apartheid. He says “apartheid came to an end … but I continued to search for some parallels where I could identify with others who suffered. I was trying to understand my own suffering.”

One way he has done this is by finding connections to other people throughout history who have endured pain. This journey led him to Sarah Baartman.
“I heard about the experience of Sarah Baartman (https://www.takealot.com/hottentot-venus-ebook/PLID41477703) and I found some parallels with her story,” he explains. “While listening to a poem (https://saraiamtara.wordpress.com/2017/04/08/a-poem-for-sarah-baartman/) written by Diana Ferrus, it already came up to me as a sculpture and then I decided to build [it].” The entire process, from searching for pieces in junkyards to putting the sculpture together, took four months.

According to Bester, he felt an instant connection to Sarah’s story. Born in the Eastern Cape in the late 18th Century, she was taken to England at 25-years-old to be put on display for crowds of curious onlookers who ogled her large breasts and buttocks – a sight so exotic in Europe at the time as to be paid for. After being paraded around England as part of a freak show, Sarah’s proprietors “fled to France with her and they continued in France until her death. And if that was also not enough, they then dissected her body and put it in glass bottles. It seems that this deep-rooted racism went beyond your death. It never stopped. I identified with what she went through,” says Willie.

Covering Up Sara Baartman

The Baartman sculpture was purchased by the UCT Works of Art Committee for the new Chancellor Oppenheimer Library in 2001, where it has stood since. It has been covered twice: first in April 2015 by student protesters and again on 9 March 2016 when students covered it as part of their procession to the Center for African Studies Gallery meant to commemorate the anniversary of the Rhodes statue being removed.

Bester found out about last year’s events through an anonymous phone call.

“I didn’t know what the whole thing was about; there were no consultations,” he says. “I was upset because it was not my intention to insult anybody by doing this sculpture. It was something about myself.”

He struggles to understand the actions of students offended by the work. “If they could find a more decent way of expressing themselves … That sculpture has been there for more than 12 years and it has created a lot of debate. A lot of people identify it with suffering. There’s lots of dialogue created through that work.”
Bester is demanding the restoration of his work to its original state. "I want it to be uncovered because it was not meant to be covered up," he says. To him, concealing Sarah's body — a body that defies today's beauty standards — is a step backwards. "You know there is always this thing of what is acceptable. If somebody is too fat or too tall, we tend to hide that person. We don't want to see [them]."

His work was constructed with the intention of challenging people to look within and recognise their prejudices, he says. "I specifically made that sculpture so that one can confront who we are and that should be acceptable... To cover it up is to do exactly what one had fought against. One had fought for everyone to be acceptable with whatever deficiency they have, or what is seen as a deficiency."

Having reached adulthood during apartheid, Bester understands the discrimination that comes with looking different, especially in a nation like South Africa. "I grew up where if you're too dark, you get a job in the kitchen or you have to sit at the back of the buggy because you are not acceptable." He fights against this notion through his works like *Forced Removals* (1988) and *Untitled (Truck)*.

One of Bester's main criticisms of the fallist movements is the lack of knowledge by participants about the historical background and artistic implications of artworks. Bester himself is often misjudged, based solely on his name. "They get caught up with my surname. They think I'm a white man. Sometimes people are shocked when I walk up and they see... And some are very delighted," he says laughing.

The physical destruction of works, particularly during the February 2016 Shackville protests in which 23 pieces were set alight (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/rhodes-must-fall-protesters-destroy-uct-artworks/), is another aspect of the movement that Bester believes to be dangerous. "Some of those works survived the apartheid system... the Boers and the Brits fought the Boer War, but yet they never destroyed a single sculpture," says Bester, who was an anti-apartheid activist.

"I would have left Rhodes just the way he was because you cannot find a better piece of evidence of who this person was and where he is," says the artist. "That sculpture is a very healthy pathway for us to know where we come from and where we are going. [Rhodes] cannot hurt me anymore."
The destruction of busts, sculptures, and paintings worries Bester; society stands to lose the chance to learn from and engage with history if all controversial works are removed or altered. “The thing is they don’t understand that by challenging these things you create a better society,” says Bester. “If you build a sculpture that resists whatever issue there is, it’s a form of expressing yourself as a community. It is tools that are very healthy for a community.”

“I suffered directly under the apartheid system… I should have burned everything because I suffered firsthand, but now it is like my children, who were spared this, who are even angrier than me,” he says. “It is dangerous because we can easily go into civil war. We’ve got enough things that can turn us against one another.”

Dissatisfied with UCT’s Response

Bester, like other artists, such as Breyten Breytenbach (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/probably-list-artworks-uct-has-removed/#letter-3), is unhappy with UCT’s actions in the face of student pressure. He finds the university’s lack of communication about the veiling of his sculpture frustrating. “I would like them to just consult with me or explain to me what’s going on… what they are doing now is censorship at its worst. That is not in the Constitution.”

The absence of correspondence with artists by the university exacerbates the core issue — the attack on the right of freedom of expression, Bester explains. He thinks that UCT never should have let this happen and students shouldn’t have had direct access to the piece. “The issue is to have a good security system, because it was about security. If it was made out of paper they would have burned it down as well,” he says.

For the students involved, discontent with the Sarah Baartman sculpture extended beyond the piece itself. Baartman, whose remains were ultimately buried in Hankey near her birthplace, still can’t seem to find peace. Bester says that students “even went to her grave and splashed paint (http://ewn.co.za/2015/04/27/Saartjie-Baartman-statue-becomes-latest-victim-of-defacing) on [it]. This thing was countrywide.”

Discuss — don’t remove

In addition to Bester’s sculpture of Sarah Baartman, students have found issue with 18 other pieces of art. On top of these 19 works deemed to be controversial, UCT removed (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/probably-list-artworks-uct-has-removed/) 75 works from exhibition.

“That was happening during the Hitler regime … they stole the art and they trashed everything.”
When Bester started to search for parallels between the apartheid system and historical systems of oppression, the first connection he made was to the Jewish experience in Nazi Germany. So for him, the events on UCT’s campus and the university’s reaction reminded him of the obliteration of Jewish texts and artworks as well as the seizure of artwork owned or created by Jews. “Now that is very Nazi. That was happening during the Hitler regime … they stole the art and they trashed everything. Now that is a good example of Nazi politics. I cannot describe it differently,” he says.

Instead of removing and covering up challenging pieces of art, Bester says, “we should create forums where we can come and talk about the issues.” In other cases, “if the funds come from government and an artist does something they feel is not in line with certain values, [the government] should make forums and invite the artists to come and discuss the works.”
Prominent artwork covered up at UCT

This is “slightly comical” says artist Diane Victor

Another artwork at UCT has been hidden from view – this time by a wooden panel being placed in front of it. The artwork is award winning artist Diane Victor’s “Pasiphaë” and its covering comes in the wake of numerous artworks being removed from the university (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/uct-safe-space-art/).

Victor’s work features a large bull who is being held by a farmer, while a small girl stands next to the farmer, smiling with a miniature bull on wheels at her feet. Inside the bull is the figure of a naked black man, sleeping.

“Pasiphaë” comes from Greek mythology and was the name of the daughter of the sun god Helios. In the myth, Pasiphaë is cursed by Poseidon and experiences lust for a bull. In order to mate with the bull, a wooden cow wrapped in cow hide is built for Pasiphaë. She then hides in this cow, mates with the bull and gives birth to a son.

Victor explained to GroundUp that the artwork draws from the Pasiphaë Greek myth and is about the sexual awakening of the young girl in the artwork. She said that if people actually knew what was being depicted in her artwork she imagines that it “wouldn’t be seen as particularly offensive”.

Originally the artwork didn’t feature the black man inside the bull but Victor added the figure in an effort to make a more obvious connection to the myth of Pasiphaë and the young girl’s sexual awakening.
“[The artwork] was made specifically to be provocative to the white male farming community,” explained Victor.

Victor said that the removal of her work was “slightly comical” and that if the artwork was not viewed on a “simplistic level” people would see what she was trying to convey, which was not a racist message.

She believes that the university is “bending the knee too easily” to pressure to remove artwork at the university but added that she understood that they may remove works if there was the fear they may be damaged.

She said that very often artwork is “made to be provocative” and that to feel anger at an artwork is not a bad thing.

Dr Peter Anderson, Chairperson of the Works of Art Committee at UCT, told GroundUp, “The piece by Diane Victor was identified as offensive as far back as the Rhodes Must Fall protests in 2015. The Artworks Task Team recommended that it be stored pending their deliberations, at a time when it looked vulnerable – i.e. in the wake of the burnings in February. It is all but immovable, being heavily fixed into the masonry of the wall on which it is hung. Its steel frame makes it very heavy and the University of Cape Town has no suitable storage space.”

He continued, “It has been the idea of the Works of Art Committee to use the picture surface – covered – as a platform on which to post information and receive comments about the distribution of art on campus; to signal, in other words, the conversational space that we all want in the matter of art on campus. Some may think the work is being censored, others – we would hope – will understand that a temporary restriction of view makes for another mode of seeing the work, less flat and obvious, more thoughtful and imaginative. So the exercise should be read as an essay in creative curation, and strictly part of the dynamic process of engagement underway.

“We are creating spaces for engagement and discussion. Work is not being censored or permanently taken down.”
Dogwatch sculpture added to UCT’s living museum
12 April 2011

Signing off: Dialogue at the Dogwatch has been installed on the new Alma Mater plaza on middle campus. Photographed at the installation were (from left) Registrar Hugh Amoore, alumnus and donor Charles Diamond, sculptor David Brown, and VC Dr Max Price.

Acclaimed sculptor David Brown’s work, Dialogue at the Dogwatch, is the new permanent resident on the Alma Mater plaza between the Kramer Law Building and the new Student Administration Building on middle campus.

A gift from UCT alumnus Charles Diamond, Dialogue at the Dogwatch, sculpted in 1994 and 15 months in the making, is a major work Brown’s oeuvre. With a footprint of about 100m², the bronze, copper, brass, Cor-ten (weathering steel) and stainless steel piece was originally commissioned by Diamond, a collector of sculpture, for his country estate in the UK. Diamond was president of the SRC in 1966/67 and graduated from UCT with an MA in economics. He became a successful global economist.

Speaking at an event in April to celebrate the installation of the sculpture, registrar Hugh Amoore said that although UCT didn’t have an art museum, its growing art collection has allowed for the creation of “living museums” in the works on display across the faculties.

“This growth is largely a result of the tradition of alumni giving to their alma mater,” said Amoore.

A number works by Brown, also a UCT alumnus, can be found around the campus, including sculptures in the chemical engineering building, the Hoerikwaggo Building, the Robert Leslie Building, and in the Irma Stern Museum gardens, where a maquette of Dialogue at the Dogwatch is installed.

Diamond described “the dogwatch” as a nautical term for the hours between late afternoon and night, when fading light can play tricks on the eyes.

“It’s important for art to ask questions and challenge perceptions,” said Diamond. “It’s difficult for me to explain the piece, so when people ask me what it is, I usually just say, ‘it’s about seven and a half tonnes’.”

A graduate of the Michaelis School of Fine Art, Brown’s work has won several awards and is represented in both South African and foreign collections.

“Students who pass here might not always become art fans,” said Diamond, “but they will be aware of the dogwatch hours - and maybe even what it means.”
This is probably the list of artworks UCT has removed

University claims there are errors in our list that we obtained from a reliable source, but refuses to provide corrections

By Natalie Pertsovsky (/author/258/)
25 April 2017

Following a long deliberation process, the Artworks Task Team (ATT) of the University of Cape Town (UCT) published a report (/media/uploads/documents/Artworks_Report_to_CouncilFeb2017.pdf) in February that indicates the pieces of art removed and covered up in the past year will remain off the walls indefinitely.

The report appears to refer to a list of 75 pieces of works that were removed, the names of which GroundUp has received from a confidential source (list included at the bottom of this article) as well as 19 pieces of art determined to be controversial by student representatives on the ATT in 2015. The two lists, which most probably overlap with regards to certain pieces of art, in combination with the 23 works that were destroyed (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/rhodes-must-fall-protesters-destroy-uct-artworks/) during the Shackville protests in February 2016, leave a gaping hole in UCT’s sizable collection of artwork as almost 100 pieces will be collecting dust in a storage closet for the foreseeable future.

In response to GroundUp’s request for confirmation of the below list of 75 removed works, UCT said that, “the list of the 75 artworks provided by GroundUp is not entirely correct.” However, the university has refused to reveal the titles of the works that are incorrect.

The ATT was started in September 2015 to advise the university’s Works of Art Committee on policy for statues, plaques, and artworks.

In response to criticism of the Task Team in the media, the ATT responded with a “clarification” (https://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/?id=9692) of its role, distinguishing itself from the Works of Art Committee whom it said is “the body responsible for the development of policy for artworks.”
In the February 2017 report, the ATT published a list of “short- and medium- to long-term recommendations [that] were developed based on the outcomes of the audit of artworks, statues and plaques.” The first short term recommendation, to be implemented in one year, states:

“The University of Cape Town must keep artworks that were removed from the walls in storage pending a broader consultative process. This consultation may take the form of displays of some of the contested artworks, (in dedicated spaces such as the CAS Gallery), debates and discussions around specific artworks and/or themes. Seminars that may involve artists of ‘contested’ works may also be hosted by the WOAC and other departments in the university around different artworks and symbols.”

It is not clear if this “consultative process” has a time limit for how long the art will be kept in storage.

The report makes it apparent that some of the works were removed for safety reasons while others were removed for political reasons as “part of the transformation agenda” and calls on the Works of Art Committee to make clear the reason for removal.

“The Task Team [ATT] organised a joint meeting with the Works of Art Committee where it supported this initiative but advised that the motives for the removals should be made clear. For example, there needed to be public communication about whether the removals were only a measure for securing assets or if they were part of the transformation agenda. The lack of public communication by the Works of Art Committee incited widespread public speculation that removals amounted to censorship by the [ATT].”

One of the conclusions reached by the team discusses that although “there may not be a problem with individual artworks,” the overall effect of many works creates an unsafe, uncomfortable environment for certain people on campus.

“In our deliberations we found that while there may not be a problem with individual artworks, their cumulative effect, coupled with the lack of a considered curatorial policy, creates a negative feeling amongst some students and staff. We found that currently, UCT does not have a curatorial policy and would need to develop one that is transformation sensitive.”

Breyten Breytenbach's Hovering Dog has been removed from UCT's library.

In an interview with LitNet in April 2016, Tsumele said: "It is 100% a case of censorship, ironically in a democracy whose constitution allows for freedom of expression such as through art."

When asked if South African art that is influenced from overseas trends can be viewed as a form of colonialism or neo-colonialism, Tsumele said, "Society should not attempt to dictate who should influence artists." Further, "There should never be dictatorship with regard to how artists represent the human condition in their works; whether we agree or do not agree with such representation, it is none of our business as society."

The report confirms the list of 19 works that were singled out by students on the team, though it does not name the pieces. In response to a query from GroundUp regarding the works, Elijah Moholola, Head Media Liason for UCT said, "[the works] were identified as part of the plan of the ATT to initiate discussions and debates around the contested artworks but such plans were affected by the protest action in February 2016."

The ATT report states:

"The initial student representatives on the Task Team identified a list of 19 works in 2015 that were deemed to be controversial. Before recommendations could be made, however, the #FeesMustFall protests began, resulting in the closure of the University."

It goes on to discuss the paintings that were destroyed during protests, without naming them:

"On 16 February 2016, twenty-three artworks were destroyed on Upper Campus during the Shackville Protests."

A 2014 article (http://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/little-at-uct-saying-black-child-be-proud-1720099) criticising the over-representation of black bodies in negative and often degrading positions in artwork displayed across campus refers to a number of paintings and sculptures, including Willie Bester’s Saartjie Baartman and Diane Victor’s Pasiphae (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/prominent-artwork-covered-uct/). Many of these were removed or covered up. These two artists are not on the list of 75 that GroundUp received, leading us to believe that the list of 75 is mostly separate from the 19 works. However, the reference to the "portrait of a
naked white man, on his lap is a black woman' identifies Breytenbach's Hovering Dog, which is, in fact, on the list of 75 artworks we received. This indicates that though UCT has said the 19 works identified were not removed because of protest disruption, works identified as part of the list of 19 may also be part of the 75 works that were indeed removed.
UCT has declined GroundUp’s request for the identification of the 75 pieces removed, for the identification of the 2015 list of 19 works discerned as "controversial," and for the identification of the 23 pieces of art destroyed during the Shackville Protests.

In response to GroundUp’s question of whether or not the removal of these pieces of art goes against UCT’s ideals of freedom of expression, the university responded: “UCT continues to uphold freedom of expression as enshrined in the South African Constitution. The removal of the artworks is only a temporary measure while there is ongoing dialogue and debates over creating an institution that is inclusive and reflective of the diversity of the country.”

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<th>Table of artworks removed</th>
<th>If you find errors in the list below, please alert GroundUp via <a href="mailto:info@groundup.org.za">info@groundup.org.za</a>.</th>
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<td>1 Justin Anschutz</td>
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<td>2 Richard Keresemose Baholo</td>
<td>Mandela receives honorary doctorate from UCT</td>
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<td>3 Richard Keresemose Baholo</td>
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<td>4 Esmeralda Brettany</td>
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<td>8 Robert Broadley</td>
<td>Flowers in a Vase</td>
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<td>10 Robert Broadley</td>
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<td>11 Robert Broadley</td>
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<td>13 Robert Broadley</td>
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<td>14 David Brown</td>
<td>Travelling icon; an artist’s workshop</td>
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<td>15 Herbert Coetzee</td>
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<td>16 Christo Coetzee</td>
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<td>Joshua Reynolds (After)</td>
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<td>Hareward Hayes Tresidder</td>
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<td>Karina Turok</td>
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<td>Michael Wyeth</td>
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Topics: Art (/topic/art/), Freedom of Expression (/topic/freedom-expression/), Tertiary Education (/topic/tertiary-education/)
Letters

After Art Censorship, What's Next, UCT?

Dear Editor

Art censorship (and let's not be coy about what the removal of certain "offensive" artwork really is) is but one step further down the dangerous, and slippery, slope of content control at UCT.

Other steps have been taken, or are in contemplation - "banning" of lecturers (Ken Hughes), abrogation of free speech (disinvitation of last year's TB Davie's invited lecturer), renaming or defiling so-called "colonial" statuary and buildings, and the restructuring of syllabi.

Might we look forward in the not too distant future to pre-authorization of lectures themselves?

It's very sad....

Sincerely
Dr William Gild
26 Apr 2017

UCT violating core values of academic freedom

Dear Editor

In its statement in response to the withdrawal by David Golblatt of his photographs and other artwork from UCT (see: https://www.uct.ac.za/usr/press/2017/2017-02-24_Statement_GoldblattCollection_AM.pdf), the UCT Communication & Marketing Dept stated that UCT is guided by the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), and is committed to academic freedom. But LIASA's code states, inter alia, that "Members should ensure the free flow of information, freedom of speech and freedom of expression and the right of access to information." UCT has consistently failed to abide by this code, and has also consistently violated the principles of academic freedom, by, inter alia, censoring works of art by removing them or covering them up, by disinviting the 2016 TB Davie invited speaker, Mr Flemming Rose, and by failing to sanction those who actively infringe on the rights of others. That the UCT Executive can continue to claim the contrary adds insult to injury and seriously undermines UCT's standing as an institution of higher learning. Universities should actively promote and defend freedom of expression. UCT is not only failing in these duties but is at times actively undermining them. This is nothing short of disastrous - both for the future of higher education in SA, and indeed for democracy itself.

Sincerely
Dr Elisa Galgut, UCT
27 Apr 2017

Breyten Breytenbach on the removal of UCT artworks

Dear Editor

What a prime example of the inherently South African expression of fascism! It is neither new nor original though: the late National Party already visited the same obscenities on us. Advancing under the banner of "righting injustices", "promoting Africanism", expectorating Western (sic) artefacts... we witness the condonation of classical fascist behaviour through the ages: doing away with anything that might challenge the closed and fearful mindsets of the mob. The world has seen this before in the book-burning orgies of the brave SA during the Nazi period (remember 'Entartige Kunst'?), in the courageous barbarism of China's Red Guards, in the ways the Pol Pot régime 'cleansed' Kampuchea, all the way through to the revolutionary ardour of Boko Haram. Welcome to the vomiting power of being human!

But why stop at such a piddling demonstration of effecting social and aesthetical justice?

I hereby declare my willingness to publicly put to the torch the three paintings that I had produced during the years of political blindness when I did not know what I was doing. I shall be naked, as behooves a penitent. I'm willing to grovel and kiss the smartphones of the revolutionaries. (I can't promise to flagellate myself, being somewhat of a coward.) The only favour I ask is...
that such a ceremony should take place in the presence of Dr. Max Price and his cohort of professors and other flunkeys.

Yours in abject contrition

Sincerely

Breyten Breytenbach

27 Apr 2017

**Replace emotion-based demands with rational debate at UCT**

Dear Editor

Emotive declarations of “pain”, “suffocation” and “outrage” are not sufficient justification to ‘ban’ anything, especially within an institution that, for decades, fought for and still claims to be free of the shackles of unchallenged ideology, discrimination, beliefs, myths and politics. If statues, artwork, building names, seminars, publications, courses, even people are to be sidelined, banned or removed, show legal cause for such actions or, at least, require interested, affected and ‘knowledgeable’ protagonists to argue their cases - for and against - in an open, heckle-defamation-free, transparent and widely publicized manner. In an institution like UCT that was once founded on striving for universal truth hindered by nothing that violates "absolute intellectual integrity pursued in an atmosphere of academic freedom" (TB Davie), unilateral or narrowly ‘collective’ decision-making has no place.

During the last two years especially, the actions (epitomized be the treatment of artwork) and inactions of the UCT Executive have effectively suborned the violation of South Africa’s laws, internationally recognized human rights and personal freedoms in support of racially/nationally and/or ill-defined ideologies.

Sincerely

Tim Crowe, UCT Emeritus Professor and Life Fellow

2 May 2017

**What happened to thought at UCT?**

Dear Editor

Since the removal of the Rhodes statue, UCT management has taken the easiest way out of debate: close down, remove. Hopefully discussion will disappear, let’s duck intelligent argument. So much for a supposed institute of learning and academia. If “transformation” is a process – and it should be, and positive – surely it should be enlightening, not a move to the dark. The censorship of the university’s art, the pathetic way in which it is being taken into hiding, necessitates protest in the fiercest term – for the good of the future of UCT itself.

The banality and sophistry that “explains” the lists and process is an insult not only to the South African public, artists and the university itself.

And then there is the big question: what are the artists going to do?

Sincerely

Melvyn Minnaar

2 May 2017

**UCT’s removal of art is active participation in the process of learning**

Dear Editor

It strikes me that in order to fully appreciate what is going on at UCT it would be good to see the removal of certain pieces as a work in itself. This is performance art of which the active participants can be proud, but only when they realise what it is they have inadvertently done. Similarly UCT can be proud of its role in bringing about their enlightenment - when it finally happens. After all, what is a seat of higher learning if it does not facilitate active participation in the process of learning?

Mere sophistry, you say?

Sometimes when a child can’t stop being destructive it’s a good plan to join in and break a few windows yourself. Too charitable a construction, you say?
Madiba, we will continue to do our job

The Cape Argus will strive towards Nelson Mandela’s ideals, writes Jermaine Craig

Cape Town - The date of the edition was Wednesday, August 3, 1994. Our cover price was R1, our format was traditional broadsheet and we still had a “late final” edition.

“Supermarket strike settled” screamed our banner lead headline, a good strong font over two decks. Fittingly, given how the old man felt about the youth and the importance of their education, our page one picture was of the Cape Argus High Schools Quiz, which is still going strong.

It’s an extraordinary image, taken at Madiba’s official presidential home, Genadendal, by photographer Karina Turok.

“I had half an hour with Madiba between his engagements and wanted to do something different, something casual, something intimate. I asked him what he normally did when he relaxed, when he had a few rare moments to himself in his busy schedule. He told me what he loved to do most was put his feet up, drink his Perrier water and read his newspaper,” Turok recalled this week.

And as Turok’s beautiful photograph shows here, his newspaper of choice was The Argus.

As the editor of this newspaper, an institution in this city, seeing that image this weekend – a time of such heightened emotion – laid an overwhelming weight of responsibility on my shoulders.
Madiba loved this paper, we loved Madiba, and our newsroom this past exhausting week has been consumed attempting to give him the best possible tribute we could.

Watching the hundreds of hours of coverage about Madiba’s life on TV this week, I came across a documentary – Madiba and the Cartoonists – and a fascinating story told by Turok’s husband Jonathan Shapiro, better known as Zapiro. I called Zapiro up this weekend and asked him to relate the story again.

“I was sitting at my desk, busy drawing, on what was just an ordinary day in early 1998. The phone rang and my wife said it was the president’s office on the line. When I took the phone a woman told me to ‘please hold for President Mandela’. Then I heard that distinctive voice: ‘Hello, this is President Mandela. I am very upset with you.’

“I was worried that he must have been annoyed with some of my recent drawings. ‘I read that your cartoons will no longer be appearing in The Argus and when I am at Parliament I won’t be able to see them every day – and I really love seeing them every day,’ he said.

“I was shocked and told him I was amazed and honoured he had contacted me, and what made it so much more special was that in the last three-and-a-half years my cartoons had become more and more critical of the government.

“But that is your job,’ he told me. That always stood out for me, that as much as Madiba respected cartoonists and satire, even when our criticism was directed at government, he valued and supported our role in society.”

This week has rushed by in a wave of emotion, grief, joy and pain, evoking strong memories of the life of a man the likes of which we have never seen before – and will probably never see again. For years now we have expected – and dreaded – that call, that text message, that announcement.

On the evening of December 5, we had heard of an urgent Mandela family meeting and scores of vehicles pulling up outside Madiba’s Houghton home.

By the time our newspaper had gone to print at 9.30pm all we could report on was the angst and concern, with no official statement.

By 10pm there was a growing worry. A few unofficial sources reported that Madiba had passed on. But they remained just that, unofficial, and there were some sources who denied it altogether.

By 10.30pm, however, more and more sources were confirming off the record that the moment we had all dreaded had arrived. By 11pm, we had word that the SABC was preparing to go live with a “very important announcement”. I rushed into the office, but with our deadline long past, I was the only one in an empty newsroom as President Zuma announced on national television at 11.45pm that “our nation has lost its greatest son”.

As much as you prepare yourself emotionally for the news and think you will be ready to absorb it when it finally comes, I wasn’t prepared to hear Zuma utter the words that Madiba had “departed”.

I stood numb, in shock, in tears, but there was no time to mourn.

The printers had given us a deadline of 1am to change our paper and I frantically called on whomever I could find.

Fortunately, key members of our production team had formed the “Black Journalists’ Golfing Association” and convened their weekly “meetings” on nearby Long Street, after putting our last edition of the week to bed.

That three of the association’s founding members are white and that none of them has ever really swung a golf club with any distinction is neither here nor there. But, importantly, they were able to rush back into the office: Rob Ewart and Colin Appolis, led by our head of news Yunus Kemp.

Extraordinarily, the paper’s most senior staffers started trickling in, asking simply: “What can we do?”

There was John Yeld, a reporter who has dedicated 35 years of his journalistic career to The Argus, and the equally experienced Martine Barker, our managing editor.

After taking medication and turning in for the night, our head of content and production Robyn Leary groggily rushed in
from Claremont, with the most experienced member of our newsdesk, back desk editor Vivien Horler, also reporting to sub copy and proof pages. The long-time head of our picture desk, Heather Bisset, was also there, pulling the best selection of the thousands of Madiba images we have on file and making sure we had the best possible pictures on hand.

Two of the finest writers in the country, Michael Morris and Jonathan Ancer, with whom I am privileged to work, appeared from thin air. Jonathan pulled together a beautiful piece capturing a grim, historic announcement and the ripples that were already starting to be felt around the world.

It was crazy, organised, calm chaos, but as frenetic as the moment was, we were prepared.

In little over an hour, we had changed and dedicated six news pages to covering Madiba’s death, while also changing our op-ed and leader page, and inserting an editorial paying homage to Madiba.

We pulled out and ran Michael’s obituary, long prepared and long on hand, a piece mayor Patricia de Lille’s spokesman, Solly Malatsi, the next day rightly called “one of the most beautifully written tributes to Madiba”.

Michael was our political reporter when Madiba was released in 1990 and he still has the notebook containing his scribbled notes from Madiba’s famous Grand Parade speech on the day of his release, as well as a copy of how our newspaper covered Madiba’s release at the time.

Fittingly, for a man who has worked for this newspaper for over 30 years and has written a book chronicling 150 years of its history, Michael’s Mandela obit was the most important piece of writing in our newspaper that night – and possibly one of the most important pieces ever published in the long, proud history of this newspaper.

We, of course, changed our page one, but no words were needed. Just a solemn black masthead, a beautiful image of a smiling Madiba, and his date of birth and the date on which he passed away.

It seemed surreal that we could be drawing a line under Madiba’s life, putting a finite date to when he had physically left us, but our team in that landmark edition paid beautiful, fitting tribute to his life.

It’s been special this week seeing how our team has responded to the biggest story of our careers, seeing John Yeld with all his experience have the vigour of a cub reporter, hunting for iconic colour pieces that typified the special relationship Madiba had with Cape Town.

I’ve been extremely proud of every single edition we’ve produced since Madiba passed away.

A cover that will go down in our annals is our black and white page one image of Madiba kissing the hand of Farieda Omar, wife of the late Dullah Omar.

Madiba had famously written in Long Walk to Freedom how he had been to the Rylands home of the Omars hours after his release from Victor Verster prison and the urban legend goes that Farieda Omar’s chicken breyani was his first home-cooked meal after his release.

Graciously though, Mrs Omar debunked that famous myth last week in John’s piece, saying the Omars had in fact not even been at home when Madiba came by and that Madiba had instead gone to well-known activist Saleem Mowzer’s home, where the only one home to greet him was Mowzer’s sister Nishaad, heavily pregnant at the time.

One of our younger reporters, Daneel Knoetze, tracked down Dawood Khan, the man tasked with sourcing the convoy of Toyotas Madiba’s entourage used to drive him out of prison on February 11, 1990.

It was important for me to also send two of our own – immensely talented and proud Xhosa women Cindy Waxa and Sipokazi Fokazi – to record Madiba’s final journey home to Qunu.

And they didn’t disappoint. On the first day of their arrival, they filed a beautiful story recalling the memories of the villagers of Qokolweni, where Madiba had gone to complete his primary schooling.

The villagers remembered how Madiba returned to the village in 1990, with Chris Hani.

For us at the Cape Argus, it’s been an intensely personal week of reflecting on and recording Madiba’s life and legacy.
Sadly, in our newspaper group this has also been a week of furious debate over the issue of a free press and how we objectively cover our country’s robust democracy.

All I can say is Madiba did not spend 27 years in prison for nothing. He did not come out of prison to be confronted by the massacres of Boipatong, Shell House and many others, and to calm a seething, hurting nation after the callous assassination of Hani, to continue to keep our country on a path of peace and reconciliation, for nothing.

There need be no fears about this paper’s integrity. We will continue to cover and expose corrupt politicians who steal shamelessly from our people and threaten the democracy Madiba and many others strived for, and many died for.

In Madiba’s spirit, our newspaper’s philosophy is one that seeks to build this country, to look at its soul and its society critically, while celebrating its advancements and being positive about its future.

We will continue to strive to be objective and fair, beholden to no party or individual, but to the interests of our readers.

As Madiba would have wanted, we will continue to do our job.

* Jermaine Craig is the editor of the Cape Argus.

Cape Argus
Sue Williamson / All Our Mothers / 2013

About

Sue Williamson’s multimedia exhibition All Our Mothers, seen earlier this year at Goodman Gallery Johannesburg, travels to Cape Town this August. The show celebrates the strength of the extraordinary women who helped to bring this country to freedom, and examines the generation gap between these wise, iconic veterans of the struggle, and their granddaughters, the confident young born frees.

Williamson’s multi-screen video installation There’s something I must tell you portrays six intense conversations in which the older women recall important events.
moments of their histories and their lives, and the younger women respond, and present their own forthright views on living in South Africa right now. Stories of exile, of the women’s march, of imprisonment evoke the ultimate question: Was it all worth it? The answers are sometimes surprising.

In making the series, Williamson worked with such key figures as the charismatic Amina Cachalia, to whom this exhibition is dedicated, the distinguished Dr Brigalia Bam, the 101-year-old Rebecca Kotane, Caroline Motsoaledi, widow of Rivonia triallist Elias Motsoaledi, Ilse Fischer, activist daughter of Afrikaner lawyer Bram Fischer, and liberation movement heroine Vesta Smith.

Amina Cachalia and Caroline Motsoaledi were two of the women portrayed in Williamson’s portfolio of etchings/screenprints of the 1980s, A Few South Africans, a series that was reproduced and widely distributed as postcards at a time when images of these women were rarely seen in the press. Today, those postcards and prints are in such museum collections as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the V&A Museum in London, and the Walther Collection in Germany.

There’s something I must tell you originated when Williamson was a Rockefeller Foundation Creative Arts Fellow in Bellagio, Italy in 2011 and received a phone call from Amina Cachalia to contribute to a book at the very moment the artist was thinking she would like to interview and photograph Amina again, and to reconsider the important contribution of that generation almost 20 years into the new democracy. And so the new project began.

Accompanying the video installation is a new series of more than twenty photographic portraits of women taken over a thirty year period.

The artist is greatly indebted to the National Arts Council of South Africa, the Goethe Institute and Business Arts South Africa for support for All Our Mothers. The producer of There’s
something I must tell you is Monkey Films’ Clare van Zyl.
Sue Williamson
Annie Silinga, Langa, 1983
Archival inks on archival paper
Image: 39 x 58

Sue Williamson
Esslina Silinga, Langa Graveyard, 1995
Archival ink on archival paper

Sue Williamson
Annie Silinga, Langa, 1983
Archival inks on archival paper
Image: 58 x 39cm

Sue Williamson
Ilse Fischer Wilson, 2013
Archival ink on archival paper
Image: 58 x 39cm

Sue Williamson
Brigalia Bam, Pretoria, 2012
Archival ink on archival paper
Image: 58 x 39cm / Image: 58 x 39cm; Paper 71.5 x 51.5 cm
Edition...
Dear colleagues, students and alumni

There have been various articles and letters in the media commenting on the process that is being followed to create engagement and discussion around the display of art on campus. Much of the public comment about this process focuses on the removal of specific works of art from public display, and offers highly critical views about this. Such criticism that UCT is practicing self-censorship or giving in to the demands of a small radical student group indicates a lack of understanding about the University of Cape Town's transformation process and how our engagement with works of art contributes to this process. We are writing to set the record straight.

It is important to understand that we are not censoring any artworks. Much of the negative public comment fails to recognise that current removals are provisional. It is our belief that the artworks will all ultimately be on display once curatorial policies have been developed. The University remains committed to enabling scholars and the public to engage with the most difficult and challenging works, including those presently under discussion, and many others that may arrive in the future. What is currently at issue is not whether this should be done, but how.

UCT Council's Artworks Task Team was established by the Council in September 2015. The members include a number of experts in fine art (see list of members at end). The Task Team released an interim statement describing the Team's mandate, the urgency related to its work and progress made. Read the full statement from the Artworks Task Team. It indicates that the University needs an active and considered curation policy. The ATT's statement focusses attention on how the works are being curated, notably on cumulative effects, some of which are discussed below.

The problem is not the individual artworks themselves but how the University has handled them.

Examples of the problematic curatorial issues include:

- Accumulated effects or weightings such as the number of works depicting black poverty and naked black bodies, in sharp contrast to the lack of anything similar in the depiction of white people, an effect exacerbated by an absence of artworks that would encourage black people to feel proud of who they are
- A passage full of portraits of white people creating an unconscious stereotype that academic excellence and leadership has a colour (and gender)
- Juxtapositions that create effects that might not have been anticipated, noticed or thought about, and may not be desirable
- Forms of framing by, for example, the architecture, situation, lighting, height, associations with historic university insignia, some of it saturated in colonial symbolism, and so on, that have not been actively considered
- Lack of contextual information
- Lack of stimulating, intellectually enabling and exciting curatorial engagement

We acknowledge that in addition to these cumulative effects, some members of the campus community have identified certain works of art as offensive to them – for cultural, religious or political reasons. This raises the policy question whether artworks that offend a significant number should be on display in public places where they cannot be avoided and, if so, what curatorial responsibilities this imposes on the University. Alternatively, should they be displayed in a gallery where they can be better contextualised and viewed by choice? This again is about curation, and not the censorship of individual artworks. All of these questions are now open for discussion.
The Task Team proposes that the curation policy, which will also affect the policies on acquisitions, should be developed through an open consultative process that includes the different voices on our campus. Through the provisional removal of some artworks the University is dismantling elements of its curation, not suppressing the individual works, before such a consultative process.

The decision to cover and take down some works is motivated by two concerns: the first is to signal that we have started a process of debate and discussion about how works of art should be displayed on campus, and that we will respond to this debate with seriousness and urgency. The second is in recognition of our custodial obligation to protect our art collection, especially those works of art that have become controversial (whether for good reason or not), noting that in the absence of an art gallery, almost all of UCT’s art is displayed in public spaces. This is necessary while we conduct the discussions about how and where these works should be displayed.

We view the discussion around works of art as part of UCT’s accelerated transformation process. We are seeking to discuss with all members of the University community how we can reflect different aspects of our university community, our diverse body of staff and students, and help to create an inclusive community where everyone can readily identify with the institution. We invite you to share with us your idea of how the UCT environment can be used to show our pride in the growing diversity of our campus community: what works of art speak to you, how and where you feel those works should be displayed. Please write to artworks@uct.ac.za

To read more about UCT’s accelerated transformation process and the work done thus far, please click here.

Members of Council Arts Task Team:
- Associate Professor Shadreck Chirikure (Chair), Department of Archaeology
- Professor Carolyn Hamilton, SARChI Chair: Archive and Public Culture, Social Anthropology
- Dr Nomusa Nalubhu, Lecturer in Art History and Visual Culture, Michaelis School of Fine Art
- Associate Professor Berni Searle, Videography, Michaelis School of Fine Art
- Mr Rorisang Moseli, President, Student Representative Council
- Ms Noxolo Ntaka, Secretary General, Student Representative Council

Sincerely,

Dr Max Price, Vice Chancellor
Professor Sandra Klopper, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Professor of History of Art
The withdrawal of a limited number of artworks from University buildings

On the 16 February a number of artworks, totalling 23, in the University’s Collection, were burnt or otherwise damaged by protesters. The major portion of these works were portraits from Jameson Hall (4), Fuller Hall (8) and Smuts Hall (3). The Works of Art Committee, in consultation with the University leadership and the Chair of the Artworks Task Team established by Council last year, has since then removed 75 works from the campuses of the University on the grounds of their vulnerability to potential damage or because they are loan works for which we have a multiple and complicated responsibility.

Assessing the situation has been – and continues to be – necessarily complex. Some works were considered vulnerable because isolated and accessible, others because they are contentious. The Works of Art Committee shares in and supports Council’s concerns about the literal and figurative ‘space’ of the Collection in the University, but also shares the stated belief in a thorough process of accountability and consultation in identifying and managing contentious works and contentious curation. The present removals do not signify a wholesale withdrawal of the University’s art on the part of the Works of Art Committee, but they do signal the Committee’s awareness of the issues at stake, and its receptiveness to the deliberations of the Artworks Task Team, which are intended to emerge as a report for comment and consultation before Council signals its will in the matter.

The affected works have been catalogued and are in storage for the time being. The Works of Art Committee is ongoingly concerned about the reception of the Collection, and with the Collection itself. The present storage of the works is in line with both concerns, and the Committee would wish to stress that the curation of any collection is always a
dynamic and creative exercise, and can no more be undertaken oblivious
to the context of time than it can ignore the space in which it must be
hung or otherwise sited.

Peter Anderson
Chairman: Works of Art Committee
10 March 2016
Letter by Bozzoli

Response by Max Price to Belinda Bozzoli

 Dear Professor Bozzoli,

Your letter dated 28 April refers.

It is most unfortunate that you wrote to the media on the same day as writing to myself without waiting for the university to clarify some incorrect claims.

Be that as it may, UCT reiterates that no artworks have been banned. The 70 or so artworks have only been removed or covered for safekeeping given the protests in February last year in which some 23 artworks and portraits were destroyed. This was necessary in line with the primary custodial responsibilities of the university for works of art in our care.
Some of the portraits, photos and artworks were removed by individual deans, residence wardens or others who are responsible for their spaces and who assessed that there was a threat to those works based on statements and actions of protesters. (Incidentally, it is because of the somewhat ad hoc protective actions of different managers in the university that there are some discrepancies in the list of artworks removed – but the published list is substantially correct.)

Most of the works that have been removed for safe keeping were identified by the Council’s Works of Art Committee based on their assessment of the risk to these artworks following some months of debates on campus and particularly the calls from activists associated with the #RhodesMustFall to remove works of art that they considered problematic. It is easy to see how removing these works would come across as censorship – but it was always made clear that they were removed temporarily for safe keeping.

Before the burnings and removals, the University Council had already set up a task team to develop a response to the debates about the University’s art collection and to review the University’s policies on acquisitions and curation.

The Works of Art Task Team (WATT) has completed its work. In its final report to Council, it made the following recommendations amongst many others:

First, WATT conducted an audit of all artworks on campus and concluded that the collection is heavily skewed towards white artists and male artists, and that statues and plaques predominantly celebrated white individuals. It recommends that as part of a transformation process, the WOAC should ensure that the collection on display is inclusive and reflective of the variety of cultures on campus. This has implications for the acquisitions policy.

Second, “in our deliberations we found that while there may not be a problem with individual artworks, their cumulative effect, coupled with the lack of a considered curatorial policy, creates a negative feeling amongst some students and staff. We found that currently, UCT does not have a curatorial policy and would need to develop one that is transformation sensitive.”

Third, the WATT’s report states categorically that “artworks are products of scholarly and intellectual engagement and, as such, they must not be censored but be seen as an educational resource. However, the acquisition and curation must be contextually relevant and sensitive to the broader objectives of the university.”

Fourth, the Task Team established that there is need for continuous and inclusive debate on artworks and symbols to ensure that their value as repositories of cultural, educational, scientific and research information is well appreciated by members of the university community.

Fifth, noting that UCT does not have an art gallery and therefore all works are displayed in public spaces, it was strongly recommended that the university establish a gallery for the secure curation of works of art, particularly those that might be more controversial. A gallery offers three advantages: unlike art on display in public spaces, people can choose whether or not to view the art; it is easier to contextualise the art works and to provide an ongoing educational experience to gallery visitors; and it is easier to provide security for the works.

Sixth, the WATT advised that the artworks that were removed from the walls be kept in storage pending a broader consultative process. “This consultation may take the form of displays of some of the contested artworks, … debates and discussions around specific artworks and/or themes. Seminars that may involve artists of contested works may also be hosted by the WOAC …” It was recommended that temporary gallery spaces be used in the interim for the display of the works that have been removed.

It should be clear that the university is as concerned about censorship and artistic freedom as our critics and the artists themselves, and that we have given careful thought to finding ways to protect that freedom, to use the art collection to educate and stimulate debate, and to address the challenge of transforming the institutional culture as reflected back to students and staff from the walls of the buildings, while also ensuring that we protect the works from damage or destruction.

Sincerely

Dr Max Price
Vice-Chancellor

Letter to Max Price by Belinda Bozzoli

Dear Dr Price,

Banning and burning of critical artworks at UCT
I am writing this letter to you today in order to address a deeply concerning issue - the restriction being exercised on freedom of speech, so much a part of what UCT ostensibly stands for, materialised in the banning of approximately 75 artworks, which have been removed from public display or covered up in the past year. Tragically we also saw the burning of some 23 artworks in the unrest of 2015-16.

The recent Groundup publication provided a provisional list of the banned artworks, which if correct, vividly brings to life the sinister actions of the University. Some of South Africa’s most significant artists are included in the list, including Breyten Breytenbach, Christo Coetzee, Steven Cohen, Mia Couvaras, Pieter Hugo, Vusi Khumalo, Lucky Sibiya, Pippa Skotnes, Irma Stern and Sue Williamson.

But we are told that the University has said this list is not accurate. We urge you to make public the precise details involved. The public – and presumably the artists too - needs to know exactly which artworks have been “banned” by the University, and also which ones were burnt in the riots of 2015-16.

It is extremely difficult to comprehend how one of our country’s leading universities, known for its commitment to openness and free speech and obviously dedicated to the support and curation of the creations of many of South Africa’s best artists, could have indulged in this kind of censorship. This current incursion on freedom of speech is akin to the censorship and banning of literature, film, theatre and art by the apartheid government.

I urge you to provide the public with full information on this matter; and to reverse the decisions of the Orwellian “Artworks Task Team” and restore these artworks to their rightful place in the University’s buildings.

Yours sincerely

Prof Belinda Bozzoli (MP)
DA Shadow Minister for Higher Education

GroundUp does not necessarily endorse the views expressed.
Judge defends his behaviour in case to have him replaced
2017-05-18
(/article/judge-defends-his-behaviour-case-have-him-replaced/)

"No-fee" school charges parents R207 a year
2017-05-18
(/article/no-fee-school-charges-parents-r207-year/)
Tuis > Portale > PEN Afrikaans

PEN Afrikaans se stellingname oor volgehou kunssensuur aan die Universiteit Kaapstad

PEN Afrikaans

PEN Afrikaans

2017-05-12

PEN Afrikaans neem met misnoë kennis dat geen vordering nog gemaak is in die sage van kunswerke wat uit sekere lokale van die Universiteit Kaapstad verwyder is nie.

Feite oor die aangeleentheid bly vaag en die universiteit se gebrek aan openheid maak dit nog moeiliker om feite met feite te vergelyk.

PEN Afrikaans reageer dus op die feite wat wel in die openbare domein bekend is: In 2016 is sekere kunswerke, waaronder werke deur een van PEN Afrikaans se lede, Breyten Breytenbach, uit die openbare oog verwyder. ’n Lys van die verwyderde werk is hier beskikbaar.

Dat werk verwyder is, word deur Max Price, die visekanselier, en Sandra Klopper, ’n professor in kunsgeskiedenis, bevestig in ’n openbare brief aan studente, werknemers van die universiteit en alumni.

Price en Klopper sê verder:

The decision to cover and take down some works is motivated by two concerns: the first is to signal that we have started a process of debate and discussion about how works of art should be displayed on campus, and that we will respond to this debate with seriousness and urgency. The second is in recognition of our custodial obligation to protect our art collection, especially those works of art that have become controversial (whether for good reason or not), noting that in the absence of an art gallery, almost all of UCT’s art is displayed in public spaces. This is necessary while we conduct the discussions about how and where these works should be displayed.

Dit is nou reeds meer as ’n jaar later en verskeie rolspelers het al gevra om toe te tree tot die “process of debate and discussion”. Van die universiteit se kant was daar egter nog geen sigbare poging nie, wat ’n mens laat wonder oor die universiteit se “seriousness and urgency” rakende hierdie kwessie.

Hierdie aangeleentheid is vandeesmaand onder die loep gebring deur Yves T’Sjoen, ’n hoogleraar in Nederlandse letterkunde aan die Universiteit Gent. T’Sjoen versoek in ’n beswaarskrif die bestuur van die Universiteit Gent, wat ’n uitruilooreenkoms met die Universiteit Kaapstad het, om hulle stem te laat hoor en die verontwaardiging van die akademiese gemeenskap oor hierdie sensuur tot uitdrukking te bring.

PEN Afrikaans het begrip vir die feit dat die universiteitsbestuur die instansie se kunsversameling wil beskerm nadat verskeie kunswerke in Februari 2016 gedurende die #FeesMustFall-opstande verbrand is.
PEN Afrikaans's statement on the continued censorship of art at the University of Cape Town

PEN Afrikaans notes with dismay that no progress has been made in the saga regarding artworks that have been removed from certain public spaces at the University of Cape Town.

Facts about the matter remain vague and the university’s lack of openness makes it even more difficult to compare facts with facts.

PEN Afrikaans therefore responds to facts that are known in the public domain: In 2016 certain artworks, including works by one of PEN Afrikaans' members, Breyten Breytenbach, were removed from the public eye. A list of the removed work is available [here](#).

Their removal was confirmed by Max Price, the vice-chancellor, and Sandra Klopper, a professor in Art History, in a public letter to students, university employees and alumni.

Their letter also said:

The decision to cover and take down some works is motivated by two concerns: the first is to signal that we have started a process of debate and discussion about how works of art should be displayed on campus, and that we will respond to this debate with seriousness and urgency. The second is in recognition of our custodial obligation to protect our art collection, especially those works of art that have become controversial (whether for good reason or not), noting that in the absence of an art gallery, almost all of UCT's art is displayed in public spaces. This is necessary while we conduct the discussions about how and where these works should be displayed.

It has now been over a year later and several role players have already asked to join the "process of debate and discussion". From the university, however, there was still no visible attempt to allow for it, which makes us wonder about the university's "seriousness and urgency" regarding this issue.

This issue has been addressed quite sharply this month by Yves T'Sjoen, a professor of Dutch literatures at Ghent University. T'Sjoen requested a statement by the management of Ghent University, which has an exchange agreement with the University of Cape Town, to make their voices heard and express the indignation of the academic community on the continued censorship.

PEN Afrikaans has sympathy with the need of the university management to protect its art collection after several works from the collection were burned during the #FeesMustFall protests in February 2016.
However, no PEN centre can silently condone the ensuing art censorship.

The second point on the charter of PEN International, of which PEN Afrikaans is a member, reads: "In all circumstances, and particularly in time of war, works of art, the patrimony of humanity at large, should be left untouched by national or political passion."

PEN Afrikaans hereby joins a growing number of voices appealing to the University of Cape Town to allow public access to any art that has been removed or covered up.
HRC investigates removal of artworks at UCT

Friday 5 May 2017 21:27
Vanessa Poonah

The SA Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) is investigating the removal of artworks from the University of Cape Town.

UCT says it has temporarily removed the art for safekeeping, following the setting alight of paintings during student protests last year.

The university says it's also carrying out a review of all artworks on campus as part of its transformation process.

The removal of the artworks from UCT follows last year's student protests in which 23 paintings were torched and a decision which has been criticised as an attack on freedom of expression.

The Human Rights Commission says its probe follows media reports of the alleged banning of artwork at the University.

André Gaum of SA Human Rights Commissioner says they have decided to start their own initiative investigation on the removal of artworks from UCT.

"We understand that some of these artworks are of Breyten Breytenbach, Vusi Khumalo and also Willie Bester who are well known artists from the Cape flats and it's important to establish what the facts are and on the basis of that we can come to a finding whether this is a violation of the hard fought right of freedom of expression and the specific right to artistic creativity."

A total of 75 artworks have been removed, but the university has declined to provide the exact list and a letter of complaint seeking clarity has been sent to the University's Vice Chancellor.

Prof Belinda Bozzoli, Democratic Alliance (DA) member of Parliament (MP) says protecting the artworks is fine although there's been no sign of additional burnings or anything.

"The point is they set up a committee which went around looking at all the artworks at UCT and decided which ones were offensive and one does not know which ones were not, and those that were deemed to be offensive have been removed from peoples sight."

The university has denied banning the art and says an Artworks Task Team has made several recommendations with regards to the future of artworks displayed on campus.

UCT notes that there will inevitably be multiple and sometimes differing views over this process. This is precisely why an extensive consultation process involving all stakeholders is being carried out to encourage open debate and deliberations on the process.

Numerous requests from SABC News to obtain an on camera interview with the University have been unsuccessful.

Click below to watch:
On the destruction of art and the loss of collective histories

18 February 2016

Assoc Prof Fritha Langerman, director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art, condemns the destruction of artworks and the threat to university collections, calling the loss of five works by Keresemose Richard Baholo, the first Black student to receive a master's degree in fine art at UCT, "particularly tragic".

In my capacity as the director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art, I strongly condemn the destruction of artworks and the threat to university collections. The loss of five works by Keresemose Richard Baholo (1994), the first Black student to receive a master's degree in fine art at UCT, is particularly tragic. These paintings, produced during 1993, are part of a valuable archive of a period in our collective histories, and have been used in several courses to teach about ways in which the past is signified in the present.

It is ironic that these works that celebrated academic freedom should have met such a fate.

Our students deserve equal opportunities, and we recognise, and decry, the failure of government to provide adequate resources to ensure this is possible. However, destroying artwork impoverishes us all.

Associate Professor Fritha Langerman
Director of the Michaelis School of Fine Art
Here is the list of art destroyed on UCT

David Goldblatt and Breyten Breytenbach condemn “censorship”

In addition to a list of 75 art works removed by the University of Cape Town (UCT), GroundUp has now obtained a list of artworks destroyed (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/rhodes-must-fall-protesters-destroy-uct-artworks/) in the Shackville protests last year and a list of works deemed to be problematic by student representatives on the Artworks Task Team (ATT) in 2015. The list was obtained from the university via a PAIA request (Promotion of Access to Information Act) submitted by William Daniels, a UCT staff member.

The university refused to reveal the titles to GroundUp (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/probably-list-artworks-uct-has-removed/), but we have, with assistance, worked out most of the titles.

Various artists, including David Goldblatt, Willie Bester (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/sara-baartman-sculptor-speaks-out-against-art-censorship/), and Breyten Breytenbach (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/probably-list-artworks-uct-has-removed/#letter-3), have criticised UCT’s response to student pressure to remove statues, busts, and other works of art from campus.

“In September of last year I wrote to Max Price and said that I wished to revoke my contract with the university,” said Goldblatt, a world renowned photographer whose work exposed the oppression of apartheid. Goldblatt’s decision to remove his collection of photographs from the Libraries Special Collections, a centre that he helped to establish, came after “the throwing of shit onto Cecil John Rhodes’ sculpture… following that the burning of over 20 paintings and the burning, in particular of two photographs by Molly Blackburn.” Blackburn was an anti-apartheid activist who died in a motor vehicle accident that some suspect was caused by the apartheid government.
Goldblatt said that the events signaled a new tide in the development of anti-democratic thought in today’s youth. “Differences are settled by talk. You don’t threaten with guns. You don’t threaten with fists. You don’t burn. You don’t destroy. You talk. These actions of the students are the antithesis of democratic action,” he said.

“For me, the essential issue was that [the university] was in breach of my freedom of expression. I couldn’t leave my work there… to leave my work there would be to endorse that policy,” said Goldblatt.

Breyten Breytenbach, whose Hovering Dog is on the list of works identified as unacceptable by students on the task team, has had three paintings removed and put into indefinite storage by the university.

Breytenbach wrote to GroundUp: “I fully support the decision of David Goldblatt and others to withdraw / remove / take back / take elsewhere (preferably out of the country altogether) whatever material or artworks they may have had at UCT, or were kept in custodianship by the university.”

He said: “If I could do the same, I’d do so.”

Unlike Goldblatt, Breytenbach’s works are part of the Hans Porer Collection at UCT. “None of these parties – collector, owner, executor or executioner – bothered to even have the simple decency of informing me,” he added.

One of the main concerns for both artists is what they call the university’s disregard for the protection of the freedom of expression guaranteed to all South Africans under the Constitution.

“The freedom of expression means the freedom of expression. You are free to express. And if you don’t have that, you don’t have freedom of expression,” said Goldblatt. “We do have laws in this country that allow the censoring of work if it’s regarded as being harmful in some particular way.”

Goldblatt insists that the university’s actions differ from the curatorship that takes place in museums around the world. Rather, he says that the administration is blatantly censoring selected works. “It’s different fundamentally [from curatorship] because they did so selectively. They selected certain works. Now, to select certain works is to censor. You cannot do this selectively; either you do this to all of them or none of them.”

He thinks UCT’s actions are dangerous. “At the end of the day, if this kind of attitude persists in the university, what will they do when a group of students come to the archive of photographs and say: ‘You’ve got photos there of Muslims. We’re not prepared to tolerate that. No Muslims, no Jews, or the Anglicans, or people with green eyes’,” said Goldblatt.

“But, if I’m a painter and I choose to show Jacob Zuma with his penis showing, then the question arises – am I to be censored for that?” he asked.

“I strongly urge all South African artists, researchers, recorders of public life etc., and as well those of foreign origin whose products may end up at South African universities, even if inadvertently so, to make absolutely sure your work is not allowed to be acquired, loaned or otherwise used by South African universities,” Breytenbach wrote to GroundUp. “You have no chance of it (the work) being seen for what it is intended to be, no guarantee it will survive the orgies of destruction these institutions foster and no responsibility or accountability (let alone preservation) will be forthcoming from the ethically and aesthetically spineless but oh so glib ‘collaborators’ running the universities.”

**UCT reply**

We sent UCT the quotes by Goldblatt and Breytenbach and asked for the institution’s response. We were sent the same statement written by Vice-Chancellor Max Price in response to Professor Belinda Bozzoli, previously published on GroundUp (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/uct-and-art-exchange-between-max-price-and-belinda-bozzoli/).

**List submitted to the University by the Artworks Task Team in 2015**

The descriptions are by the students who objected to the works. GroundUp has added the artist and title of the work. (All images republished as fair use.)
1. *Hovering Dog* by Breyten Breytenbach (Student description: Portrait of white man with black woman on his lap having sexual intercourse)

2. *Saartjie Baartman* by Willie Bester
3. *A Passerby* by Zwelethu Mthethwa (Student description: Black woman sitting on a rock with three children with her all in their underwear in a plastic basin with an impoverished surrounding)
Otto Beit Building:

4. *Pasiphaë* by Diane Victor (Student description: Portrait of a bull inside it is a black man with his genitals exposed)
Kramer:

5. *Dialogue at the Dogwatch* by David Brown (Student description: A number of sculptures depicting black men with their genitals exposed)
6. Unknown (Student description: Black people with HIV)

**Hoerikwaggo:**

7. Similar to the sculptures on the Kramer lawn by David Brown

**Chemical Engineering Building:**

8. A township scene by Vusi Khumalo (Student description: Portrait of poor black people)

**EGS Building:**

9. Courtyard outside tea room probably by David Brown (Student description: black man with genitals exposed)

**Michaelis:**

10. *Dayaba Usman with the monkey clear, Nigeria* by Pieter Hugo. (Student description: Black boy sitting next to a monkey made to replicate the monkey)
List of works destroyed in protests

1. James Eddie, Portrait of Mrs Joan Gie
2. Carli Hare, Portrait of Sue Folb
3. Harriet Fuller Knight, Portrait of Dr Rosemary Exner
4. Edward Roworth, Portrait of Mrs Barnard-Fuller
5. Edward Roworth, Portrait of Mrs Doris Spencer Emmet
6. Edward Roworth, Portrait of Mrs Anna Maria Tugwell
7. Roeleen Ryall, Portrait of Mrs Arlene van der Walt
8. Roeleen Ryall, Portrait of Mrs Rosemary Taylor
9. Rupert Shephard, Portrait of Mrs Marie Lydia Grant
13. John Wheatley, Portrait of Edward, Prince of Wales
14. Richard Keresemose Baholo, Graduation Day
15. Richard Keresemose Baholo, Extinguished Torch of Academic Freedom
16. Richard Keresemose Baholo, Release Our Leaders
17. Richard Keresemose Baholo, Rekindling the torch of Academic Freedom
18. Richard Keresemose Baholo, The girl witch
19. Kirsten Lilford, Intimacy
20. Nina Romm, Twee Jocks and a Lady
22. Stanley Eppel, Portrait of Prof Owen Lewis
23. John Wheatley, Portrait of Prof Alexander Brown
24. Molly Blackburn Collages (not identified by UCT, but confirmed)

Letters

More art destroyed: What I found

Dear Editor


These works were also destroyed: Many important females. The collages of Molly Blackburn were several photos of her, she was from the Black Sash. See the informations below from my article.

’n Borsbeeld deur die bekende kunstenaar Delise Reich van die eerste vrou wat aan ’n Suid-Afrikaanse universiteit gestudeer het, Maria Emmeline Barnard Fuller, is ook met verf beskadig.

Fuller het in 1886 onderwys aan die UK se voorloper, die South African College, gestudeer en ’n sleutelrol gespeel in die ontwikkeling van die kampus.

’n Portretstudie van haar is ook verbrand.

Twee unieke foto-collages van Molly Blackburn, ’n bekende lid van die Black Sash-beweging wat onder raaiselagtige omstandighede in 1985 in ’n motorongeluk dood is, is ook verbrand. Volgens History Online was daar 20 000 mense – meestal swart – by haar begrafnis.

’n Ballerina wat internasionale roem verwerf het, Rosemary Taylor, se portret deur Rupert Shepard is ook verwoes.

Fuller se portret (deur Edward Roworth) is ook verbrand, saam met dié van ander vroue, naamlik Doris Spencer Emmett en Anna Maria Tugwell (albei deur Roworth), Joan Gie (James Eddie), Sue Folb (Carli Hare), dr. Rosemary Exner (Harriet Fuller Knight), Arlene van der Walt en Rosemary Taylor (albei deur Roeleen Ryall) en Maria Lydia Grant (Rupert Shepard).

Anna Maria Tugwell was die eerste huismoeder van die eerste koshuis vir vroue by Groote Schuur. Sy het ook aan die South African College gestudeer.

Die ander portrette wat verband is, was van Harry Frederick Oppenheimer (Bernard Hailston), Albert van der Sandt Centlivres (Neville Lewis), Jan Christiaan Smuts (Edward Roworth), prof. Theodore le Roux (Robert Broadley), prof. Owen Lewis (Stanley Eppel), prof. Alexander Brown en Edward, Prins van Wallis (albei deur John Wheatley).

Dan was daar ook die vyf werke van Keresemose Richard Baholo wat in die 1990’s ’n student by die UK se Michaelis-skool vir skone kunste was.
New Molly Blackburn Memorial Hall named

Former Black Sash president and UCT Council member Mary Burton addresses those gathered at the naming of the Molly Blackburn memorial Hall.

UCT’s decision to honour the late Molly Blackburn by renaming the hall which currently houses the Nescafé, the Molly Blackburn Memorial Hall, attracted widespread media interest recently.

The naming ceremony on July 8 was aired on SABC TV, and reports were published in newspapers around the country, including one or two newspaper editorials applauding the move on the part of UCT.

Although Blackburn died in a car accident in 1985, an event many regarded with suspicion at the time, her memory is still very much alive in the South African consciousness. Her work in the 1980s in particular, served to bring into the public domain the dark dealings of the security forces, the full nature of which were only fully revealed during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings after 1994.

Blackburn was a member of the provincial legislature for the Progressive Federal Party in the 1980s, and a stalwart of the Black Sash. She is remembered particularly in the Eastern Cape where she highlighted the human rights abuses being perpetrated by the security forces of the time.

Blackburn was also at the forefront of efforts to uncover the facts behind the murder by security police of the Cradock Four - Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata, Sparrow Mkonto and Sicelo Mhlauli.

UCT council member Mary Burton (a former president of the Black Sash) said of Blackburn: "She will be remembered for her courage and determination in the work that she undertook as a Member of the Cape Provincial Council, sitting in Cape Town, representing the Progressive Federal Party, and as a member of the Black Sash, defending the rights of South Africans to justice and freedom from discrimination."

"She responded fearlessly to appeals for assistance, particularly from areas around her home city of Port Elizabeth, and whenever communities were threatened by violence and repression."

"It was while traveling with colleagues in the Eastern Cape, recording events under the state of emergency, and taking statements, that she was killed in a car accident in December 1985."

"Her life was one of dedication to the cause of bringing justice and peace to South Africa."

Vice-Chancellor Professor Njabulo Ndebele said Blackburn had been "a remarkable woman who was one of the truly great South Africans to stand up and be counted during one of the darkest periods of our history."

* This is the second Molly Blackburn Hall on campus. The previous venue no longer exists due to extensive remodeling on upper and middle campus. The new Molly Blackburn Memorial Hall is a popular meeting place for students.

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AS I TRY try to find an objective response in myself to the UCT RMF actions of last week, I am immensely grateful to the Cape Times for publishing Mbali Matandela’s views yesterday.
My photograph, together with my late husband, Brian Bishop’s photograph, were amongst those burnt with other photos, paintings and portraits last week.

Brian and I were close friends and colleagues of the late Molly Blackburn, after whom the Molly Blackburn Hall on the UCT campus is named.

Two beautifully designed photo collages of Molly and her friends and colleagues used to hang on the attractive wooden columns in the MB Hall.

We were anti-apartheid activists together before Molly and Brian were killed in a car accident 30 years ago; an accident that left me with permanent physical and lasting emotional injuries. Included in the collages was a telegram of sympathy and solidarity sent to Molly’s husband Gavin, and to me from the ANC in Lusaka.

The UCT RMF Facebook page sets out their mission statement (March 25, 2015) that includes one long term-goal as: “Remove all statues and plaques on campus celebrating white supremacists.”

I am guilty of much as a South African citizen born under apartheid, a system that compromised us all. “White supremacist” is not a description I easily own, but I am prepared to explore what I might have done that would cause such a label.

I would never want to lecture to the students. Rather, I think there are things I believe we should mutually explore together.

I do feel hurt over what happened to the photographs that were on display. When I heard that exhibits had been burnt, I tried to establish if our photographs had been included, because I had heard a rumour that they were.

I went into the Molly Blackburn Hall where the photographs were on display. They weren’t there. I thought: “This can’t be.” I thought perhaps that they had been taken away. I understand that the university is taking an inventory of everything that was on display.

There is nothing wrong with fighting colonialism. It was ugly. But I firmly believe you undo your cause when you resort to violence. I have always believed in non-violence. I will always support the students, but I believe their fight has to be more nuanced.

I understand the anger. I feel very strongly that a lot of the work since the TRC that ought to have been done, has not been done. We are a very wounded nation. While it has been possible for some of us to heal, for many healing has not come. I believe that some of the service delivery issues, some of the anger, some of the reaction to non-delivery by government at all levels are being underpinned by a deep woundedness. Unhealed hurt is one way of putting it.

There are some incredibly fine initiatives on the go. But after democracy, far too many of us thought that we could just push forward, and the challenges that were still there would just go away. But they haven’t. The woundedness is still there.

Take District Six, this gaping wound in the middle of our city. I can remember the technikon (the present Cape Peninsula University of Technology) being built there. I can remember fighting against its construction. I went to appeal to the authorities not to allow the technikon to be built there. But nothing has been resolved and more and more of the land that should be part of the restitution process is just being gobbled up.

I know there are complications. But I’m still convinced that if we engage in good faith, we will find solutions. We must find solutions. I don’t want to see our society being split on racial lines again.

Student protests have not come as a shock to me. But a lot of things that happened during the fight against apartheid have been forgotten. I am one of those who have become part of the walking history that has been forgotten. History is important. Not only from 1652, but a history from much closer to the present.

I completely accept that the students are alienated. And I completely accept their attention to matters such as colonialism. But I really believe that it would not be necessary for us to sit on opposite sides. We must work out something that is more African and more embracing.

We are an amazing combination of human beings in South Africa. We become a winning nation when we start doing
We are an amazing combination of human beings in South Africa. We become a winning nation when we start doing things together. An example is our football team in the 2010 World Cup. That was amazing, wonderful. And we have people who are wonderfully entrepreneurial.

I am very thankful for the student who wrote the article on the Cape Times op-ed page because I had visited their Facebook page and it was very faceless. One can understand a fear of retribution or whatever, but we really do need to know who they are so that we can engage. We have an enormous job to do in fighting what the government is doing that we don’t like.

We should be directing our energies to the right places.

I longed to be a UCT student when I was young, but my father wouldn’t let me go there. I was always a bit political, and by the time I was ready to go to university in the late 1960s, there were sit-ins at UCT, and my father said he wanted his money’s worth. So, he sent me to Stellenbosch. In the end, I was glad he did because I’m one of the few English speakers in my circle these days who is fluent in Afrikaans, who is not an English-speaking chauvinist like a lot of us are these days.

Going to Stellenbosch enabled me to speak another language and be exposed to cultures I hadn’t been exposed to because of apartheid. And I am a much more rounded person because of that.

Last year, a group of us (friends and colleagues) were invited to participate in responding to the countrywide flashpoints of anger. We have travelled far and wide to demonstrate solidarity, refer desperate people to resources, offer opportunities for expressing grievances and feelings (often anger and fear), participate in initiating creative alternatives to the often desperate situation of people’s lives, and to introduce legal support where this is indicated in terms of our constitution.

In the Western Cape, we spent several hours focusing on the essence of what we believe and what name we would like to give our small chapter of the work. We are all committed to redress, restitution and reconciliation, and were delighted when we found a Xhosa word that embraces these three concepts – Masibuyisana. Our commitment is to justice and healing.

Thanks to the media once again, we are in contact with groups and organisations that have opened themselves to our quest for “listening and being heard; acknowledging pain we have caused and pain we have experienced”.

I welcome the opportunity of finding ways that the principles of working together, black and white, towards the healing of our woundedness (as a nation), could be furthered.

This is not work that is always best served by public debates, which tend to divide us into “fors” and “againsts”. Thanks to the bold step of writing about her views, I now know there is a flower that I shall try to find.

I Oliver was a political activist and member of the Black Sash

Share this story  

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The Academic Freedom Committee notes with grave concern recent instances of threats to academic freedom. In January, threats made by the Rhodes Must Fall collective to the Communications and Marketing Department, regarding the CMD’s “Striking 2015 images at Molly Blackburn” exhibition, led to the Department concerned capitulating to these threats and removing the exhibition. In March, an RMF exhibition was itself disrupted by the TransCollective.

The AFC considers these threats and actions to be assaults on the deeply-held values of academic freedom that lie at the core of both the university, and the society in which we live. We urge the university authorities to not allow threats and intimidation to stifle academic debate, and we urge members of the university community, where possible, to stand up against assaults on our academic freedom, and to defend the space for intellectually robust and fair debate.

The Academic Freedom Committee, UCT
Artist **Willie Bester** unveiled his newest sculpture titled 'Sarah Bartmann' at his studio on Friday, 7 July 2000.

Sarah also known as the "Hottentot Venus" was an indigenous woman taken from the Cape to Europe by her Dutch employer and put on display by an animal trainer to show off her distinct anatomy. She didn't share in the profits as she was promised and died in exile far from her motherland and tribe. After Cuvier made a plaster cast of her body, it was dissected and her organs were still on display in Musee de l'Homme, Paris up till 1974.

A poem reading by various poets, was a tribute to Sarah's life and death.

*Diana Ferrus, A poem for Sarah Bartmann:*

"I've come to take you home -
home, remember the veld?
the lush green grass beneath the big oak trees
the air is cool there and the sun does not burn.
I have made your bed at the foot of the hill,
your blankets are covered in buchu and mint,
the proteas stand in yellow and white
and the water in the stream chuckle sing-songs"
VIDEO: The life and times of Sarah Bartmann
Art and UCT: an opportunity to encourage debate

These are tough times for art at UCT.

Paintings were burnt in a protest in January. An exhibition in Molly Blackburn Hall of events in 2015 was taken down when some students disapproved of it. In the past couple of weeks GroundUp has reported that over 70 works have been taken down or covered up by the Works of Art Committee and the Artworks Task Team - the latter established by the university council in September. These include Willie Bester’s Saartjie Baartman and Breyten Breytenbach’s Hovering Dog, as well as works by Zwelethu Mthethwa, William Kentridge and Stanley Pinker.

In the 1930s Diego Rivera, a Mexican communist, friend for a while of the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky, lover of Frida Kahlo, and one of the great artists of the 20th century, was commissioned to paint a fresco titled Man at the Crossroads in New York’s Rockefeller Centre. Before it was complete, Nelson Rockefeller ordered its destruction. Here is Rivera’s recreated version of it called Man, Controller of the Universe:
A careful look at the figure to the right of centre shows the reason why Rockefeller went apoplectic when he saw it. It’s Vladimir Lenin, leader of the Bolshevik revolution.

The 1999 movie Cradle will Rock (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0150216/?ref_=nv_sr_1) shows Rockefeller, played by John Cusack, deciding after this incident to invest in art that wouldn’t upset. Hence, the movie suggests, the rise of inoffensive abstract art. It is an interesting take of how artists like Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko became so popular.

Institutions of learning, such as UCT, should try to do a little better than petulant capitalists like Rockefeller.

Artworks are put up, taken down, replaced, refurbished and removed all the time. For the most part, few people, notice or wonder about the process by which this is done. The art displayed at UCT, much like the curricula of, say, philosophy or computer science, is determined by experts. Usually this makes sense. Most of us, including me, don’t know enough about art to make sensible decisions.

But what the Artworks Task Team is doing is not the normal work of curation. It is not replacing art with the aim of refreshing displays. It is not trying to enhance UCT’s art collection. It is not acting to challenge students, to make them question their views and prejudices. On the contrary: it is removing art and acting out of fear that particular artworks offend or will be destroyed.
UCT’s vice-chancellor Max Price has published a statement (http://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/?id=9669) explaining the purpose of the Artworks Task Team and the continued covering up and taking down of art that is deemed offensive for “cultural, religious or political reasons”.

Price gives examples of what he calls “problematic curatorial issues” including:

- “Accumulated effects or weightings such as the number of works depicting black poverty and naked black bodies … an effect exacerbated by an absence of artworks that would encourage black people to feel proud of who they are”.
- “A passage full of portraits of white people creating an unconscious stereotype that academic excellence and leadership has a colour”.
- “Juxtapositions that create effects that might not have been anticipated, noticed or thought about, and may not be desirable”.
- “Forms of framing saturated in colonial symbolism”.
- “Lack of contextual information”.
- “Lack of stimulating, intellectually enabling and exciting curatorial engagement”.

These criteria are so wide-ranging that almost any painting or sculpture could fall foul of them, especially given how varied and personal responses to art are.

And the primary target of the Artworks Task Team has been the centre of academic life and learning at UCT: the main library and the adjoining Molly Blackburn Hall. It is here that nearly all the publicised acts of removal and covering have taken place. Under no reasonable interpretation can this space be described as perpetuating colonial or racist ideas. Interpretation of art is subjective but there’s a limit to the reasonableness of subjectivity. (There are areas which look like colonial relics on campus: Smuts Hall for example. But the library is not such a place.)

The art in the library clearly has been selected with care, with the intention of being stimulating, aesthetically and politically. What is being removed or covered up is art with sexual connotations. It is puritanism as much as anti-racism that appears to be determining what is culled.

Willie Bester’s sculpture of Saartjie Baartman has been covered up. Bester is a black artist. His representation of Baartman was described as “remarkable” by former UCT vice-chancellor Njabulo Ndebele in his book *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*.
Price, in this instance, has done the opposite of what needs to be done. In a time of unprecedented public interest in UCT’s cultural artefacts, instead of retreating in response to Rhodes Must Fall’s (RMF) criticisms and actions, he should take the opportunity to increase debate and discussion on campus.


Council should be encouraging debate and civil disagreement (not merely by inviting email correspondence), just as, to some extent, happened before the Rhodes statue came down. It should call for more artworks. It might consider issuing a challenge for depictions of the events on campus last year, and other imaginative ideas. It should encourage art to flourish, not be covered up or removed. It should have done this months, if not years ago. It’s still not too late.
Breyten Breytenbach's *Hovering Dog* has been removed from the library. He is a bit cross (http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-04-05-letter-to-the-editor-breyten-breytenbachs-anger-with-uct/#.Vw65UiafFyQ) about it. What can be more galling to racists than a picture of love across the colour line?

Over the past year Price and members of the council have been insulted and condemned by RMF, black and white alumni, unions and academics and some newspapers, often unfairly. Price has been pelted with bottles and his office has been firebombed.

Price’s letter seems a consequence of being under constant siege, and believing that the university generally is under siege.

But it isn’t. If you walk down the main avenue of upper campus on a sunny afternoon, you find thousands of students, black and white – often together – doing what students do: dancing in the Molly Blackburn hall, studying in the library, sitting in groups on the plaza chatting, sometimes discussing politics or science, fretting over tests, loans and money, often holding hands and sometimes kissing. UCT is a vibrant place.

I am confident UCT can deal with open debate about its art and cultural monuments. Sure, there will be conflict and anger; and the outcomes of the debate aren’t knowable in advance. But UCT might also emerge a better institution for it. I wish the besieged administration could see this, because its current approach suggests it has a low view of the institution.

*Correction:* The initial version of the article stated that UCT’s council supported Max Price’s letter. This is apparently incorrect and the article has therefore been updated.

*Post-publication update:* It was noted that the Works of Art Committee and the Artworks Task Team have together taken down over 70 artworks, and a link was added to the document that confirms this.

Geffen is GroundUp editor and a post-graduate student at UCT. Views are not necessarily those of other GroundUp staff.

**Photos of art in UCT’s main library and the Molly Blackburn Hall**
Prominent artwork covered up at UCT

This is “slightly comical” says artist Diane Victor

Another artwork at UCT has been hidden from view – this time by a wooden panel being placed in front of it. The artwork is award winning artist Diane Victor’s “Pasiphaë” and its covering comes in the wake of numerous artworks being removed from the university (http://www.groundup.org.za/article/uct-safe-space-art/).

Victor’s work features a large bull who is being held by a farmer, while a small girl stands next to the farmer, smiling with a miniature bull on wheels at her feet. Inside the bull is the figure of a naked black man, sleeping.

“Pasiphaë” comes from Greek mythology and was the name of the daughter of the sun god Helios. In the myth, Pasiphaë is cursed by Poseidon and experiences lust for a bull. In order to mate with the bull, a wooden cow wrapped in cow hide is built for Pasiphaë. She then hides in this cow, mates with the bull and gives birth to a son.

Victor explained to GroundUp that the artwork draws from the Pasiphaë Greek myth and is about the sexual awakening of the young girl in the artwork. She said that if people actually knew what was being depicted in her artwork she imagines that it “wouldn’t be seen as particularly offensive”.

Originally the artwork didn’t feature the black man inside the bull but Victor added the figure in an effort to make a more obvious connection to the myth of Pasiphaë and the young girl’s sexual awakening.
“[The artwork] was made specifically to be provocative to the white male farming community,” explained Victor. Victor said that the removal of her work was “slightly comical” and that if the artwork was not viewed on a “simplistic level” people would see what she was trying to convey, which was not a racist message.

She believes that the university is “bending the knee too easily” to pressure to remove artwork at the university but added that she understood that they may remove works if there was the fear they may be damaged.

She said that very often artwork is “made to be provocative” and that to feel anger at an artwork is not a bad thing.

Dr Peter Anderson, Chairperson of the Works of Art Committee at UCT, told GroundUp, “The piece by Diane Victor was identified as offensive as far back as the Rhodes Must Fall protests in 2015. The Artworks Task Team recommended that it be stored pending their deliberations, at a time when it looked vulnerable – i.e. in the wake of the burnings in February. It is all but immovable, being heavily fixed into the masonry of the wall on which it is hung. Its steel frame makes it very heavy and the University of Cape Town has no suitable storage space."

He continued, “It has been the idea of the Works of Art Committee to use the picture surface – covered – as a platform on which to post information and receive comments about the distribution of art on campus; to signal, in other words, the conversational space that we all want in the matter of art on campus. Some may think the work is being censored, others – we would hope – will understand that a temporary restriction of view makes for another mode of seeing the work, less flat and obvious, more thoughtful and imaginative. So the exercise should be read as an essay in creative curation, and strictly part of the dynamic process of engagement underway.

“We are creating spaces for engagement and discussion. Work is not being censored or permanently taken down.”

Topics: Freedom of Expression (/topic/freedom-expression/), Tertiary Education (/topic/tertiary-education/), UCT and art (/topic/uct-and-art/)
The letter then goes on to say that Rose's appearance might provoke conflict on campus, pose security risks and might amount in some way to one of these three. This is a dangerous and damaging route for an academic institution to take.

However, in a letter sent by UCT Vice-Chancellor Max Price on 12 July, Price tells the committee that the university executive had decided “it would be unwise to proceed with the address (https://www.indexoncensorship.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/UCT-AFC-letter-from-Exec-on-withdrawing-Flemming-Rose-invitation-v24.pdf)”


Index on Censorship is appalled by the decision by the University of Cape Town to rescind an invitation to Danish editor Flemming Rose to deliver the annual TB Davie lecture on academic freedom – especially at a time when academic freedom is under threat around the world – and considering recent events in Turkey.

Index on Censorship condemns decision to axe Flemming Rose as speaker on academic freedom

Also read: Flemming Rose responds to the University of Cape Town
grata and while most would protest peacefully against him, we believe there is a real danger that among those offended by the cartoons, an element may resort to violence."

The academic freedom committee responded to Price (https://www.indexoncensorship.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/UCT-AFC-statement-TB-Davie-2016.pdf), saying in a statement: "Academic freedom is severely compromised when security and other pragmatic considerations preclude inviting speakers who – while controversial – in no way violate our Constitutional limitations on free speech… We regret the Executive’s decision and what it reveals about the limited scope of academic freedom at UCT. Ours should be a campus on which people are free to express and contest ideas, even unpopular ones."

The decision taken by the administration of UCT is a clear example of a type of “assassin’s veto” in which those who argue they are offended by the speech of others can use the threat of violence to silence those with whom they disagree.

Jodie Ginsberg, Index on Censorship chief executive said: “This a huge blow to free expression and academic freedom and UCT’s attempts to dress this up as otherwise are to be condemned in the strongest terms.”

Also read:
- Flemming Rose responds to the University of Cape Town (https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2016/07/flemming-rose-responds-university-cape-town/)
- UCT statement: Withdrawal of invitation to speaker of TB Davie Academic Freedom Lecture (http://www.uct.ac.za/dailynews/?id=9847)
- Kenan Malik: Academic freedom and academic cowardice (https://kenanmalik.wordpress.com/2016/07/22/academic-freedom-and-academic-cowardice/)

Comments are closed.

NEXT POST > (https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2016/07/flemming-rose-responds-university-cape-town/)
Backlash from staff and alumni against UCT executive

University receives PAIA request, and two petitions calling for it to open

Students, staff and alumni concerned by the continued shut down of the University of Cape Town (UCT) are putting the institution’s executive under pressure to open.

Nearly all face-to-face teaching at the university has stopped. This afternoon, the libraries were closed and the shuttle service suspended following violent incidents on campus.

Student and staff petition

A petition calling for the university to open (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe6ZfE3MEFi1ajJ9qTDdRgNyQ66GZBUm7CHVv17b3W8cBnA/viewform?c=0&w=1), signed by over 1,300 members of the university including over 500 staff, was sent to Vice-Chancellor Max Price.

Associate Professor Shamil Jeppe, one of the signatories, told GroundUp: “The university is a place of learning, teaching and research. Protests can [take place]. But these activities must continue else we throw the whole institution and our intellectual project into serious jeopardy.”

Another signatory, Professor Imraan Coovadia, told GroundUp: “We have a video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMm0lu8f-s) [from today] of a man being beaten and his life being endangered. They [members of UCT’s executive] are letting ordinary men and women take the brunt of the assault. Students and professors are being threatened. They cannot manage the situation. There is no doubt that this executive cannot pursue the policies necessary to restore order at the university.”
Professor Michelle Kuttel informed Price of the petition in an email several days ago, and again today. She wrote to Price today: “I have yet to receive any sort of response to our petition … “.

She further wrote:

“This video of an unprovoked brutal attack (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMm0lu8f­­s) on a security guard this afternoon clearly shows prominent ‘protesters’ again involved in violence. Why are they allowed to do this serially? There should be more than enough evidence for charges against them. Have you thought about the possible consequences if other students or staff are caught in the crossfire? Not to mention the potential for abuse (especially of women) in the current lawless environment in the residences.”

“We are totally demoralised and appalled at the current situation. Many of us are pursuing other employment options.”

Kuttel said: “Is it your intention to drive a large swathe of staff to quit UCT? Because that is what will happen. We are totally demoralised and appalled at the current situation. Many of us are pursuing other employment options.”

In a strongly worded email to Price, Samuel Chetty of UCT’s Computer Science Department wrote: “I have to add my voice to the gross lack of leadership that I have witnessed thus far. I have not witnessed the anarchy and mayhem that is currently playing out since the 1980s. I have to attribute this to your style of leadership that has set this institution back into the age of the bygone years.”

Alumni petition

Meanwhile UCT alumnus Judith February started a petition for alumni yesterday (https://www.change.org/p/saveuct-open-our-university-and-stop-the-violence). It has over 500 signatories. It states:

“A shut down is antithetical to the very idea of a university and it is fundamentally undemocratic for a small group to hold an entire university to hostage. We note the UCT statement of 18 October 2016 that sets forth the basis for engagement with protesting students to ensure the academic year is completed. One of the bases is, ‘Possible amnesty to the students who have been interdicted, suspended or expelled due to their involvement in the February Shackville protests.’ It is very difficult to understand why amnesty should be considered for criminal actions specifically given the disruptions on campus over the past two days. It is also puzzling why this specific group of protesters is treated differently to other students who have been sanctioned. The only reason could be that they are holding the university hostage and bullying it into submission. The protesters have shown that they are willing to place the interests of individual student leaders, charged with criminal activity above the interests of thousands of other students, staff and support staff.”

Request for names and affiliations of protesters negotiating with UCT

And in a further development, a staff member in UCT libraries, William Daniels, has sent a Promotion of Access to Information Act request (/media/uploads/documents/J750_paia_Form%20A.pdf) to the university asking it to provide “full names and surnames and faculty affiliations of the individual FeesMustFall/ShackvilleTRC/SRC Candidates representatives with whom the vice-chancellor and the Special Executive Task Team have been negotiating during September and October 2016.”

“I think it is important that UCT’s 26,000 students know the identities of the individuals purporting to represent them and who have been granted recognition by the university executive,” wrote Daniels.

He sent the request after Judith du Toit in the vice-chancellor’s office responded to Daniels’s original email requesting this information: “Thanks for the suggestion. It is a complicated situation and would likely be seen as victimisation and bullying.”

UCT response

Asked to comment on why Price had not responded to the staff and student petition, and why the names of the people the university is negotiating with have not been made available, Patricia Lucas in UCT’s Communications and Marketing Department wrote to GroundUp:

“Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price has received hundreds of letters and emails from a wide range of people with a wide range of concerns. Unfortunately he has not been able to respond to all of them individually. Instead, he has addressed the issues they have raised through various VC Desk communications to the campus community, particularly with regards to the engagements with multiple stakeholders and the call for reopening the campus.”

Lucas further wrote: “UCT is investigating every reported instance of attack on security staff. We appeal to anyone with information on these attacks to phone Campus Protection Services on 021 650 2222, or the SA Police Service (SAPS). Public order policing has been provided on campus today by SAPS.”
She also said: “The libraries were closed and the shuttle service suspended to facilitate a plenary session that was agreed between protesting students and the UCT executive. Other services on campus, such as the computer labs, should still be open.”

**Protesters’ statements**

A statement earlier today on student protest group Shackville TRC 2016’s Facebook page ([https://www.facebook.com/shackvilleTRC/?hc_ref=PAGES_TIMELINE&ref=nf](https://www.facebook.com/shackvilleTRC/?hc_ref=PAGES_TIMELINE&ref=nf)) said: “Private Security has violently beaten students at upper campus. The situation has been escalated. The University of Cape Town and the state have declared war.”

A further statement from the group said: “Police are now on the campus with Private Security. Steve Biko Building remains available as a safe haven from state and institutional violence.”

**Letters**

**Please will the adults in this country stand up and lead**

Dear Editor

I cannot convey the emotions that this video has elicited: on the one hand I am appalled at the violence that our students are capable of. On the other I am saddened beyond belief that we have created a society where our youth feel the need to behave this way.

Please will the adults in this country stand up and lead. Things do not have to descend into anarchy - there are other more beneficial ways of dealing with this pain. The first step is to acknowledge it - please will someone in our so called government stand up and acknowledge that we have failed dismally in providing our youth with a future, and promise that this will be addressed with the seriousness it deserves. How can the president of a country, whose youth have to resort to this type of behaviour, justify demanding a presidential jet, an unnecessary nuclear build, support for four wives and 20+ children and control of the Treasury etc? Where is the leadership with regard to developing our people? That requires investment in education, housing, sanitation and job creation. The vast majority of people living in South Africa want it to work and want to help but do not know how because our leaders do not have a coherent plan.

And yes the privileged whites also want SA to succeed and ALL our people to have a reasonable standard of living and every opportunity to reach their potential. It makes me sick to see my tax money spent on enrichment of a few at the expense of the poor.

Sincerely
Pam Renaud
19 Oct 2016

**Cry the beloved country**

Dear Editor

I wish to voice my frustration at the responses coming in from mainstream detractors of what is happening at our universities. It seems to me that very few within society are willing to acknowledge that students have legitimate grievances that requires closer scrutiny.

The hard issues are being left to government to resolve like education, housing, employment etc. even while the main body politic incessantly seeks to hold government to a higher standard on matters relating to corruption, state capture etc. When Rome finally burns it will be because those privileged enough to have been able to make a positive contribution to SA society abdicated their responsibilities to the youth of our country and chose instead to do their damnest to preserve their privileges.

Sincerely
Waheed Badrodien
24 Oct 2016

**Hiddingh Campus occupied by squatting protesters**
Dear Editor

For nearly six weeks now a group of students have occupied UCT Hiddingh campus, sleeping and living there, refusing anyone access to workshops to do practical assignments.

Nothing has been done to evict them. They are squatters, recognised as such by law. Yet no one has stopped them from using their new ‘digs’ to harass students and staff, post threatening messages on Facebook, and put signs on the respective workshops housing equipment worth thousands of rands warning staff and students not to enter.

How is this possible? What about those who have battled and sacrificed to make their children’s dreams come true by studying at Hiddingh? How will this year’s 4th year students present final works of art at a standard good enough to pass them in 5 weeks time? How will drama students access the theatres and stages that they need to pass? Why would staff want to work here next year (assuming the university has a next year)?

Most of those occupying the campus are post graduate students, their undergraduate education a thing of the past (some are masters students) high on control, pulling the strings of a weak and ineffectual VC and Senate who for some unthinkable reason refuse to go to court to get them evicted and take back the campus.

This university - once the number one ranked in SA - is collapsing. Its plain for all to see. Silent diplomacy.....look what that did for Thabo Mbeki. Its doing the same for UCT.

Sincerely
Desperate single parent
27 Oct 2016

UCH staff, students and administratos should take comfort

Dear Editor

It is almost impossible for those of us far removed from current events at UCT to comment on them. I am sure that I speak for others in saying that we are proud to be graduates of a great university with an unrivalled record of independent intellectual inquiry and achievement and a proven ability to meet challenges and adapt to radical change.

The petition from staff and students reflects the almost intolerably conflicting pressures under which those guiding the university are acting. Recent events at universities throughout South Africa, and at UCT in particular, are a negation of the whole idea of a university and a cause for grave concern. UCT’s response deserves admiration for the way it is continuing to strive to remain true to its core ethos.

The very heavy stress this imposes on the university’s staff, both academic and administrative, and the majority of its students must be all but unbearable. Whatever the outcome, they should take comfort from being upholders of a very great tradition.

Sincerely
Barry Dean, graduate and former member of UCT’s staff
13 Nov 2016

You might like
24 February 2017

UCT statement on The David Goldblatt Collection

The University of Cape Town (UCT) proudly housed The David Goldblatt Collection from 2009 until this week. The Goldblatt Collection is a South African heritage treasure, it includes 18 archival boxes of photographic prints, transparencies, negatives and digital items representing his oeuvre, including portraiture and his work on various assignments. The UCT executive has been in discussion with Mr Goldblatt recently about his wish to move the collection from UCT to Yale University. We regret that Mr Goldblatt could not be persuaded out of his view that freedom of expression, artistic freedom and rights of artists were no longer protected at UCT. We respect and understand his decision.

UCT will continue to promote, protect, attract and collect artistic collections and work with artists into the future. The institution, the UCT Libraries, and the faculties working in this field are committed to freedom of expression, artistic freedom and the rights of artists. UCT commits itself to intellectual honesty, rigour in debate, openness to alternative ideas and respect for other views, ways of being, beliefs and opinions as stipulated in the university’s statement of values. We promote and protect academic freedom and freedom of expression, including the creation of spaces for contestation of ideas.

Guided by the university’s statement of values and the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), the UCT Libraries in particular are committed to academic freedom, openness to alternative ideas, respect for other views, the creation of spaces for the contestation of ideas and adhere to the principles and guidelines of the profession’s Code of Conduct and Ethics, which include:

- Members should ensure the free flow of information, freedom of speech and freedom of expression and the right of access to information.
- Members should not exercise censorship, but facilitate and allow for the free and equal access to all sources of information.
- Members should support intellectual freedom.

We wish Mr Goldblatt and the collection well and hope both go from strength to strength.
Local photographers are finally getting more exposure for their art

South African photography has long been dogged by a contradiction: while many of its practitioners are internationally celebrated, local art collectors have generally shunned the medium.

The talk at the Cape Town Art Fair last weekend reiterated this pattern. Little was said about the Goodman Gallery's remarkable tribute show for the late photographer Thabiso Sekgala. Instead, the focus was on the hoard of nearly a dozen paintings by Robert Hodgins painstakingly assembled by Goodman Gallery curator Neil Dundas.

Outside the fair, though, it was a different story. On Wednesday, a day before the opening of curator Tumelo Mosaka's well-organised fair, collector Tammi Glick launched the Maitland Institute — a new space devoted to "art and ideas" — with an exhibition by Zanele Muholi.
4 South African photographers making it big on the international front


Titled Somnyama Ngonyama (“hail the dark lioness”), the exhibition is composed of six larger-than-life self-portraits of Muholi in eccentric costumes. In one sequence she wears a cowhide shawl and R100 notes as headwear. The dark tonalities of the portraits are achieved in post-production.

“I wanted to take a different approach and create a new kind of dialogue,” said Muholi, best known for her portraits of black lesbians. Her self-portrait project is still a work in progress and once finished will total 365 works. Muholi first exhibited her self-portraits at her New York dealer, Yancey Richardson Gallery, in October 2015. Conventionally printed and framed, they were on sale for between $6,200 and $7,700.

Glick’s roomy exhibition space, in a retrofitted industrial building owned by her father, Cedric Glick of Daleglen Property Group, enabled Muholi to play. Her photographs here are printed as wallpaper. The unconventional display method forms part of Glick’s plan to offer a space where artists and their public can appreciate and think about art beyond the imperatives of retail. Next up will be a show of paintings by Penny Siopis.

Glick’s interest in showing photography in unusual ways dates to 2012, when she and dealer Joost Bosland held an exhibition in Woodstock, Cape Town. Titled Copy Shop and held in an empty unit of The Stockyard, a Daleglen office development on Ravenscraig Road, the show included photocopies of David Goldblatt’s famous 1980 photo of a Miss Lovely Legs pageant in Boksburg.


The edgy styling of Glick’s new initiative will doubtlessly not influence mainstream tastes. That role has now been assumed by the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, which when it opens in September will include five dedicated photography galleries.
Last week it was announced that Ballen, through his eponymous foundation, had made a financial gift to the Zeitz museum's endowment, as well as donated one signed edition of all his photographs since 1968 to the museum's permanent collection. He will also donate a signed edition of all future work, a pledge enabled with the support of the Swiss-based Eiger Foundation.

The transactional nature of the gift will see the museum's photography halls named the Roger Ballen Foundation Centre for Photography. The Eiger Foundation is further contributing towards the establishment of a dedicated post of curator of photography, yet to be filled.

"It represents a blueprint for a new young institution of how we can all come together, of how it can actually happen," said museum director Mark Coetzee.

Ballen, who first met Coetzee in 2010 when he was exhibiting his photos at the 17th Biennale of Sydney, likened the Zeitz museum to "a rocket ship ready to take off. I really feel all the ingredients are here for a Guggenheim Bilbao."

Ballen, who was born in New York but has lived much of his adult life in South Africa, has exhibited widely, including at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and at the Tate Modern in London.

In 2006 singer Elton John, whose photography collection is on show at the Tate Modern, purchased a number of Ballen's works. John's collection includes work by Ballen's hero, the Hungarian-American André Kertész.

Ballen's fluency with the ways museums and collections function partly motivated his decision to donate to the Zeitz museum.

"If you give it to a big international museum, the work sits in a storeroom," he said. But his major motivation was his connection to South Africa.

"I have lived more than half my life in South Africa. It feels appropriate to do this."

Roger Ballen's 'Mimicry', which will be on show at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa. Image: Supplied
Ballen's gift to local photography occurs at a time when another important photography collection is leaving the country. David Goldblatt has cancelled his agreement with the University of Cape Town Libraries to house his archive.

Up until recently UCT Libraries kept a collection of Goldblatt’s digital images, negatives, transparencies and prints, which were available to researchers.

The photographer’s unhappiness with UCT vice-chancellor Max Price and his administration’s handling of recent events on campus motivated Goldblatt to cancel his agreement and give his archive to Yale University.

Goldblatt is particularly unhappy about the vandalism of a #RhodesMustFall commemorative exhibition at the Centre for African Studies last year, as well as the censorship of over 70 works by the university’s Artworks Task Team.

"Freedom of expression is indivisible," said Goldblatt. "It is not something that you can divide up into, this is okay, but not that."

The loss will be tangible, particularly given Goldblatt’s stature. Heaping praise on her mentor, Muholi pointed to Goldblatt’s selfless work in establishing the Market Photo Workshop, which since January occupies a stately new building on Mary Fitzgerald Square in Johannesburg.

"We are really indebted to him for giving us a space to express and be ourselves," said Muholi.

"Not everyone is that generous. He also did not create a space and have it named after himself. He has given so much."

OTHER EXHIBITIONS TO CATCH

FOOTPRINTS

In a career spanning more than two decades, Andrew Tshabangu has established himself as an important SA photographer. He experiments with ways of seeing and interpreting

Image: Supplied

PERFORMANCE

The 3rd international Live Art Festival is currently under way in Cape Town, with world-class talent from 12 countries. The festival’s three-week programme offers audiences cutting-edge visual art and challenging performances of dance, music and literature. Performances are free. On in various spaces in Cape Town until Sunday.

Image: Supplied

ENDO

With this body of work, Chris Slabber discards the notion that the skeleton is a representation of the temporary nature of life and explores the physical beauty of the object in itself. On at 23 Voorhout Street,
Ellis House, New Doornfontein, Johannesburg, until March 5.

Image: Supplied

• This article was originally published in The Times.
I have been thinking about this David Goldblatt taking his art collection out of UCT under a claim that in UCT there is no longer “freedom of artistic expression.” And thus David Goldblatt taking his art collection to Yale University in the US. This comes after #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall students activists putting a political pressure to the University to remove works of art that were insulting and humiliating to Black people at the university. Of course, the University gave in to that correct political pressure put by the student activists. The action by David Goldblatt is very important for our politics. Question White people’s works and they will move to US or Europe. This is what we want. David Goldblatt removal of his work of art creates a space for Dumile Fani’s works of art, Thami Mnyele’s works of art and Dathini Mzayiya’s works of art. The question of substance as opposed to symbols. When statues are removed the colonial substance will remain, this is being address. #RhodesMustFall #FeesMustFall

UCT defends stance on artistic freedom after Goldblatt pulls out

UCT has defended its protection of freedom of artistic expression, after the David Goldblatt Collection chose to move its collection to Yale University in the US.

M NEWS24.COM
Report by the Artworks Task Team
(a Task Team of the Council of the University of Cape Town)
February 2017

Members

Associate Professor Shadreck Chirikure (Chair)
Associate Professor Adam Haupt
Dr Nomusa Makhubu
Associate Professor Barbaro Martinez
Mr Rorisang Moseli
Ms Noxolo Ntaka
Associate Professor Jay Pather
1.1 Introduction

Events associated with the Rhodes Must Fall Movement in 2015 prompted the Council of the University of Cape Town to constitute an Artworks Task Team to evaluate the institution’s symbols with a view to enhancing transformation and inclusivity. The Council Artworks Task Team, comprised of members recommended by the Vice-Chancellor and the SRC and appointed by the Council, started its work in October 2015. This report summarises the activities of the Task team and presents recommendations to the Council of the University of Cape Town.

1.2 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Artworks Task Team are:

- to conduct or commission an audit, assessment, and analysis of statues, plaques and artworks on campus that may be seen to recognise or celebrate colonial oppressors and/or which may be offensive or controversial;
- to seek comment and opinion from members of the University and other interested and affected parties on these issues (statues, plaques, and artworks); and
- to formulate proposals for new statues, plaques and artworks.

The recommendations of the Artworks Task Team will be considered by the Works of Art Committee before being submitted to Council for its consideration.

1.3 Composition of the Task Team

1.3.1 Initial Composition

Associate Professor Shadreck Chirikure (Chair)
Professor Carolyn Hamilton
Mr Keenan Hendrickse
Dr Nomusa Makhubu
Ms Khanyisa Pinini
Associate Professor Berni Searle

1.3.2 Current Composition

Associate Professor Shadreck Chirikure (Chair)
Associate Professor Adam Haupt
Dr Nomusa Makhubu
Associate Professor Barbaro Martinez
Mr Rorisang Moseli
Ms Noxolo Ntaka
Associate Professor Jay Pather
1.4 Activities of the Task Team

From its inception the Task Team met frequently to fulfil the requirements set out in its terms of reference. After debating the terms of references, implementation strategies were developed but these were adaptable depending on the ever-changing situation on the ground. Below is a list of some of the key activities performed by the Task Team:

i. The task team debated the terms of reference and sought guidance from the Registrar in cases where clarification was required.

ii. It was agreed, as dictated by the prevailing conditions at the time, that it was prudent to seek input from the University community regarding artworks that were known to have “generated controversy” and to make recommendations regarding those. This was to be followed by processes related to the full art collection.

iii. The initial student representatives on the Task Team identified a list of 19 works in 2015 that were deemed to be controversial. Before recommendations could be made, however, the #FeesMustFall protests began, resulting in the closure of the University.

iv. The Task Team was unable to meet again until February 2016.

v. In the intervening period an audit of statues and plaques on campuses was performed.

vi. On 16 February 2016, twenty-three artworks were destroyed on Upper Campus during the Shackville Protests.

vii. In response to the destroyed artworks and what at the time were continuing protests, a decision was made by the Works of Art Committee to remove artworks in selected places for safe keeping.

viii. The Task Team organised a joint meeting with the Works of Art Committee where it supported this initiative but advised that the motives for the removals should be made clear. For example, there needed to be public communication about whether the removals were only a measure for securing assets or if they were part of the transformation agenda. The lack of public communication by the Works of Art Committee incited widespread public speculation that removals amounted to censorship by the Council Artworks Task Team.

ix. The Task Team published an Interim Statement highlighting the problems caused by the unintended cumulative impact of the University’s artwork collection and the way in which they are currently displayed at UCT. The absence of a considered and contextually sensitive curatorial policy was also seen as a point of concern. Furthermore, it was noted that UCT does not have an art museum where it can exhibit artworks and where people may decide whether to see artworks or not.

x. The Task Team opened a call for public response with the aim of soliciting different views from different stakeholders. Some complained that the University was censoring artworks while others believed that it was sacrificing academic freedom.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art Type</th>
<th>Pre-1994 Statues and Plaques</th>
<th>Post-1994 Statues and Plaques</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statues</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
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</tbody>
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**Group Representations**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art Type</th>
<th>Black History and Achievements</th>
<th>White History and Achievements</th>
<th>Both Black and White History and Achievements</th>
<th>World History and Events</th>
<th>Science and Nature</th>
<th>Indeterminable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plaques</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statues</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gender Representations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art Type</th>
<th>Women History and Achievements</th>
<th>Men History and Achievements</th>
<th>Both Women and Men History and Achievements</th>
<th>Science and Nature</th>
<th>Indeterminable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statues</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data relating to the different types of artworks can be interrogated further but it is clear that there are more white artists and artworks produced by white artists than there are those by black people as broadly defined. This must be understood within the context of the Works of Art Committee’s artworks acquisition processes. Until recently it was an official University policy that one percent of the construction cost for a new building would be reserved for the purchase of artworks. The Works of Art Committee, however, was mandated by policy to preferentially acquire works either by UCT artists or artists affiliated with UCT. The result was that the acquisition pattern and profile reflected the racial composition of the art school and its graduates. Statues and plaques are dominated by white males. There are comparatively fewer statues and plaques for white women and black people.

### 1.6 Review of Works of Art Terms of reference

The Works of Art Committee played an important role in creating and shaping UCT’s symbolic landscape by being the sole acquirer of artworks. Some of the complaints raised by students during consultative processes were that it was a conservative body that required transformation. It was therefore essential to review the terms of reference of the Works of Art Committee and the accompanying artworks acquisition policy. The Task Team and a few members of the Works of Art Committee performed a review of the terms of reference. It was recommended that transformation must guide the activities of
the Works of Art Committee. It was also recognised that there was need to safeguard academic freedom but within a transformative context. To improve on governance it was recommended that the Works of Art Committee be a joint committee of Senate and Council. Furthermore, the acquisition and de-accessioning policies were adjusted to achieve redress and inclusivity.

1.7 Limitations and challenges

The Task Team encountered a number of limitations and challenges engendered by the fact that events often unfolded faster than the Task Team could make decisions. This resulted, at times, in the Task Team being reactive rather than proactive.

1.8 Conclusions

Based on the audit and consultative processes performed as part of its deliberations the Task Team reached the following conclusions:

1. Artworks, statues and plaques at UCT are dominated by those of white people, in particular those of white males. While the policy of acquiring works by UCT and UCT-affiliated artists is a good one, it reproduced the racial composition of staff and students of the art school, who were and are still, mostly white.

2. The Task Team amended the Terms of Reference for the Works of Art Committee. As part of the same process, a new and inclusive acquisition policy and new membership structure for the WOAC were developed and approved by Council at its last meeting in 2016.

3. In our deliberations we found that while there may not be a problem with individual artworks, their cumulative effect, coupled with the lack of a considered curatorial policy, creates a negative feeling amongst some students and staff. We found that currently, UCT does not have a curatorial policy and would need to develop one that is transformation sensitive.

4. There is a great deal of conflict of interest and vested interests around artworks created in part by the fact that acquisition, curation, and major decisions have for a long time been associated with ‘experts’ at the exclusion of others.

5. Artworks are products of scholarly and intellectual engagement and, as such, they must not be censored but be seen as an educational resource. However, the acquisition and curation must be contextually relevant and sensitive to the broader objectives of the university.

6. The Task Team established that there is need for continuous and inclusive debate on artworks and symbols to ensure that their value as repositories of cultural, educational, scientific and research information is well appreciated by members of the university community.
1.9 **Recommendations**

A number of short- and medium- to long-term recommendations were developed based on the outcomes of the audit of artworks, statues and plaques.

*Short term recommendations (to be implemented in one year)*

1. The University of Cape Town must keep artworks that were removed from the walls in storage pending a broader consultative process. This consultation may take the form of displays of some of the contested artworks, (in dedicated spaces such as the CAS Gallery), debates and discussions around specific artworks and/or themes. Seminars that may involve artists of ‘contested’ works may also be hosted by the WOAC and other departments in the university around different artworks and symbols.

2. The Works of Art Committee must re-open constructive public debates regarding the artworks that were removed, damaged or destroyed during the Shackville protests, pending broader consultation. This critical engagement must also extend to the entire collection.

3. As part of the review of institutional culture, the University may include debates on artworks and symbols in the discussions around the Shackville TRC and IRTC processes.

4. The Works of Art Committee may invite proposals for new artworks aimed at achieving redress and balance. This is because artworks and symbols must play an essential role in the transformation of the University.

5. The Task Team recommends the establishment of a high level heritage committee responsible for the integrated management of the University of Cape Town’s heritage that includes but is not limited to buildings, collections, archives, photos, and symbolic spaces (e.g. Slave Burial Ground).

*Medium to long term recommendations (2 to 4 years)*

1. The University must consider building an art museum with a curatorial team for exhibiting artworks. This may also act as a space for different discourses around all forms of art – “problematic” and “non-problematic”.

2. There are currently at least two galleries (Michaelis Galleries and CAS Gallery) as well as a museum (the Irma Stern Museum). Within the context of adaptive use, we recommend that these spaces and their resources (human, financial, etc.) when available, be re-aligned as spaces to begin debates around UCT artworks.

3. The Works of Art Committee must develop a curatorial policy, through broad consultation with relevant stakeholders.

4. The Works of Art Committee in periodically reviewing the acquisition policy may consider widening and broadening the range from which it acquires artworks. For example, it may reserve 50% of the acquisition budget for UCT related artists and
use the remainder to buy artworks from across the country and the African continent as it sees fit. This is essential for achieving diversity and inclusivity.

5. The University may, through the WOAC, commission artworks, symbols and portraits that celebrate important events in its history. This may form part of the institution’s broader heritage strategy. However, this must not take away the rights of individual departments and faculties in making their own acquisitions and commissions of the same.

6. The University must develop a heritage policy that integrates not just approaches but also decisions about conservation and use of its heritage resources. This is important because the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 mandates that institutions and individuals must actively manage heritage resources in their custody.

References


