

ONE MAN SHOWS

The Mandela Rainbow Honeymoon
(1992–1999)

Pieter-Dirk Uys



DISCLAIMER AND WARNING

The scripts in this collection from 1992 to 1999 have not been altered to reflect today's values or to accommodate current sensibilities. They are an authentic record of what was performed at the time. The words are specific here to their social context. Deeply offensive terms were still used ironically and satirically to expose racism, sexism and hypocrisy, and to reflect the prejudices of society at the time. Offensive depictions and harmful terms have therefore been purposefully retained for historical accuracy. To alter the words and scripts would not only give an untrue and false account of the performances but would render the satire and political import of these scripts incomprehensible.

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Contents

Dedication	5
The story so far	9
On leaving the stage	15
1992: AN EVENING WITH PIETER-DIRK UYS	23
The text	25
'Quo Vadis Evita?'	67
November 1994: A date with Madiba	74
1995: BAMBI SINGS THE F.A.K. SONGS & OTHER STRUGGLE ANTHEMS	98
Enter Bambi Kellermann	99
The text	107
Meanwhile back in the real world (1995)	142
1995: YOU ANC NOTHING YET	151
The text	155
Is the grass greener on the other side?	199
From the Cape Flats to Brooklyn Heights via Channel Four	207
Being the woman I sometimes am	215
Evita's bust exposed in Parliament	219
1995: TRUTH OMISSIONS	227
Nuremberg and all that jazz	229
Planning a party	231
Announcing a new show	234
Preparing the party	236
The text	241
After the party	269
Understudying PW Botha	277
Sharing the party	281
Looking for theatre in a live world	287
Meanwhile back in the real world (1995)	292
1996: TANNIE EVITA PRAAT KAKTUS	298
The text	299
1997: LIVE FROM BOERASSIC PARK	327
A Boerassic Park in the Swartland	329
The text	335
What the media said in South Africa	366
What the media said in London	372

1998: EUROPEANS ONLY	375
The backstory	377
The text	381
A perfumed assault on Parliament	404
The Ballot Bus invasion	414
Our Lady of Politics goes on an Election Trek	419
Janet Suzman goes on an election trek: from her diary	438
1999: DEKAFFIRMATED	444
After all that ... a programme note at last	445
The text	449
Shock & Awe	485
Looking ahead	497

DEDICATION

In 1960, when Dr Hendrik Verwoerd was pulling South Africa out of the British Commonwealth and remaking us as a republic, I was a 15-year-old pupil at Nassau, an Afrikaans state school in Cape Town. It was run by a strict and pompous principal and oriented towards Christian Nationalist education, the policy of the apartheid state. One day, soon after the Sharpeville riots, hundreds of people, most of them not white, marched in from the townships and past our school. They were on their way to Parliament to demand the end to passbooks for blacks. All we could hear were sounds that we thought were tanks rumbling alongside the march. We were told to lie under our desks and pray. This felt like the end of the world. A few years later at the University of Cape Town, I met some fellow students who were part of that march. I told them of our terror. They laughed. One said, ‘Why didn’t you come and join us?’

At school no one questioned apartheid. It was thought normal. We, the Afrikaners, were right and everybody else was black.

I had many teachers in high school, mostly products of the brainwashed society teaching us in a brainwashed way. But there were two exceptions. Meneer du Toit taught us the history of the Afrikaner (then recently rewritten in Pretoria). His job was to spread the word. He did it by telling us exciting stories. The other teacher was Miss Nel, who taught our second language, English. A small woman with chiselled features, she looked a bit like Meryl Streep crossed with Bette Davis. She went far beyond her duty. She’d just returned from London, where she’d been teaching rowdy Cockney kids for a year and shared her

stories with us; made us feel like grown ups; made us curious to know more. As we worked towards the two national exams, she made learning personal and enjoyable.

Miss Nel took the class to see our Shakespeare set work play at the University of Cape Town (UCT) Little Theatre in Gardens. I will never forget the magic of *King Lear*. When that curtain went up, my life was changed forever. Miss Nel also asked us each to write her a poem. The prospect terrified me.

‘In English? ... No, Miss, I can’t.’

‘Yes, Pieter, you can ...’

‘No, Miss, I can’t ...’

‘Pieter, you can do anything! If you believe in it, and work towards it, you can do anything.’



Aloise Nel

Most of my school friends went onto higher education at the Afrikaans university in Stellenbosch. I chose the English-speaking UCT to study to be a teacher. I also wanted to say those words to a frightened child.

I wrote my first poem for Miss Nel. I was 13.

Homecoming

*I see it there behind the trees
the castle of my youth
The tall red chimney marks the grave
of tears of joy and grief
The house is cold and ashen-grey
the doors are locked up tight
The windowpanes are broken out
and filled with a misty light.
A cat sits on the garden wall,
looking at me with stern cold eyes
I see a message in their depth
which reads: "They did not wait for you.
You went away a spoilt young man
with great ideas in your proud head.
You did not send a word
of how you felt, or if you longed.
You always wanted to be free
and thought that they had wronged.
To you they were a nuisance
and a burden to your joy.
You know now what you were like then
a selfish, hateful boy.
You went alone into the world
and left them on their own.
They did not wait
They could not wait
They're dead, you know, they're gone!*

It wasn't until years later that I found out from my mother that Aloise Nel had gone to see her privately with this poem and said: 'Your boy is going to be a writer.' That's what my mother also kept on saying, even though my dream was to be an actor. But Aloise Nel also gave me the confidence to become a performer. As a constant target of the bigger boys, I learnt to survive the hard way, and learnt to tell jokes and make them laugh and that way forget they wanted to beat me up. I would also hide in the girls' toilets! Maybe that's where I started illuminating tough life through entertainment.

A year after I left school, Miss Nel got married to Peter Lambrecht and had three children. She moved to Johannesburg and we kept in touch, firstly with Xmas cards and then with tickets to my shows. I'd send her my scripts. She also pointed out what worked and what didn't; sometimes she added: 'Your spelling is still awful.' When she came to a new show, there was a great temptation to stop the performance and point to her and say that it was all thanks to her that I was on this stage.

The dawn of the new century saw my work at schools with details about HIV and AIDS. I have also enjoyed hours discussing with learners about topics focused on humour in politics and the right to ask questions, a far cry from my school days, when it was taboo to discuss politics, question anything. Our fears back then remained unspoken.

Not all children get the full attention of parents. But every child should, could, must have a teacher who stands in for all the things parents are not able to manage. On my visits to schools I always tell the learners and the teachers about Miss Nel and how she, as my teacher and later my friend, changed my life.

This book is dedicated to such teachers.

THE STORY SO FAR

It was called lockdown. But it turned out to be much more than that. It was for many a beginning, for too many an end. Everyone in the world was affected if not infected.

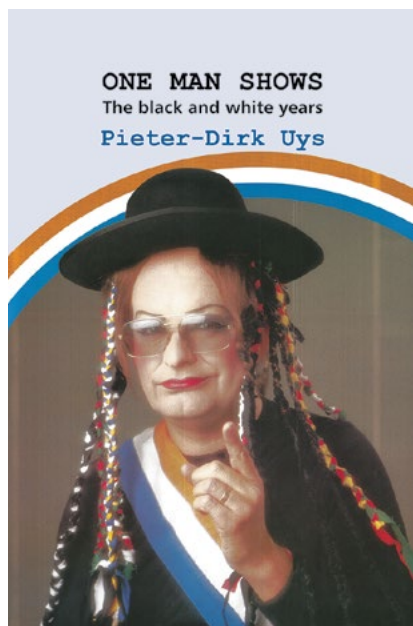
My bout with Covid-19 luckily happened after two vaccinations and was 'mild'. After 700-plus days of lockdown, I was accustomed to its face. Like Stockholm Syndrome, the prisoner had fallen in love with the jailer.

Mid-March 2020 took most things away, except time. An empty diary. No stage performances in a near future that felt far away. I started a love affair with things I never had time to notice; the garden and its inhabitants, from snails to hadedas and the 49 other bird species to the pet cat licking its chops for a taste of dove or mouse. They all had names now. Each one had a life. Hopefully none would pass on a virus.

For years I had hoped to one day find the time to put my revue texts onto my website: www.pdu.co.za. My dramatic works were there and well perused, but a revue text somehow couldn't just be placed out of context. But now, suddenly, pandemically, time was on my side for once. I had to type up each text, still anchored in the vernacular of the 1980s and 90s, when the internet was just a rumour and only real in the *Star Wars* films. At first, going through the material, I couldn't believe that I had gotten away with so much. I was also shocked to sense the fears of the past still with me in this present, that the hypocrisy of the black and white years had reinvented itself as the politics of today.

I added a backstory to each revue, giving my reasons for choosing specific characters and controversial issues. Then I realised that a

political backstory was needed to put it all in proper perspective. After adding photos, posters, reviews and memoirs, the ‘therapy’ resulted in a 500-page book. But who in a state of disaster would spend R500 on a book about satirical things that happened 40 years ago?



Front cover of *One Man Shows* – Volume 1

One Man Shows: the black and white years shares the seven revues I performed during the height of apartheid, from 1981 to 1994. In December 2021, I released it on my website. It is there – free and easy to read on a laptop or tablet. I sent the link to the schools where I had presented *For Fact's Sake*, my AIDS-educational memoir during the early 2000s. I now suggested that they share the new opus with their history department (and others), so that the learners could choose from the satirical sketches ones to perform, and then discuss why those characters were in a politically-incorrect entertainment during the dark days of separate development. It would be one way to place the experience of our past struggles into the history of our present freedoms. That was the first volume. Here is the second volume.

One Man Shows: The Mandela Rainbow Honeymoon (1992–1999) is also subtitled: *the mock in democracy*, and focuses on our unexpected democracy, with much thanks to a man who came out of 27 years of darkness and gave us light. Chalk became cheese, good became better, and bad just looked worse. The expected bloodbath in which apartheid would drown didn't happen. Many of the horrors of those days were now excused as politically motivated, so everyone could be invited to the party and dance well into the next decade. When would the music end?

Aluta continua!

And so the struggle continues, decades after the elections of 1994. The small light at the end of the curved tunnel finally burst into sunshine, inviting the rainbow nation to embrace a new brand of politics. A democratically-elected government of the people, for the people and by the people, some of whom would soon prove how easily they could fool most of the people.

The last page of the first volume reproduced an advert placed on election day 27 April 1994, in the national newspapers from former South African Ambassador to the Independent Homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti, Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout, who was now looking for a job. However, before that became a reality, I had to take that one step forward in 1994 to two steps back.

1992 saw *An Evening with Pieter-Dirk Uys* at Cape Town's Baxter Theatre. That revue should have been included in the first volume, but was skipped over because of the headline: 'PDU retires from the theatre!' My recipe of 49% anger versus 51% entertainment could no longer produce the proper balance. It was no longer them and us. Nelson Mandela had been a free man since 11 February 1990, and reconciliation was being translated into many tongues and lingos while not always meaning the same thing.

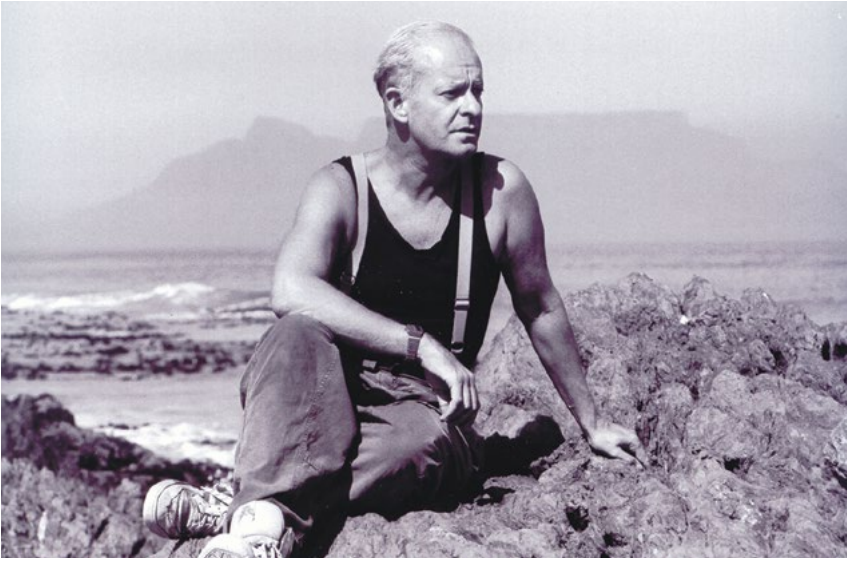
It wasn't all fun and gains. Violence became the order of the day. At least during the Struggle, the enemy's enemy became my friend. But now, as the doors of imprisonment were flung open and returned exiles rediscovered their South African roots, the stage was no longer the rare

platform to expose political crimes and fill the ether with shocked laughter, relieved gasps and comedy-criinges. Now we all could laugh about the past, because it was no longer the present. Now we all could look forward to the future, because it was something we had dreamed about for so long. We were all marching to Pretoria, where we would crown a former political prisoner as the first president of the entire nation, a celebrated leader for all its citizens.

The cracks in the granite of white supremacy widened. Paul Simon broke the cultural boycott with a concert in Johannesburg; ARMSCOR admitted to having made mistakes. Peace talks between De Klerk, Mandela and Buthelezi gave us hope. South Africa and Russia established full diplomatic ties, so coaxing the Red out from under the bed. The YES-for-political-reform referendum of March 1992 gave most whites a chance to say *Amandla*, and understand the meaning of the freedoms so long denied to the majority.

Winnie Mandela's 1991 trial for the murder of Stompie got her a suspended prison sentence, and on 13 April 1992 Nelson separated from his wife. The Boipatong massacre of 22 June left 45 dead; the Bisho massacre would follow in September. CODESA: the Convention for a Democratic South Africa, gave many reasons to talk the talk and then walk the walk. US President George Bush senior and the EU lifted economic sanctions against South Africa. Suddenly the warriors felt redundant. The struggle veterans embraced the ceasefire. The United Democratic Front (UDF) found its full stop and dissolved into the ANC, while former comrades in exile returned as citizens. The hated Group Areas Act and Population Registration Act were repealed. Comrade Chris Hani became the charismatic leader of the SA Communist Party. Whispers of proposed war crimes trials grew louder. A Nuremberg in Johannesburg?

Meanwhile my life had not been a freeze-frame. I was definitely losing my faithful National Party scriptwriters, but there was more to my alphabet than merely 'politics now'. In early February 1992, Evita Bezuidenhout led a Cape Town Festival march down Adderley Street celebrating our new freedoms. I directed a revival of my play *Die Van*



Looking across towards Robben Island on 11 February 1990,
the day Nelson Mandela walked to freedom.

Aardes van Grootoor, which opened in Cape Town and also had a run in Johannesburg. In April into May, I was invited with *Süüd Afrika in farbe* to Frankfurt, Erkrath, Münster, München, Salzburg, Graz, Gleisdorf, Ljubljana (Slovenia), Hamburg, Wiesbaden, Düsseldorf, Hanover, Augsburg, Marburg, Stuttgart, Zürich, Regensburg, Wilhelmshaven, Wuppertal, Aachen and Bonn.

In May my first play in the 'new South Africa', *Die Vleiroos*, premiered at the 1992 Grahamstown Festival, which also saw my 1970s' play *Paradise is closing down* explored through a 'revisited' 90s look with the three white women now as gay men, reflecting the tolerance in our noisy new Weimar. It then opened in Johannesburg at the Wits Theatre where the adapted drama was massacred by the critics, and closed after a week. Within hours, I was joined by Lizz Meiring as Evita's secretary Bokkie Bam, and we filled the empty Wits stage with an emergency season of *An Audience with Evita Bezuidenhout*. Maybe that experience had some influence on the next outing. The next production was obvious.

The Argus

4911

CAPE TOWN, FRIDAY OCTOBER 2 1992

SA's top satirist Uys is quitting the stage

ADELE BALETA

PIETER DIRK Uys is "hanging up his satirical toyi toyi shoes" and retiring from the stage.

Uys made this announcement in an invitation to The Argus today to attend a performance of his current show at the Baxter Theatre, *An Evening with Pieter Dirk Uys*.

Attempts to contact Uys, now 47, were unsuccessful. Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout, South

Africa's greatest white lady — was also unavailable and rumour has it she was rehearsing her version of "Don't cry for me Bapetikosweti ..."

Uys — undoubtedly the country's top satirist — recently returned from a tour of Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the former Yugoslavia where his show was a smash hit.

He will give his final performance on October 10.



Pieter-Dirk Uys

News cutting from *The Argus* October 2 1992

ON LEAVING THE STAGE

Moet 'An Evening with Pieter-Dirk Uys' nie misloop nie.
Daar sal nie weer geleentheid vir so 'n opwindende en
vermaaklike aand wees nie

– *Tempo* (Durban) Oktober 1992

Evidence abounds that it's his razor-sharp mind and
masterly mimicry that's made Pieter-Dirk Uys the country's
top satirist. We'll certainly miss him

– *The Natal Mercury* (Durban) October 1992

In September at the Baxter Theatre in Cape Town, *An Evening with Pieter-Dirk Uys* opened with the headline: 'Pieter-Dirk Uys leaves the stage!' Was it just a sly publicity stunt? Or was I really a damaged clown? It would be my last stage performance in the 'old South Africa'. This didn't mean retirement; it just meant putting the brakes on my labours in the theatre. Since 1981 and *Adapt or Dye*, I had annually spent eleven months out of twelve on stage. My decade had been filled with over 3,000 performances of one man shows, writing plays, directing plays, producing plays and sometimes acting in them. This would be the first time that I hadn't needed to plan eighteen months ahead – hiring theatres and structuring a new year's season. But hidden in this faux freedom I hadn't enjoyed for years was a feeling of terror. Yes, I could now get on with the things that were waiting for me: unfinished novels, children's stories, film work, television, flowers in Namaqualand and the stories of our people without the stench of politics that had been

the manure in which I grew my satirical daisies. Yes, I'd always wondered when a gear-change would come, and now this seemed to be the most logical moment to hang up the satirical toyi-toyi shoes and explore new avenues. That was the wonderful thing about where we were at in South Africa in 1992. Anything seemed possible!

Uys has always been my favourite satirist – an essentially serious man who uses laughter as the formidable weapon that it can be. His highly developed sense of the ridiculous is never too vitriolic. He is hugely entertaining, but his magic is much more than that. He can get his audience to identify their own weaknesses and prejudices while laughing at everyone else's – and ultimately laughing at themselves. He also pokes fun without fear or favour. No one is left out.

– *The Sunday Times* (Cape Town) September 1992

The new show was a joy to write. Joan Collins had visited South Africa in May and was hailed as a 'silicone sex symbol' and 'a nice but empty package'. In London South African journalist Jani Allen had sued Channel 4 for libel. In a documentary it had been suggested that she had had a sexual relationship with the neo-Nazi AWB leader Eugene Terre'Blanche. What could be more tempting? Put them all together on stage!

The search for a new Scarlett O'Hara in the long-awaited sequel to *Gone with the Wind* filled the local tabloids with letters from upset white beauties, who feared that the new political correctness would be biased against them in favour of non-whites. A black Scarlet O'Hara? Mouth-watering. British Prime Minister Maggie Thatcher had suddenly resigned and tearfully left Downing Street to make way for the bland John Major. UK TV's *Spitting Images* introduced His Greyness with the Iron Lady's skeleton in the Number 10 closet. Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk shared the Nobel Peace Prize while hissing compliments at each other in public. The right wing threatened war, while the left wing threatened peace. Whites packed for Perth, blacks packed the

stadiums and shouted *Freedom!* Hijackings, robberies, kidnaps, lies, hypocrisy, fake news (not yet called that) and racist fears (called that!) ruled supreme.

Die man is goed, beter, beste. As satirikus ken hy nie sy gelyke in Suid-Afrika nie, en onlangse optredes in Europa bevestig sy internasionale status. Hy strooi steeds die kwinkslae, maar soos saad. As die giggels en lagbuie verby is, bly daar iets wat in die gemoed van die kyker kan ontkiem – onder meer tot groter selfkennis en medemenslike verdraagsaamheid. Dit is 'n meesterlike – en hoogs genietlike – vertoning van spot, satire, mimiek – 'n figuurlike spel met spieëls wat stukkies werklikheid opvang, dalk verwring maar des te meer helder weerkaats.

– *Die Burger* (Kaapstad) September 1992

When President PW Botha and his wife, accompanied by an international media cluster and ironclad security, took this first 'state visit' to the south-western townships and was presented with the 'Freedom of Soweto', I was convinced that satire in South Africa was now dead.

The basis for my satire has always been this: keep your balance at 49% anger and 51% entertainment, because the other way round you lose the audience. Even though it could end up 'funny' on stage, most political targets and their deeds, which are the diet of this monster called 'satire', are based in anger: anger at the stupidity; anger at the helplessness you feel as a mere grain in a sandbox of lost lives.

In the 1980s it was hard to laugh at our politicians. Even though the 1977 Information Scandal was still warm and steaming on the mat, everyone was careful not to point a finger.

In 1978 my play, *Die van Aardes van Grootoor*, upset the censors by our use of photos on the set of past National Party leaders – DF Malan, JG Strydom, HF Verwoerd, BJ Vorster and PW Botha – and so they banned them all with gusto. That's all you really need. If there is no sense of humour, clowns rush in where angels fear to fly. And throughout

my career, I have been blessed with a government devoid of any sense of humour. Our grotesque leaders were a cartoonist's dream. My chorus line seldom varied. There was: PW Botha, the boss with a flickering tongue that lashed out like an old crocodile while wagging his finger; Dr Piet Koornhof, senior Broeder and second in command of the NP *Titanic*, who had the big ears of a clown and the habit of creating long sentences without adjectives or vowels; Minister of the Interior, 'Lucky Lips' Connie Mulder; 'Hell-I'm-Gorgeous' Deputy President Chris Heunis; Foreign Minister Pik Botha, the best actor in the company without compassion.

The show is hilarious, well-polished and very enjoyable. The next challenge for Uys to prove his worth as an iconoclast would be to dive into the entire spectrum of New South Africa farces and give those holy cows a run for their money.

– *South* (Cape Town) September 1992

My targets of political absurdity lined up daily, led by the homelands fiasco with its multi-bordered bits, like pimples on tired, sagging buttocks. The Department of Plural Relations (replacing Black Affairs) gave birth to the madness of whites and 'plurals'. The tricameral parliamentary system became the reality of so-called separate development, and the Imperial Presidency of Elize Botha's husband gave me years of unforgettable titles for new revues on a silver platter: *Adapt or Dye*, *Total Onslaught*, *Beyond the Rubicon* – and my superstar spook, Evita.

There was also the absurd reality in which we lived: the democracy of PW Botha, where one man, one vote meant he was the man and his was the vote. Freedom of speech was just a theory. The stage, and in particular the revue/cabaret, became by default a daily newscast where the public could find out what was happening behind their backs. Telling the truth was illegal. It was not necessary to add noughts for effect. The facts of our states of emergency were there and people listened in shock and then burst out laughing at the ludicrousness of

‘ons land, ons volk, onslaught’. The laughter was not caused by banana peels on stage, but by a banana republic.

Nothing is sacrosanct. He makes a meal of the official guardians of our morals. He slips in and out of numerous roles with off-hand perfection and as bubbly as ever.

– *The Daily News* (Durban) October 1992

The foundation of my work has always been: laugh at your fears – then those fears will be less fearful. They can still be lethal, but at least not twenty feet tall in the shadows, just twenty inches high in the light. There were only two dimensions back then: the good guys and the bad guys. The good guys were in jail and the bad guys were on the coins. It was often as simple as black and white. It was also important to always find a place in the revue to wave the ANC colours of the banned majority and to clearly repeat the forbidden words from the skeletons in the closet of Robben Island. The laws of the land were there to be broken. To make draconian laws look ridiculous in the eyes of the nation, often in high heels and a dress, was a great and often illegal pleasure.



Evita Bezuidenhout was born out of necessity, at a time when it was impossible to reflect the true South Africa with a straight face. Through her mouth I could play my own devil’s advocate. She, with her national

arrogance, was what I wanted to undermine. I gave her as much rope as she needed to hang herself. Sometimes she would trip me up with it. But to have created a creature, who, through her personality, could have a greater influence on an audience than I could, was one of the most fascinating aspects of my job.

There is also the delightful shockability of our people. The fact that swearwords, like poep, could make the volk either shocked or hysterical with laughter, while the fact of dead black children in the township down the road made them look away, was something that the character of Evita reflected. She used to say: ‘Sies, our people are not like this. Pieter-Dirk Uys is just a third-rate comedian, and the fact that he is still a free person shows how liberal we are. Anyway, our jails are full ...’

Uys se grootste bate is sy vermoë om van keur en gestalte te verander, om veranderings in die samelewing noukeuriger na te speur en die draak met hulle te steek. Dis die stoffasie waarvan die beter satirici gemaak is.

– *Vrye Weekblad* (Kaapstad) September 1992

I got repeated soft warnings to toe the line, odd threats of visits in the night, so I often changed my place of residence just in case, and constantly checked my car for loose nuts and bolts, and once or twice thanked Ford for that extra power to lose an aggressive car in my rear-view mirror. And there was Mrs Bezuidenhout to save my life. When the dangers of the job started heaping up, Mrs B would appear plumed and pouting in the newspaper as the perfect irritating diversion tactic.

When the government finally freed Nelson Mandela, I realised that it was time to pack away my rusty weapons of word-war, leave the trenches of guerrilla theatre and get down to some ‘serious’ work. But then the true alphabet of free speech made itself available, and the new political starlets of the right and the left joined the government as my new high-kicking scriptwriters. With the rise of the House of De Klerk, with its grey eminence of the nice smile and Saatchi & Saatchi finesse,

just old Pik Botha remained in my chorus line as my Talleyrand relic from that bygone age. The other politicians became too small to do.

Incisive, derisive, hilarious, bittersweet satire. If Uys had done some of these sketches in the form of *Weekly Mail* reports, he'd probably be pushing up daisies right now. As usual his razor-sharp observations hit the mark time and time again. We laugh; the victims squirm ...

– *Scope* April 1993

With exceptions: Nelson Mandela stood like a granite colossus, satirically dull, while skulking in his shadows, seethed and slithered the faceless who now use the word 'democracy' as a new swearword and/or password. And suddenly my stage had shifted. It was no longer under spotlights in a theatre, carefully structured to keep that 49% anger balanced with the 51% entertainment. Satire now thrived outside in the streets of South Africa and around the tables of CODESA and COSATU and Communism and Conservatism. Satire was usually the combination of absurd facts placed in normal situations. For example:

- * Mandela builds a family home in the Transkei based on his Vic Verster prison: 'I am familiar with the walls of that house.'
- * South Africa becomes the only country in the world with a Communist Party with plans for the future.
- * The homelands are governed by an Oupa, a Bantu, a Gatsha, a Lucas.
- * In the early 1990s, the National Party of DF Malan, JG Strydom, HF Verwoerd, BJ Vorster and PW Botha quickly becomes South Africa's biggest and noisiest apologist for apartheid.
- * Mass murderers are freed under the guise of having committed political crimes. The *Wit Wolf* I did in *A Kiss on Your Koeksister* is now a free man, pledging to repeat his acts of mass murder, if not on stage then in the streets.

And I'm supposed to be the satirist here!

At his best when he dons disguises, particularly those of women. Pieter-Dirk Uys has not lost it. He's just changing it. And perhaps he hasn't quite finished yet.

– *The Argus* (Cape Town) September 1992

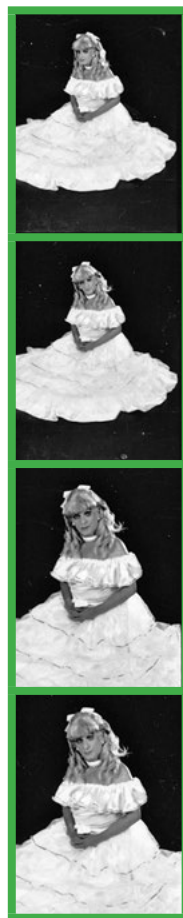
I didn't have the correct words at the time to prepare myself for the democratic rights of political correctness. While I never resorted to blackface comedy, apartheid proved itself to be not just a colour. It was also a sound. On the phone you could guess the ethnicity of the person. Blacks sounded black; Coloureds sounded Coloured; Afrikaners sounded Afrikaans, Jews sounded like kugels ('as true's God'), and everyone sounded tense. It was time to take a step out of the chorus line and rethink. It was definitely time for *An Evening with Pieter-Dirk Uys*.

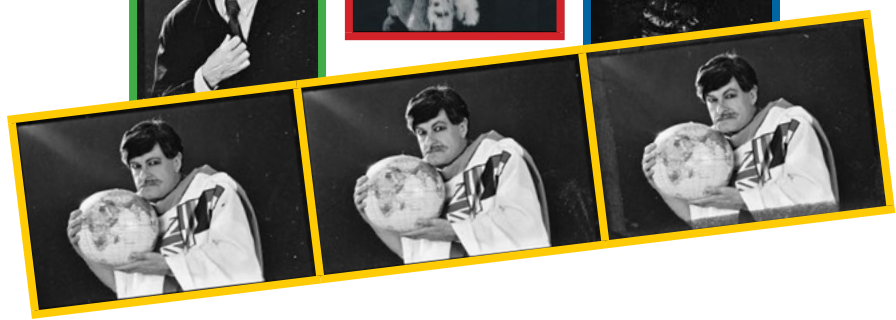
There is nothing sad about Pieter-Dirk Uys's farewell show.

But South African satire is losing a dimension. And that's very sad.

– *The Daily News* (Durban) October 1992

1992
AN EVENING
WITH PIETER-DIRK UYS





An Evening with Pieter-Dirk Uys

Performed at the Baxter Theatre Cape Town and Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre Durban

THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

The bergie rails at the audience

Oom Patrick tells a tale

The censor reminds

The former official without his Immorality Act

Nelson Mandela's Vic Verster warder recalls

The security policeman from the old days

Chief Gatsha Buthelezi complains

Minister Pik Botha states a fact

Evita Bezuidenhout welcomes the losers

Saartjie auditions for the big part

Joan Collins as Jani Alien in search of the perfect boerewors

Baroness Margaret Thatcher is happy to be there

UK Prime Minister John Major is there too

Sir Noël Coward has the last word

THE STAGE SETTING

Empty stage. Black curtain surround. On stage a trunk with international labels. In it are all the props and costumes needed.

THE SHOW

PDU as the bergie enters through the audience and eventually ends up on stage. He wears black plastic bags covering his pants and shirt, beanie on the head.

THE BERGIE: Mind the patron. Excuse the member. And you thought this place had right of admission reserved? Look again. Times are so bad in the theatre, they even take an IOU from people like me just to get another bum on the seats. And my bum on your seat will leave an impression you will never forget! *(He molests someone in the front row)* Please, Master? My old mother's in hospital, Master. She's lost a leg, Master. Got some change? Asseblief, Mèddem, I want to buy some bread... *(He laughs)* People still fall for that. Who can afford bread? With the price of bread being what it is, it's wragtig cheaper to eat cake! *(He is seen to take a coin from someone)* What's this? A rand? Or an Olympic Silver Medal? You want me to slip a disc? You carry five of these rand coins for longer than one hour and see what it does to your back. Thanks but no thanks. *(He gives it back)* Signs of the times. You give a two rand coin in payment and the change you get is bigger, weighs more and is worth bugger all!

(He gets onto the stage)

So welcome to the theatre. The way things are going out there in the real world, the theatre at Groote Schuur hospital probably sees you more often than this theatre at the Baxter, what with your heart attacks and stress symptoms and traumas and overdoses. Relax, it's only a revolution. But between us, I must admit: life is not as lekker as it was in the good old bad old days. Not that the old days was so hot either, but at least apartheid separated the blacks from the whites. Nowadays you can't tell the blerrie difference: everyone looks poep-skyt-bang!

In the old days I came here every day of the week. I was one of their best patrons. While shows were playing here to full houses, I cleaned up in the car park with half a brick: the Mercedes and BMWs and Jaguars and Bentleys and Lamborghinis. What's in the car park now? Blerrie Toyotas, Golfs, second-hand 4×4s. Pathetic. Ja, kyk hoe lyk djy? Dis 'n smart jas, maar jy ry 'n kak kar! You now dress down for the good times? Old clothes, no flash, no gold chains, no rings hey? Rather keep your fingers? You leave the expensive shiny car safely on blocks at home and bring the maid's shopping Honda here, hoping someone like me will steal it and so you can claim the insurance? Forget it. The

insurance companies are also bankrupt and I don't drive Hondas! Relax, it's only money.

So this is the stage I read about? No, I wrapping my smooresnoek in the newspaper this morning, I read the 'whats-on-in-the theatre' list. Listen, when last did you read your arts page? They're not exactly encouraging you to put on your smart jas, feed the Rottweiler, load the gun, kiss the kids, triple-lock the garage, get in the car, spend your rands and cents enjoying yourself here in the theatre? All they seem to see is the negative. And they call themselves 'arts pages'? Shame, with friends like that who needs critics. Relax it's only the theatre!

You're supposed to know that this place will make you have a nice time. And if you forgot, let me remind you: here you get Real Live Entertainment! All sweating, all spitting, all swearing. This is the only place left where you get something that's not tinned. TV is canned, video is tinned, CDs, radio – you name it: all in a tin. But here, in the theatre and in the church, it's live from God's mouth to your ear. So if you need an overworked, underpaid stranger on a daily newspaper to tell you want to do with your spare time, you deserve to stay at home and watch something tinned, simulcasted and made in L.A. Relax, it's only entertainment. But look, I'm preaching to the converted. Behold the captive audience! OK, so now that I've made you all feel really lekker for bothering to come here tonight and probably losing your assets and your sense of humour in the process, what did you come here for? Spectacle? No, man, you should have gone to the Nico Malan Opera House for spectacles. They like making a spectacle of themselves! There at least you can see your tax money wasted on stage: marble pillars and Persian carpets and golden staircases and satin dresses and chorus lines and imported dik-gat tenors in tight tights who hit their top C there by B! You come here for Protest Theatre? Man, you're two years too late. They don't protest here anymore; they repent. Satire? Vir wat? What's here that you can't do yourself in your garage at home? Look, black curtains, 'n klomp ou doose, present company excluded.

An Evening with Pieter-Dirk Uys? Why didn't he make it *A Morning with Pieter-Dirk Uys*? And then you *would* have had tea and scones and made

the noon bioscope show of *Basic Instinct* at the Golden Acre. At least there you would have got tits. Lots of tits. I can assure you: no tits here tonight! So what do you think you'll get? Maybe all the old kak you can see on video anyway, man. PW Botha? For God's sake, PW se moer, man! He's a has-been. He's yesterday's bad smell. Weg. Gone with his own wind. In die wildernis weggefok. You want to see PW Botha? OK. *(He does a PW Botha impression)*

Who else did you come for? Ou Piet Koornhof? Jisis man, he's been forgotten for so long, people don't even remember his ears. They see the ears and they say: it's Prince Charles without a brain. OK, you want Piet Promises? Hier's ou Piet... *(He does a Piet Koornhof impersonation)* And o God ja, that old drag, Mevrou Evita Bezuidenhout? *(He does an Evita pose)* So there, I've now done all the old characters you came to see. Dis nou klaar. Now you can go home happy and watch Sarajewo on CNN and feel better. Hey? Who else you came for? Desmond Tutu? Oh, a little bit of black humour? *(He does a Tutu moment)* Listen, do yourself a favour. Go down the road to St George's Cathedral and see Desmond Tutu for real: all singing, all dancing, all talking. The man's even got a Noble Prize for his performance, which is much grander than an Oscar! I mean what awards are up here tonight? Fleur du Cap Best Actor 1981? Some consolation prize!

Now *An Evening with Desmond Tutu* is something I'd go and see like a shot. And that's free! Ja, and if you go to Tutu's theatre often enough, you get a free pass-out to heaven. You come here to the Baxter Theatre once too often, you feel like hell! And talking about archbishops, I'm off to Constantia. The Tutus have now got nice transparent garbage bags up there, so that we bergies can window shop at leisure. And, by the way, the owner of CA 564 889? Thought I'd just tell you: your car alarm is due to go off in exactly two minutes. Hasta ta la vista baby!

(Music as PDU strips down to his dress suit)

PDU: 'Listen, Pieter-Dirk Uys,' the kugel said to me, 'when are you going to do something serious. It's all very good and well having a go

at the government, but what about something with a bit of meat?’ I’ll leave the meat to Jani Allan in the second half. Laughter is a very serious democratic right; life is a very serious democratic right. So let’s get that out of the way and then laugh.

Serious times here in South Africa. Not very funny. Not very hopeful. Not very helpful. Nothing to read up on the situation. Come on, we’ve all been through puberty and we’re still here. We’ve all sat alone in our rooms wondering if we’re going to die. No one to ask. No one to tell. No one to laugh with. So after 300 years, South Africa is going through puberty. Its voice is breaking. That’s all. It’s not the end of the world, just the beginning of growing up. The question is therefore not: will South Africa eventually become a man and grow a beard? The question is: will the beard be black or red. White it won’t be, that’s for sure, but maybe brown? So moenie pêniek nie. Alles sal regkom.

(PDU changes into Oom Patrick: He tells the story like one by C. Louis Leipoldt)

(Light change)

OOM PATRICK: Times were hard in the little dorp on the forgotten vlakte. It hadn’t rained properly for years. The scrappy occasional cluster of raindrops plopping in the dust was an irritating tease, not the answer to collective prayers. So the earth stayed barren and dry. Whatever little bits of green dotted around like pimples came mainly from the corrugated iron roofs of the small sun-baked houses, all painted in that dirty-green railways colour fashionable since the beginning of timetables.

Oom Jan and Tannie Bessie lived a happy contented, if somewhat uneventful life, she with her all-consuming interest in private conversations on the party line and he pottering around the wooden model of the first and only boat he’d ever travelled on, back when one could sail from Cape Town to Durban without being exceptional. Those days were far away both in mileage and years. Oom Jan and Tannie

Bessie didn't have children in this dusty little spot ignored by the world. They kept a few animals that they loved within reason. Neither believed in pampering their old dusty dog into behaving like a spoilt child and anyway, the dusty old cat wanted no sentimental handouts and sat on the dusty stone wall like a battered grey sphinx in the dust. There were also a few dusty chickens that laid breakfast and sometimes for their troubles ended legs-up in the air on the Sunday lunch table which was never dusty. But the empress of their humble homeland was Ou Bella, a large white overweight sow, who'd been part of the family for over a year.

Bella had arrived one morning in a dusty cardboard box as a small pink piglet and everyone thought she was the sweetest little bulldog they'd ever seen. But Mother Nature had no plans to divert from habit and in the months that followed, klein Bellatjie shed her cuteness and the luxury of being picked up and cuddled, and blew up into old sow she now was. She'd snuffel around the yard, raising important clouds of dust as she grandly pushed the perimeters of her domain as far as she thought possible. The other animals begrudgingly evacuated that territory, acknowledging her as the boss, because they recognised a bigger bully when they saw one.

Life zizzed by and would so forever and a weekend, until one day when Ou Bella looked up at Oom Jan with such a wistful longing in her small piggy eyes, for deep down in her instinct stirred the shocking hurt that she was unfulfilled. She had no babies of her own. Ou Bella needed a man! Oom Jan huffed and puffed and gathered her up in his arms like when she was tiny, except now it took so much longer. He plonked her large body into the dusty wheelbarrow and trekked her up the dusty track to the small holding of his friend Pypies Jan Brak, so-called because of the pipe he always smoked, and the many stray brakkies he would gather around him. Those little dogs seemed to come from nowhere and end up lying everywhere – under a thorn bush or an upturned kis with the nostalgic words 'Produce of the Union of South Africa' still faintly visible on its side. Their little brak bodies pulsed with a common heat rhythm of panting and all the shiny little pink tongues were cheekily garish in the dusty drabness.

But around the smallholding lurked an aura of mystery and power, for Pypies Jan Brak had an emperor in his domain – a large rough pig called Rofman who lumbered around the extremities of the plot like a tank out of control. It had all been carefully discussed over the party line and eventually decided that Ou Bella would be introduced to big Rofman, and if the penny dropped (for that was what they still called it on those public lines of communication), if the penny dropped, it would cost Oom Jan and Tannie Bessie a mere R30.

‘Big price to pay for something pigs do anyway!’ sniffed the practical wife with her eye on their precious money, but Oom Jan knew Tannie Bessie understood the ways of womanhood, and when no one was looking, she gave the big white sow a good luck wink.

Pypies Jan Brak offered Oom Jan a well-stewed mug of real boerekoffie and they sat and spoke at length about rugby and politics, and like the bees around the scruffy fruit trees, the day buzzed on warmly and without sensation. Whatever came to pass between the two courting snorters costing R30 will have to go unexplained. So when the koffie was cold and the pipes warm, Oom Jan moaned and groaned, loaded his enigmatic charge back into the wheelbarrow and left the smallholding, watched by many stray dogs and Rofman. And no one was giving away any secrets.

Oom Jan whistled as he wheeled, the big broad back of the sow bouncing about in front of him. He was happy now, and relieved that Ou Bella’s accusing look would no more make him feel so guilty. But because he was a man of many doubts and meagre means, Oom Jan did ask Pypies Jan Brak how certain he could be that the necessary penny-dropping had taken place between the two pigs.

‘Well,’ said Pypies with his pipe clenched between his gums, ‘if you look tomorrow and your Ou Bella is nibbling at the small blades of grass growing around the base of the water tap, then you know it’s okay ...’ and he paused to light up, to puff, to spit, to smile. ‘... but if she’s rubbing her snout in the mud with a vengeance, bring her back for a second go,’ he winked. ‘No extra charge.’ He winked again.

The next morning Oom Jan was up with the sun and keen to make sure

that Mother Nature had had her way the day before. Maar o smart, Ou Bella was not eating the small blades of grass; she was rubbing her snout in the mud with a vengeance. So Oom Jan, with a heavy heart and a heavier wheelbarrow, trundled his unsatisfied load across the dusty dorp for another assignment with Rofman. More boerekoffie and some pipes later, he reloaded her and as he wheeled her back home, she once again gave him that look of disappointment that made him feel so guilty.

Oom Jan didn't sleep well that night and he was right to worry, for the next morning the large white sow was again nuzzling the mud with her snout in an angry display of frustration and need. So into the wheelbarrow she was lifted and rolled back to Pypies Jan Brak and the astonished strays who yawned their interest at the daily repeat performance. Only Rofman withheld any comment. Just watched. Just waited. Oom Jan and Tannie Bessie were very distressed. After all, Ou Bella was more than just a pig. She was their pig! But Pypies Jan Brak paused to light up, to puff, to spit, to smile.

'Dinge sal regkom' he said and shook his head both ways.

On that Sunday morning, after a full week of daily trips back and forth in the glaring sun with a groot vet vark in his wheelbarrow, Oom Jan lay in bed with aching arms and didn't have the heart to get up and see what state Ou Bella was in. He nudged Tannie Bessie and eventually she heaved herself out of the creaking bed and paddled across to the window. 'Bessie, sê my. Is Ou Bella eating the soft grass? Or is she rubbing her snout in the mud?'

Tannie Bessie peered into the yard. 'Nee, my man,' she said slowly, 'Ou Bella is sitting in the wheelbarrow.'

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: I started being a dramatist very seriously, wanting to write plays like Noël Coward and Tennessee Williams, plays that reflected the

world around me. I joined the Space Theatre in 1973 and there we did my first bilingual play *Selle ou Storie*. It was then that I met the great love of my life, a love that made me world famous in Cape Town: the Publications Control Board. In quick response to an anonymous complaint they put a 2–21 age restriction on *Selle ou Storie* at the Space, thinking it would die a natural death. But then we toured the play, and because the censors couldn't go back on their decision, they banned the script. So we ran the show on an English translation of the Afrikaans which was legal because *Same old Story* was not *Selle ou Storie*.

Then I wrote *Karnaval*, a play set in Long Street among the colourful black, white and beige characters that made Long Street so special. Within a week *Karnaval* was banned as a production. So now I had a play you could see but not read, and a play you could read and not see. It was a marriage made in heaven. The censor board became my public relations department. Lists arrived carefully typed, telling me what I had done wrong and giving lists of words deemed obscene. Imagine how I must have corrupted the typist.

Die van Aardes van Grootoor started its Johannesburg life in 1979 and within three weeks it was banned. The typist was at it again, swearing and cursing. But by this time I had learnt my lesson. There were no real swearwords in the play; just suggestive ordinary Afrikaans words like *naaimasjien* and *boerewors*. I also made up words that sounded really gross but meant nothing: like *trawantgetras* and *genotskrots*. This time round we could afford an appeal. That meant the same people who banned the work would sit in appeal against their own judgement. Kangaroo court is not just a word. They were still spending our millions building a new Publications Control Board headquarters in Pretoria and so we couldn't use the main courtroom which was not yet finished. So we sat in the passage outside.

Now just remember: all state buildings and arts councils have passages so wide you can park six Mercedes Benzes and BMWs comfortably side by side. I never understood why until recently. It was future planning. Nowadays civil servants can park their Mercs in the passage outside their offices for safety. There we sat in the passage. The proceedings

were opened by a gebed, solemn and very important. Suddenly with a great banging of buckets, the Coloured cleaning lady arrived. 'Nay man, yous people must bugger off here. I mus' clean. Asseblief.' So we upped and awayed while she swept and muttered and waddled off and we sat again and were very serious.

'This play is obscene ... these words: genotskrots?' They paged into their large dictionary. G – genots – genotskrots? But of course they couldn't find it. 'Meneer Uys, hierdie vieslike woord genotskrots. Wat beteken dit nou eintlik in u konteks?' Konteks my voet: the buggers had no clue what the word meant.

'Die woord bestaan nie, Dokter. Ek het dit geskep.' I made it up and only I know what it means within my context – and I'm not telling. They conferred; they mumbled; they smacked their lips and then they decided. 'You can have the word back, but don't do it again.'

The Publications Act stated that the censors still only needed one anonymous complaint in order to act, to come and stop the fun. Since *Die van Aardes* I have been sending them complaints about my new work: three or four letters from various locations saying *sies sies sies*. The board would react to these complaints and come and judge and make utter fools of themselves. With the revue *Info Scandals*, the night the appeal committee was in to judge if their banning of the revue was to stay or to go, I added this sketch about censorship:

(Light change)

(PDU adds glasses as the censor and takes out a copy of Scope magazine and opens it)

- a) Whereas because of the obscene nature of their shapes, the following objects are deemed undesirable: candles, cucumbers, bananas, boerewors and plural orbs, formerly known as nigger balls.
- b) Whereas the following places have been declared indecent and/or obscene, the following places in South Africa will hereby cease to exist: Holfontein, Kakamas, Nigel and Donkergat.

- c) Whereas tomorrow has been declared undesirable because of the obscene phrase; the crack of dawn
- d) Whereas the following are also banned: photographs of any prison in South Africa; media coverage of any unrest in South Africa; quotations from the utterances of any banned person and organisation; the wearing, flaunting, displaying and/or circulating of the banned ANC flag, colours and/or any other communist slogans
- e) Whereas because of the obscene insinuations as perpetuated by the *koek* and *moer* in Koekemoer, the shifts in Lipschitz, the *tiet* in Tietties, the telephone directory has been declared undesirable.
- f) Whereas all Afrikaans universities are to be closed forthwith because of the *fak* in fakulteit.
- g) Whereas all nudity, other than that of large black women in the homelands which is regarded as officially natural – all other nudity is deemed offensive and undesirable. If we meant to walk around with no clothes on, we would have also been born black.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: We won our appeal, but the committee banned this sketch because of the obscene word 'Nigel' ('naai Jill?')! My eternal delight and gratitude to Mevrouw van Staden, who typed out the long list of obscene and unacceptable words and phrases, only to add to the bottom of the four-page letter in her handwriting: Meneer Uys, u spel die woord 'fok' met 'n f en nie met 'n v nie.

The good old days of government censorship. When intelligent people had their creative energies wasted fighting for the right to say *poep* and *kak*, and while that was diverting a nation, our army marched into Angola, our education lobotomised a generation and PW Botha took our so-called parliamentary democracy and stuck it up his expletive deleted! Now the magazines are full of nude ladies, rude boys and

sieslike woorde. The screen sizzles with semen and Sharon Stone. Nipple-cap blackout-stars are as forgotten as whites-only signs. Are we going to become like Denmark?

Wait now. Imagine before we have a transitional government and a transfer of power, if the government with their deep-rooted belief in free speech, legalised all and everything, so that there would be no censorship whatsoever? Hardcore porn in the Pick 'n Pay? The Lick 'n Lay? And then when the new democratic nonracial government takes over under its banner of freedom of expression, and just sees a heritage of tits and arses and fucking and sucking all over the land, they will have to do something.

And up on their moral high ground, the retired horsemen of the bloody Boer Apocalypse will smile as a horrified world watches the ANC censor move into that building Pretoria. So if I just hang in here, one day I might again get an official letter that says: 'Aikona Bra Piet, you don't speak this word with just an *f*, you speak it with an *i-f* – iFok!'

(PDU packs things into the boxes; a moment of pause here)

What has happened to yesterday's heroes? I'm not talking about the imperial heads on the coins or the voice in the Wilderness that are still firing off in all directions. I mean the ordinary people, like me and you, law-abiding citizens who kept systems of bad politics going for so long? Today you won't find any communists in Eastern Europe. Not in Berlin, Leipzig, Warsaw, Magdaburg, Moscow or in the Kremlin. No one was a member of the Communist Party. Like in 1945 when no one in Germany could be found who supported the Nazis. 'Me? Support Hitler? That schwein? No! Never! Anyway, I'm Austrian ...' Ja, and so was he ...

Here 'by us' from 1948 to 1990, there were so many laws to uphold, so many people to control, so many jobs to fill. But like the dinosaurs, they are now all gone. Relics in the museums of satire.

(PDU changes into the official now without his Immorality Act)

(Light change)



PDU as the Immorality Act official with a comb

THE RETIRED OFFICIAL: (*He refers to the newspaper*) Sis! Pornography! Filth! 087 numbers wherever you look and they're always engaged. Whites marrying blacks; blacks pumping whites. Bastard children. Even our new Miss South Africa? A Coloured? What is this country coming to? None of this would have happened in the old days. Then there was law and order. Then there was a system. Then there was the Immorality Act. (*He reads from the newspaper*) 'Boesaks to divorce'! Janee. None of this would have happened back in 1971 when I was in charge of Morals and Illegal Liquor. Oh yes, I had my picture in the paper three times: 1966, 1971 and 1977. I have kept all the records. (*He shows a battered file*)

The Immorality Act was exactly that: an act against immorality. For 20 years it was my job as an undercover policeman to look through keyholes and catch blacks and whites having illegal sex. I had to sort out all my papers and things when I retired to the old age home and found my file.

(*He pages through the file and finds the case*)

‘Contravention of the Immorality Act June 5 1971.’ My most famous case and one they said they wanted to make into a film. Ja, I hope they pay me. It was a Coloured man and a white woman. I remember it like yesterday. She was a student at UCT, obviously a communist. He was an unemployed Coloured, definitely a communist. We followed them to her house in a whites-only area of Observatory. She went in through the front door like any decent white woman would. He went round the back to the kitchen door carrying a box of groceries, so that everyone must think he was just a Coloured delivering the groceries. But even without the box, he looked like a Coloured delivering groceries. Jisis, they must think we were all poephols?

At first Sersant Brand and I observed it all through binoculars sitting in a tree. They didn’t even draw the curtains. They kissed. I saw his tongue in her mouth. Sies, I nearly kotzed and fell out of the tree! Then at 12:30 a.m. they went to bed. Naked. The Coloured kept on his vest and socks! Typical.

(He reads from the report)

‘Sexual intercourse was had on and off between 12:39 a.m. and 12:54 a.m.’ Exhibits 36 to 67.

(He shows photos)

‘Thirty-nine seconds after the suspects had reached their first climax, we proceeded to break down the front door within the procedures as laid down by the Immorality Act.’

Ja, Sersant and me was especially clever. We took off our police boots so that we would not make crunching sounds on the gravel outside so that the suspect doesn’t hear us coming. We want to hear them coming! So we tiptoe round the house and run at the front door with our shoulders to break it down like in the films. But this bleddy door is made of solid oak and nearly breaks my shoulder. Sersant Brand takes out his service pistol and shoots the lock open and we run in. But the suspects are so busy they don’t even hear the shots because she is moaning yes-yes-yes and he is panting ja-ja-ja and he’s still hot and hard and pomping her, man! Sies! Typical!

(He holds up material in a plastic holder)

Here's the proof: 'Semen stains on the sheets. Semen stains on his underpants.' He had a large erection which we photographed quickly before it went away. Jisis. Her nipples were also erect, both of them. Exhibit 72: colour pictures of her nipples here ... *(He shows the photo)* ... plus a sworn statement by Sersant Brand who felt the nipples repeatedly to confirm what I myself had originally felt. *(He reads)* 'Both suspects were taken down naked, each covered by a blanket, to the police station where they were again photographed, fingerprinted and searched in their intimate areas for incriminating evidence. Further tests showed that she was a female Caucasian (white), according to racial classifications as laid down by the Population Registration Act Section 58/a: hair soft, eyes blue, nose thin, nipples pink. Her pubic hair curls to the left when pulled through the teeth of a comb proving without any doubt that she is a bona fide white'.

(He holds up a comb)

'Further tests showed that he was a male non-Caucasian of Bantu and Coloured descent: dark skin, brown eyes, flat nose, thick lips, large penis' ... Jisis ...' His pubic hair curls to the right when pulled through the teeth of a comb, proving beyond any reasonable doubt that he is a non-white, i.e. a black, i.e. illegal, i.e. potential jailbird i.e. soon to be dead after having slipped in the shower on the soap and fallen out of the 8th floor window.

(He holds up another comb)

No man, there was once a proper way to do these things. So what happens now? Who keeps the comb? Anyway, all this had nothing to do with apartheid. Apartheid? No man, we were just obeying orders.

(He combs his hair with the comb. Then looks at the one hair with horror)

O jisis....!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(PDU adds the official outfit of the prison warder)

NELSON'S WARDER: (*Sings:*

'What a friend I have in Nelson')

What a friend I have in Nelson

He will make me rich one day

When I write my book on

Nelson

All of Hollywood will pay

Ah, another coachload of tourists!

Wilkommen, bienvenu, welkom to

the Vic Verster Prison. Yes, through

those very gates Nelson Mandela

walked to freedom as seen live on

your own TV after 27 years in jail,

and all thanks to President de

Klerk and the present government

who killed apartheid and gave hope to a hopeless cause.

So, ladies and gentlemen, before we go inside the house where Nelson

lived, just look around you. And yes, of course, take as many photographs

of this prison as you like. Here it's legal to be illegal. You see, this is no

Alcatraz, no hell hole. Check the view, man, so pretty. The mountains,

the vineyards, the fresh air. Such a lovely place to spend what's left of a

life sentence.

Now before we go on, let me introduce myself: I was one of Nelson

Mandela's prison wardens for many years: Robben Island, Pollsmoor

where I tended the six plants he brought with him and then here. Nearly

20 years, hey? I was longer with Dr Nelson Mandela than he was with

Mrs Winnie Mandela! This is the very house in which he lived prior to

being released. The previous white South African Government even

went as far as to put up this plaque: *Nelson Mandela lived here rent free*. Of

course I didn't stay in this house with him. Prisoners and warders never

shared the same cell. While Dr Mandela had all these rooms at his

disposal, I slept on the floor in the old servant's quarters at the back.

(*He shows the 'swimming pool'*)



PDU as the prison warder

Now here you can see the private patio with swimming pool where Nelson Mandela entertained his friends from other prisons, as well as members of the apartheid cabinet who came to ask his advice in secret on how to set him free. It can now be told (and I'm sure you didn't hear it here first): his wife Winnie Mandela never spent a single night here with her husband. She said it was a political statement of protest against his incarceration, but the truth is that Mrs Mandela and her football team preferred staying at 5-star hotels where they had colour TV. Dr Mandela only had black and white.

He left me so many nice things when he was free to go back to his other house in Soweto. I left everything as he left it. (*He points them out*) The boxing gloves, underwater goggles and snorkel. Even a free pass to Disneyland – all the presents people sent him while he was still imprisoned, hoping he would remember them and be their friend. The Reverend Jesse Jackson sent him a postcard every day with the same words: *Please don't forget my name*. Now who can forget the Reverend Jesse Jackson? The only member of the Jackson Family who doesn't look like Diana Ross. And here ...

(*He points it out*)

... you will see inside the glass case holding all the stamps that Dr Mandela got on the letters and postcards from supporters all over the world. He wasn't allowed to read them, but I secretly kept all the stamps. Soon he had the best stamp collection in Africa. He said he didn't need anything to remind him of the last 27 years, so he gave them to me and I will donate it all to the nation. Ja, he also read the book I was writing about my life with him. He said it was very nice and corrected some of my spelling. He said it would make a good film.

Ja, maybe there is someone who wants to make a 27-part television series of my life with Nelson Mandela? Just think: Arnold Schwarzenegger as me, Marlon Brando as Pik Botha and Whoopy Goldberg or Joan Collins as Winnie? Funny hey, they are now making films all over the world about Nelson Mandela's life and he didn't do anything for 27 years, while here I am and I can make 14 different bird sounds without even using my hands.

(He sighs sadly)

Things became very quiet here since he's gone. No one to talk to. No one to listen to. No TV crews camping outside the Vic Verster gates. No letters and no stamps. They say the next lot of political prisoners here won't have their own swimming pools and fax machines. They say they might not even be black! O ja, I did get a postcard today, from Dr Mandela. He still remembers my stamp collection wherever he travels around the world ...

(He reads from the postcard)

'Dear Gregory, how are things back at the Old Vic ... (Vic Verster...Ja) I hope this postcard gets past the prison censors... (Now they're all members of the ANC) I'm in the middle of another tour. Nothing really changes. I am here among people who are still denied proper education, decent housing or human dignity. They still suffer from discrimination. They still fight prejudice every day as we all must ...'

Shame, that must have been his last visit to Zimbabwe. Let me remove the stamp for our collection. *(Then he realises where the card comes from)* Oh. This postcard was posted in Pretoria!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Benjamin and I were at UCT together in the sixties. He went into politics and was arrested. I went into theatre and was not. Benjamin ended up in John Vorster Square in Joburg. He was tortured. He nearly died. Thanks to Helen Suzman's intervention, he was released and went to the United States. But then in 1990 a free Nelson Mandela changed everything and with so many others, Benjamin came back to South Africa. Paul Simon also came and broke the cultural boycott with a concert of celebration in Johannesburg. Everyone was there. Also Benjamin. It was there he heard a voice from his past:

(PDU changes into Swanepoel, who was Benjamin's interrogator in prison)

(Light change)

SWANEPOEL: Hey Benjamin? It's me! Swanepoel! Long-time-no-see. No man, Benjy, don't walk away. Those days are over. It's 1990; we're now in the new South Africa. Let bygones be bygones. Here, shake my hand? Friends?

(He doesn't get a response. He laughs)

I don't suppose you expected to see me here today, in my ANC-friendly outfit. No man, I'm part of the undercover security, protecting Mandela and the other terries ... oops, patriots!

(A pause)

Jisis, ou Benjamin, can't you say something? Cat caught your tongue? We left you your tongue, you know. We could have cut out your tongue, as we did with some of the other patriots who will now forever be speechless. No man, I'm only joking.

(He laughs)

Remember all those names we called you when you there by us at John Vorster Square? We called you a communist, Jew boy, kaffir lover. Ja, but you were only a stroppey bastard. You once spit me in the face. I called your mother a communist hoer and you spit me right in the face. Jisis, I was the hell in. Why do you take it all so personally? I was only joking.

(He laughs)

So how is your mother? Happy that today we are one of the few places in the world with a Communist Party with plans for the future? So tell me, Benjy, are you still a communist? Come on man, you can admit being anything nowadays. It's legal to be illegal! In fact some of my best chommies today are those communists and terrorists I used to interrogate in the old days. We now meet and watch rugby together. Have some beers. They like me. They call me Comrade Swanepoel. They say hello when they see me. Not like you ... *(He screams)* ... you communist Jewish liberal bastard!

(Then he laughs)

Joking ... joking ... hell, you only get a fright quickly nowadays.

Remember in the old days, Benjy? When we would hang you up against the wall on those chains? And still you refused to give us the names of those other terrorists who were trying to overthrow our government? And look what happened? Those terrorists will now become the government! Ja: love your enemy as long as he signs your pay cheque!
(A pause: he sighs)

I must tell you ... my work there at John Vorster Square is becoming so boring ... there's nothing to do. No one to arrest. No one to interrogate. No one wants real specialisation. And soon no death penalty! Jisis, people walk free from jails, because their crimes are now 'politically motivated'? Kak man. There's just no one to talk to in our cosy little room under the stairs. *(He chuckles)*

Remember our little room, Benjy? With the one light bulb? The bucket of cold water? The two bricks in your hands? Bits and pieces of live wire? Hey? Hey? Hey, I see you have a wedding ring on? Married, hey? Shit, I hope we didn't fuck up your future with those extra volts. *(He winks)* But maybe you even got to enjoy all that? Joking joking ...
(He laughs)

Shit man where's your sense of humour? You've been living in America for too long. Anyway, here you are again. Back in South Africa. So welcome home, Benjamin. Is it nice to be back in a real democracy for a change? Or does it make you feel a bit redundant? Ja man, there's no more apartheid left for you to fight and get world-famous for.
(He stretches his arms)

No man, I love democracy. I've always loved democracy.
(He hisses at him)

The only reason I spent the best years of my life in that fucking little room under the stairs, interrogating communist kaffir-loving Jew boys like you, is because I loved democracy and did what I did to defend democracy. So that you could one day come home and enjoy democracy.
(A pause as he pulls himself together)

Anyway, I better go ... I see Mandela on the move again. I mean, look at that man's energy. He's old, been in jail of 27 years, had TB, prostate cancer, but who would know? Someone slipped up somewhere.

(He becomes chatty again)

Listen man, if you ever find yourself there by John Vorster Square, pop in and have a beer with us for old time's sake. You won't recognise the place, ou Benjamin. No more barbed wire, no more guns, no more kaffirs falling out of the top floor windows. It's like bleddy McDonalds.

(He laughs)

Anyway, since I've applied for amnesty, they've asked me to stay on in my old job. It's all about specialisation, ou Benjy. Maybe our new minister of police wants his chaps to learn the ropes from an old master with a hell of lot of experience!

(He grins at him)

OK Benjamin? See you around ... oh, and Comrade? Shalom. And Viva Mandela!

(He makes a fist with a third finger erect and laughs)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: South Africa will never fit in. When the world was democratic and left, we were totalitarian and right. We had sanctions and boycotts and lots of shit. Now comes the New World Order and a world that flirts with authoritarianism and right-wing politics, while we try and find our democracy against all the odds. And when we get it, what then? The world will impose sanctions against us for being left!

Not so long ago, when relatively decent people from relatively normal societies in the UK, Germany, Australia and Canada would ask relatively ordinary people like me from an exceptionally crazy country like ours: 'Where do you come from?' and I'd say 'South Africa,' they'd usually say 'Where's that?,' or 'Is it close to Nairobi?', or 'Oh? Why aren't you black?' Then, as time went by and the world got smaller, they'd say: 'South Africa? Where Meryl Streep made that movie? Does she have a farm in Africa?' or 'South Africa? Hey, don't you guys have a problem down there?'

And then television news discovered apartheid after 35 years and suddenly everyone everywhere knew everything about my country. 'Please, I belong to the anti-apartheid movement. Don't try and tell me about South Africa! I know everything about South Africa. Don't confuse me with facts.' Even taxi drivers: 'South Africa? Bastard, you shoot elephants!' or more often: 'South Africa? Apart-hate? You've got the right idea...'

And now it's different again. Now when I go to Europe and perform in Germany, people say: 'Where do you come from?' and I say 'I come from the new South Africa!' Do you know what relatively decent people from relatively normal societies now say?

'Oh God we're so sick of you! We're so tired of your problem! Every time we switch on our TV, there you are with apartheid! Every time we open our newspapers: apartheid! Can't you sort it out at home? You've now got two relatively decent people in charge of your future: Mandela and De Klerk. Leave us alone! We have our own problems. German reunification has not been fun. Yugoslavia is becoming a second holocaust. Eastern Europe needs help; Russia's in trouble. Saddam Hussein's alive. Margaret Thatcher's immortal. And while everyone is spending valuable time worrying about what anti-apartheid T-shirt to wear, the whole world is dying from pollution and everyone everywhere is susceptible to AIDS. Wake up South Africa! Democracy is democracy! Give everyone the vote and the right to make their dreams come true! You white South Africans, you black South Africans, you brown South Africans, have been getting away with murder for far too long and God doesn't like competition.'

Well, not all decent people say that. Unfortunately.

(PDU packs things into the boxes. A moment of pause here)

Apartheid is not just a colour; apartheid is also a sound. Whenever each of us opens our mouths, we are what we sound like. A blind man could easily classify groups with ease. *(With accent)* Blacks sound black; *(With accent)* Coloureds sound Coloured, *(With accent)* Afrikaners sound like this; *(With accent)* English speakers sometimes like this; *(With accent)* Indians like this and tourists sound confused.

Since 1981 I've been doing politicians in the public eye. I did PW and eventually he was forced to resign, with the echo of a nation's laughter ringing in his ears. Dr Piet Koornhof is now retired and living in Stellenbosch, stroking the ears that made him famous. There were other shits passing in the night: Rajbansi, Hendrickse, Winnie, Magnus, Vlok, General van der Bergh, Eschel and Katie, Connie. And there is one politician whom I did on stage in 1986: Chief Mango of Ulundi. Gatsha objected violently. It wasn't that important, so I put him away in the box with the other has-beens. But now, hearing how he pleads for democracy, how he supports freedom of speech, how he begs to be one of the Three Stooges, I can't let this tin mug go by untipped.

Because apartheid is just a sound, I don't need to go black. I just need to go back: remember Zulu kraal uMgungunglovu! Oh, just for those who keep seeing it in newspapers and hearing it on TV and not knowing what the facts they are talking about: Chief Mango and his boys insist on carrying their spears and knobkieries, their traditional cultural weapons, wherever they go. Now the ANC also have traditional cultural weapons called AK47s. Problemo numero uno! Chief Mango says a Zulu man is not a man without his weapon in his hand. What did Bantu education teach him at school? This is a weapon; this is a gun. This is for politics. And this is for fun.'

(PDU changes into the traditional Zulu outfit)

(Light change)

CHIEF BUTHELEZI: I would hereby like to most forcefully ... you know ... distance myself from all the bullshit that is being bandied



PDU as Chief Buthelezi

about ... you know ... in the local media and abroad ... you know ... that the majority of black-on-black violence in South Africa ... you know ... is being caused by the Inkatha Freedom Party.

As I have said repeatedly ... this is all a lot of bullshit! It is obvious to anyone who knows ... you know ... that those who perpetuate violence in the name of the IFP ... do not represent us in any way. And so ... you know ... I would like to use this opportunity to warn ... any communist, terrorist or bastard full of bullshit who causes trouble for Inkatha ... our traditional cultural weapons will find their mark.

Inkatha takes no sides. We are objective. We Zulus prevent violence; we do not Xhosa it! Ja ... we in the Inkatha Freedom Party ... and the KwaZulu police ... are sick and tired of being represented as Nazis and thugs. I warn you! If you continue to bullshit us in this way ... you will unleash forces in South Africa the end result of which cannot be foreseen.

I am a civilised man.

I wear nice suits, ties and shoes. I have friends all over the world: in Germany, in France, the USA, the UK, SAP and SADF. And with their help, I will do everything in my power to bring about a nonracial, democratic, nonsexist new South Africa ... you know ... and not Mandela, De Klerk, Cyrus Vance, the Goldstone Commission, the National Peace Accord or any bullshit is going to stop me!

God bless the peace process!

We Zulus just want peace in South Africa. We demand peace in South Africa. We pray for peace in South Africa. We kill for peace in South Africa – for the biggest piece of South Africa!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: I see there's a new competition on SATVs 'Good Morning South Africa': predict the future of South Africa and win a holiday for two in Sarajevo. So while the Zulus hang on to their traditional cultural

weapons: spears, axes and assegais; the ANC hang on to their traditional cultural weapons: AK47s. The National Party just hangs on to its traditional cultural weapon:

(PDU changes into Minister of Foreign Affairs Pik Botha)

(Light change)

PIK BOTHA: I'm not here.

I'm not in this show. I don't want to be in this show. I can't afford to be in this show. You can't ever afford to see me in any show. However, I am in this show for a very good reason. The reason I am in this show is the following: the first half of the show is over; in other words, it has come to the moment which is usually called the interval.

So let me state here most categorically and repeat it with conviction: the word 'interval' means just that. It is not a subversive code for a secret project of

the government, for the simple reason that secret government projects no longer exist. In fact the government barely exists.

What will now happen has been very carefully planned. The houselights will come on. *(The house lights come on)* It is my fervent hope that you enjoy the interval. And when the interval is over, bring your sweets and come back to your seat and just don't panic. This is only the theatre. This is not CODESA. I repeat: this is not CODESA ... unfortunately ...

(He exits)



PDU as Pik Botha,
Minister of Foreign Affairs

(IT IS INTERVAL)

(After the interval)

VOICEOVER ANNOUNCEMENT:

Ladies and gentlemen. Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout.

(Lights) Evita enters. She wears a golden ballgown, green top, black gloves (ANC colours) and an apron with proteas prominent. The costume must be able to be stripped off, item by item)

EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT: Amandla, skatties.

I bring you greetings, not just from Pretoria; not just from the National Party, not just from our friends in high places, but greetings from the new world order, from Barcelona to St

Petersburg, from Chicago to Kathmandu, the name of the new South Africa is spoken with awe and envy. At last the world knows that in spite of all the bad things that mean men will persist in repeating; in spite of Boipatong and Sebokeng and Katlehong and a million other stray bullets, the world knows that in South Africa, people are also living there.

Apartheid is dead. The Cold War is over. The world is relieved. There are other things to worry about. And yet wherever I went during the last few weeks, even at the Olympic Games, the United Nations, visiting Queen Elizabeth at Sandringham, spending a weekend with the Gorbachevs on the Riviera – wherever I went, there they still stood:



those pathetic anti-apartheid demonstrators making such a dated spectacle of themselves; their banners out of the Middle Ages: Votes for Blacks, Sanctions now!, Down with Pretoria Tyranny!

Shame. But we in Pretoria understand. The National Party is filled with compassion for them and will do everything in our power to accommodate even those demonstrators who seem to have fallen on bad times, now that their *raison d'être* is no longer there. And so for those vegetarians who don't eat eggs except in omelettes; and those liberals who adopt chimpanzees rather than Ethiopians; for those political exiles still nostalgic for the rack; for those do-gooders who must always do it in public; and for the banner-waving troublemakers who are addicted to protesting about anything horrible happening nice and far away, and so causing traffic jams for others in the process. To all these anti-apartheid addicts now suffering from acute withdrawal symptoms now that we in the National Party have so successfully killed off your faithful conscience soother, the South African Government invites you to bring your bleeding heart to the new South Africa, see the changes and revel in nostalgia for the good old bad old days.

Leave London and the reality of Bosnia-Herzegovina and take a trip to Adolf Disneyland. Touchdown at Jan Smuts Airport. For the occasion there will be a specially made whites-only signs all over the arrivals hall to make you feel instantly persecuted, especially if you're not really as white as you've always pretended to be. You will of course land in South Africa with carefully forged ID papers that will be slipped to you on the plane with your orange juice just before touchdown. You will obviously put your clocks back 10 years.

Within minutes of your arrival, you will be detained by large white customs officials with foul breath, beer bellies and sideburns. They will search your luggage, sneer at your taste in aftershave or perfume, confiscate all your copies of *Punch*, *Private Eye*, *The Red Star* and the *Guardian*; embargo your Jackie Collins paperback and insinuate that you have hardcore pornography jammed up your anal passage. Once out of the Customs Hall, you will instantly be arrested by brutal Afrikaner policemen in their familiar coral-blue uniforms, armed to the hilt and

manipulating vicious hungry Alsatians, one of which will lightly bite you on the backside.

Have no fear. Those repulsive guardians of law and order are actually all unemployed actors from the local state theatre, or unemployed policemen, unemployed security policemen, unemployed secret policemen, or just unemployed. The dog will be real, but as all security dogs are now being crossbred with hyenas, after the dog bites you, it will laugh.

You will then be locked up without trial. Solitary confinement will be given on request. Immediately go on a hunger strike. For those bleeding hearts with a high cholesterol problem and other obese do-gooders, this will be like spending weeks at an expensive health spa and cost you nothing. You will lose weight rapidly. Neo-Nazi thugs who recently spent weeks on a hunger strike swear by it and came out of jail looking quite marvellous.

Now you will suddenly be released from jail in the middle of the night. As you stumble out into the cold, you will be rearrested again and this time be taken to grim John Vorster Square in Johannesburg. By law South African prisons may still not be photographed, so you won't find it in your brochure, but just imagine the Maze in Belfast where Brits lock up the IRA, and you'll know what to expect. In John Vorster Square you have some options. You can either break under interrogation and become a collaborator, which is not very interesting, or you can remain silent and really suffer. If this is the case, you will be submitted to the highly unusual SAP methods of torture that made Steve Biko so famous. And dead.

These methods are all set out in the standard police textbook compiled by the former Minister of Justice John Vorster himself, which is still in use and is entitled: 'If they don't talk, play chopsticks on their private parts with live wire'. This manual, by the way, has recently been forwarded to Colonel Gaddafi, Yasser Arafat, Fidel Castro and Saddam Hussein by the former Head of social welfare, Comrade Winnie Mandela, so it shows how universal we are ... we were. During torture, hot and cold running water is guaranteed, so don't bring an electric

blanket. You become one by your third day. Hairdryers are allowed, especially while standing on your head in a bucket of cold water. The wet towels with which they will first beat you and then wind round your head for purposes of suffocation, are all freshly laundered and will carry your monogram in the left-hand corner. You can keep these as a memento.

You could now be thrown out of the fourth-floor window of John Vorster Square by calling your interrogators ‘fools’, ‘nitwits’, ‘idiots’, ‘morons’ or simply ‘dom bliksems’. Don’t call them ‘Nazi thugs’ as most of them like it. Then depending on how badly you insult them, and taking into account the fact that they might not even understand your English, they will bounce you out of the window, missing the concrete below by inches. This is bungee jumping at its most exciting. Suicide can be staged in your cell by hanging yourself by your underpants, but this is not usually fun. On the other hand, suicide in the shower can be achieved by a whole variety of methods: slipping on the soap, sliding on the soap, stumbling over the soap, or in the case of the aforementioned Steve Biko, just accidentally falling over in the shower and banging your head against the wall 15 times or more.

You now have a choice: you can be banished to a small black township outside the dusty Orange Free State dorp of Brandfort, where Comrade Winnie Mandela spent some years without running water, electricity, toilets or freedom, entertaining the likes of other legendary bleeding hearts like Sir Richard Attenborough and Senator Edward Kennedy, or you can be sent to Robben Island for life imprisonment. If you choose the island, things will really start happening quickly and you could become a legend before you can say ‘Nelson was here’. Just be sure to bring to South Africa with a nice photo of you and your cat or dog, or with your local black person if you have one. The picture can now be smuggled out of South Africa to appear in various biased bleeding-heart newspapers worldwide, as well as on T-shirts that carry the bold words FREE ME.

For an extra supplement you can also have a children’s playground or council tenement named after you in a West London borough.

Unfortunately we cannot guarantee a birthday bash at Wembley Stadium as this only comes after 25 years of real imprisonment. However I'm sure Stevie Wonder will tell you that he loves you, if you smuggle him a braille postcard from your cell. For those of you who eventually survive the NP Bleeding Hearts Tour, which will be syndicated prerecorded/live on TV to hotspots like Sarajevo, Belfast, Beirut and Phola Park, I can promise the following: a removable colour tattoo of a police dog bite that you can place on your calf or ankle when you eventually return home, battered but wiser; a special layman's guide on how to tie a Winnie Mandela turban 34 ways; a free rubber necklace that glows in the dark, sporting the logo 'Don't worry Be happy', and a lists of countries in the civilised world that still openly practice naked racism and unofficial apartheid. These include most of North America, most of South America, most of Europe, most of Asia, most of Africa, all of the UK and Australia, as well as the South African towns of Boksburg, Louis Trichardt and Ventersdorp.

So dear bleeding hearts and old-fashioned liberals, don't give up your prejudice against prejudice. It's not your fault that the world has got used to racism not so much as an outrage but more a way of life. Just always remember the wise words: 'Evil flourishes when men of good will do nothing.' Aluta Continua. Viva de Klerk Viva! The orange white and blue? Goodbye? Totsiens aan ons Springbokke, vaarwel moedertaal Afrikaans? Bonsoir Voortrekker Monument? Do we now banish the Battle of Blood River? Maybe it is time to say goodbye to the old and welcome the new. Throw off the mantle of terror and stand proud in the sun of freedom. What matter those symbols if what they represent has lost meaning?

Our job is very hard. Just imagine the time and the future CODESAs needed for the renaming of all the airports? Not to mention the hundreds of Voortrekkerwags and Verwoerd-friendly venues, suburbs, school halls and boulevards? So I went to my boss and I said to him: 'Pik, how do I dismantle the past?' And he said: 'Evita? Just listen to the beat.'

The beat? 'Wat bedoel jy, Pik! Wat bedoel jy?'

(MUSIC WITH A BEAT: Evita strips – off with the top and the skirt, and ends up in gloves, high heels and step-in; she takes off her wig. It's PDU)



PDU: For heaven's sake, there is no Evita Bezuidenhout! It's just me! Relax! I've got a Jani Allen sketch coming up and this is one way of getting dressed or undressed. Now hold up your fingers like this and pretend you're looking through a keyhole.

(PDU puts on blonde wig)

No, I need more, in order to do less. Relax your keyholes. I'll bring on the boerewors later. First let's find South Africa's answer to Scarlett O'Hara!

(Music from the film Gone with the Wind while PDU transforms into Saartjie auditioning as Scarlett: the Evita skirt of gold and green is reversible to white. Add white top and hold stick with SA flag. Wave it. The young nervous Saartjie now looks like Scarlett)

(Light change)

SAARTJIE: Scarlett O'Hoera? I said you must be joking? Who is this Scarlett O'Hoera? Someone from an escort agency? But my ouma laughed and said: No, this Scarlett O'Hoera is one of the most well-known people in the world, and if they choose me as her, she can make me rich and famous, and that's why I'm here to look like Scarlett O'Hoera.

My ouma made my dress from the dining room curtains. There is so many girls out there. Some went to university, but they is too old. My ouma says I will win. She says I look just like this Scarlett O'Hoera. I don't know. I saw a photo of her



PDU as Saartjie

in *Huisgenoot*, but she had dark hair. But ma says anything we need, can come out of a bottle.

(*Works at her makeup and hair*) Anyway, my pa says I have a better chance to win this lookalike competition than the Miss South Africa contest. My ma and my antie wanted me to go in for that one, and I did get into the semifinals as Miss Pretty Face, but then pa said: No, there's no point in trying more, because Miss South Africa will never again be a pretty Afrikaans girl like Anneline Kriel. Those days is over.

The new Miss South Africa can now only be black or Coloured. And she is. I tried for Miss Clicks, but that one was also full of Coloureds and one won. Miss Raydon was a black from Soweto who can't even answer the question: what is your favourite dish? Easy! Tupperware! Miss Germiston South is a Coloured. Miss Atlantic Seaboard is a Indian. That Miss Boland says she is white, but I don't know with lips like that. So there's no more competitions left for me to win.

I always dreamed from when I was a little girl of becoming a beauty queen, and then when Anneline became Miss World and Margaret Gardiner Miss Universe, and Diana Tilden-Davis a princess, pa and ma said that's what I must do. Ma wanted to be a beauty queen, but she was always pregnant. I worked forever doing my exercises, and reading to make my background broad, and looking after my skin and my hair that's mostly real. But there's one thing I can't change and that is: I am white and Afrikaans, and I cried for a whole weekend because my dreams were over.

But my oom who is a policeman on suspension, cut out this story from *Keur* magazine about the worldwide search for a new Scarlett! He teach me the words I must say here, because this girl Scarlett could have been also an Afrikaner. And no Coloured or black can ever play her, because Scarlett O'Hoera is white! And that's that! Like me, she lived in a big house under nice trees, and she had pretty clothes, and lots of black maids, and she wanted to have children and be married and live happily ever after. But then came the freeing of the slaves, Oom Santie says, like Oom FW de Klerk's speech on 2 February 1990 that unbanned the ANC and the Communists, and suddenly there was no law and

order, and people were breaking into her house *Tara*, like our house *Costa Brava*, and if they had a motor car it would have also been stolen like our Toyota was, and all the young white men carried guns like my boet, and the blacks were so cheeky like ours also.

Anyway then came the war like our troubles, and like us Scarlett's family was fighting against returned exiles from the north, who wanted everyone to be the same, black and white, and then they wanted to even ban Scarlett's people's flag and national anthem like here, and force them to give up everything! Like hell! And for what? No! Then Scarlett said: o nee, julle kan almal gaan kak!

And so she fought them all by herself, and learnt how to cook and scrub floors and deliver babies, and eventually the man she married turns out to be a communist called Red Butler, and leaves her owing thousands of rand and uses bad language, and then Scarlett just sits on the steps of the ruins of *Tara*, but she doesn't show tears, because real boere never cry. 'Tomorrow will take care of itself!' she says.

Well, now it is tomorrow, and they will make this Part 2 of the film *Gone with the Wind* and ma and pa and ouma and Oom Santie all say I must win, because the future of Ons Volk depends on it. (*Makes herself ready for the audition*)

I am ready for my audition now.

(*She recites in a bad Southern accent*) 'Hear me now, Lord, hear me now.

As true as the earth is in my hand

As true as there is a sunrise

As true as true as true is true

We will never, never, never, never go hungry again!

(*Music from Gone With The Wind as she waves the SA flag*)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: The Jani Allan/Eugene Terre'Blanche keyhole farce had the world in stitches and gave us all a great laugh when things were not so funny.

Jani has not been idle. In order to pay off her great debt, she has written a best seller called *The Leader, The Blonde and The Blonde's Keyhole*.

The TV series based on the book is finished and here is an episode: with Miss Joan Collins (who also has vivid memories of her recent experiences in South Africa) as 'Miss Janie Alien' – and making his debut as 'Eugene Derriere-Blanche', television critic and more, Barry Ronge.

(PDU into Joan Collins – an elaborate designer outfit à la Alexis Carrington)

(Light change)

VOICEOVER ANNOUNCEMENT: And now for the next thrilling episode from our soap opera: *The Leader, The Blonde and the Blonde's Keyhole*. With Joan Collins as Miss Alien and making his debut as Eugene Derriere-Blanche Barry Ronge.

(Music from Dynasty)

(The judge and Advocate Charm are prerecorded – or live)

VOICEOVER – JUDGE: Silence in court! Silence in court. Miss Janie Alien? Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

JOAN: Why?

JUDGE: It's in the script.

JOAN: I do. I'll swear: 'white bottom'!

JUDGE: Mr Charm? You may start your cross examination.

VOICEOVER – CHARM: Thank you, M'Lud. Miss Alien, you are a notorious blonde journalist from Johannesburg?

JOAN (ACTING AS JANI ALIEN): 'I had a large ... by-line there, yes. I also demolished ... I mean, I also interviewed some very famous South Africans: Gerda Graham, Brian Krets, Henny van Helsteen among others. Oh yes, also that black leader ... what was his name ... Mango

something. Yes, I was voted one of the most admired people in South Africa.'

CHARM: So was mass-murderer Barend Strydom.

JOAN (ACTING): 'I wouldn't know. I was married at the time. It did not last, because you see, I have a lack of interest in sssss ... I can't even say the word.'

CHARM: Try, Miss Alien, try. The word rhymes with 'Dex'.

JOAN: Dex Dexter? Is he in this series as well?

CHARM: Sex, Miss Alien. You are telling this court that you have no interest in sex?

JOAN (ACTING): 'None whatsoever!'

CHARM: How old are you, Miss Alien?

JOAN: Must I answer that? (*Acts*) 'I am 24.'

CHARM: I didn't quite hear you ...

JOAN: 25?

CHARM: 25!!?

JOAN: Alright, I'm nearly 60, you bastard. You're like all the rest. When I arrived in South Africa to do that gig for Operation Hunger, a group of men trapped me in a TV studio and peeled me like an onion. Who do they think they are down here? South Africa, where life is cheap and the truth has practically no value at all, and I should know! This banana republic at the edge of the world whose inmates still think Margaret Thatcher is prime minister!

CHARM: Isn't she?

JOAN: My Lord, the only reason I'm in this TV series playing the part of a dizzy blonde with a chipped tooth because she doesn't know how to use a vibrator properly, is because I want the challenge of playing someone older than me. I've also never played a blonde before.

JUDGE: You're not a blonde, Miss Collins?

JOAN: Not if I stand on my hands. No, my Lord.

JUDGE: Silence in court! Silence in court! Proceed, Mr Charm.

CHARM: Miss Alien, did you on the backseat of a small car, ever eat an exotic Afrikaner sausage called boerewors?

JOAN: Definitely not pap!

JUDGE: Silence in court!

CHARM: I beg your pardon?

JOAN (ACTS): 'I don't eat meat. I'm a vegetarian anorexic with bulimic tendencies and no tits ...' Hang on, who wrote that line? How can I say a line like that? I have a reputation to uphold, as well as two sagging breasts!

VOICE: Take two! 'The Leader, the Blonde and The Blonde's Keyhole' (*Clapper sound*)

JOAN (ACTS): 'I'm a vegetarian anorexic with bulimic tendencies ... and two big hearts.'

CHARM: Did you at any time have sex or a sexual relationship with the large bearded man in question?

JOAN: Are we talking about Barry Ronge or ...

CHARM: We are talking about Eugene Derriere-Blanche.

JOAN (ACTS): 'Absolutely not! There was no physical relationship with him!'

CHARM: Did you commit adultery with him?

JOAN: With Barry Ronge?

JUDGE: Silence in court!

CHARM: Did you commit adultery with Eugene Derriere-Blanche?

JOAN: He couldn't get his pants off in the car! (*Acts*) '... absolutely not. Wholly, entirely, no!'

JUDGE: Silence in court!

CHARM: Has he kissed you on the mouth?

JOAN: Barry Ronge?

JUDGE: Silence in court!

CHARM: No, Miss Alien, the fat Nazi with the blowjob eyes?

JOAN: The blowtorch eyes, my lord. (*Acts*) 'I was once impaled by the blue flames of his blowtorch eyes. But he never kissed me anywhere, not on my mouth or anywhere on my person.'

CHARM: You found him sexually attractive?

JOAN: Barry Ronge????

JUDGE: Silence in court!

JOAN: Why does he keep saying that?

JUDGE: It's the only bloody line I've got!

CHARM: Answer my question, Miss Alien. Did you find the fat boer who falls off his horse attractive?

JOAN (ACTS): 'I've always found him repulsive and my close friends, who saw it through the keyhole, know it. He is pink pig in a safari suit with his ventilated green Y-fronts!'

CHARM: Eugene Derriere-Blanche?

JOAN: I thought we were talking about Barry Ronge.

(She acts: Breaks down about her Channel 4 courtcase in the UK)

'This is worse than Yugoslavia! It was splashed across all the South African papers: the most intelligent blonde in the courtroom was a golden police labrador. How can they do this to me? I was a liberal journalist with no ... with two big tits. After everything I did for the struggle against apartheid? Writing articles for *Scope* magazine and *Die Patriot*? Exposing the soft underbelly of male chauvinism at MNET.'

(She drops acting and now is pure Joan Collins)

Listen darling, when Barry Ronge met me at Jan Smuts airport, I already knew something was amiss. Was he trying to bug me? I said to him: 'Is that a Dictaphone in your pocket? Or are you just pleased to see me?' You must believe me, Your Honour, I'm just a working girl. After *Dynasty* dropped in the ratings, I had to do something to keep my hemline up. And when the offer came from Operation Hunger to go to South Africa and kiss black babies, I thought, what the hell. It isn't exactly Biafra. Maybe I can get a leopard-skin coat and matching handbag.

(Acting Jani) 'That's when I met them, these nearly extinct rare and protected species. These AWB Afrikaners who are too stupid to draw a swastika properly, with their beards and blue eyes and khaki shirts. With their boereworses and their Afrikaans language. When they speak it, they are so rough, so passionate, usually so pissed. "God, maar jou gat laat my gril!" I didn't understand a word, but those guttural sounds made me ovulate!'

(Back to Joan) They took advantage of me in South Africa. They used me. They abused me. And now I'm on trial here for my life! I feel

raped. I feel ignored. I feel bankrupt! O87? I am desperately in need of a few million rand? Maybe I can open a chain of boerewors takeaways and call them ET's?

(Acting Jani) 'You see, my Lord, writing about apartheid isn't bringing in the big bucks like it used to.'

JUDGE: Miss Alien, you are a dangerous woman. You are the sort of woman who tells fibs and one who flaunts her charms.

JOAN: Thank you, my Lord!

JUDGE: You have conquered my court with your bad manners and white lies. But I'm afraid it will do you no good. By the way, I like your perfume.

JOAN: My perfume? Ah yes ... *(Acts Jani)* 'Channel No 4. It really makes you stink.'

JUDGE: Silence in court! Silence in court! Has the jury reached a decision?

CHARM: Yes, my Lord. Miss Collins? Will you please put on your clothes?

JOAN: Never!

CHARM: Jani Alien? Have you been found guilty or not guilty of making the whole world laugh for no reason whatsoever? What sayeth the jury?

JOAN: Oh God, I have an appointment with my plastic surgeon next week! Please let the verdict be right, not Ronge!

(Music from Dynasty underscores)

VOICE: 'Remember to watch next week's episode of *Dysentery* to find out the real recipe for boerewors, and Joan's way of keeping it standing up.'

(Music: 'God Save The Queen')

(Light change)

PDU changes out of Joan Collins and into Maggie Thatcher's blue suit)

MAGGIE THATCHER: Hello. Baroness is the title, but call us Barren Maggie for short.



PDU as Maggie Thatcher

We're sure you're all so relieved to see someone like us, who is relatively normal. Oh? You actually recognised me? Jolly good. You've just won yourself a Toyota motor car. Go and collect it in Gugulethu. We're so deeply chuffed to be here, having broken off our half-a-million dollar puff-promotion tour for Phillip Morris cigarettes to come and give a boost to our old chum Freddie de Klerk. We like President de Klerk. In the old days he and I used to have a very satisfactory exchange of views. He would come to 10 Downing Street with his views and leave with mine.

And now thanks to me, you're more or less a democracy, so shut up and do as you're told.

Stop this violence! Good Lord, really one would think you were all a bunch of savages. Can't you just sit around a table like decent white people? Drinking tea and sharing the spoils like everyone else? If I were in charge here, I'd shoot the lot of you. But alas, they tell me we are no longer in charge anywhere. Sadly we are also no longer resident in Buckingham Palace ... in Downing Street, but let us introduce to you someone who is, and who should hopefully not let us down. Believe me, this will not be a major change.

(Maggie transforms into John Major: She takes a tissue out of her bag and removes her lipstick, adds his glasses, takes off her wig which is over his grey wig and keeps on her blue dress)

JOHN MAJOR: Hello. The name is Major. John Major. I'm English. Father was a trapeze artist. So I ran away from the circus to join the

world. My wife is called Norma and she loves the opera. Grey is my favourite colour.

What else ...? Ah yes, I am the prime minister of the United Kingdom. I knew there was something else ...

I've absolutely no idea whatsoever why I am here, but what can I say? Here I am and I'm delighted to be here, so there. This morning I telephoned 10 Downing Street and asked to speak to Margaret Thatcher. 'Margaret Thatcher is no longer prime minister,' they said.

I waited a bit and then phoned again. 'May I speak to Margaret Thatcher?' I asked.

'Margaret Thatcher is no longer prime minister,' they said.

So I phoned a third time. 'May I speak to Margaret Thatcher?'

'Margaret Thatcher is no longer prime minister,' they said, and then added, 'Why do you keep asking?'

'Because I want to hear you say it over and over and over ...'

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Throughout my life I have been lucky to find inspiration in the greatest: Marlene Dietrich, Sophia Loren, Tennessee Williams and Noël Coward. I have on video a tribute to Coward, showing the remarkable ups and downs of his career, with interviews with his colleagues and friends, and with him.



PDU changing into John Major

Towards the end of the film, there he stands leaning casually against his grand piano, looking like a Chinese mandarin, wearing a cravat, holding a cigarette with framed portraits of Gertrude Lawrence, Dietrich and the Windsors behind him. He says:

'When I look back over my life in the theatre, one thing stands out above all others. Friends. Good friends.

When you have success, they enjoy it with you and make that success something so very memorable. When you fail, they are there to catch you when you come crashing off your ivory tower of ambition. And they cradle you and soothe you and make failure something so utterly forgettable. All you need in life are good friends ...'

He pauses and smiles enigmatically for quite a time. And then he says: 'I think that's the perfect place to stop, don't you?'

(BLACKOUT)

THE END

'QUO VADIS EVITA?'



'Now that you've left the stage, what about Evita Bezuidenhout?' they asked. 'Is she dead at last? Have you buried her?' Well, I never gave her life. I gave her a platform. The public gave her the name 'Evita', demanded more details of her life: where she lives, who she was. They supported her development from huisvrouw and moeder to the most famous white woman in South Africa. She was once just one of the chorus line of characters who took a bow in Durban in 1981 when I launched *Adapt or Dye* as a way of life.

Within weeks, she was the leader of the pack. Within years, she was a spokeswoman for a silent Afrikaans minority. Within a decade, she became the darling tannie of the volk. That I should now be accused of murdering – no, assassinating – Evita Bezuidenhout, so important a political figure, is worthy of a libel suite of boerewors proportions. Anyway, it's too late. If I had killed Evita Bezuidenhout five years before 1994, I would be freed for having committed a political crime.

While many people thought Evita Bezuidenhout was alive and well and living in Bapetikosweti, others thought I went to sleep in her nightie. Does the deep sea diver go to bed in his wet suit? The most ridiculously funny thing is her reflection in my mirror. I literally stripped Evita Bezuidenhout down to size in *An Evening with Pieter-Dirk Uys* – from her Voortrekker rok, now in ANC colours, right down to her basic-black and Madonna smile – as my answer to her question to Pik Botha: 'How can I dismantle the past and make it compatible with the future?'

This then was the key question for a South Africa beyond CODESA. Could we go into the future with Blood River as a shield and Hendrik Verwoerd as guardian angel? No. Would we ban these symbols and create more violence? No. But humour can fit these square pegs into round holes. So I would venture forth, away from the comfort of where I'd been active for so long and plough into the celluloid jungle, hack along the paths of TIPP-EX and PCs, risk my sanity through the mountain passes of the unknown and explore new horizons of communication.

A new Great Trek. But I couldn't do it alone, even while I pretended to. So, without looking back over my shoulder to make sure, I hoped there would always be a middle-aged, well-dressed, carefully groomed Afrikaans tannie following me in her very high heels and cursing softly under her breath because I am going too fast.

Like many who announce retirement in floods of tears and careful makeup only to make a passionate comeback, I could not resist the exquisite hook of the 1994 election on which to hang my next show, *One Man One Volt*. MNET was my new stage. The 1994 election was over. We had a new government. Producer Pieter Cilliers approached

me with the ideal solution, to temporarily leave the stage with Evita Bezuidenhout and create a new audience through television. We structured her chat show round interviews with the ‘terrorists’, ‘Communists’ and ‘jailbirds’ of the past, who were now our future leaders. It wouldn’t be a dry conversation in a television studio, but a different adventure outside in the real world. First we made a list of potential guests, focusing mainly on the superstars of our new regime, and I faxed them an invitation. No one turned us down!

The Evita’s *Funigalore* series showed us the flaws in the propaganda that had programmed our nightmares for nearly five decades. Joe Slovo was a hated Communist and a feared killer, rather than a fellow South African who was full of the same passion and love for what I had so long regarded as my personal domain. Each of Evita’s guests surprised me. And they too had been subtly convinced by their own propaganda.

Some guests were too close to the past to allow much rediscovery, although the youthfulness and disarming commitment of Roelf Meyer,



Evita with Pik Botha



Evita with Tony Leon

co-author of the Constitution, made one a fan. Pik Botha's flair for being the greatest upstager in the business demanded some respect. Speaker of the House Dr Frene Ginwala shocked me with her wit and her fairness. DA leader Tony Leon pleasantly surprised me with his vulnerability and his determination to adapt his party and not die!

SACP leader Joe Slovo shared a precious day of vital energy with us in spite of his unmentioned cancer. Evita ended his episode with the strange epitaph: 'Old Communists never die. They just become South African cabinet

ministers.' ... yes, and then they die. I know there were many television viewers who mourned his eventual passing, having only recently discovered him on their screens while he was being such a gentleman to their Tannie Evita.

ANC Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa stepped out of the newsprint where he'd been trapped by platitudes and slogans and became a vital leader for the future. And a man who could charm Evita Bezuidenhout into saying the word 'Amandla' with a smile.

There were guests who were a complete revelation, because I knew nothing about them, other than my own reaction to their TV images. Free State Premier Terror Lekota was not the man who killed babies in the dead of night. PAC MP Patricia de Lille was not the harridan who knitted necklaces beside the bloody guillotine.

Then there were the guests who were profoundly moving. Minister of Transport Mac Maharaj sharing his Robben Island experience with us and his wife and children. Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale listening

to Mimi Coertse singing a boerelied with tears in his eyes, all leading to the highlight of the series when President Nelson Mandela entranced the nation while treating Evita Bezuidenhout with such respect. Like a lady. Like Maggie Thatcher. A lady with balls!

The guests showed me their scars. They showed me their pain. They exposed their humanity. They flaunted their compassion. They shouted their passion. They made Evita feel like a winner and me like part of the top team. More than anything, they made me

realise, as I hope they helped viewers to understand, that our country was in the best of hands. The structures of government, so severely crippled after a devastating political disease, would survive as a healing energy as democracy prevailed. That is, as long as we could just stop being frightened of the nonexistent bogeymen created by the political pornographers of the past.

Evita's *Funigalore* was firstly entertainment. There were people who would watch to see what dress the man was wearing. There were those who didn't miss a move because they so hate everything Evita did. There were those who watched because they knew it was not the usual soap opera or sitcom. There were those who looked forward to it, because they too had a great time discovering the new world around them. *Funigalore* was also, in its own carnival way, a contribution to the reconstruction and development process. Reconstructing prejudice and developing compassion!

We filmed 12 episodes. We could have filmed 20 more! Some famous politicians were making their availability known – except for



Mimi Coertse, Tokyo Sexale and Evita



Evita with Jay Naidoo



Evita with Piet Koornhof

Mrs Mandela who must have lost our fax number! Through television, Evita Bezuidenhout moved from her static position of relic-in-opposition to one of involvement with the government of the day. And as such, she could be around in future to comment on the policies of the government of national unity, this GNU that she had helped create. She would damn with faint praise. And if they wished, if they were so careless, if they were just damn stupid, they would behave like true politicians – lie, cheat and steal – and so encourage her to condemn them through the flattery of humour!

The international reaction to *Funigalore* was extraordinary, from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Daily Telegraph*, *Le Monde*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Variety*, *ABC News*, *CBC*, *CNN*. How a man in drag could talk to such established political superstars, be taken seriously and treated as an icon by some, was difficult for them to understand. Poor normal old world. You've just got

to be one of us to appreciate Evita's *Funigalore*! Yes, skattie, you had to be there! Happily all the interviews can be viewed on YouTube.

So here, from the Penguin edition of *Funigalore: Evita's Real-Life Adventures in Wonderland* is the interview with Nelson Mandela, filmed in November 1994 and broadcast on New Year's Day 1995.

November 1994: A Date with Madiba



Evita Bezuidenhout at the gate to Tuynhuis

A motor cycle escort roars into view accompanying a pale blue Rolls Royce. The caravan hisses to a halt. Cycles rev. A large traffic officer stiffly opens the back door of the car and salutes. Mrs Bezuidenhout glides out. She is wearing a chiffon two-piece summer dress, large flowers on a blue background. She does not merge with the scenery.

She smiles at us. The slight wind teasingly snaps at her hair. She holds it with one hand.

‘Sayibona, dumela, molo, hello! (*The voice is a near whisper*) I’ve come to see a very old and dear friend. Who also happens to be ... (*Here she gives a little sigh of inevitability*) ... probably the most famous person in the world!’

And with that she strides through the gates of Tuynhuis, past a policeman who salutes smartly. Evita gives a passing wave and goes into the main door of the office of the president of South Africa.

Now, to get an interview with Nelson Mandela is probably the hardest thing in the world to arrange. Everyone wants to talk to him. He is the most remarkable politician in the world. He has a wisdom and a charisma that promise good copy. He tries to fit everyone into his schedule, but he is only human, contrary to what many people may think.

When *Funigalore* started, it was the unspoken dream that maybe one day Nelson Mandela would agree to take part. But we had to audition for him. I had to show him my cards.

After the first series it was obvious that what we were doing was being regarded as more than just a comedy turn with a man in drag. The viewing figures had shot up. Everyone was talking about the programme. Politicians started making their interest known. I wrote a letter to the president in September, asking his indulgence. It would be fun, I suggested. An official letter arrived sometime during the next month saying: Thank you but no. There is no time.

By now, however, we had tried other sources. His daughter Zinzi seemed sympathetic and would put in a word. I left a letter for the president at the High Rustenburg health farm when I heard he was due to arrive the day I was leaving. It would be fun, I promised. The memory of our first meeting at the Retreat rally on Valentine's Day was still strong in my mind, and the knowledge that one framed photo on Nelson Mandela's desk was of him and Mrs Bezuidenhout, gave me the feeling that all was not in vain. And so it came to pass that suddenly we were told he would grant us an interview!

We also heard from FW de Klerk's people around the same time. They could only give us half a day. It wasn't enough time. I wanted very much to find out more about FW and sensed resistance from his inner circle. So we turned him down, but said yes, please, to Mandela's manne.

It's an incredible story. I don't know if I've got it quite right, but as there is no one prepared to confirm it, let me just give it to you and you can make up your own mind. The president has two formidable pillars of support, Parks and Mary. Both work very hard and quite understandably didn't see the point of involving the president in a comedy turn with this Afrikaans woman. Somewhere in the middle of them

came Priscilla, who turned out to be a fan. She suggested the interview and the pillars said no. Then she went to pillar one and said: 'I see it's in Mary's book, better put it in yours.' Did the same with pillar two: 'I see it's in Parks' book ...' So we were scheduled for those precious thirty minutes on a Tuesday.

Then life got in the way. The meeting was cancelled because of the Angola Peace Accord to be signed in Lusaka. Mandela's presence was vital. The diaries were compared, the pillars found the impostors inked in for Tuesday and we were exposed and cancelled! Priscilla suggested maybe on Thursday at 9.30? The pillars were not amused and said: No way. Then from behind the desk came the familiar tones: 'We ... we would like-e to be-e in-e the programme-e.' Thus spake Mandela. The second date was a reality!

What can you do in 30 minutes to fill a 30-minute show? Not make a mistake! The idea of a failed mike or foiled tape was too ghastly to contemplate. Not even Hendrik Verwoerd disguised as a Boeing was permitted to overfly Tuynhuis between 9.30 and 10.00 on that fateful Thursday morning.

We got there at 7 a.m. to do the makeup. Gail, a Cape-based makeup artist, was with me. The idea of being in the same room as Mandela was nearly too much for her and she was seriously excited. We were welcomed by all, security at the gate, the door, the inner door, the foyer and the passage. They were young and seemed to look forward to the fun. As for me, I had that visit-to-the-dentist feeling, with my toothache in the pit of my gut! We were shown into the ladies' powder room, of course. A long chamber, mirrored on one side with plush seating for wide-buttred Broederbonders' wives. Elize Botha's touch was still to be seen. Pink and lime green. At least today there would be no first lady catching me in her loo!

Gail did the face. It went quite quickly. It was comfortable being there and we had time. I glanced once or twice at my notes but knew that in those 30 minutes of the lifetime ahead, notes would not help. A Coloured lady came in with a tray of tea and cookies. She was bright-eyed with excitement.

‘Môre, Meneer! Waar is Mevrouw?’ For a moment I wondered too.

‘Daar in die box,’ I said, pointing at the place where Evita lay.

The door opened again and five more ladies entered, wearing their neat uniforms and carefully coiffed hair. All the president’s cleaning ladies! And I was in their loo!

‘Haai, Meneer?’ said the first lady. ‘Can we watch the transformation?’ I was still wearing PDU clothes; only the face showed what lay ahead.

‘Of course,’ I said. ‘I’m in your powder room, after all ...’

So I stripped down to my scants and started with the tights. The ladies watched each movement carefully, sometimes studying me through the image in the mirror.

‘Haai, Meneer het mooi bene!’ said one. Others agreed with lots of haai’s and oo’s. I sukkel’d into the elastic step-in, now quite a necessity, as the indulgence of Chardonnay sat around my bum like a broad smile.

‘Haai, Meneer! Ek het ook so gesukkel met my bleddie step-in!’ shrieked one lady, and they all fell about remembering. I felt no self-consciousness. They were watching a clinical operation like keen medical students.

Next came the bosoms, moulded orbs of foam rubber. One was a bit mauled; my little Maltese dog, Baby, had got hold of it and had chewed away at the landlady’s tit! ‘Haai, Master, is that now Master’s bosoms?’ asked a member of the audience, now getting her Masters and Meneers mixed up. She held out a hand and I passed the boobs to her to study. She looked at the one with a gasp. ‘And this one is all full of holes?’ she hooted at Baby’s chew marks. I told her about the dog’s strange habits. She nodded gravely. ‘Shame, Master,’ she said, ‘at least it’s not cancer!’

Then came the dress. First the skirt, then the blouse, then the shirt. Each item was greeted with a hiss of admiration and a mutter of comment. I looked in the mirror. There I stood in costume. All that was lacking was the hair. The ladies were transfixed. I took the hair out of the wig box.

‘Now, ladies, look. When I put on the hair, she’s here.’ They nodded and watched. ‘Are you ready?’

‘Ja, Meneer,’ they all said.



Evita with the Tuynhuis staff

I put on the wig. Instantly Evita Bezuidenhout was there. The ladies changed their attitude in a flash. Suddenly there was no reference to Meneer, no chummy interest. They stuttered and tried to look busy. I gave them an Evita stare in the mirror.

‘Haai waarlik,’ whispered the first lady, ‘there’s Mrs Bezuidenhout. Mōre Mevrouw ...’

‘Mōre Mevrouw,’ the others echoed, dry mouthed, as if their nightmares had come true. The past was back!

‘No, man, leave Mevrouw to get ready now,’ said one and started bustling the others out.

‘But can we have a photo with Mevrouw?’ asked another.

‘Natuurlik,’ I said and they looked at Evita twice before realising that I was in there. They giggled and nudged each other but the earlier bond was gone. Mevrouw Bezuidenhout was here and that meant back to work. We quickly posed for pics before she would notice and they left, nearly curtsying as they went. I looked in the mirror. Evita Bezuidenhout glared back at me. It was time for me to leave too.

I left the Elize Botha-baroque chamber and crossed the foyer into the main passage. Wherever I looked I saw icons from the past: paintings, statues, carpets, curtains. Colour schemes of pink and lime green. I half expected Tannie Elize herself to pop out of the Taiwanese vase of gladioli and say 'Boo!'

The reception room was full of activity. Technicians running around doing what only they seem to understand. Cables crisscrossed everywhere. Some interested parties watched – important-looking people (black) and people in the way (white). There is something comforting about a film crew at work. There is bustle and motivation. It can be confusing and chaotic, only because there isn't time to explain what everyone is doing.

I went through the half open door to find a private moment just to take a few breaths. It was the cabinet room – an oblong table bristling with microphones and high-backed chairs, all facing the throne at the top. Was this where all the decisions were made in the PW days? The Old Crocodile's lair? I looked out of the window into the gardens of Tuynhuis. Half a dozen gardeners were pottering around. Peace and calm. Table Mountain loomed up to the left, Parliament on the right. Our own Versailles. Number 10. White House. Élysée Palace. Kremlin.

No sign of security. I suddenly thought like Jeffrey Archer: man in drag gets into Mandela's office and bang! No one had checked my bra for bombs! I checked Evita's lipstick in something bright and polished. She looked fine, taking it all in her stride. She was at home here.

Director Pieter Cilliers popped his head round the door, pale and wan, hair on end like he was connected to a live wire. He mouthed something. Beginners on stage, or run for your life? I went back into the room. Two chairs stood facing each other like an electric chair reflected in a mirror. I sat down and was strapped in with mike cables. The chair was not high enough to allow me to cross Evita's legs properly. I tried, but it uncomfortably squeezed the fat tummy I'd saddled her with.

Then suddenly the bustle was gone. There was a deep and terrible silence. Probably the most unsettling thing, to suddenly see a film crew

ready and waiting. One could hear the adrenalin pop in various stomachs. Gail looked haggard as she stood poised with her powder puff and lip gloss. I caught designer Nico de Klerk's amused twinkle. He had rearranged every deckchair on Evita's Titanic, dressing the picture and moving the treasures of the nation to suit his artistic flair. What a culmination to our 15 years of involvement with this Evita Bezuidenhout.

Nico had given detail to my fantasy through the years of her development from revue sketch to national treasure, and now here she was ready to talk to Nelson Mandela! I wanted to pee. I wanted to poep. I wanted to run. But Evita wanted to see Madiba and so we all sat and waited. He was to come in through a door behind me. I heard Pieter C say to the pillars: Tell the president we are ready.

Tick-tock, tick-tock. My eyes scanned the faces of the crew. For each one this was a momentous occasion. No mistakes. No time. No nonsense. Then we all heard the familiar nasal tones. He was outside in the passage. The door opened and he walked in. I was watching Gail as she looked at her hero. Tears spurted from her eyes and she hugged herself in an agony of delight.

President Mandela was wearing a loose shirt in a black and white design. I was pleased I'd chosen the floral for Evita and not the second choice which was a black and white design. The president and the boere tannie could've looked like matching armchairs!

Mandela went round each member of the company, shaking hands and welcoming them. I'd been told not to move, because of the mike cable up my dress, but bugger that. When Nelson Mandela turned to me, I half rose. He was twinkling.

'Ah, and there you are, looking so beautiful.'

I think I said: 'Mr President, we can't go on meeting like this .. .' We embraced. He felt thinner than last time. He sat in his chair and I plopped down in mine. Mercifully the camera didn't show my feet, for they'd gone completely awry. I'd just stopped thinking with anything else but my head. Evita sat there like a ragdoll, feet pointed in, knees apart!



Evita with President Mandela

Mandela got his mike clipped onto his shirt. He was smiling broadly at me.

‘Thank you for your time,’ I said. ‘This is a great honour.’

He then said how important he thought the programme was. ‘Evita says things that people listen to.’ I immediately knew we were on the same wavelength and started looking forward to the interview.

There has been so much written about this man, so many articles and interviews and stories and legends, and yet to prepare for a chat like this was nearly impossible. Firstly, there was no way that I would make him look bad, not a moment of embarrassment for him, certainly no hint of send up. He was the president. He was Mandela. He was a hero. In the past it was my joy to break down the false gods. Now it was my duty to support the true leaders. The fact that he was prepared to expose himself to the likes of an Evita, to the whims of a stage comic dressed up as a woman, that in itself was enough of a joke. I didn’t need to pull out any dirty laundry.

As for small talk, what can one say to this man? There can be no hint at his private life, because the centre of that life in the shape of his

wife is not there. I had structured my areas of interest into sections: this building, prison life, Christmas, the Cape, heroes, hopes and inspiration – and who made his gorgeous outfits? But while I knew where to go and what to say, it all depended on where he would take it. Mandela was not a stand-up comic. He was not known for the sound bite! This could take more than just 30 minutes ...

I looked at Pieter C. He nodded slowly. I glanced at Nico, who would give me the 10, five and three-minute countdown. He nodded grimly. I smiled at my friend in the chair across from me. He nodded and winked. We were off.

‘Mr President, everyone in the world wants to spend time with you and here you are with me. I must thank you. *(A nice opening moment offering him the chance to say: it’s a pleasure. Or whatever. He does nothing. He just smiles. Oops. She carries on.)* It’s a wonderful honour to be back here in Tuynhuis ... *(Again he just smiles and nods. Hey, what is this? Audition time? An icy panic shoots through my tummy. Please, Madiba, don’t encourage a monologue!)* I look around this room and I see some of the things that I helped create. Mrs Botha and I looked after the curtains here.’

Mandela looks startled and peers around at the curtains – cheap pink and lime green. ‘Oh yes?’ The ice is broken.

‘Do you enjoy being in Tuynhuis?’ Mevrouw asks.

He answers slowly. Yes, he enjoys being in Tuynhuis, ‘because it gives one an opportunity to make a humble contribution towards the national debate that is going on in the country. And yes ... er ... it’s a wonderful experience.’

I’m not quite sure what all that means, but Evita sails into mined waters, flags a-flying. ‘We were very scared in the old days, as you probably remember. Afrikaners like me were frightened that when black South Africans would take control of South Africa, all the old symbols, the old paintings, the old stinkwood furniture would be removed and we’re so happy to see that everything is still here.’

He remains in his serious mode. I feel I’m getting Answer 45/b. ‘Minorities are entitled to be concerned about the type of changes that

have taken place in our country. The task of the government and the ANC leadership would be to assure the whites that change would not mean a reversal of the position, where blacks will not oppress the white minority and the other minorities. And I think we have succeeded, we are succeeding in addressing their fears.'

He pauses. Do I go in with another comment? Mandela doesn't take interruptions gladly. I let Evita simply nod. He isn't finished. 'And the Afrikaners themselves have made a very important contribution towards normalising the situation. President de Klerk and ... er ... the other prominent Afrikaners like Constand Viljoen. They have done very well indeed in ensuring that all of us come together, to join hands and to pledge this common loyalty to our common country. *(He pauses. I let Evita venture a 'Well ...' But he isn't finished.)* And you yourself have played a tremendous role.'

Now who is he talking about, me or Evita? I was never sure in this interview; I still am not sure. I don't think Mandela plays to the character of Evita. He sees me there and talks to me. I suspected this ever since the Retreat rally. It is important, therefore, for me to gently weave in Evita's reality, so that even though he never mentions her name, it could be that he is talking to her, not to me. Are you with me?

Evita basks in reflected glory. 'Ag, President Mandela, thank you. I appreciate that, especially coming from you, here in this wonderful place. *(I let her speak slowly, needing time to think. I dread the moment that he might call her Pieter or Dirk. Change the subject! When in doubt, PW Botha!)* Did you meet President PW Botha in this room?' *(He did indeed.)* 'I met him in the room where I am.'

'What was the experience like?' Evita asks, echoing the question on a million lips.

'It was an experience, you know, which shook me from top to bottom. Because I had expected that ... er ... he would behave in the way in which his image had always been projected ... *(An image I hoped I had contributed to projecting!)* ... that he would lecture to me and pointing a finger ... *(I can't resist Evita pursing her lips and wagging a little finger here. Nelson twinkles.)* But it was one of the most pleasant

interviews I've had. He welcomed me with a broad smile and he served tea for me and ... er ... and it really was a wonderful meeting.'

Imagine it: PW Botha, emperor and white induna, pouring tea into a china cup for the tall black man in a new grey suit brought in from his jail cell to meet his jailer.

'Did you have koeksisters with your tea?' Evita asks.

'Why?'

'Because I sent koeksisters specially for you that day,' she purrs.

He laughs. 'Well, on that day they were not there. But koeksisters, you see, are my favourite. (*That's a new one!*) In fact, when I reached Johannesburg in 1941, I saw koeksisters for the first time. (*I don't want to interrupt. Evita murmurs a delighted 'Ja?'*) And at that time I was getting two pounds a month, but I used to reserve ten shillings, so that every weekend I could have koeksisters!'

'Well,' glows the moeder of the nasie. 'I shall make a point of sending you koeksisters once a month!'

Mandela beams that magical smile. 'Oh! Thank you! First class!' He gives the thumbs-up with both hands, sharing his delight with everyone in the room.

Isn't it time for the 10-minute signal? Every moment feels like an hour! I page through my mental notes.

'Mr President, I see the beautiful garden here at Tuynhuis. Still exquisite and so special. Do you have a chance to, as in the old days ... I read in your biography, you wore a straw hat at Pollsmoor and worked in the garden? Do you have a chance to enjoy yourself here?'

A serious expression removes memories of koeksisters. 'Well, that is one of the things I regret very much. Because in prison I could sit down at the end of the day. And think! (*He articulates the word as if it means 'celebrate'.*) Do nothing else but think. And I was able therefore to see myself in a different light and to be able to correct the mistakes ... at least to have a plan to correct the mistakes we committed in the course of our work.'

I wonder how many other interviewers have heard this. To me it sounds fresh and personal. I nearly forget to act.

He pauses, but I say nothing. Nor does Evita.

‘And the other thing that I liked very much was gardening. To create something new. I spent at least two hours a day gardening. I have no time for that now.’

‘Oh, what a shame,’ murmurs Evita wondering whatever happened to hard labour in jail.

‘I don’t even have the time to think!’ Mandela repeats. ‘I have to move from one meeting to the other, and by the time I go back home, either at 10 o’clock, sometimes at 12 o’clock and even after, all that I have to do is just go to bed!’

The loneliness of this man affects us all. Is there anyone waiting for him at night to make him some cocoa? Dying to ask him; damned if I can.

‘Where is your home, President Mandela? Where do you feel most at home?’ Evita has also heard of the stories of the former first lady’s dismay at having to move out of their Pretoria palace, Libertas. Mandela moved in and renamed it Mahlamba Ndlophu.

‘Well, Lower Houghton now is my home. (*His pronunciation makes it sound like Lower Gauteng!*) In fact, I wanted to stay in Lower Houghton and travel every day to Pretoria. But there was solid opposition against this. Even Mr de Klerk told me that he thought it would be risky for me to stay in Lower Houghton, and strenuous too. And he advised that I should stay in Pretoria. When Parliament is here, of course, naturally I must spend most of my time here. And be able to be in contact with cabinet ministers, Members of Parliament, because that is very important. (*The president is not a Member of Parliament.*) I can’t understand how the head of state could be excused from being a Member of Parliament where the fate of the country is being decided.’

We were originally going to film this interview outside in the garden with Table Mountain as a backdrop, but the wind started playing silly buggers and the vision of Mevrou’s hair up a tree was not appealing. I now had to bring the mountain to Mohammed!

‘Table Mountain. Has this become a symbol for you through the years?’ Evita asks.

The President smiles. 'Well, Table Mountain is die ou Vader van die Moederstad, and so it has got that symbolic significance for us. I went up Table Mountain in December '47 and I saw Robben Island from there. I never knew that I would be an inhabitant of Robben Island for more than two decades!'

Was he on the mountain when Jan Smuts was on the mountain? Was he in Cape Town when I was in Cape Town? The extraordinary fact that Mandela was taken out of prison by his warder for drives around the Cape means that most of us who didn't even know what he looked like might have seen him without taking note. Evita Bezuidenhout, of course, saw him!

'I remember also when you were at Pollsmoor, you used to come into Cape Town with, was it Luitenant Gregory?'

'Oh yes,' he answers forcefully – obviously a strong memory.

'I think I once saw you sitting in the car. I saw the police officer go into a shop. I looked into the car. I saw you. I said to myself: "O! Liewe aarde, daar is Nelson Mandela!" I think you were eating an ice cream ...'

'Oh yes!' he remembers, cupping his chin in his hand, twinkling away, being entertained.

'I wanted to open the car door and say: "Mr Mandela, let's run away together! Let me save you!" But I was so scared you would turn me down. Oh, that's silly ...'

'Oh? No, no, no, I would have welcomed you,' says he who was once the world's most famous political prisoner.

'Oh, that's wonderful,' trills she who doesn't even exist.

I try and find Nico de Klerk in the corner of my eye. This is going on forever! But I know to break eye contact would be fatal.

'Mr President, your memories of Christmas?' The programme is to be broadcast on the last Friday of the year, just after the nation has been laid low by its annual Christmas cholesterol attack.

Mandela remembers Christmas as a child. 'The only time when we could have, in the countryside, sugar.'

We spoke about this afterwards. Every white person within earshot was startled by this fact. We overweight, dieting blobs, to whom sugar is

like kryptonite to Superman, hearing how sugar was Christmas for a small black kid in the Transkei. President Mandela gently rubs our noses into the sugar.

‘Because tea and coffee were reserved for elderly people, but at Christmas then they gave us, you know, some coffee and sugar. Some syrup, you know, with bread .. .’

‘Stroop en brood? Ja!’ agrees the tannie with the sweet tooth.

‘Right!’ confirms her president. ‘And then, of course, we would slaughter a sheep. That is what I remember ...’

‘Do you ...’ Evita starts, but he is not yet finished.

‘... and also seeing our mothers walking from house to house, village to village, kraal to kraal ... er... eating almost the whole afternoon. I still remember those things.’

Now was the chance to move to those 27 years of limbo. ‘And in prison, did you ever have an opportunity to celebrate Christmas? (*Evita puts on her liberal face of drawn sympathy. Her voice becomes a whisper.*) Was there a .. .’ (*But he doesn’t share her sense of tut-tutlage.*)

‘Oh yes! We did, we really did! And they allowed us to buy a packet of sweets, a packet of fruits. That is what we enjoyed there. And then when some of us were in “a group”, you could buy a lot of goodies and enjoy Christmas.’

‘Oh, that’s wonderful,’ applauds Mrs Bezuidenhout, delighted that her side had shown such compassion.

‘And then, of course, we used to have games. (*This is where I should have been more detailed. Ask him what games! Show me!*) Play competitions and organise some concerts and singing and so on.’ (*He sits and smiles as if ready to launch into ‘My Old Man’s a Dustman’, but I drop that ball shamefully.*)

Evita ploughs on through the fields of good nature. ‘Do you have a chance now to enjoy laughter?’ she asks as if his past was one big hoot. ‘Is there time to have a good time?’

‘It is very difficult,’ he intones, losing the twinkle. ‘The programme is very tight.’ He goes on to explain how he has been allowed a half day off work, but how this in practice is quite impossible.

‘And to relax?’

That’s something we all want to know. I beam out at him through Evita’s eyes.

‘Oh, the relaxation comes only in the morning. When I wake up every morning at five o’clock, I am on the road. (*Just to hear this makes my heart sink. How exposed he is every day to harm, and that only in his need to relax and keep fit!*) For about an hour, sometimes a little more than an hour. But when I go home to my country village, I walk up to the distant villages and cross little rivers and climb hills and so on. Sometimes it takes about two, sometimes three, even sometimes five hours of just walking and talking to the people in the villages.’

The twinkle is back. He is not faxing me a prepared statement. I remember the remarkable news that Nelson Mandela had built a holiday home near his village based on the design of the house in which he had stayed at the Vic Verster Prison. Like me and you, Evita also wants to know why.

‘Could you explain to me why you chose that design?’

He takes in the question, purses his lips, nods slightly, narrows his eyes, then opens them wide, moving from ancient Mandarin to aged Griqua, takes a breath and articulates carefully.

‘Well, you know, I stayed in that house from 1988 to 1990. I was all alone and I became friendly to the walls of that house. And it left a very formidable impression on me. And that is why I wanted to carry that impression with me to my country village. And because I had some of the most pleasant memories in that cottage in Victor Verster. That is where most of the negotiations with the top government team that was set up for this purpose took place and the decisions made about the future of South Africa. And so, that house in the country village represents those memories.’

Watching Mandela being interviewed on TV to prepare for this chat, it was his body language that fascinated me the most. Beside his obvious displeasure at interruptions, he would signal the end of his train of thought with a few quicker movements of the head, a spurt of verbal energy, and then a smile and a nod to indicate a full stop.

I followed this alphabet carefully and it helped a great deal. I now got the smile and the nod. Next chapter.

‘This year, 1994, has been for everybody probably the greatest year, in fact, the first year of the rest of our lives. You have freed all of us. You have freed me of all the guilt of being associated with things that we are now so ashamed of.’ Who was talking? Pieter-Dirk Uys or Evita Bezuidenhout?

Looking at the programme now I realise that it does not represent the character of Evita very well. I nearly submerge her to the point of nodding and yes-ing. The many chances one would have had in a ‘normal’ interview of lassoing the subject with his own rope, had to be passed by for the sake of respect and good manners. Evita can be arch. In this interview she is a purring tabby. Maybe that is why Nelson Mandela kept looking at me with a smile that reminded me of the way my father would look at me. ‘Yes,’ he would be saying, ‘you’re acting very nicely, but I know you’re in there!’ Well, in some moments here I was not just ‘in there’; I was also peeping out.

I pull back and let Mevrouw get on with her job.

‘There must be so many highlights for you. Do you have one specific moment in the last year that sticks in your mind as being totally extraordinary?’ As if the reality of a democratic South Africa, a black president, a peaceful transition, a return to the world, a culture of hope was not totally extraordinary!

‘Well, I don’t think it’s fair to personalise the achievements that were made during 1994,’ Nelson Mandela says, again displaying his legendary generosity and humility. ‘Those achievements would not have been possible without the sacrifices that were made by a long line of freedom fighters, who never gave up and who came out into the streets and demonstrated. Who were shot and killed by the racist apartheid police, and who were arrested and detained without trial. Who were thrown into jail to serve long sentences, and it is the results of their sacrifices that is responsible for 1994. (*An obituary to the struggle.*) But ... er ... also now all centres of South Africa have contributed, including those who are on the other end, including

those who were the oppressors. (*Evita's mouth sets slightly, although she personally has no knowledge of these people he refers to!*) They have now contributed to the building of a new South Africa. And although it is proper for us to look back and to decide who exactly brought about this change, it is necessary now to look at it from the point of view of the contribution that is being made. Because it may be comparatively easy to overthrow what you don't like, but to build a new South Africa may even be more difficult.'

Evita gives a tentative, 'Ja.'

'And it is here that the contribution of other South Africans is appreciated.' He gives the nod and the smile. My turn.

'Is it difficult to be the world's greatest hero?'

He looks grave. 'I don't spend much time on that, because the world has many heroes. I myself have many heroes and my heroes are the men and women who have chosen to bring about happiness into the heart of everybody, whatever his background, whatever his race. And I am heartened by the fact that we are rich in such men and women in our own country.'

Nico de Klerk has given me the 10-minute signal. This means I have to fill the time with choice questions, but leave enough space to hand the president his gift and wind down with goodbyes. All this before the 30-minute tapes run out. All this before a battery gives in and the mikes die. All this before our time is up. Ten minutes to go!

'Your inspirations. Who were they?' Evita now asks, just dying to know what makes this extraordinary man tick. Again this puts Mandela into a collective mode.

'Well ... er ... it's not very easy to say that, because we are an organisation which believes in a collective leadership. And ... er ... it is the collective effort of all South Africans, of all human beings that is important, not really an individual. (*He pauses. Evita hmmms. I wait. The seconds tick by.*) There are many people that I admire for their courage or for their vision, for their foresight. And in this country, one man who had that vision was ... er (*He keeps us in suspense. Who will he mention? De Klerk? Pik?*) Minister Kobie Coetsee.'

Well, blow me down! The former minister of justice? Evita can only echo our amazement. 'Wraggies, ja!'

'Because at a time when no member of the National Party wanted to hear about the ANC, that was the man who was working systematically with me to make it possible for the ANC and the government to sit down and to talk. And I have immense respect for that man. (*He refers to the time before the present fashion for democracy. The time of PW Botha's dictatorship. The time when FW de Klerk was a closet democrat.*) But of course it would not be correct to say this is my hero, because I have had heroes from my own organisation. It's difficult to single out one of them.'

'Well,' says Evita Bezuidenhout, love pouring from every pore. 'It's very easy to say that you are definitely my greatest hero!'

He breaks out into a wonderful, all-embracing smile. 'Well, that is mutual, because you are my hero!'

Whoever he means here, we are all grateful. I have to lead up somehow to the gift we have for him: a red ethnic shirt with Evita's picture embroidered on it. Evita comes to the rescue.

'Tell me about the wonderful things you wear. (*Images of Nelson Mandela in a variety of colourful shirts and tunics come to mind. Also his excellent suits and choice of ties. A veritable GQ fashion plate!*) I have to congratulate you for not wearing always the suits and the ties that the old Broederbond used to make so famous in the old days. (*He laughs. This must be a joke he has enjoyed before.*) Do you have a certain style? Do you have somebody who designs your lovely shirts?' she asks.

'No, actually, you know ... er ... I just accept what I get. There's not a single article which I wear which I have bought!'

'Ag nee!' gasps Mevrouw. Can you imagine any other head of state admitting to this with such gratitude? Clinton? Mitterrand? Kohl? But then this is not just any old politician.

'And all these are presents,' President Mandela adds with a touch of pride. 'And I just appreciate, you know, the hospitality of people who make it possible for me to have some little bit of variety.' Thus spake he who for 27 years had very little to call his own.

Recently Mandela had made a statement encouraging men to

participate in housekeeping and the care of children. Evita touches on this. The shadow of the absent Mrs Mandela looms in the background.

His face sets gravely again. 'Well, that is one of the dearest things that I miss. To sit down with your children and to listen to them, their hopes and aspirations. To answer questions, to help them to grow. I miss that a great deal. And now and again I have the opportunity of calling them together. But of course they are spread all over the country. And some of them are in other parts of the world. But ... er ... I like sitting down with my children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Because I have three great-grandchildren.'

'Ag ja?'

'And 21 grandchildren!'

'Ag nee!'

'Yes,' smiles the great-grandfather of the nation. 'So I am very rich. I am wealthy.'

Evita is about to compare treasures. I bite her tongue before she might refer to her little granddaughter, Winnie-Jeanne!

'Well, I've two little grandchildren ... er ... from my daughter Billie-Jeanne.' Suddenly the fact of two small black nearly Bezuidenhouts is a status symbol for her.

'Aha!' smiles the President.

'And the little grandson is called Nelson-Ignatius!'

'Oh yes?' Mandela nods.

'Ja,' Ouma beams.

'Oh. Very good!' He gives the thumbs up with both hands.

I see Nico de Klerk give the five-minute hand signal out of the corner of my eye. I can't break eye contact with Mandela. I feel if I look away he will go and get on with ruling the country.

Evita has no problems with motivation. When in doubt, talk food.

'And I would like to one day bring you bobotie! I don't know if you've ever tasted real Afrikaans bobotie?' Only once, but he'd like to again some day. Evita promises to make bobotie especially for him.

'Very good!' Mandela beams from ear to ear.

A New Year message from the president? He thinks and nods. The

smile is gone. He turns to the camera. 'It appears to me that we are going through a very difficult period. There are a lot of problems. But what encourages me is that we have the capacity to address and to solve those problems. One of the things that worries me a great deal is the position of the South African police. The lower ranks work very long hours, more than any other worker in this country. They are poorly paid for an extremely dangerous type of work. And it is my task to ensure that the problems of the police are resolved. Because as long as the morale among the police is very low, it's going to be difficult for us to deal with the crime which is worrying me. (*Strange to refer once again to the same police as earlier, but this time not as a 'racist apartheid' force, but one that needs compassion and support.*) They are doing marvellous work and we must put them in a position where they can do their work and enjoy it, because it is worthwhile. And it cannot be worthwhile if they work under primitive conditions.'

'Ja,' says Evita. There is no argument or conversation here.

'Apart from that I would appeal to all South Africans to join hands in the building of the new South Africa and in promoting a spirit of reconciliation.'

There it is!

'Wonderful!' trills Mevrou. Time for the gift. 'Mr President, I have a gift for you ...' She takes the big brown box Nico had set on the small side table and holds it up. Nelson helps her keep it level. The box is scribbled full of changes of address. 'It was sent to Robben Island ... (*There it stands: his name and number, scratched out to be sent to Pollsmoor.*) They sent it to the Vic Verster. Then I think someone sent it to Tuynhuis, Cape Town ... (*Also scratched out!*) but they wrote "Return to Sender"!'

This actually had happened to an important letter recently sent to the president at Tuynhuis. Returned to sender. Person unknown! Evita opens the box. There lies the red ethnic shirt with her face smiling out.

Mandela laughs, clearly delighted.

'A special shirt to remind you of this very special occasion.'

'I'll value this,' he tells her. 'Thank you very much!'

On the inside of the box is the photo of Mevrou. She reads the

written message to him. 'For Madiba, eternally yours. Amandla/Vrystaat! Evita Bezuidenhout.'

I sense Nico de Klerk giving me the wind-up signal. Evita takes Nelson Mandela's hand and holds it.

'I want to thank you for everything that you are doing for us and for being such a friend to us and for inspiring us with so much love and affection for the future.'

'You are welcome,' Nelson Mandela says. 'You are very generous. You have done wonderful work too and we are proud of you. And I mean it when I say: you are one of my heroes!'

I hold the moment for a few beats and then turn to look at Pieter C. 'That's it,' I whisper. It is 29 minutes 47 seconds!

The pillars surge towards us from either side. The president of the International Olympic Committee is waiting next door. Real life must go on. Our stills photographer wants a few pics. President Mandela seems happy to pose with Evita. We stand holding the shirt between us. The pillars tap their feet impatiently.

President Mandela moves off towards the passage, me with him. At the door we embrace.

'I must quickly show you what I look like without the wig!' I whisper. The cameras are not present. Good. I don't want everything to look like a photo opportunity.

Nelson twinkles at me, nodding. I whip off Evita's wig. He gasps.

'Oh, very good! Put it back on! I would never recognise you like that!'

We laugh and hug again.

Our stills man catches us. He snaps me, wig in hand, with Nelson Mandela laughing. One of my favourite pics ever! And then he was gone. Back to the world. Having left us with one of the most extraordinary 30 minutes of friendship.

Quickly the crew stripped their setup and arranged the room back to its original shape. There was some work still to do outside the building. I couldn't really remember anything of the interview other than it had gone without a hitch.



Madiba and PDU



Evita with her motorcycle escort

Outside on the cobblestoned driveway stood 12 motorcycles and uniformed traffic officials. We needed now to film the arrival and departure. When the group recognised Mrs Bezuidenhout they wanted autographs. Pieter C asked them to be part of the shot and they all agreed. So Evita arrives with a full motorcycle escort! As she walks by the policeman on duty, he salutes smartly. (*When Pieter C asked him if he would, the young man darted indoors to phone his superior: Could he salute Evita Bezuidenhout? he asked. Yes, came the reply from Pretoria. And so he did!*)

At various stages during the filming, members of the cabinet came out of Tuynhuis. Waves and embraces were exchanged between them and the most famous white woman in the land. I'd never met any of them myself, but Evita was on the warmest terms with her new leaders.

The final scene in the programme starts on a frame-up of the brass plaque outside the entrance: Office of the President. Evita steps out of the building with that satisfied cat smile on her face.

‘Well, we have to agree on something: we have got the most unique president in the world. Nelson Mandela first went to jail and then went into politics, and not the other way round!’



Evita at the door to Tuynhuis

(The full interview is available on YouTube, along with all the other interviews from Evita's *Funigalore*.)

1995...



ENTER BAMBI KELLERMANN



An empty space on my stage does not last long. Evita has a younger sister. The former Baby Poggenpoel was introduced through a two-minute clip in the film *Skating on Thin Ices* as a blonde alto-voiced siren. If Evita Bezuidenhout was my Sophia Loren, Bambi Kellermann was my Marlene Dietrich. Pianist and composer Godfrey Johnson made the suggestion and so we started creating a cabaret repertoire for Bambi's Hildegard Knef voice. Soon her personality emerged with its own suggestions. She left Bethlehem as a teenager and after various escapades

in Vienna and Bavaria, became a stripper on Hamburg's legendary Reperbahn. She married a Nazi, then escaped his cruelty and so launched herself as a Grand Horizontal of the northern hemisphere, and superstar of dark alternatives.

Luckily (for me) the siblings don't get on. Evita and Bambi will never be on the same stage at the same time. Their first cabaret emerged in 1993: *The Poggenpoel Sisters*. The first half introduced Bambi through song and story, and in the second half her sister arrives to take the drunk diva to a clinic. All this was taking place on the eve of the first democratic elections.

The second outing was Bambi's own cabaret, dipping into the treasures of songs made legend by Dietrich, as well as a cluster of familiar boereliedjies, in this case having been arranged by Kurt Weill.

Godfrey and I have been recycling and reinventing Bambi's material through the years since 1995. The text that follows is the version presented in 2010 during South Africa's hosting of the soccer World Cup. By now Godfrey had arranged the score for a small chamber band. The season at Cape Town's Fugard Theatre won Bambi the 2011 Fleur du Cap Award for best performance in a cabaret.



Godfrey Johnson and PDU

The following blurb was her 1995 introduction to the unsuspecting world with her performance at the Grahamstown Festival.

Street-fighter in Bambi to the fore ... doesn't let the truth get in the way of a good story ... a wicked edge. She's certainly not above corruption and, like her sister, has little sympathy for sacred cows.

– *The Argus*

Bambi Kellermann is the younger sister of Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout, the 'most famous white woman in South Africa'. Chalk and cheese. Whereas Evita has become a household name and favourite across political-party lines, Bambi smoulders in the background – not yet as famous as her sister, but far more dangerous.



An uncanny sampling of the tunes reflects a disturbing and disturbed self that Bambi is coming to terms with ... her performance is reminiscent of the halycon days of Berlin cabaret.

– *Cape Times*

She left Bethlehem in South Africa's Orange Free State in 1956 and went to Europe where she eventually married Joachim von Kellermann, a notorious Nazi survivor of the Second World War. In order to hide him from arrest, she took whatever job she could, in many cases verging on the pornographic. Eventually they reached Paraguay, where von Kellermann found old SS friends. He became minister of war. He has since died.

A very clever cross-over between stand-up comedy and cabaret ... interwoven with her hilarious distortion of popular boere-liedjies, Bambi's lasting effect is to make strange the known. Seductive, very crude and spot on, Bambi is a mindblast!

– *The Sunday Times*



Bambi is back in the democratic South Africa. She runs a wine-tasting cellar in Paarl, sometimes referred to as nothing more than an excuse for a high-class brothel. It is known that she is HIV-positive. But with money and knowledge, she can live with her virus, as she did with her terrible secrets.

Bambi's a bit of a diva now, part Patti Labelle, part Marlene Dietrich, confident enough to try her hand at musical experimentation, with delightful results ... you'll love Bambi.

– *The Weekly Mail*

She sings - well, she has been inspired to sing by many who also could not sing, but became famous for their singing: Marlene Dietrich, Hildegard Knef and Zarah Leander to name the German ones. She loves the music of Kurt Weill and Stephen Sondheim. And being an Afrikaner meisie at heart, finds any excuse to sing her favourite boereliedjies out of the *FAK Sangbundel* - but with a sinister twist.

Dis nou Kabaret! – *Die Burger*

This is what her kabaret is about: her extraordinary story of survival told in song, her background echoed in familiar tunes, her inspirations gently mocked through canny impersonation. The cabaret, with music arranged and played by Godfrey Johnson, is in three languages. Her story is told in English, while the songs also include some in German and some in Afrikaans.

Bambi ... a Marlene Dietrich clone from hell, a very dark Blue Angel, part Euro-slut, part boer and part lush.

– *The Cape Times*

This cabaret is not for the faint hearted. It unites the acrid stench of the old Weimar Republic of the 1930s and the sexy rot of Hamburg's Reperbahn with the familiar aromas associated with 'ons eie' Voortrekker-camps and braaivleis-orgies.



Bambi, 'n dronklap-tert met meer myle op as 'n 1971 Mustang, 'n gehawende Kabaret-ster met 'n Dietrich-fiksasie

– *Die Burger*



1966.

The Alhambra Theatre, Cape Town.

Marlene Dietrich was performing her legendary one-woman show. I went on the first night.

It changed my life. Something happened to me when I watched this blonde Berliner sing and speak. Of course she didn't sing, she barked; she didn't speak, she recited. She was technique personified. She never put a foot wrong.

It was perfection.

To see one person hold an audience in thrall.

The spotlight tinged with pink, the curtains a warm crimson.

That dress shimmering like a billion explosions.

The golden hair and the ramrod posture.

The deep sounds of a gruff grandmother cooing her frightened baby to sleep.

Where have all the flowers gone?

I met her backstage and I went to every performance and stared. On the last night I found myself on stage with a bunch of roses in my hand. She'd already disappeared behind the curtain.

I followed her.

She turned. "Peter, what are you doing here?"

"Flowers..." I stammered.

She took charge. "Come. Bow!" And she parted the curtains and we bowed!

Somewhere along the line I gave her the flowers.

She kissed me.

Someone took a photo and here it is.

Marlene Dietrich

"Here is a rose
to show how much I care

Tied to the stem
a lock of golden hair
For you Lili Marlene

Aufwiedersehen Marlene..."

"....a very dark Blue Angel"

CAPE TIMES

PIETER-DIRK UYS

AS EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT'S YOUNGER SISTER
BAMBI KELLERMANN GIVING HER UNIQUE VERSION
OF LIFE, LOVE, LIEDJES AND LIBERATION

Bambi

sings
the
FAK
songs

WITH
GODFREY
JOHNSON
as "Jesus"
at the piano



Bambi



Bambi Kellermann

Evita Bezuidenhout's younger sister, Bambi Kellermann, is loose! Recently returned to South Africa from Paraguay, the Blonde boeremeisie with the past goes straight to the metaphorical groin. Her new show has selective memory and the Afrikaans past in the firing line, with super-slut Bambi pulling the trigger.

She left South Africa and married infamous Nazi war criminal Joachim Kellermann, a cruel and violent man. After following him to Paraguay, fleeing nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal, she became part of the government elite. Now Kellermann is dead and Widow Bambi carries his ashes in an urn. But no one wants to have a Nazi buried in their country.

Backed by her Paraguayan accompanist, Enrico Jesus de Cavallo, Madame Kellermann dusts off her FAK Sangbundel, bible of traditional Afrikaner volksliedjies, and delivers a shining selection of familiar songs with a satirical angle, arranged for her by none other than Kurt Weill and Bertoldt Brecht in the 1950's, after a particularly drunken group sex encounter.

BAMBI SINGS THE FAK SONGS with Pieter-Dirk Uys as Bambi Kellermann and Godfrey Johnson at the piano.

BAMBI SINGS THE FAK SONGS was hailed by the critics:

"Street-fighter in Bambi to the fore...doesn't let the truth get in the way of a good story... a wicked edge. She's certainly not above corruption and, like her sister, has little sympathy for sacred cows." Gill Lord/Argus

"An uncanny sampling of the tunes reflects a disturbing and disturbed self that Bambi is coming to terms with...her performance is reminiscent of the halycon days of Berlin cabaret." Wilhelm Snyman/Cape Times

"A very clever cross-over between stand-up comedy and cabaret... interwoven with her hilarious distortion of popular boereliedjies, Bambi's lasting effect is to make strange the known. Seductive, very crude and spot on, Bambi is a mindblast!" Gail Reagan/ Sunday Times Metro

"Bambi's a bit of a diva now, part Patti Labelle, part Marlene Dietrich, confident enough to try her hand at musical experimentation, with delightful results. Move over Ella, here comes the new scat queen...you'll love Bambi!" Peter Frost/ Weekly Mail

"Dit is nou kabaret!" Gariel Bothma/Burger



THE
FUGARD
THEATRE • CAPE TOWN

F.A.K. SONGS
AND OTHER STRUGGLE ANTHEMS

Opening at the Fugard Theatre on 1 September
Pieter-Dirk Uys presents Evita Bezuidenhout's sister
Bambi Kellermann in her unique cabaret



Bambi sings the F.A.K. songs & other Struggle anthems

Performed at the Fugard Theatre Cape Town during August 2010

THE COMPANY

Pieter-Dirk Uys as Bambi Kellermann

Godfrey Johnson as musical director and composer

With the Bokkie Band: Rayelle Goodman, Heather Roth,
Mac Mckenzie, Hilton Schilder

Sir Noël Coward has the last word

THE STAGE SETTING

The piano and band are lit not unlike the venue in the film 'Cabaret'.

THE PERFORMANCE

The Bokkie Band take their places. Godfrey enters and goes to the piano.



The Bokkie Band in action

OVERTURE

(*Bambi enters*)

O MOON OF *ALIBAMA*/DAAR KOM DIE *ALIBAMA*

Oh show us the way to the next whisky bar

Oh don't ask why

Oh don't ask why

For we must find the next whisky bar

For if we don't find the next whisky bar

I tell you we must die

I tell you we must die

I tell you

I tell you

I tell you we must die

Oh Moon of *Alibama*

We now must say goodbye

We've lost our good old mama

And must have whisky

Oh you know why

Oh Moon of *Alibama* ...

Daar kom die *Alibama*

Die *Alibama* die kom oor die see

Daar kom die *Alibama*

Die *Alibama* die kom oor die see

Oh show us the way to the next pretty boy

Oh don't ask why

Oh don't ask why

For we must find the next pretty boy

For if we don't find the next pretty boy

I tell you we will die

I tell you we will die

I tell you

I tell you

I tell you we will die
Nooi nooi die rietkooi nooi
Die rietkooi is gemaak
Die rietkooi is vir my gemaak
Om daarop te slaap
Nooi nooi die rietkooi nooi
Die rietkooi is gemaak
Die rietkooi is vir my gemaak
Om daarop te slaap
Oh Moon of *Alibama*
We now must say goodbye
We've lost our good old mama
And must have whisky
Must have boys
Must have money
Oh you know why ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(*Bambi Kellermann speaks with a Dietrich German accent*)

Now some of you might have recognised part of that song as being 'Daar kom die *Alibama*', a famous Afrikaans folksong to be found in the *FAK Sangbundel*, the official collection of all the liedjies we as Afrikaans kids grew up on. The rest of the song was composed by Kurt Weill with words by Bertolt Brecht and came from their famous opera *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*.

My name is Bambi Kellermann and I left South Africa in 1956. I grew up in the little town of Bethlehem in the Orange Free State. Why did I leave my homeland? Because of politics. I hated the politics of apartheid. It offended me. So I went into to exile and only returned to my homeland in 1994 when apartheid was dead. No, I'm joking. The

only reason I left South Africa in 1956 is because I didn't want to die a virgin in Bethlehem.

I saw the opera *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* in Darmstadt in West Germany in 1957. I saw it there with my husband. I had just married him in Austria. He introduced me to the music of Richard Wagner. A little Wagner goes a hell of a long way. I introduced him to the music of Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht. He hated them both. He called them decadent. He said they should have been eliminated during the war. He said if he had been in charge and not just in an advisory capacity, he would have had them gassed with the others. My husband tended to over dramatise.

Where is he? I think I left him in the dressing room. Bitte Liebchen? (*Godfrey exits*) I met my husband in Vienna in 1957. I had just arrived from South Africa with my sister, the one you call Evita Bezuidenhout. Then she was just Evangelie Poggenpoel. She and her friend Mimi Coertse took me along when Mimi got a job at the Vienna State Opera. I entered a hairdressing competition in Graz. I didn't win, but at least it gave me a chance to explore this new world I was in. My sister went back to Pretoria in disgust. She said there were too many foreigners in Vienna and none of them understood Afrikaans.

I got a job at a club in Vienna called *Der Blaue Engel*. It is there that I met an old German film star of the 1930s. Her name was Zarah Leander. She had backed the wrong side of Hitler's Nazis during the war and now she was doing dishes. She introduced me to the man who would become my husband. A German man. An older man. His name was Joachim von Kellermann. They said he reminded them of the German film star Curt Jürgens. He said I reminded him of Elke Sommer. (*Pause*) Ja, well, it was 1957.

And so we got married and for our honeymoon he took me to München and introduced me to his friends. In a beer hall. A beer hall in München? That's when I realised I had married a Nazi. I had married General Joachim von Kellermann. He had been a commandant in the concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen. You must understand that in 1957, I didn't know what a Nazi was. After all, I was just an Afrikaner. But

eventually I recognised things about him that were very familiar. It was then that I realised that he was the professional. We Afrikaners were the amateurs. It would have taken us a very long time to have killed six million blacks!

And so I had to get a job to earn money to hide my husband from Simon Wiesenthal and his Nazi hunters. And thanks to my generic Afrikaner sense of rhythm, I got a job on the Reperbahn in Hamburg as a stripper. Then I joined a club in Amsterdam and had live sex with a donkey on stage. (*To a man in the audience*) Mmmm, I thought you looked familiar.

Wherever I worked we had to hide; all over Europe. Eventually we found our way to Paraguay through Odessa and there my husband became minister of war in the government of President Alfredo Stroessner. Until Joachim died. And I can assure you, the day my husband, General von Kellermann, died of strychnine poisoning in 1988 was the first day that I as his wife could freely laugh. Ha!

(*Godfrey brings on two Martini shakers. One holds Joachim's ashes*)

Thank you, darling. No, one is my martini for breakfast tomorrow. This is him. (*She takes an urn and shakes it*) My husband. And now we're both here in South Africa. I am trying to find a place to sprinkle his ashes, but no one wants a Nazi polluting their ground. I tried Germany, but they said 'why us?', and sent me to Austria. I found the ideal place there, but alas, they deported me to Holland. The Dutch, of course, never ever collaborated with Nazis, nor did the French.

Even here in South Africa I have a problem with his ashes. 'Was he black?' they say here. 'Only in his heart,' I answer. I've learnt my lesson. Here I don't bother to ask questions. I just put a few thousand rand down. Jawohl, the best government money can buy. They say ANC now stands for A Nice Cheque.

But Kurt Weill changed my life. There we were in Darmstadt, 1957, having seen the opera *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagony*. My husband, of course, loathed it. We got back to Hotel Heidehof. We argued. He always won those arguments because he shouted in German. He hit me. I went into the passage outside to pull myself together.

I smoked. We were allowed to do things like that ... remember? It was then that I heard music coming from Room 23, Zimmer drei-und-zwanzig. Piano playing. Laughter.

The door suddenly opened and a very ugly woman stumbled out and vomited over my shoes. I recognised her immediately. It was Lotte Lenya, the wife of Kurt Weill, herself an actress, a singer and obviously someone who couldn't take her liquor. I followed her back into the room, furious. 'How can you vomit over my new shoes, you drunk bitch!' – it sounds better in German. 'Leck mich mal am Arsch, alte Kuh!'

And then I recognised the man sitting at the piano. It was Kurt Weill. And standing in the window, silhouetted by the street lamps, the squat figure of Bertolt Brecht. Brecht was a communist and had smuggled himself over the Iron Curtain to see his opera in the West. I was speechless. Imagine. Room 23, Hotel Heidehof, Darmstadt. 1957. Kurt Weill. Bertolt Brecht. Lotte Lenya. And Bambi Kellermann: born Baby Poggenpoel at 6 Mirre Weg, Bethlehem, Oranje Vrystaat, Suid-Afrika, Afrika. Wêreld. Heelal. It is truly a very small world.

Lotte Lenya had strange sexual tastes and ended up in the linen closet with two of the cleaning girls, leaving me alone in the room with the two men. Now I know what happens when I am in a room with two men and wearing a short skirt. It was obvious they wanted to fuck me, both probably at the same time. I tried to convince them that I was happily married. And then I recalled how things came to pass behind the bicycle shed at the NG Kerk in Bethlehem. 'Kom kêrels! Af met die broek en in met die padda!' Funny how everyone anywhere seems to understand that Afrikaans.

The next morning I woke with a terrible hangover. My stockings were torn. My underwear was missing. Both men had showered and left. The carpets were covered in sheet music. I looked. I recognised the songs. All my old Afrikaans liedjies from the songbook of the Federation of Afrikaans Culture, die Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuur, also known as the F.A.K. Songs. I must have sung them that drunken night before. Kurt Weill had written them all down in his own unique way, reflecting the innocent childhood of a boeremeisie growing up in a decent

Christian society – or so she thought. A child who becomes a girl at the mercy of the ooms and those older but not wiser. A young South African who took a long time before she had the courage to say no.

I want to share some of them with you here and now: the *FAK Songs* arranged by Kurt Weill, adapted and orchestrated by Godfrey Johnson and performed tonight exclusively by my very own ensemble: Bambi's Bokkie Band. Take a bow boys and girls and fasten your seatbelts. Here come the *FAK Songs and Other Struggle Anthems*.

My name is Bambi Kellermann.

I am an Afrikaner.

Ek is 'n Afrikaner.

Ich bin ein Afrikaner.

(Light change)

THE FAK SONGS

HANSIE SLIM

Hansie slim

Berg gaan klim

Gaan die wye wêreld in

Stok en hoed

Pas hom goed

Hy is vol van moed

Maar sy ma wil hom gaan haal

Hansie het miskien verdwaal

Moeder sug

So bedug

Hansie kom gou t'rug

Hansie stout

Maak 'n fout

Fix the match vir 'n pot goud

Maak 'n bel

Op sy cell
Nou's hy in die hel
Maar sy fans sê dis okay
Tomorrow is another day
Almal sug
So verlig
Hansie kom nooit weer t'rug

BOBBEJAAN KLIM DIE BERG

Bobbejaan vat die plaas
So haastig en so lastig
Bobbejaan vat die plaas
So haastig en so lastig
Bobbejaan vat die plaas
En die boere staan verdwaas
Hoera vir die jolly bobbejaan
O moenie huil nie
O moenie treur nie
Ou Mugabe se vets kom weer
O moenie huil nie
O moenie treur nie
Ons Malema kan by hom lekker leer

HOE RY DIE BOERE

Hoe ry die boere sit sit so
Sit sit so (x2)
Hoe ry die boere sit sit so
Sit sit so hoera
Die highjacker sê tingalingaling tingalingaling hoera
Die highjacker sê tingalingaling tingalingaling hoera
Hoe skyt die boere sit sit so
Sit sit so (x2)
Hoe skyt die boere sit sit so
Sit sit so hoera

AAI AAI DIE WITBOSKRAAI

Aai aai Oom Pedofiel
Laat die kind suig aan jou piel
Die media vertel vir almal vry
Maar almal trek hul neus opsy

ROKKIES WOU SY DRA

Rokkies wou ek dra
Maar niemand kyk daarna
En almal staan verslae
Toe ek vir 'n rokkie vra
Oom Jannie noem my Goggabie
Goggabie Goggabie
Oom Sarel noem my Goggabie
Mooi is ek nie lelik nie
Rokkies dra ek nou
Met lyntjies bont en blou
Ek vra Oom Pietie Louw
Of hy van my rokkies hou
Oom Pietie noem my Goggabie
Goggabie Goggabie
Oom Benny noem my Goggabie
Gewild is ek nie alleenlik nie
Met rok en lok getooi
Lyk hierdie nooi so mooi
Al die oomies kom flinkflooi
By die blondkop rooirok nooi
Oom Barend noem my Goggabie
Goggabie Goggabie
Oom Karel noem my Goggabie
Mooi is ek nie lelik nie
So sit ek nou vir my
'n Klomp ryk ooms opsy
Wyl Ma en sussie brei

Lê ek met hul en vry
En almal noem my Goggabie
Goggabie Goggabie
En almal betaal vir Goggabie
Ryk is ek, nie arm nie

MÔRE OOMPIE MÔRE TANNIE

Môre Oompie Môre Tannie

Waar is Jannie dan

O ...

Jannie het gaan rugby speel

Soos enige jong man

Ja Oom Kalie ja

Ek is nou 'n vrou

Nee Oom Kalie nee

Ek wil met Jannie trou

Ek is lief vir Jannie

Ek wil altyd by hom wees

Maar sy Pa forseer my

Om daai bybelteks te lees

Ag Jannie waar

Kom ons bymekaar

Ag Jannie hel

Jy's my beste pêl

Ek het toe 'n plan

Om so sy Pa se frons te keer

Kry 'n verrekyker

Om te sien wat ek kan leer

Ja Oom Kalie ja

Hou Jannie weg van my

Ja Oom Kalie ja

I will make you pay!.

WAT MAAK OOM KALIE DAAR

Wat maak Oom Kalie daar
Wat maak Oom Kalie daar
Oom Kalie steek 'n stywe dop
En slaan Tant Dinkie oor die kop
Dit maak Oom Kalie daar
Wat maak Oom Kalie daar (x2)
Oom Kalie is ons dorp se held
Maar ek weet hy steel kollekte geld
Dit maak Oom Kalie daar
Hoe lê Oom Kalie so (x2)
Oom Kalie se broek is op die grond
Hy steek die meid
Nou is daar stront
Hy soen die skoolseun
Op die mond
Hy streel die meisie
Oor haar kont
Hy pluk en vroetel
Aan 'n hond
Hy wip sy voël uit
Vir 'n pond
Hy doen dit alles
Ek sweer dis waar
Dit, Jou Honour, doen Oom Kalie daar
Oom Kalie luister nou
Hier is genoeg gebrou
Ek sal jou reputasie veilig laat
As jy met 'n psigiatriest mooi sal praat
En luister na sy goeie raad
Dat al ons kinders goed sal baat
Weg van jul' Ooms en jul'
'Kom Trek My Draaaaaaaaad'.

HOE RY DIE TREIN

Hoe ry die trein

Hoe ry die trein

Kimberly se Trein

Hoe ry die trein

Hoe ry die trein

Kimberley se trein

Die Kaapse nooi sê tingalingaling

tingalingaling hoera

Die Kaapse nooi sê tingalingaling

tingalingaling hoera

Hoe ry die boere sit sit so

Sit sit so

Sit sit so

Hoe ry die boere sit sit so

Sit sit so?

(She is more desperate)

Sit sit so

Sit sit so

Sit sit so

Sit sit so

(She has a machine gun)

Ratatatatatatatat!!!!!!!

Hoera!

(Light change)

BAMBI: Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht wrote so many songs together. But their most moving song was written towards the end of the Second World War and was inspired by the terrible Battle of Stalingrad. The

soldier leaves his beloved wife and goes to war, but always sends her something to remind her how much he loves her.

Was bekam des Soldaten Weib
Aus der alten Hauptstad Prag
Aus Prag ...

No, wait – Prague? Second World War? That is all in black and white. We are now in glorious colour. Imagine if Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht lived in South Africa? What would their ‘Song of the Soldier’s Wife’ have sounded like then?

(Light change)

THE SONG OF THE SOLDIER’S WIFE

(Spoken): During the 1950s
a young man and a young woman got married
in a kraal on one of the many hills in the Transkei.
After the ceremony the young man took his wife
in his arms and kissed her tenderly – for he was
going to leave her to go to the big city to get work.
But he promised that no matter where he found
himself, he would always love her and send her
something very very special ...)

What was sent to the young man’s wife
from the glittering white city on the Rand
From Egoli he sent her
a pair of high-heeled shoes
with a kiss or two
came the high-heeled shoes
from the glittering white city on the Rand

(Spoken): There he got a job)
What was sent to the worker’s wife

from Sophiatown over the Vaal
from Sophiatown he sent her a collar of fur
how it pleases her
the little collar of fur
from Sophiatown over the Vaal

(Spoken: He lost the job, but lucky found a better job)
What was sent to the miner's wife
from the wealth of Johannesburg Deep
from Diagonal Street he sent her a hat
she looks sweet in that
in her little cloth hat
from the wealth of Johannesburg Deep

(Spoken: On the mine he joined a banned organisation)
What was sent to the comrade's wife
from the township on barren land
from the township he sent her
a blanket so rare
to have and to wear
a grey blanket so rare
from the township on barren land
What was sent to the prisoner's wife
from Soweto the city of fear
from Soweto they sent her
food in a tin
and a bottle of gin
just some food in a tin
from Soweto the city of fear

*(Spoken: Luckily he escaped from prison and crossed the border
to freedom)*
What was sent to the fugitive's wife
from the west near Gaborone

From Botswana he sent her
a banned T-shirt
embroidered and pert
a 'Free Mandela' T-shirt
from the west near Gaborone
What was sent to the exile's wife
from the far-off Russian land
From Moscow he sent her
a black widow's veil
For his death to bewail
in her widow's veil
from that far-off Russian land
from the far-off Russian land.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

BAMBI: And now I am back in South Africa and I can't imagine why I left it in the first place. I now have a lovely wine-tasting cellar in the beautiful Boland town of Paarl. Actually, it's a brothel disguised as a wine-tasting cellar. No, next time you come, you must come. I have some beautiful young women and boys. All proudly South African. I look after them as I think they should be looked after.

Why are sex workers criminalised? We have a constitution that protects everyone, but not them? How can we confront the scourge of human trafficking, if we don't give these vulnerable people protection. I say: unionise sex workers, make them legal, keep them healthy and let them pay tax.

We did well during the Soccer World Cup. Everyone knows we have lions and rhino and elephants, but did anyone have the foresight to warn our visitors that there is a poisonous HIV snake in our grass? But at least we have a president who understands the need for protection. He showered us with one billion condoms during this great event.

One billion condoms? And they expected 350,000 visitors for a 30-day event. So each tourist, I suppose men and women, arriving at OR Tambo International Airport, would get their passport stamped, and be given a box of 2875 free condoms. That's 95 condoms every day, 4 condoms per hour, one every 15 minutes. No wonder there are so many empty seats at the matches. You don't waste what you get for free, even if it kills you!

(She takes out a condom)

I introduced a FIFA Survival Kit – FIFA standing for 'free information for all' so don't sue me for breach of copyright. It should be part of our culture like the vuvuzela. Who borrowed my kit last night? Did you go through it with your kids? Look, the safest sex is no sex, but this is not a musical. The alternative is the use of condoms to stay alive.

So practise safe sex.

1. Practise how to put them on in the light and sober, because it will probably happen in the dark while you are drunk.

(She takes out a banana)

2. Condoms don't go onto bananas as might have been demonstrated to you. Men and boys don't have bananas between their legs.

(She takes out a dildo)

3. This is a penis. A white penis you will still find mainly among those who say they come from the Transvaal, which ceased to exist 16 years ago, so where do they trek to and from?

(She takes out a black dildo)

This is the penis that most people in this country have. Black or Coloured. I prefer to call them Barack Obama Beige. The fact that the white penis is bigger than the black penis is an urban legend that you can research for yourself. It only costs R20.

(She takes out a femidom)

4. There is a condom for women called the femidom. I know it doesn't look very appetising, but you don't eat it. You wear it inside your vagina. Yes, it does look like you could catch a fish in it, but it does allow women to protect themselves and in a country where most men will be drunk, protect yourself wherever you can.

Ladies, putting half a brick in your bag is also a good precaution. Man with sore balls cannot chase you and mug you. Just teach your family the word 'no' in all our eleven languages and others: Aikona, No, Non, Nyet, Nein, Nee. Or the two words that anyone will understand: Fuck off!!

(Bambi exits)

(Godfrey and the Bokkie Band sing a Stephen Sondheim song)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(Bambi enters)

Stephen Sondheim. Another genius who can take ordinary things and make them extraordinary. Marriage. Divorce. Love. The Japanese. He also wrote a song about me and my sister Evita.

Evita Bezuidenhout hates me with such a passion, I'm afraid you'll never see the two of us in the same place at the same time. I am even scared to go near her town of Darling because she's probably told the police to shoot me on sight. And yet I feel such compassion for her. As her younger, blonde, thinner sister, I see the shadows of menopause etched out on her face. Stephen Sondheim put it into words with such gentle care.

(She holds the framed picture of her sister and sings with it and to it)

(Light change)

SEND IN THE CLOWNS

Isn't it rich

Are we a pair

Me here alone on the ground

You in mid-air

But where are the clowns
Isn't it bliss
Don't you approve
One who keeps tearing around
One who can't move
Send in the clowns
There ought to be clowns
Just when I stopped opening doors
Finally knowing the one that I wanted was yours
Making my entrance again with my usual flair
Sure of my lines
No one is there
Don't you love farce
My fault I fear
I thought that you'd want what I want
Sorry my dear
But where are the clowns
Please send in the clowns
Don't worry ...
... we're here

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

BAMBI: This is a strange country. I see Evita Bezuidenhout everywhere: addressing parliament, tea with city mayors, making keynote speeches at major imbizos and now standing for president in 2009. Are you all crazy? She's a white, racist Afrikaner Nationalist who treated her maid like my husband treated a Jew. She supported apartheid! No, maybe I should rephrase that: she's just a South African who's not black. When FW de Klerk had a 70th birthday he celebrated with a dinner at the Mount Nelson Hotel. All the usual suspects were there: Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Zanele Mbeki, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Helen

Suzman and half the Afrikaner Broederbond that should have been locked up. The MC for the evening was – my sister. I must admire her professionalism. She had to organise the evening and keep her lipstick unsmudged. She also had to do her homework, finding out FW de Klerk's favourite song. I could have told her: 'I'm dreaming of a White Christmas' – but no, I'm wrong. FW de Klerk's favourite song is also one by Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht.

(Light change)

MACK THE KNIFE

Oh the shark has pretty teeth dear
And he keeps them pearly white
Just a jackknife has MacHeath dear
And he keeps it out of sight
When the shark bites with his teeth dear
scarlet ribbons start to spread
Fancy gloves though wears MacHeath dear
so there's not a touch of red
Sunday morning on the sidewalk
lies a body oozing life
Someone's sneaking round the corner
could that someone be Mack the Knife
In the harbour from a tugboat
a cement bag's dropping down
The cement's just for the weight dear
Bet you Mackie's back in town
The cement's just for the weight dear
Bet you Jackie Selebi's ... shhhhhh ...

ICH HAB NOCH EINEN KOFFER IN BERLIN

Ich hab noch einen Koffer in Berlin
Deswegens muss ich jemals wieder hin
Die Zeligkeiten

Vergangene Zeiten
sind alles noch in meinen Koffer drin

*(Spoken: Yes, we all still have a suitcase in Berlin
I know I have some
Hildegarde Knef had a few
Zarah Leander, Marika Röck, Greta Keller
But the greatest baggage of all was left by that unique Blue Angel
and so let me remind you of Marlene with some of her most
famous tunes ...)*

LILI MARLENE

Bei der Kaserne vor dem grossen Tor
Steht eine Laterne und steht sie noch davor
Da wollen wir uns wiedersehen
Bei der Laterne woll'n wir stehen
Mit dir Lili Marlene
Mit dir Lili Marlene
Outside the barracks by the corner light
I'll always stand and wait for you at night
We will create a world that's true
I'll wait for you
the whole night through
for you Lili Marlene
for you Lili Marlene...

JONNY

Jonny, wenn du Geburtstag hast
bin ich bei dir zu Gast
die ganze Nacht
Jonny, ich träum' so viel von dir
Ach komm' doch mal zu mir
nachmittags um halb vier ...

LOLA

They call me Naughty Lola
the wisest gal on earth
at home my pianola
is played for all its worth
Now I'll tell you a secret
don't hammer on the keys
for a little pianissimo
is always bound to please ...

LOOK ME OVER CLOSELY

Look me over closely
tell me what you see
the lady likes to look her best
before she pours the tea
You'll see a diamond-studded gown
that makes the evening sun go down
So look me over closely
tell me what you find
but don't get over-anxious
I'm not the marrying ...

THE LAZIEST GAL IN TOWN

... I'm just the laziest gal in town
It's not cause I couldn't
It's not cause I wouldn't
And you know
It's not cause I shouldn't
It's simply because...

GO SEE WHAT THE BOYS

... go see what the boys in the backroom will have
and tell them I'm having the same
Go see what the boys in the backroom will have

and give them the poison they name
And when I die
Don't spend my money
on flowers and my picture in a frame
Just see what the boys in the backroom will have
and tell them I sighed
and tell them I cried
and tell them I died of the same
And when I die
Don't buy a casket
of silver with the candles all aflame
Just see what the boys in the backroom will have
and tell them I sighed
and tell them I cried
and tell them I died of the same
And when I die
Don't pay the preacher
for speaking of my glory and my fame
Just see what the boys in the backroom will have
and tell them I sighed
and tell them I cried
and tell them I died of the ...

HELLO MR SAILORMAN

... Hello Mr Sailorman
Please sail away from me
You want to be the captain of my ship
I must agree
It's very sexy seeing you here
In uniform and medals bright
Just sail away from me today
and then come back tonight
Oh sailorman
You know you can be the boss up on my bridge

And when we sail the seven seas
The storms will make us pitch
Oh sailorman
I am your fan
My heart is like a fridge
But when we sail the seven seas
your love will make me rich
And up we go
And down we go
From starboard right to port
And in you go
And out you go
My sailorman
My sport ...
Hello Mr Sailorman
Please sail away from me
You gotta be the captain of my ship
I must agree
It's very sexy seeing you here
In uniform and medals bright
Just sail away from me today
and then come come come back ...
tonight ...!
(*Spoken:* Just see that you come before you go, gigolo!)

(BLACKOUT)

(*Lights*)

BAMBI: Now that last song, 'Hello Mr Sailorman' was written by Godfrey Johnson. Last time we performed the Grahamstown Festival and presented our medley of Marlene Dietrich songs, we had rave reviews from two national critics. Those are the teenagers who can read and write at the same time. Each said what a highlight the Marlene songs

were and how they both loved that iconic song made so famous by the Blue Angel – ‘Hello Mr Sailorman’. Well, let’s not complain. When the critics get things really wrong, it sounds so absolutely right!

(She holds up magazine/newspaper)

Why do they call it media? Because it’s never well done nor rare. And yet, some of the stories in here are just bizarre. Here’s one about Tante Koba in Welkom. Oom Gert fell in love with her and married her. On their wedding night he found out the truth. She was wearing false legs. In Welkom! Why? Because she was born legless. But that didn’t put off Oom Gert. In fact, it made him determined to get rid of those horrible plastic legs that squeaked when he was on top of her. So he unscrewed them before he inscrewed her and she quite liked being naked under sheets. That first night of passion was unknown to her, because for the first time she didn’t have the problem of where to put her legs.

The next morning Oom Gert took the two legs into the garage and using his electric saw, cut the plastic legs into small pieces. All that was left was Tante Koba’s big toe.

(Light change)

OU TANTE KOB

Ou Tante Koba sy is so dom

Sy roer haar koffie met haar groot toon om

Ou Tante Koba maak oop die deur

Oom Gert se broek sit vas in die skeur

Dis nie myne nie

Dis nie joune nie

Dis ’n ander man se vrou wat jy oor stry

Ander man se koffie

Ander man se tee

Ander man se koekies

Die neuk jy nou mee.

(Spoken: She's happy. Oom Gert takes her everywhere. To the bioscope where they only need one seat. She bounces on his lap dropping popcorn in his mouth. Even on the beach she is his ball. And when they go for a picnic, she sits naked in the basket with the mayonnaise bottle cold against her bum)

Ou Tante Koba sy's halfgebak
Sy hou haar groot toon in haar bruin handsak
Ou Tante Koba is nie so dom
Sy roer haar Earl Grey met 'n lepel om

(Spoken: She loves looking after the house for her man. She cooks and cleans, she scrubs and gleams. And if you stand outside, you might see the top of her curly head whizz by the window as she sweeps the floor with her crotch like the perfect wife)

Ou Tante Koba is vol van dank
Sy jaag lekker rond op haar eie rolplank
Ou Tante Koba is 'n wonderwerk
Al knielend op haar stompies in die Moederkerk
Dis nie myne nie
Dis nie joune nie
Dis 'n ander man se vrou waaroor ons lag
Ander man se koffie
Ander man se tee
Ander man se liefde
Die peuter ons mee.

(She introduces the Bokkie Band)

And now Godfrey will sing a song by Spoliansky and Schiffer, written during the time of the Weimar Republic. Maybe you don't recall: the Weimar Republic was an experiment in democracy in Europe in the thirties. A young democracy not unlike ours, brought to its knees by

corruption, arrogance, public servant strikes and greed. It gave rise to an Adolf Hitler. Unlike us...

(Bambi exits. Godfrey and Bokkie Band sing)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(Bambi enters)

A charmingly familiar song. I hear my husband move. He always wakes up when I think he's asleep. *(She checks in the shaker)* No, still fast asleep...

It was a difficult life, trying to hide him and also earn a living. Austria, Germany, Denmark, Holland, France, Spain, Ireland, England. That was the best time, in London. We lived there between 1969 and 1972. Very nice in London, sehr gemütlich in Londen. The weather was terrible, but no one recognised my Nazi husband. Thank God the British are so well mannered, they never look you in the face. So I always enjoy visiting London. I don't go there to shop at Harrods; I can do that in Dubai. I go to London for my antiretroviral treatment, my AZT drugs.

As you all know, if we live in the first world, which we whites do, and we have enough money, which we whites do more than don't – we can live with AIDS, as I do. But because it is difficult getting the proper drugs in this country as opposed to beetroot, garlic and African potatoes, I use my Voyager miles to fly to London once a month to get all my drugs free on my old National Health card.

Ja, once sex was so simple. All you got was clap, crabs or a court case. Now it's so complicated. Now they keep warning me: Frau Kellermann, achtung achtung! Don't smoke that cigarette! You'll get lung cancer and a lawsuit. Don't drink; you'll get cirrhosis of the liver. Stay out of the African sun; you will get melanoma. Don't have sex without a condom or you will get AIDS. *Also*, what else is new?

Look, we are all going to die. I mean that's for sure: we are all going to die. So why spend so much time trying to prevent the inevitable? And that's what I say to my clients in Paarl. I say: 'Darlings, you are now in South Africa. If you don't get cancer, you will get TB. If you don't get TB, you will get AIDS. If you don't get AIDS, you will get Alzheimers – at least you won't know what you've got. If you don't get Alzheimers, the township taxi will get you. And if the township taxi doesn't get you, your garden boy will. Yes, we are all going to die. But can we live? Live? Liebchen, don't so frightened of just being alive.

(She drinks vodka from a small bottle)

I shouldn't drink vodka while on ARV treatment. Zackie Achmat gets so jealous, but I can't help it. I was introduced to vodka by a sweet old nun in Stuttgart in 1958. She said: 'Bambi, remember always. Before you have to eat aeroplane food or give a blowjob, gargle with vodka!

Such beautiful weather. I sat on my patio in Paarl and it reminded me so much of Paraguay. Because my husband was minister of war, we had a great villa on the hills outside the capital Asunción. I remember how we would spend Saturday afternoons sitting the sun, having schnitzel, strudel, schnapps und viel spass. And one Saturday Martin Bormann was with us for the weekend. You might remember he was one of the architects of the Holocaust. He had just been to Philadelphia USA where they gave him a new facelift. Now he no longer looked like Tyrone Power. Now he was Gregory Peck. And Auschwitz's Doctor Death, Josef Mengele, popped in with his four kittens on his way to the Cat Show. And then Martin Bormann said something very strange.

He said: 'How come during the 1930s, when there were so many decent British and American statesmen and politicians, who already knew in the 1930s that we Nazis were killing Jews, why did they do nothing to stop us?' I had no answer for that, until that Nazi exterminator of Jews Adolf Eichmann came out of the guest cottage. What a party pooper he was; no sense of humour at all. He said: 'Of course there were decent and good British and American politicians and businessmen, who knew that a future with a few million less successful and arrogant Jews could only leave more for them. So maybe that's why they waited and waited

and eventually came into the Third Reich to punish us naughty Nazis, conveniently six million dead Jews later.'

Like today. Africa is dying of AIDS and everyone knows it. No one can say: 'I didn't know what was happening.' So why is so little really happening? Or are there still too many decent and good politicians and statesmen who say one thing at G20, while thinking another? Realising that with a few million less starving, demanding, arrogant blacks, things would only be better for globalisation? And then, in a few year's time, when another six million people are dead, we will wake up and say: 'where have all the Africans gone?'

(Light change)

WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE?

Where have all the flowers gone
long time passing
Where have all the flowers
gone long time ago
Where have all the flowers gone
Young girls picked them every one
When will they ever learn
When will they ever learn
Where have all the young girls gone
Long time passing
Where have all the young girls gone
Long time ago
Where have all the young girls gone
Raped by young men every one
When will they ever learn
When will they ever learn
Where have all the young men gone
Long time passing
Where have all the young men gone
Long time ago

Where have all the young men gone
Died of a virus every one
When will they ever learn
When will they ever learn
Where have all our people gone
Long time passing
Where have all our people gone
Long time ago
Where have all our people gone
Something happened
No one spoke
When will we ever learn
When will we ever learn

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

BAMBI: But I am ashamed that I lecture to you about this. This is preaching to the converted. You know these things. That's why you are here, because you care. You read the local papers, listen to the local radio news. Even there they tell you that there is a problem with a virus. It has no simple cure. It happens through sex. You know and you're concerned, but not worried, only concerned – because it can't happen to you. Decent, white, educated, religious and civilised people can't get AIDS, because it only happens to the poor and the careless. The blacks. I think you're wrong ... (*To a woman in the audience*) ... but maybe you're right. It can't happen to you, darling, for sure: when's the last time you had sex?

But what about your children? Your grandchildren? Are they okay? Do you talk to them? Do you warn them about the minefield out there? What are your kids doing now while you are here? Doing their homework? Trying to read JM Coetzee? Chatting on Facebook? No, darling, they're fucking. At the age of 10 they start, because everything we show

them makes them also want to be sexy and thin and beautiful. I hope you tell them where the dangers are? While you're sitting here safe, your kids are out there having unprotected sex with a fellow South African.

(Opens the shaker and looks in)

He's awake. Poor Joachim, really losing weight.

(She takes out some ashes on her long fingernail)

Look where we are, liebchen. Not the Gedächtniskirche in Berlin. The Fugard. In District Six. Six not sex! And look who came to see me tonight: all the gays and the Jews? You failed. My God, you were such a disgusting husband. Always treating me so badly. Treating me like a Wife: W – I – F – E: Washing! Ironing! Fucking! Etcetera! And every night you used to beat me, because I wouldn't do what you demanded. You kept saying to me: 'Bambi, in the name of the Führer, I command you to give me a blowjob!' And I always said: 'No!'

Well, darling, here it is!

(She blows out his ashes off her fingernail into the audience)

(Light change)

HIER'S EK WEER

Hier's ek weer

Hier's ek weer

Met my rooi naels voor jou deur

Ek wil jou hê

En ek sal jou kry

Hier's ek weer

Hier's ek weer

Ek is tuis

Wie kan my keer

Ek wil jou hê

En ek sal jou kry

Al slaan jou ma my driemaal op my kop

Dan staan ek op

Dan kom ek weer
Al slaan jou pa my driemaal op my kop
Dan staan ek op
Dan kom ek weer
Dan staan ek op
Dan kom ek weer
Hier's ek weer
Hier's ek weer
Met my rooi naels voor jou deur
Ek wil jou hê ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

Thank you. I don't know if we have time to do the last song. I was supposed to rehearse this with Godfrey but I got waylaid ... the traffic, not a man. I know you want to go and wee, but wait. This is worth it. Who starts? Me? You? Together? Okay...

(Light change)

PIRATE JENNY

(Spoken: Daar kom die *Alibama*
die *Alibama* die kom oor die see
Daar kom die *Alibama*
die *Alibama* die kom oor die see)

You gentlemen can watch while I'm scrubbing the floors
and I'm washing your empty glasses
and maybe once you tip me and it makes you feel swell
on this ratty waterfront in a tatty old hotel
and you'll never guess to whom you're talking
and you'll never guess to whom you're talking

Suddenly one night you will wake up with a fright
and you'll ask: 'Who the hell could she have been?'
now you see me kinda grinning while I'm scrubbing
and you think: 'Why the hell's she got that grin?'
There's a ship in the harbour
with four dozen cannon
and they're pointing at you!

You gentlemen can say: 'Hey bitch! Finish the floors!
Get upstairs, make the beds, earn your keep here!'
You toss me your tips and look out at the ships
but I'm countin' your heads while I make up the beds
'cause there's nobody who's gonna to sleep here
Tonight none of you is gonna sleep here

Suddenly at night you'll wake up in a fright
and you'll yell: 'Who's kicking up that row?'
And you see me just staring out the window
And you say: 'What's that bitch got to stare at now?'
It's the ship in the harbour
with her four dozen cannon
that soon will shell the town

Then you gentlemen can wipe off the smirk from your face
'cause this whole stinking dump is doomed
Every building in the town will be dust on the ground
Only this cheap hotel standing up safe and sound
and you yell: 'Why the hell spare that one?'
and you yell: 'Why the fuck spare that one?'

All through the night with the noise and to-do
you can hear the fighting getting nearer
Then you'll see me steppin' out into the morning
and you'll ask: 'Where the hell's she goin' to?'

And the ship in the harbour
with four dozen cannon
runs my flag up its mast!

By the break of day the attack's under way
my pirates are swarming in the streets now
prowling in the shadows where nobody can see
rounding up bastards and bringing them to me
then they'll ask: 'Shall we kill them now or later?'
'Kill them now or wait till later?'

Noon by the clock and dead silence on the dock
when they ask me who will have to die
And in that deathly silence I'll say:
'Now! Kill them all!'
And for every head that falls I'll just say:
'Hopla! Viva!'
And with her four dozen cannon
my beautiful *Alibama*
will sail away with me ...

(*Spoken: Daar gaan die Alibama*
die Alibama die seil oor die see
daar gaan die Alibama
die Alibama die seil oor die see)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

BAMBI: You will recognise some of that song as being from the great old *Afrikaanse Volkslied* from the *FAK Sangbundel*: 'Daar kom die *Alibama*'. The rest of the song, 'Pirate Jenny', was of course by our friends Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht from their great classic, *Der Dreigroschen Oper* – *The Threepenny Opera*.

My name is Bambi Kellermann.

His name is Godfrey Johnson. They are my Bokkie Band. And
this was our cabaret, vile und vunderful.

Good night.

(Curtain call – Godfrey puts the zebra-skin coat around her shoulders)

BAMBI: I stole this coat from my sister Evita Bezuidenhout. Real zebra –
the symbol of the new South Africa. Black and white stripes. Forced
racial integration. Cyril Ramaphosa shot it for Evita. He was aiming at
Roelf Meyer but missed.

(She takes off her blonde wig. Bambi is bald)

This is so hot ... forgive me. Ja ja, between the chemo recently and the
ARVs now – and having adapted and dyed my hair for so long, what
can I tell you. Never mind. It's only hair. I still have my heart.

(Light change)

FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN

Falling in love again

never wanted to

what am I to do

I can't help it

Love's always been my game

play it how I may

I was made that way

I can't help it

Men cluster to me

like moths around the flame

and if their wings burn

I know I'm not to blame.

Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuss

auf Liebe eingestellt

Ich kann halb Lieben nur
und sonst garnicht ...

(She bows and exits)

(Bokkie Band finale)

(Company curtain call)



The Company

MEANWHILE BACK IN THE REAL WORLD (1995)

Nineteen ninety-two saw my 'retirement' from the stage with *An Evening with Pieter-Dirk Uys*. But in 1993 I introduced *The Poggenpoel Sisters* and presented *An Audience with an African Queen* at the Edinburgh Festival. Then came the fateful three-month tour of Germany with *Negerküsse* (see volume one for the gory details). Democracy exploded on 27 April 1994 with that first election for all, and for me *One Man One Vote* on stage. Meanwhile television cameras were recording *Evita's Funigalore* for MNet, in which politicians were auditioning for the left, right and centre.

'Apartheid was so successful that in 1994 we couldn't kill it. We had to sell it to Bosnia and Burundi as "ethnic cleansing",' said Mrs B. While that bloody news was breaking daily, Queen Elizabeth II found the time in her schedule to visit South Africa on her royal yacht, *Britannia*. Mrs Bezuidenhout also snatched a headline when she was invited by Minister of Water Affairs Kadar Asmal, to officially launch the renaming of the Hendrik Verwoerd Dam in the former Orange Free State. Like a queen, she cut the ribbon in the former banned ANC colours and thereby renamed it Gariep Dam. 'May God bless it and all who sail on her!'

By mid-1995 *Bambi Sings the FAK Songs* had established Bambi Kellermann as a farce to be reckoned with, and Tannie Evita was no longer the only gem in the jewellery box. A new political show had not yet made itself felt, although as always, a title presented possibilities. Inspired by a comment in an American gangster flick: 'Brother, you



Evita's son, De Kock Bezuidenhout, and friends on the quay in Cape Town harbour, welcoming the Royal Yacht *Britannia* to Cape Town for Queen Elizabeth II's state visit to South Africa with the poster: 'Our Constitution will even protect you, M'am!')

ain't seen nothin' yet!', creative bells started ringing. The merry-go-round of celebrations slowed down as the nation came to terms with its new government.

It was worth the wait. Politicians are like monkeys: the higher they climb the pole of ambition, the more of their arses we can see. They had a year to find their feet. Now Nelson Mandela, Winnie Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Gatsha Buthelezi joined Evita Bezuidenhout, PW Botha, Pik Botha, Nowell Fine and Bambi Kellermann in the chorus line. Comrades? You ANC nothing yet!

Lock Parliament's doors. One year's grace is over! And Pieter-Dirk Uys is back in the political arena makin' whoopee! Out of bed with the old; in with the new SA. Uys's unleashed pets savage their own reputations – as he always says, his scripts are written for him – as they show colours

other than virginal white, green, black and gold ... witty
sharp and shocking. This show works best when Uys is
outing the old league against the new order – the clash, or
embrace, is riotous – *Cape Times* (Cape Town) April 1995

The honeymoon with freedom was over within a year. For those 365 days, I celebrated our new democracy that rushed in where fairness feared to tread since the birth of the unmentionable in 1948. As they had asked, ‘Where were you when President Kennedy was shot?’, and everyone remembered, now they asked, ‘Where were you when Nelson Mandela was sworn in as South Africa’s first legitimate democratic leader on 10 May 1994?’

I was in Holland, in laid-back Amsterdam, waiting to do my show. I watched the bloodless birth of my nation on TV, as did most of the world. I lost kilos in tears. It was a turning point of my life, watching the ex-‘terrorist’, ex-‘convict’, whose face was withheld from me for 27 years, be sworn in as president at the Union Buildings in Pretoria, virtually on the spot where they had once buried the sinister architect of apartheid, Hendrik F. Verwoerd. One was encouraged to believe there is a God, and she is black. And then I realised ...

The long-lasting success and universal popularity of Pieter-Dirk Uys are phenomenal. His performance skills are outstanding. He’s a brilliant impersonator with lots of cheeky charm ... (but) does Uys have to be quite so rude?
– *Sunday Times* April 1995

Amusing but minus muse
– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) May 1995

Met hierdie vermaaklike opvoering, wys Uys dat hy nie een van die slagoffers van HOP gaan wees nie. Sy oë bly oop en sy tong is skerper as ooit
– *Die Burger* (Kaapstad) April 1995

Ace is the top card! The year has provided rich ore that he
(Uys pronounced Ace) mines with gusto. After Cape Town
and Johannesburg, the winning Uys takes his act on the road
to London
– *Time* May 1995

... these were the good guys, the people we'd been fighting for, waiting
for, and so many dying for. Could I immediately rush in with my satirical
scalpel? No, good manners alone demanded a truce of 100 days. That's
what the Americans allow their new presidents, before they go from
honeymoon to battle. In that first year we discovered that, thanks to
this new democracy, all of us: white, Black, Coloured, Indian, English,
Afrikaans (and those in the other nine official tribes), male, female and
convertible, now had the equal right to make utter and complete fools
of ourselves. And that politicians are, believe it or not, only human.

'You ANC Nothing Yet' is lively and stylish entertainment
that will irritate, tease – and raise uncomfortable questions.
It offers abundant evidence that the fiftyish Uys is a force to
be reckoned with. He's right in there, listening and
watching, and taking notes. And the powers-that-be could do
worse than take a note, too
– *Weekly Mail* May 1995

P-D Uys returns – and no one's spared. He moves easily from
character to character, peppering his satire with blinding
insights into the transparent doings of our new government.
The research he puts into his work is always a pleasure. Facts
and insights carefully woven into irreverent situations all
help to make the ridiculous entirely credible
– *The Argus* (Cape Town) May 1995

Soon, a year after the great day, I had a new chorus line of targets
kicking up high with their legs exposing a fascinating array of corrupt
frills and faux fur. I'm so happy that politicians will always just be
politicians: predictable but unstable.

While the old targets, the dead unmentionables, were obviously all unpleasant people who deserved to be held in utter contempt, most of the new MPs did not shoot black children, withhold rights and freedoms, or help themselves to the national treasury. Most of them must surely be committed, decent, experienced and likeable citizens, who could even make this new nonracial, nonsexist, nonsensical democracy work over time. Surely they must ...?

As the title implies, you ain't seen nothing yet, because nothing much has happened since the inauguration. So where have all the RDP promises gone?

– *Business Day* May 1995

No one is left out in Uys' merciless satire, from Mandela to Winnie to Tutu. There's clout in his portrayal of the new order

– *Pretoria News* July 1995

Democracy could have been the death of Pieter-Dirk Uys. Without his anti-apartheid crusade, without the pomposity, duplicity and arrogance of our Nat rulers, without exposing the uncomfortable facts of the total onslaught, without all the political ammo which has provided him with revue material for years, he could have been a theatrical goner. But he didn't die. He adapted. Even in our new cosy world of democracy, of international acceptance and of having a much-loved black President, we are still living in an imperfect South Africa in which there will always be place for a bright-minded satirist to poke fun and to expose hypocrisy.

– *The Cape Times* (Cape Town) October 1995

Some of yesterday's freedom fighters, who once demanded an end to the imbalance in society, are now swaggering around, overweight and overpaid, like cartoon jackdaws gathering all that glitters into their own nests, hardly different from the old.

Pieter-Dirk Uys lays into South Africans, our leaders and their scandalous gravy train with satirical vengeance. Very funny
– *Sunday Times* October 1995

Suid-Afrika se nuwe politici het net lekker begin ontspan op hul soustrein. Groot fout. Want die wittebrood is verby en Pieter-Dirk Uys, die bruidegom met die skerp tong, is terug. Uys was nog altyd die beste kommentator oor die politici in die land en as iemand gedink het hy gaan stilbly nou dat apartheid iets van die verlede is, was hy verkeerd
– *Die Burger* (Kaapstad) Oktober 1995

In order to be politically correct, everything else is allowed to go wrong. Too much money loudly promised where money doesn't exist; too many promises made from the heart, never delivered; too many people gratefully doing a job that just one person could do in half a day; too many half days carelessly being utilised, when full-time attention is vital for the survival of the unfittest – all of us.

Dat hy hard werk, blyk uit sy materiaal wat so vars is soos die jongste nuus. Die nuwe politici mag 'n beter humorsin hê, wat so 'n bietjie van die angel uit Pieter-Dirk Uys se steek haal. Maar dit doen geensins afbreuk aan sy vernuf en oorspronklikheid nie
– *Die Burger* (Port Elizabeth) November 1995.

Uys links the past, present and future and – equipped with his inimitable skill to harshly tackle everyone and everyone's ideologies in the nicest possible way – brings us up to date with South African politics through the eyes of a cheerful cynic. Uys is also conducting another useful exercise: making us remember.

– *Eastern Province Herald* (Port Elizabeth) March 1995

The new South Africa – a fragile state, ravaged and shell-shocked, thrust out in to the blinding sunshine, mauled by reporters, hustled by cameras, wearing unrecognisable ethnic clothes, hailed by strangers in languages it didn't understand, expected to do great magic, when just to be able to breathe, to swallow, to smile, to laugh – was a wonder.

In the 23 years that Pieter-Dirk Uys has been irritating politicians, this multi-faceted trouper has given a new meaning to the word satire, and carved a unique niche for himself in this country's history. No one has kicked our sacred cows with more relish. Or given us so many opportunities to laugh at ourselves. Looks as though the services of this eagle-eyed watchdog will be needed for some time yet
– *Eastern Province Herald* (Port Elizabeth) November 1995

Funny and familiar, perceptive yet unthreatening, Pieter-Dirk Uys gives us a magical and mellow 80 minutes
– *Daily Dispatch* (East London) November 1995

The miracle must take place on prime time television too. The greatest Constitution must be written, solving all the problems of mankind. One million houses must be built in five years. The alphabet of tomorrow must be understood clearly by all, like the former writing on the wall, even by those who can't read. Instant nation! Virtual government! Penny in the slot and pull the handle!

For so long we were trapped by states of emergency. Now we are being held in a state of emergence. The thin line between satire and racism was blurring. In the past, to attack Afrikaners and whites and apartheid was hailed as satire. Now, to comment on black people and the ANC is regarded as racist.

Uys has uncanny ability to make everyone laugh at themselves and the situation they are in. He also has the knack of disguising underlying seriousness. He is sometimes crass,

sometimes subtle, hard-hitting, scathing and rewarding. He is a master at milking South Africa's sacred cows to maximum advantage and is, therefore, the cream of satirists
– *Evening Post* (Port Elizabeth) November 1995

It's old hat to say that Uys is South Africa's greatest satirist; he is actually more than that. His laughter is often truly iconoclastic, shattering preconceptions and illusions with a clap of thunder that rattles the stars
– *Sunday Tribune* (Durban) February 1996

The disappointment of not finding simple monsters in power, like with the old regime, is tangible. The audiences waited for a bitter laugh at the expense of their new government, often not realising that the laugh was on them. Meanwhile the moral high ground on which Mandela and his comrade-apostles found themselves was a very slippery slope. We had all seen how quickly Mrs Mandela lost her footing and tumbled down into the soft-and-brown.

In die breë gesien is dit egter 'n welkome terugkeer na die soort politieke satire wat die afgelope hoeveel jaar die volk grootliks bevry het en Suid-Afrikaners letterlik die reg gegee het om die politici te kritiseer, te bevraagteken en uiteindelik reguit te sê dat hulle niks anders as staatsdiensamptenare in diens van die volk self is nie
– *Tempo* (Durban) Februarie 1996

The ace of satire is back with a show which reaches the highest standards in entertainment. It's a masterful, hilarious and incisive commentary on the people who dominated the old South Africa and continues his tirade against the new regime. Miss it at your peril
– *Daily News* (Durban) February 1996

The great difference between what was before Mandela, and what was after Madiba, is that there was no more 'Us versus Them'. It became 'Us versus Us'. For a while at least.

Uys starts to put the knife back in. 'You ANC Nothing Yet' is slick entertainment and it begins to look as if Uys is beginning to get to grips with the RDP – 'The Revenge of the Dark People' – *The Natal Witness* (Durban) February 1996

After a year's hiatus from the stage to allow the developing new constitution to draft his scripts and mould and direct his characters, Pieter-Dirk Uys bounces back with new vigour and old brilliance with this slick new satire. His latest collage of funny, familiar, sometimes forgotten faces, is high on hilarity and serves much food for thought

– *The Mercury* (Durban) February 1996

Have we not learnt anything from the past? They say, every democracy deserves the government of their choice. And if ours has turned out to be an overcrowded gravy train of chancers and lifters, we must be careful not to have the last laugh too soon, having forgotten what we were meant to laugh at in the first place.

Pieter-Dirk Uys cracks it on the Cape Flats. One of the characters that brought out the best response for the evening was the National Party supporter-organiser from the township who had most of the people trying to identify the real-life characters from their neighbourhood. For many people this was their first experience of this form of dramatic art

– *The Argus* (Cape Town) April 1996

1995

YOU ANC NOTHING YET

PIETER-DIRK UYS



**you
ANC
nothing
YET!**



SOON AT THE DOCK RD THEATRE

Three plays about Cape Town
by Pieter-Dirk Uys

From 5 June:
"Karnaval - a long street celebration"
directed by Mark Graham

From 3 July:
"Paradise is closing down"
directed by Lynne Maree

From 1 August:
"God's Forgotten"
directed by Mark Graham

All three plays performed by
Lonita Crofford, Shirley Johnston,
Lynne Maree, Jonathan Pienaar,
Trix Pienaar, Deirdre Wolhuter

Presented at the Dock Rd Theatre
Book at Computicket

Watch the press for details

THE BOLD, THE BLACK, AND THE BEAUTIFUL

Our Soap Story thus far:

When Nelson comes out of prison after all those years, his beautiful wife and convicted felon, Winnie, is waiting for him. But things go sour quickly and he separates from her. Nelson becomes Chairman of the Board. A new era has begun for everyone. His estranged wife dramatically is appointed to a position on the Board in spite of her past. At least everyone can keep an eye on her there! Controversy stalks her every move.

Meanwhile Pik has shed all former identity as the hitman of yesteryear. He becomes one of Auntie Frene's passionate suitors. She doesn't have time to respond, as she tries in vain to keep the entire family together. They don't even turn up for her assemblies!

Unknown to them, but carefully watched by the fascinated community, Pik's former flame, the powerful Mrs Bezuidenhout, watches from the ruins of her gutted embassy, plotting and planning revenge.

Young Jay rises swiftly from irritating agitator to elegant troubleshooter in the company hierarchy. While having no portfolio, he bandies about the letters RDP to great applause and some cynicism.

Ms Nowell Fine, the brash reborn-democrat, turns her back on her past as the last of the Jewish African Princesses. She tries to play the affirmative action-game according to the new politically-correct rules. But her former maid Dora, now ANC Woman's League Spokesperson for Former Maids, makes up the rules in Xhosa faster than they can be broken in Zulu. Elizabeth Windsor, mother of Charles and mother-in-law to the glamorous Diana, arrives with her morose Greek husband on the family yacht. An awkward moment is avoided when Nelson finds out that Winnie has gone to West Africa!

She returns early and in disgrace. Her expensive lapdogs Tony, Peter and Bantu flock to her side, but realise the imminent loss of their special dogbiscuits. They abandon her and stand behind the Chairman of the Board, wagging their tails.

The bold, black and beautiful Winnie is dramatically fired from her deputy position on the Board. No reasons are given although everyone in the know knows. She foolishly threatens court action.

The Chairman's actions are seen as unconstitutional. He also apparently forgot to consult Gatsha, his maverick cousin who throws his toys out of the cot and threatens to go back to the kraal.

And so Nelson, surrounded by highly educated and over-paid experts in the field of government, is forced to reinstate a smiling Winnie, just to fire her again. The world stifles its laughter.

But Winnie resigns just in time and retires into lengthening shadows of her political twilight with a new hairstyle and licks her wounds. Will she be back? If so, when? Will she eventually become Chairman of the Board one day?

Meanwhile striking nurses unleash bacteria in a maternity ward. There is a rape every 18 seconds. The neighbourhood becomes the most violent in the world. A society of professional victims sit and wait for the next handout.

Nelson is alone in his mansion Genadendal. Winnie is not alone, plotting in her palace in Beverly Hills, Soweto.

The first year of the new reality is over.

The Bold, the Black and the Beautiful prepare for the next bloody round.

What will happen?



To encourage **TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT** (meaning: you should know what's going on in high places) and **THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRACY** (meaning: they should know what you're wanting down here on the ground), here are a list of **OUR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS** and their **FAX NUMBERS**.

So if you have a complaint, a grudge, an idea, or even a compliment, let our government know!

We put them there.

If we don't wag a finger at them every now and then, they'll end up giving us the finger!

Arts, Culture, Science and Technology	(012) 324 2687
Defence	(012) 347 0118
Education	(012) 323 5989
Environment Affairs & Tourism	(012) 323 2275
Finance	(012) 323 3262
Foreign Affairs	(012) 351 0253
Health	(021) 45 1575
Home Affairs	(012) 21 6491
Housing	(012) 325 6398
Public Works	(012) 325 6398
Labour	(012) 320 1942
Land Affairs	(012) 21 1244
Mineral & Energy Affairs	(012) 322 8699
Post, Telecommunications & Broadcasting	(021) 462 1646
Provincial Affairs & Constitutional Development	(012) 341 1389
Office of the President	(012) 323 8246
Public Enterprises	(012) 44 5848
Public Services & Administration	(012) 326 8686
Justice	(012) 21 1708
Safety & Security	(012) 320 5065
Sport & Recreation	(012) 21 8493
Trade & Industry	(012) 322 7851
Transport	(012) 328 3194
Water Affairs & Forestry	(012) 328 4254
Welfare & Population Development	(012) 325 7071

Contributions to RDP:

ANC, P.O. Box 61884, Marshalltown 2107

R100 000 plus:

Street named after you

R500 000 plus:

Suburb named after you

R1 million plus:

Government building named after you

R5 million plus:

Small dam named after your pet

R50 million plus:

Airport named after you

R100 million plus:

Province named after you

R250 million plus:

Nelson Mandela changes his name to yours



Pieter-Dirk Uys was born in 1945 and has outlived official apartheid that came to be in 1948. He started irritating politicians with his plays from 1973. In 1981 he launched his one-man total onslaught against the regime of the narrow-minded, the bigoted, the amateur and the fool.

Most of his earlier targets are either dead, in retirement, insane, forgotten or recycled as members of the present Government of National Unity.

Pieter-Dirk Uys had a Jewish mother and an Afrikaner father and so belongs to both chosen (white) peoples. He is reputed to be related to a seventeenth century Cape Coloured hoer known as "Wilhelmina Opklm" who plied her trade between Heerengracht and De Paarl, thus making him a true local native.

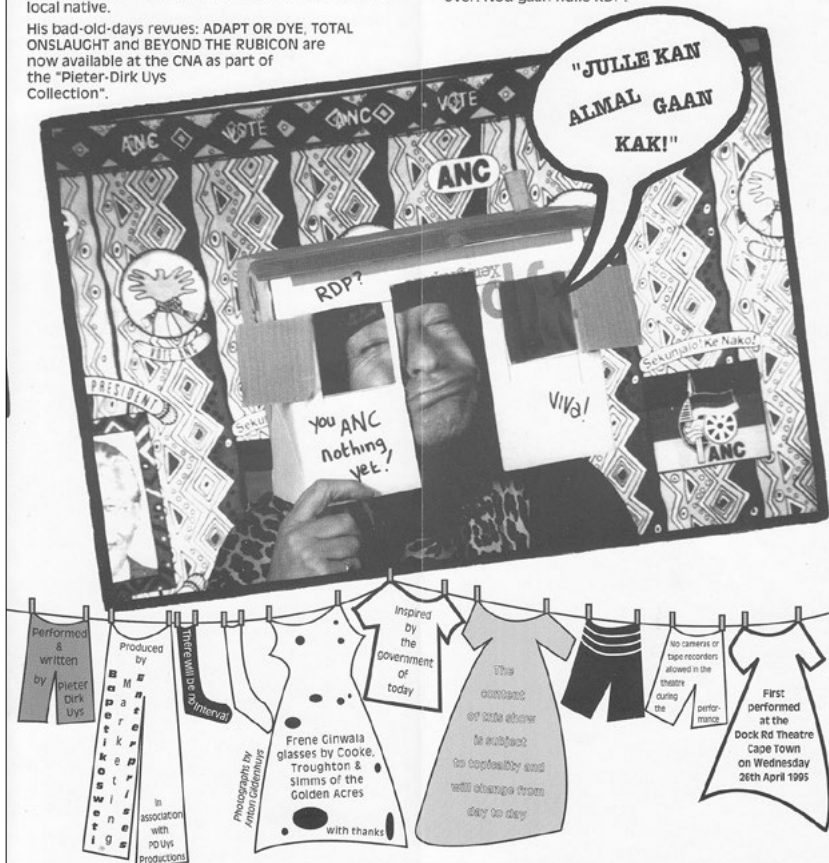
His bad-old-days revues: ADAPT OR DYE, TOTAL ONSLAUGHT and BEYOND THE RUBICON are now available at the CNA as part of the "Pieter-Dirk Uys Collection".

His Bapetikosweti Sagas: FARCE ABOUT UYS, SKATING ON THIN UYS and EVITA'S INDABA can be purchased there too as the "Evita Bezuidenhout Collection".

Ster-Kinekor Video are releasing his recent MNET TV-series of 12 conversations with South African politicians as "EVITA'S FUNIGALORE 1 & 2".

Penguin Books will publish the behind-the-scenes look at this record-breaking pioneering example of virtual-diplomacy in July titled: "Funigalore: Evita's Real-life Adventures in Wonderland."

Pieter-Dirk Uys has been on official honeymoon with the Government of National Unity since the Election Days in April 1994. This honeymoon is now officially over. Nou gaan hulle RDP!



Unfortunately, owing to the constraints of time, this show can only be performed in English and a bit of Afrikaans, two of the eleven official languages. However, on request and in writing, accompanied by a bank guaranteed cheque for R40,000, performances can be given in Zulu, Xhosa, North Sotho, South Sotho, Venda & Swati

You ANC nothing yet

Performed at Dock Rd Theatre Cape Town * Port Elizabeth Opera House * Guild Theatre East London * National Arts Festival Grahamstown * Nico Malan Theatre Cape Town * Playhouse Theatre Durban * Lentegeur Centre Manenberg

This is the adapted version of the South African text for the UK, performed at the Tricycle Theatre London NW6. A similarly adapted text for the USA was performed in November 1997 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York



THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

PW Botha, former president of South Africa

Nelson Mandela, president of South Africa

A bergie

Jay Naidoo, minister in charge of RDP

Pik Botha, former minister of Foreign Affairs

Sersant Swanepoel

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Winnie Mandela

Gatsha Buthelezi

Mrs Petersen

Miss Honeyball

Nowell Fine

Evita Bezuidenhout

THE STAGE SETTING

A washing line spans the width of the stage. From it hang all the costumes and props used in the show. A selection of cardboard boxes are on stage as 'houses'. Used costumes and props can be put into them.

THE SHOW

(PDU enters as the theatregoer)

(Light change)

THE THEATREGOER: *(He reads from the programme)* 'Pieter-Dirk Uys ... *You ANC Nothing Yet?*'

Oh God, what are we in for tonight? I hope it's not satire. I hate satire! Anyway, what the hell is satire? Someone once said: satire is tragedy plus time equals satire. Can't work for South Africa – too much tragedy and not enough time. Some American said that. Trust the Americans to talk such crap. And anyway, what is this new South African satire? Winnie Mandela's latest hat? Nelson having tea with Tannie Betsie Verwoerd? There is no satire in South Africa any more. It's all over. Apartheid is dead. No more bad news. Now it's just democracy. So what are they now all complaining about today? 'I don't have a house. I don't have a job. I don't have your car!' Well, work for it, comrade, work for it. That's what freedom is all about. Or is having to work now also the fault of apartheid?

I bet you there are going to be a lot of swear words here tonight. I know these comics. They've got nothing to say any more, and so they start with bad language. Words like fuck. Everything is fuck this, fuck that, fuck left, right and fucking centre. Or *shit*. Or *poep*. Or *kak*. Or racism? Look, there's a very thin line between satire and racism nowadays. In the old days, all you had to say was something bad about the whites and the Afrikaners and apartheid, then you were a satirist. Now you just say anything about the blacks and the ANC and democracy? Now you're a racist. You watch. Any excuse here tonight to get at the fucking Jews, or the stupid kaffirs, or the dom Hotnots, or the stinking coolies.

If not them, then it'll be against the Afrikaner. What an easy target now that we're down, hey? Die Afrikaners is Nazis! Die Afrikaners het kinders geskiet! Dis die Afrikaner se skuld dat jou gat stink! Dis altyd die Afrikaner! If not, then the Rooinekke. Listen, my grandparents told me what the British did in South Africa during the Boer War with those concentration camps. Long before Hitler was even born, the Brits invented those death camps in South Africa and did terrible atrocities to the women and children. Fed them crushed glass in their pudding. And raped them. Now couldn't they have raped them first and then given them pudding? Typically English.



You ANC Nothing Yet. Probably going to get a lot of liberal apologies. 'Sorry, I was part of the white system. I apologise, Baas Nelson.' Or protest theatre? Please God, I can't stand protest theatre. I hate anything relevant. All this boring toyi-toyi Zulu aerobics. 'Kill the boer and kiss the kaffir!' I could have done so many other things tonight. Hell man, this is (*Find local references*) Cape Town. Clubs, bars, the waterfront. A shebeen in Langa? Massage parlour in Long Street! Now I'm here at this theatre. I never go and see his shows. He always does the same thing. And he's so old. Fifty. When is he going to do something serious? You watch, it will just be an excuse to wear woman's clothing. (*He sees more people*) Hey? You people also waiting to see the Pieter-Dirk Uys show? That middle-aged, bald, fat Afrikaans Jewish moffie queen? Me too! I'm his biggest fan.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Do you remember where you were on 10 May 1994? Were you glued to the TV, watching Nelson Mandela become the first democratically elected president of South Africa? Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela! Thank God for Eurocentricity. What would the Anti-Apartheid Movement had done without that easy name, Nelson. Free Nelson! Viva Nelson! Imagine Free Rolihlahla!

I wasn't even in South Africa on 10 May 1994. I was in Holland doing my show there. I couldn't believe I was missing the rebirth of my nation. I watched it all on TV. CNN. You never quite know with CNN. Is it for real? Or are they filming it all in a warehouse in Atlanta, Georgia? This was real. There he stood. Our former terrorist. The ex-convict 466-64. The faceless enemy. The man whose beautiful smile we were not allowed to see for 27 years. When Mandela was released from jail, most of us didn't even know what he looked like. We waved at the wrong person! And there he stood at the Union Buildings in Pretoria, being inaugurated as our president, virtually on the same spot where they once buried the assassinated body of the architect of apartheid, Hendrik Verwoerd. I think there is a God and she's black. And when I saw that, I realised that the bad old days were over. For most of my life I was blessed with a minority white government with absolutely no sense of humour whatsoever. So it became my aim in life to poke fun at them and make them so cross, that they would have heart attacks and die. I did have some success. But now it was completely different. My government were the good guys!

So I took a year off. A honeymoon with the new leaders. Just good manners. The Americans always give their new president 100 days grace before they print a picture of his foreskin in the newspapers. I thought I would give my government of national unity 365 days during which they could become real politicians. And what a good investment that was. They say: politicians are like monkeys. The higher they climb the pole of ambition, the more of their arses we can see.

(He shows off his Africa-design outfit in the ANC colours)

Do you like my new politically correct ethnic outfit? In all of my shows since 1981, I was always forced to wear a suit, because all my targets

wore suits. Those old Afrikaner Broederbonders. Double-breasted suits, white shirts, ties, socks, shoes. I don't even have a pair of socks on stage tonight, which shows how much things have changed. Today's government doesn't bother with suits or ties. Some of them don't even wear shoes. In our Parliament you'll never hear the old titles: 'honourable minister' or 'my esteemed colleague'. Mister Speaker? I dare anyone to call Speaker Frene Ginwala 'mister'! She'd throw her British passport at you!

Now we're a democracy. A bit boring, hey? Not as much horrible fun as the old days. It was so much easier laughing at the Bothas and their old regime. They were so wrong. They were so 'Right'. They were so ugly. None of us liked them. None of us traded with them. They did such crazy things, with their fingers and their tongues. You won't find anyone in today's government daring to show us the PW Botha finger. No, I lie, I saw President Mandela do it the other day. Probably trying to get rid of an irritating mosquito. 'Gatsha ... Gatsha!' Actually there was another member of the government that used a finger. Mrs Winnie Mandela. But she used this finger (*Shows the middle finger*).

But to really enjoy where South Africa is going, let's not forget where we came from. So let me take you back to the bad old days, the dark ages, long, long ago. Michael Jackson was still black. 1988. You'll have to use your imagination here to stand in for suits and ties, socks and shoes. And imagine if you can, that to have these ANC colours on your person in 1988, meant that you'd be arrested and locked up in jail. You went directly to jail. You did not pass GO; you did not collect 200.

And so for those white South Africans here, be careful that your nostalgia doesn't give you away. (*Add NP rosette*) The rosette ... (*Add pink carnations*) Pink carnations. Rose-coloured glasses. (*Plus hat*) Remember this? The Boer crown, die Boerekroon? Haven't seen this for a long time. Imagine Deputy President Thabo Mbeki wearing one of these? Or saying these words?

(*Light change*)

(PDU goes to the washing line, finds the costume and is now PW Botha)



PDU as PW Botha

PW BOTHA: Ons in die Suid-Afrikaanse Regering ... we in the South African government, demand an end to intimidation and violence in our country. We will not tolerate the lack of discipline and respect. The full might of the state will be used against those subversives who disobey. It's very simple. I'll just send in the police. I will call out the army. I will just declare another state of emergency. I will keep law and order in South Africa and no one in the world is going to stop me!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(PDU puts the PW costume in a box)

PDU: Famous last words. Yes, yes, yes, I know PW Botha is a has-been. He's not relevant. It's over. It's gone. Forgive and forget? Yes, forgive. But never forget. If we forget, it will just happen all over again under a different name. Already we've exported apartheid to Europe where it's proving to be a great success, thriving there as 'ethnic cleansing'. And unlike us, they're getting away with it. So I won't apologise for my instant replay button. But I also have a fast forward button. So let's whizz through seven years, from the Old Crocodile to the Old Lion King.

(PDU adds the Mandela wig from a box)

Ag shame, look at his hair. Every day I have to take out my white shoe polish and add more. He just hears the name 'Winnie' ... shoe polish! He hears the name Buthelezi: more shoe polish! Soon our black president will be snow white!

(Light change)

(PDU goes to the washing line and changes into Mandela costume)

NELSON MANDELA: We in the government of national unity ... will not tolerate the levels of violence and crime in South Africa ... We demand a return to discipline ... in the police ... in the army ... the health services ... the education services ... the civil service ... and in my family. The might of the state will be used against those who disobey. Of course ... we will not send in the police ... because they are on strike. We will not call out the army ... because they are AWOL. We have a simpler solution ... to find a way to restore law and order. We will just telephone PW Botha.



PDU as Mandela

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Maybe Mandela did phone PW Botha. Who else would encourage him to say things like: 'I gave the Shell House guards instructions to shoot to kill if necessary.' Surely not from a Nobel Peace Prize winner? Not our Madiba? Is he losing his touch? Is he making mistakes? No.

I have a simple explanation. How can Nelson Mandela get from Tanzania to Cape Town to New York in one day? Simple answer: there are three Mandelas. There is the old beloved 77-year-old Madiba who goes to bed early with a book. His book. Then there are two substitute Mandelas. And they're fucking things up. The one lookalike fired Winnie Mandela from the cabinet twice! The other lookalike embraced the disgraced Reverend Alan Boesak too soon without realising that the state's pocket was being picked. And one of them said those words in the senate that shot Madiba in the halo: 'I gave the guards at Shell House instructions to shoot to kill if necessary.'

See the washing line? All the dirty washing of the last year. It's also part of a competition. If you can guess which character wears which costume, you'll win a fantastic prize: amnesty for life! No one needs it here? I hear the nervous heartbeat of a Broeder ... or is it the rabbi? Or a Coloured pastor? Or the Christian minister? Never mind, it's the new South Africa. We can now get away with murder. Even from a pulpit. Do to others before they do it to you.

Another new word that has become a way of life in South Africa is 'trans-paren-cy'. Transparency in government means we know exactly what's going on. Transparency in democracy means you don't have to bother with what's going on. And transparency in theatre means I'm going to tell in detail what's going on. Starting with my shoes. Made in the townships from the tyres of your stolen car. Amandla Adidas! Gauteng Gucci! I will auction these shoes after the show to raise money for the RDP – the Reconstruction and Development Programme. Nelson recently did that with his shoes and raised R160,000. (£/\$____) I'll probably raise R10. At least the RDP will see that.

And talking of the RDP, let's build a house with each empty box. The first truly transparent South African I will do for you is so transparent for the simple reason that he is everywhere – and yet no one sees him. He has many names: layabout, hobo, homeless, vagrant, tramp. An aristocrat of the streets of Cape Town. One of the bergies of the Boland.

(Light change)

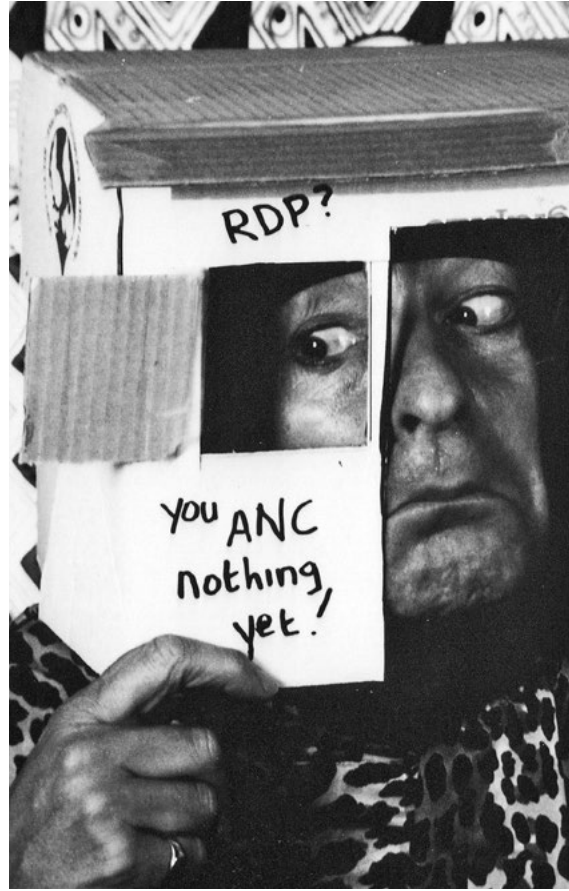
(PDU pulls a shabby costume for the bergie out of a box)

THE BERGIE: Hey, who's your 'bergie'? Don't call me names like that, man. We're not bergies, or vagrants, or tramps. This is the new South Africa. Be politically correct and call us 'strollers'. We are also a good investment. Residents of Cape Town spend so much money on burglar alarms and Rottweilers and guns. Why don't they just put a box like this on their lawns and we'll just move in. We're territorial. You look after us; we look after you. No one will break into your house while we're around, except us and you know our faces.

So many tourists from overseas come to Cape Town and now look at us and pull up their faces and say: 'Goodness gracious, have you also got those dreadful homeless vagrants in boxes? Cluttering your streets?' Hey, for your

information, we are not homeless. We are potential voters. It's the homeless in South Africa who put a political party into power!

Ja, we know lots of promises were made by the ANC. They promised us big houses and big cars and nice jobs. They promised that to Reverend Alan Boesak, not to us. And look at him now? Slim Hotnot. We saw him once swap wives in midstream: Prick-N-Pray! But it's okay. When Mandela promises, Mandela will deliver. Maybe not today or tomorrow, but soon. And that's the difference. Before the 1994 election we had



PDU as the bergie

nothing. We were invisible, hidden behind sand dunes, walls and prejudice. This year we still have nothing, but we are no longer invisible. We are tran-spar-ent.

So watch what happens to all those nice green grassy parks in Cape Town where white people walk their dogs. Soon our little boxes-homes will appear. First one, then a camp, then a suburb! We don't mind waiting, but not behind a sand dune. Now we'll be where everyone can see us. Ons sal op julle voorstoepe kak en dan klop vir papier! Because we are the RDP: the Revenge of the Dark People!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Yes, there were a lot of promises made. One million houses in five years. Or was that five houses in a million years? There are seven million South Africans without homes. Seven million? It keeps us awake at night. Wondering where they will appear next. No, stay behind the sand dunes. But not on the Sea Point beachfront! All hell will break loose. (*The voice of a resident*) 'This is outrageous! Call someone who we can sue!' Ja, everyone will be there: CNN, BBC, SKY, the independent media. And President Mandela's fax machine will melt down. But fear not, help is at hand. The minister without portfolio in charge of RDP, Jay Naidoo, will come and make a statement.

Now I need some help here. Some trans-paren-cy. Maybe also some democracy. Time to make a choice: what costume would you like me to wear? Remember, he's got no portfolio. A white top? Indians like wearing white. Jay Naidoo's a fascinating politician. Not so long ago, he was the trade unionist that big business in South Africa loved to hate, because he told the workers to stay away. 'Stay away from your jobs; go on strike; force the government to its knees, wreck the economy!' (*Thanks Jay, we miss your stay-away days. It was so easy to find parking.*) Now Jay Naidoo is a minister. Now he must say exactly the opposite. Now he must say: 'Don't stay away. Don't strike! Help the

government! Build up the economy!' It's wonderful when chalk is sometimes forced to become cheese.

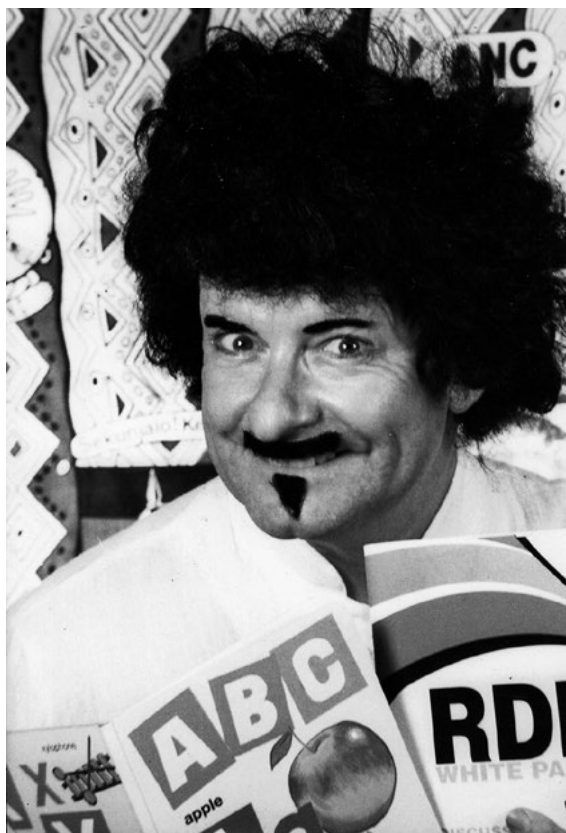
(PDU now gets into the Jay Naidoo outfit from off the washing line)

Okay, Jay has black hair ... *(He takes a wig out of a box)* I must pay tribute to Mrs Winnie Mandela here. Thanks to her I have black wigs for every target for the next 10 years, because Winnie changes wigs faster that she changes her mind. I have a long Winnie wig like Whitney Houston; short curly Winnie hair like Angela Bassett, knitted and plaited Winnie hair like a Cleopatra drag queen. This Jay Naidoo hair is one of Winnie's pre-Stompie wigs.

Then the eyebrows. Jay is cross between Frank Zappa and one of the Marx Brothers. Probably Karl Marx. *(He sticks them on)* Then a moustache and a funny triangular beardy-thing here. *(He sticks them on his face)* I don't know what the significance is. Maybe it's an Indian symbol or maybe just bad shaving.

(Light change)

JAY NAIDOO: Thank you very much. Amandla. I am very happy to be here in Cape Town, on the Sea Point beachfront, to diffuse this little misunderstanding. And thanks to the electronic media, I can do so across the four corners of the globe. First, let me say here most categorically: the RDP is a great success. I would like to congratulate everyone who has contributed to that success, including myself, which goes without saying,



PDU as Jay Naidoo

and that is why I'm saying it. And I would like the world to know that we have 20,000 houses ready and 200,000 houses in the pipeline. We have schools, hospitals and clinics waiting in the pipeline. We have a huge electrification programme for the townships pending in the pipeline. Which goes to show: we have a very successful pipeline!

But I would like world to know; change in South Africa cannot happen overnight. The RDP is a slow process because of apartheid. It is apartheid's fault that anything doesn't happen in South Africa. It is apartheid's fault that these people are in boxes. It is apartheid's fault that Winnie Mandela is overweight and off her head. It is apartheid's fault that I am here today. If it wasn't for apartheid, I would've been here 40 years ago. Granted I would have been five years old, but just look what other five-year-olds without portfolio are doing in the townships.

And therefore I am very happy to be here today on behalf the government of national unity ... Amandla! ... to point out that these boxes are excellent examples of how to alleviate the pressure of having to do something when there's nothing to do it with. I mean, why must the means always lead to the end? Here we have examples of the end with no means whatsoever. And people are living in these boxes. Real people. Our People. Amandla! And if we promise them real homes again, they might vote for us again in the upcoming municipal elections. And so here, on the Sea Point beachfront and in the glare of international media interest, I am very happy to point out these excellent examples of interim reconstruction and transitional development and so, in my capacity as minister without portfolio, to award this house the 1995 RDP Gravy Train Award for excellence in making do with absolute bummer all.

(A box is now the proud house)

The Reconstruction and Development Programme is very complicated. In order to make it clear to all, let me quote Forrest Gump: 'RDP is like a box of chocolates. It's only when you've opened it up, do you realise that most of the chocolates weren't there in the first place. And the rest have been eaten!' Amandla!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Recently I did a television series in South Africa called *Evita's Funigalore*. It was a chat show with Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout talking to our new politicians, among them ANC Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa, Communist Party boss Joe Slovo, President Nelson Mandela, Speaker Frene Ginwala, Minister of Transport Mac Maharaj and Jay Naidoo. Jay wanted Evita to teach him how to tango! So off we go to the dance studio. Me dressed in Evita's tango skirt, with high heels, tits, teeth and big hair. Jay is in his dress suit with flashy bow tie and moustache, looking like Speedy Gonzales. We worked our arses off! Forget that all Africans have got rhythm.

Eventually after 25 minutes of rehearsing, just before the first take, Jay stopped and said: 'Hell, I'm having a wonderful time. I've never danced the tango before!' I said: 'Jay, you've also never danced with a man in a dress before!' Jay gasps: 'Oh my God, I forgot!' Maybe that more than anything shows how things have changed. As expected whenever Jay Naidoo makes a positive statement, someone from his own cabinet will come and contradict him. A quick riddle: can you put a square peg into a round hole? Yes: we call it the government of national unity. The GNU. The next politician was for many years a square peg. In fact, through three consecutive Nationalist governments, Minister of Foreign Affairs Pik Botha was the squarest of pegs. You'd never think of making jokes about him being a round hole. But then came Nelson Mandela and Pik Botha was recycled into the GNU as minister of minerals and energy affairs. And now, still as a member of the New National Party, is he still a square peg? No way! Pik Botha is now the roundest of holes.

(Light change – PDU now in Pik Botha outfit from off the washing line)

PIK BOTHA: I'm not here. Let me underline that most categorically and repeat it with conviction: I'm not here! And what's more, you're not

here either. Because if you were here, you'd be living in one of these little boxes. And to crown it all, these examples of failed ANC policy are not here either. Because they're everywhere! Wherever you look in South Africa today, you see them. As lean-tos, shanties, pondokkies, hovels, shacks, alternative housing, alternative camping: it's a damn disgrace. And as a result I now can't find a single cardboard box in which to place my empties to take back to the bottle store for a refund. Every empty cardboard box has been colonised. Each empty box now has a street number on it. Each box contains a family of potential voters.

And that's why I am here today, mutton dressed up as ham, to see if any of these squatters will vote

for the New National Party in the municipal elections on 1 November. Amandla. Viva. Mozzarella. Vote for the New National Party. We'll give you a bigger box! Kumambu karabunda! I just made that up. That's the wonderful thing about having 11 official languages. Ten to one no one will understand a bloody word you're saying.

But to get back to the nitty-gritty. As we all know, the RDP is a damned disaster. And who will take the blame for that? The ANC? Oh no, o nee. The ANC is incapable of taking the blame for anything. Buthelezi's IFP won't take the blame, because the word 'blame' doesn't exist in the Zulu language. The Marxist PAC can't take the blame either, because they only exist on paper. The Democratic Party is too frightened to take the blame, because their leader is too short.



PDU as Pik Botha with
the Voortrekker Monument

So who gets the blame? The New National Party gets the blame. And why does the New National Party always get the blame? The New National Party always gets the blame, because the New National Party has proved it! And it all started in 1948 with another box: the ballot box. But I'm too young to remember the details of the birth of so-called apartheid, so don't blame me. I'm sick and tired of the ANC throwing names at me: names like DF Malan, JG Strydom, HF Verwoerd, BJ Vorster, PW Botha. Who the hell are those people? I've never heard these people's names before in my life. But now I realise who they are: they were all airports. So how can the New National Party be blamed for national airports?

And as far as apartheid is concerned, yes, we realise apartheid was a reality. But apartheid did not originate in South Africa. Apartheid came from overseas, for the simple reason that we Afrikaners are too stupid and too lazy to have thought up something so successful. Apartheid was brought to South Africa by the Dutch settlers, then the British settlers, then French settlers, also German settlers. They came and colonised our South Africa and brought with them this Eurocentric, political, segregationist tool to exploit our people, humiliate our people and enslave our people.

And now at last the truth can be told. That the National Party fought this so-called apartheid single-handedly for the last 300 years. And the proof of that can be seen clearly: apartheid is dead! But the New National Party is still in the government of national unity. In theory. In reality we're not here. In fact, none of us are here. In truth, most of us wished we were never here in the first place. But because you are here, I have to be here. So don't believe all this propaganda: the ANC didn't kill apartheid. The ANC became world famous through apartheid. We in the National Party killed apartheid, because only we know where we had put it. Amandla!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Okay, talking about transparency. Put up your hands, all you South Africans. How many of you once voted for the National Party? And how many Brits are here? How many of you voted Conservative at the last three elections? See, it's not just us. Nobody did nothing! Never mind, in 1945 you couldn't find anyone in Germany who would admit to supporting the Nazis either. (*As a German*) 'Me? Support Adolf Hitler? That schwein? Nicht möglich! Anyway, how could I? I'm Austrian.'

When the Berlin Wall fell over, you couldn't find any communists in former East Germany. And in South Africa after 1994, everyone was part of the struggle against apartheid. The whole world seems to be suffering from the same variant of a political Alzheimer's Disease. So the long-term is gone, but the short-term memory remains. Who can forget the Rugby World Cup Final at Ellis Park? When our old man came onto the field wearing the Number 6 Springbok jersey? My friend Benjamin was there that day.

Now Benjamin fought apartheid during the 1980s. He was arrested and imprisoned in John Vorster Square in Johannesburg. He was tortured by the police and nearly died. But he got out and went to London where he healed, thanks to their strange freedoms and weather. And he met a girl there and married her and waited to go back home. Like so many hundreds of our people all over the world waiting to come home. And there he was, at Ellis Park on the stands, waving his little Y-front SA flag among crowds, black and white with painted faces in the national colours and screaming *Vrystaat Amabokko-bokko!* When Benjamin suddenly heard a voice from his past:

(Light change)

(PDU adds ANC scarf and cap from the washing line)

SWANEPOEL: Hey? Benjamin? It's me! Swanepoel! Long-time-no-see. No man, Benjy, don't walk away. Those days are over. We're now in the new South Africa. Let bygones be bygones. Here, shake my hand? Friends? (*His handshake is not accepted; he laughs*)

I don't suppose you expected to see me here today, in my ANC-friendly outfit. No man, I'm part of the undercover security, protecting Mandela and the other terries ... oops, rugby fans! Jisis, ou Benjamin, can't you say something? Cat caught your tongue? We left you your tongue, you know. We could have cut out your tongue, as we did with some of the other patriots who will now forever be speechless. No man, I'm only joking.

(He laughs)

Remember all those names we called you when you were by us at John Vorster Square? We called you a communist, Jew boy, kaffir-lover. Ja, but you were only a stroppy bastard. You once spit me in the face. I called your mother a communist hoer and you spit me right in the face. Jisis, I was the hell in. Why do you take it all so personally? I was only joking.

(He laughs)

So how is your mother? Happy that today we are one of the few places in the world with a Communist Party with plans for the future? So tell me, Benjy, are you still a Communist? Come on man, you can admit being anything nowadays. It's legal to be illegal! In fact some of my best chommies today are those communists and terrorists I used to interrogate in the old days. We now meet and watch rugby together. Have some beers. They like me. They call me Comrade Swanepoel. They say hello when they see me. Not like you, you communist Jewish liberal bastard! Joking joking ...

(He laughs)

Hell, you only get a fright quickly nowadays. Remember back then, Benjy, when we would hang you up against the wall on those chains and still you refused to give us the names of those other terrorists who were trying to overthrow our government? And look what happened? Those terrorists will now become the government! Ja: love your enemy, as long as he signs your pay cheque!

I must tell you, my work there at John Vorster Square is becoming so boring. There's nothing to do. No one to arrest. No one to interrogate. No one wants real specialisation. And soon no death penalty! Jisis,

people walk free from jails, because their crimes are now ‘politically motivated’? Kak man! There’s just no one to talk to in our cosy little room under the stairs.

(He laughs)

Remember our little room, Benjy? With the one lightbulb? The bucket of cold water? The two bricks in your hands? Bits and pieces of live wire? Hey, I see you have a wedding ring on? Married, hey? Shit, I hope we didn’t fuck up your future with those extra volts. But maybe you even got to enjoy all that? Joking joking ... Shit man, where’s your sense of humour? You’ve been living in London for too long.

Anyway, here you are again, back in South Africa. So welcome home, Benjamin. Is it nice to be in a democracy? Or does it make you feel a bit redundant? No more apartheid left for you to fight and get world famous for?

(He becomes passionate)

I love democracy. I’ve always loved democracy. The only reason I spent the best years of my life in that little room under the stairs, interrogating communist kaffir-loving Jew boys like you, is because I loved democracy and did what I did to defend democracy. So that you could one day come home and enjoy democracy.

(He laughs)

Anyway, I better go. I see Mandela’s on the move again. I mean, look at that man’s energy. He’s old, been in jail of 27 years, had TB, prostate cancer, but who would know? Someone slipped up somewhere. Listen man, if you ever find yourself there by John Vorster Square, pop in and have a beer with us for old time’s sake. You won’t recognise the place, ou Benjy. No more barbed wire, no more guns, no more kaffirs falling out of the top floor windows. It’s like bleddy McDonalds.

(He laughs)

Anyway, since I’ve applied for amnesty, they’ve asked me to stay on in my old job. It’s all about specialisation, ou Benjy. Maybe our new minister of police wants his chaps to learn the ropes from an old master with a hell of lot of experience! OK Benjamin, see you around. And comrade? Shalom. And Viva Mandela!

(He laughs and his balled fist shows a middle finger)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Let's build another house? We're being so inspired by other democracies, especially in Africa. Robert Mugabe? Lead and we shall follow. But first, let me put two and two together: it makes Tutu!

(He gets into the purple frock from the washing line; adds wig and sunglasses from a box)

(Light change)

ARCHBISHOP TUTU: I had a dream. I dreamt I died and went to heaven. And Saint Peter opened the gates and said: 'No, Desmond Tutu? You can't come here. You have been very naughty. You keep criticising the ANC! No, you must go down to the hot place.' So I want down to the hot place. And the next day there was another knock at the gates of heaven and Saint Peter opened the gates and there stood the Devil.



PDU as Archbishop Tutu

And the Devil said: 'No man, ever since you've sent Desmond Tutu down to hell, he's causing so much trouble, I've come up to apply for political asylum!'

But jokes aside. I am so relieved to be able to announce here from the bottom of my heart. For the next 20 minutes, there will be an interval.

(PDU exits)

(INTERVAL)

(PDU enters, still as Desmond Tutu)

TUTU: Welcome back to the new South Africa. We are the rainbow people, and as we all know, at the end of every rainbow is a pot of gold. Ours has already been stolen. But jokes aside ...

I am so relieved to be here tonight to comment in a positive vein about our miracles. I remember once saying: if pigs could fly, all police stations in South Africa would be international airports. No longer is apartheid just a pigment of the white imagination. It is gone underground. But we not only have a unique country, but also a leader who stands out above all other leaders. There is no politician like Nelson Mandela. Because Nelson Mandela first went to jail, and then went into politics – and not the other way round!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: For many years I didn't have any black characters in my show, because I was white and Afrikaans. Until Desmond Tutu once asked me: 'Why am I not in your show?' And now he is in the show. And he came to see me do him and came backstage and said: 'Pieter-Dirk Uys, you are very naughty! That was very good, but you still don't have enough rings on your fingers!' And so he sent me these.

(He shows the rings)

What happened to all the international places named after the Mother of our Nation? The Winnie Mandela Pre-School Creche in London NW6? The Winnie Mandela Council Housing Estate? The Winnie Mandela roads and streets and cul-de-sacs? It didn't take the world long to change those names once uMama fell from grace.

Winnie: South Africa's most famous former. Our former activist, former detainee, former football fan and mentor. Former friend of Stompie, former Mother of the Nation, former ANC head of social welfare, former wife, former convicted felon, former deputy minister for arts-and-culture etcetera times two. And now they whisper that Winnie Mandela might be running for president in 1999. So I might still end up on Robben Island.

Winnie has the choice of 12 different wigs on the washing line, but oh no, she's being specially difficult. She's now knitting her hair. Thank heavens she has a small imagination when it comes to wearing costume jewellery ... *(He shows the earrings of small tyres)* ... 'Come on baby, light my tyres ...'

(PDU adds the costume for Winnie, plus turban)

(Light change)

WINNIE MANDELA: Oh my God, I am so exhausted contradicting my husband. I am trying to get him into court. When he is in court, I will also be in court. And when I am in court while he is in court, we'll both be in my court – the Court of Winnie, Queen of Africa! Amandla!

I am a cat with more than nine



PDU as Winne Mandela

lives. One minute I'm up; then I'm down. Then I'm good. Now I'm bad. I was hired, then I was fired and then again rehired. But then I resigned before I could be fired for having been hired in order to be fired! Now I'm just waiting for the next comeback. Who said there was no life after someone else's death?

The present situation in South Africa with its democratic confusions and violence is attracting so many people who want to become famous on our pain. We have pop stars singing songs about us. We have politicians fighting their elections campaigns on our backs. We have journalists writing prize-winning articles with their pens dipped in our blood.

I don't mind all the rubbish people write about me in the newspapers: 'Mugger of the Nation in New Scandal!' 'Winnie's in the Pool!' That's one thing we in the ANC never have to worry about, and that is a bad press. Most of our people still can't read. But beneath it all, I am just a poor defenceless woman, abandoned by her husband and rejected by the people she put into power. It's not been a very good year!

I need a lawyer and fast. You see, my husband is still separated from me, although he loves me very much. But our marriage breakup was all the fault of apartheid. We should bring the criminals to justice. I know Mandela promised De Klerk that there would be no Nuremberg Trials in South Africa. I agree. Why go all the way to Nuremberg when we can have our trials in Johannesburg?

I must keep the name 'Mandela' for future projects. He can have everything else: the house in Beverley Hills Soweto, the new Mercedes Benz. I just want the tyres. Which reminds me ... (*Turns to 'a person'*) ... darling, please check if my car is still in the shade. You can't miss it. It's the biggest, newest limo on the block, with a bumper sticker that says 'Fuck Capitalism'. And while you're about it, white boy, clean the windows, polish the bonnet and check the ashtrays for any cigarette stompies.

(*She turns to us*)

Do you like my outfit? I got it in New York when I was there to raise money for the RDP. The shop gave it to me free – after I took it. It was

so comfortable on Concorde ... oh come now, fair is fair! We blacks sat and watched whites buy new cars with taxpayers money. We blacks watched whites keep the best jobs for themselves, their families and friends. We blacks watched the whites bankrupt our land. Now it's going to be our turn!

Comrades, you ANC nothing yet!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: We survived Winnie Mandela as deputy minister of culture. Will we survive IFP Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi as minister of home affairs? He was supposed to now be in the show because I believe in equal opportunity satire: good guys, great guys, bad guys, mad guys! But he's not here. Gatsha Buthelezi walked out of this show. He's been walking out of so many things lately, we're never quite sure if he's ever in. And when he's in, is he in fact really 'in'? A show without Buthelezi is like *Alien* without that thing. I collected a great costume for him in London.

(He refers to what's on the washing line)

When I shopped about to find bits and pieces to make up a Zulu chief, Tony Sher lent me things he used in *Titus Andronicus*. Very African ethnic made in Taiwan. The Africa Exhibit on the South Bank gave me some offcuts of nice leopard skin material from Manchester. I passed a club in Soho and nicked a few feathers off a naked lady having a smoke in the alley. FW de Klerk left his glasses in the toilet at the high commission in Trafalgar Square and this traditional cultural Zulu weapon comes from the Channel 4 props room. Hey Presto! Zulu Chief Gatsha Buthelezi! Made in London nogal!

(Light change)

(PDU gets into his Buthelezi costume)

GATSHA BUTHELEZI: No, I don't have any time for any of this poppycock ... because as you know ... I haven't been consulted and I am absolutely flabbergasted ... you know, to find out that in spite of what I said to Dr Mandela ... you know ... I have been ignored in my demand for international mediation. I want Thatcher and Gorbachev and Carter and Kissinger to mediate and if I don't get them ... you know ... I will walk out.

Even though I am minister of home affairs, it is in an ANC-dominated government ... and as you know ... ANC is mainly Xhosa and I am a Zulu ... and Zulus don't like Xhosas ... and so I would like hereby and most forcefully to

distance myself from all the bullshit that is being bandied about in the international media ... you know ... that insinuates that the majority of black-on-black violence in KwaZulu/Natal ... you know ... is the fault of my Inkatha Freedom Party.

I am flabbergasted. As I have said ... and let me put it into a nutshell ... that as far as I am concerned ... and I know I speak for all parties involved on my side ... and I reiterate it again, you know, and not for the first time ... but notwithstanding, let me repeat here with conviction and say without contradiction that it's all bullshit. We Zulus prevent violence. We do not Xhosa it!

I can assure you that we have no weapons ... I don't know who sucked that out of which thumb. It's all bullshit ... it's poppycock ... I am flabbergasted. I have said to Dr Mandela: we Zulus have traditional



PDU as Gatsha Buthelezi

cultural weapons that are harmless: assegais, spears, machetes. They are our culture. A Zulu without his traditional cultural weapon is not a man. And a Zulu who is not a man, is not a Zulu; he is a Xhosa ... so stop calling us Nazis and thugs. I warn you! If you continue to bullshit us in this way, you will unleash forces in South Africa the end result of which cannot be foreseen.

I am a civilised man ... as I have said ... and I will do everything in my power to protect this democracy ... and not a Mandela, not a De Klerk, not the United Nations, not world opinion or a little bullshit cabinet post is going to stop me! God bless the government of national unity. We Zulus will always demand peace in South Africa. We pray for peace. We kill for peace. The biggest piece!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Mandela, the old Merlin, is doing magic and reconciling the nation. But on his right he has Buthelezi who wants a KwaZulu kingdom in Natal – his own Bantu Bosnia – and on his ultra-right, Mandela has AWB führer Eugene Terre'blanche, that fat drunk Nazi fuck who keeps falling off his horse in public, demanding a white homeland for Afrikaners. King Solomon would have a nervous breakdown, but not our Madiba.

(Light change)

(PDU gets into his Madiba shirt from the washing line; wig and sunglasses from a box)

NELSON MANDELA: We ... in the government of national unity ... are committed to a united South Africa. There can be no ... Afrikaner homeland ... or Zulu kingdom as far as the ANC is concerned. I have discussed the recent demands with First Deputy President Mbeki and

Second Deputy President de Klerk ... and rejected them in the strongest possible terms. However ... in the spirit of reconciliation, we agree with King Goodwill Zwelithini's demands for a separate Zulu Kingdom in Natal ... and we also agree with the AWB's demands for a separate Afrikaner Homeland ... which we think should also be in Natal. We therefore recommend a timeshare.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: It's so hard sending up a man like that in a show like this. It's like doing Mother Theresa in drag! I love him so much, I can't even do him properly. Nelson Mandela isn't just any old politician. He's not a Bill Clinton, or a John Major, or a Boris Yeltsin. He still means what he says. I'm not going to humiliate him. His wife does that all the time. So if that makes me a failed satirist, fine, I don't care.

One of the most difficult things to make sense of with a straight face, is how blacks and mixed-race Coloureds could have voted the former National Party of apartheid into power in the Western Cape. So there, in her little house on the Cape Flats, to which her family had been brutally moved by the Group Areas Act in the 1950s, is Mrs Petersen. It is a year since the 1994 election. She is giving an interview to the correspondent from a popular British newspaper.

(While PDU gets into the costume of Mrs Petersen, she calls to her grandson)

(Light change)

MRS PETERSEN: Pietie? Die man is vroeg. Sê vir hom ek is nog besig. En Pietie? Gee die man 'n koppie rooibostee en 'n samoesa. Jy wiet mos daardie foreigners vriet mos enigiets local. En Pietie, sluit op die hond. Hy't nog nie geëet nie!

(She is now ready for the interview; her accent is very specific)

Ag man, I'm sorry to keep you waiting. Oh, I see my grandson's given

you rooibos tea and a koeksister. Now before we start, please don't use my name in your story. I don't want the neighbours to know who I am. God, I don't want a petrol bomb through the front window of my lounge. I'm terrified of all the violence in this area. Oh, it's much worse than it was a year ago. With my own eyes I have seen gangs of ANC youths come from their township by train and stand waiting for our children outside the local school. And then throw them with a stone. And please don't tell me they're just reacting to years of apartheid discrimination. Most of them are only 12 years old. We Cape Coloureds all suffered under apartheid, just like the blacks; some of us even more because we've got brains. Now you people in the overseas newspapers always call us Coloureds 'mixed-race', even 'black'. Black? I'm nearly whiter than you! Look at my skin; it's not black, not even brown. It's pink! I would kick my kids out of here if they ever brought home a k ... a black to marry. It would pollute the blood. Listen, it's like a cup of black coffee. No matter how much milk you put in it, the black of the coffee lurks around the bottom just waiting to come out at any time.



PDU as Mrs Petersen

Anyway, my grandfather was German. You can see it my eyes and nose. German, not Bantu.

No man, this used to be a decent Coloured area before the ANC started moving in. I don't even shop at the corner café that was once owned by those friendly coolies. Now it's so black and so political. I won't go near the green grocer either. It's now run by communists who returned from exile in London! My dear, I know rubbish when I see it. I was even spat at by one of their children wearing a Communist Party T-shirt. One has to draw the line somewhere. I mean, it's not that I'm antidemocratic, or anything like that. It's just that I'm against ...

One misses the Jews who used to own those shops before they emigrated to America. You can't blame Jews with money in the USA for not staying here in South Africa. They say, when the Jews start packing it's time to go; when the Portuguese start packing, it's too late already. And those Jews that stayed behind because they say they've got as little as me, which is bleddie unlikely knowing how sly they are, they were the first to vote for this ANC/Communist government just to make more money. But look, I'm not anti-Semitic. It's just that I'm against ...

Now take the desecration of the old Jewish cemetery there by the station. At first they said it was the AWB-Nazis. Then they say it was the Communists. Kak man, the Jews did it themselves just to make us Coloureds look bad. Just because some of us are Muslim doesn't mean we're all Arabs. But I don't know any Jews myself, so really it's got nothing to do with me.

I suppose I was politically naïve until I found out that my children were being forced to boycott their classes at school. Ag no man, that's the bleddie limit. Intimidation of the children? Mandela keeps talking education, education, education, and then when we get the schools, they burn them down and try and kill the teachers. They built a new crèche here down the road from money donated from London: 42 places for black kids and 18 for the others. Who's that now? That's the Coloureds, the whites and the Indians. No *siz*, it's just not bleddie fair. No man, we've got to move out of this area. I don't want my kids growing up here and meeting someone from this area. I don't want

them to live in a slum. Oh yes, under this ANC affirmative-action Reconstruction and Development Programme, all the damn squatters are getting the best houses and then they bugger them up and refuse to pay for the water and electricity and then we sit with the bill? So call me a missionary in the jungle.

The November municipal election is just around the corner. If we don't fight like hell to win, we're finished. So I deliver New National Party election pamphlets into letterboxes at 4 a.m., because I'm scared I'll be recognised and attacked. There are animals around here, my dear, absolute animals. Not that I'm prejudiced against blacks. How can I be? My daughter-in-law is black. Not that I see her as a black; her grandfather was Italian. You can see it in her hair. Italian, not Bantu. She's not crazy about me being a member of FW de Klerk's New National Party – the party of apartheid, she says – but when she comes down here, she can see my point. Look, we all suffered under apartheid. But that's over now. Let bygones be bygones. Someone has to look after us Cape Coloureds, and it's not going to be the ANC or the Communists, that's for sure. So you see, it's not against her I am, you know, *per se*. It's against this whole system of proportional representation. Write down: 'Democracy will never work in South Africa because there are far too many natives.'

Ag, promise me you won't use my real name; Petersen. Give me an ethnic pseudo-plume. Call me Mrs Patel or Mrs Maponja. I don't want people to think I'm a racist. Not that I am one, but people might think it because of what you write, and I can't take that chance, you know. Not with the new grandchild coming and then the twins and the four kids from my daughter's first husband. God, is that the time? (*Calls*) Pietie? Slaan aan die teevee. Dis tyd vir my serial. (*To him*) Time for *Neighbours*.

No, let me be absolutely straight with you. We're all terrified of the day that the blacks start to overrun this country. And you must admit they've got far more children that we have. I know, because we are living here with the dregs of humanity, my dear, the dregs. But don't get me wrong. Come November I'm not going to vote again for the NP because I hate

the blacks in the ANC, or the Communists in the SACP, or the Indians in the PAC, or the Jews in the DP, or the others. I'll be voting for the New National Party because ... rather the devil you know than the devil you don't.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: From Mrs Petersen on the Cape Flats to somewhere in one of the many buildings in this country that house the huge and ever-increasing bureaucracy. In the Department of Public Works, Miss Joan Honeyball is winding up her day. She has been working in the civil service since the 1970s. She was looking forward to promotion, a pension and happy retirement. Then democracy happened. Joan is now too old, too rigid, too white; a dinosaur with tits; still the best tits on the 14th floor!

(Light change)

(He gets into Mrs Honeyball's costume from the washing line and wig/glasses and files from a box. She sits on a crate; two boxes are her desk)

MISS HONEYBALL: *(While she works at her papers and files, the phone and earpiece is clipped to her face; she is talking to Frikkie, a colleague in another department)*

Hello? Sayibona, dumela, Department of Public Works, Juffrou Honeyball wat praat? / O Frikkie, are you also working late? / It's 3.25! / Mr Mazibuko's working me like a slave. / Ja, I've got the pages here, man. Just have to be proof read. I faxed a copy to your department, okay? / Check the spelling; you know who wrote it / Mmmm, ja, Standard 4. / Fax through the changes. Mr Mazibuko wants it finalised ASAP. / Hey? / No, man, ma is still very sick, but she won't go back to the hospital. You remember last time she was there, she nearly died. The nurses were dancing in the parking lot and there was no one to

help her when she started choking. / Ja, lucky he was there. He put his finger down her throat and cleared her windpipe. He's working for us now / Ja, in the garden, half-day. Okay Frikkie, page one:

(She reads the document)

'Dr Pallo Jordan, minister of posts, telecommunications and broadcasting: A coffee table R3,237; Landscape work to garden terrace R34,000; Curtains and furniture R175,000 ...'

Which reminds me, Frikkie, remember those curtains we still got at R46 a yard from Ackermans? / They're still hanging, hey?

'Thabo Mbeki, deputy president: Mansion upgraded R1,500,005 ...'

'President NR Mandela: Renovations to Genadendal R1,400,659; Curtains and fittings R247,413; Furniture R220,687; Domestic quarters renovation R26,989 ...'

No man, that went in the burglary. / In the day they came! Cleaned us out. Even took the sugar, the M-NET decoder, the TV. All my records even! / Where? / What insurance? *Here*, Frikkie, you're funny hey?

'Trevor Manuel, minister of trade and industry: Workers' quarters internal repair and renovation R23,256; Curtains and furniture R134,2276 ...'

'Alfred ...'

Hey Frikkie, how do I say his surname? *Nzo*? / Is there not a letter missing? *Nzo*? / Funny name ...

'Alfred Nzo, minister of foreign affairs: Furniture R204.115 ...'

Where do you read that? / *(She shuffles through her pages)* *Nzo*? / True? / How must I know, I only work here / No man, who can buy a newspaper now at R2,00? / Frikkie, I only take home R48,00 after everything's been subtracted. / Oh? / You take home R120? Hell you're lucky ...

'Dr Sipho Mzimela, minister of correctional services: Curtains and furniture R252,000; Home repairs R42,000 ...'

'Ronnie Kasrils, deputy minister of defence: Domestic quarters R27,000; Curtains R71,000 ...'

Hey, isn't this Kasrils a communist? / So how come a communist has got domestics? / Oh, they're all communists?

'Joe Modise, minister of defence: House refurbished R134,350 ...'

'Jeff Radebe, minister of public works: ... Hey, that's our boss! ... Mansion refurbished R220,000; Light fittings replaced R13,000 ...'

Hell hey! Lots of light ...

'Mbongema Ngema, head of music, Natal Playhouse: For anti-AIDS HIV education play R14 million; Extras R3 million ...'

No, that's from the Department of Health budget / No, they can't pay nurses or doctors or anything, you're right! / No, they put out tenders and they say this was the cheapest. / No, I swear to God, Frikkie. (*Laughs*) Ja, pull the other one! / No, I have to take my leave, or else I lose it. / Ja, the Seychelles. That would be nice, hey? You could go in my private plane! / No man, I'll just get out the deckchair and put it in front of garage if it doesn't rain / ... and if we can get the car out of the way. It's still on blocks standing there for nearly a year. / No man, please come and look at it, Frikkie. We just can't pay, okay?

'Derek Hanekom, minister of land affairs: Home renovations R130,000.' Winnie Mandela? No, she's not on this list. Funny hey? / Hey? / Shhh! / Who told you that? / Never mind, Frikkie, I've still got that floppy disc with the virus. Just one more of this affirmative action kak and the floppy goes into the system. / Ja, my contribution to reconstruction and development. Imagine tomorrow's headlines? Civil Service Declared RDP Positive!

(She laughs till she coughs)

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: From the 14th floor to the city of fourteen car hijacks a day, to somewhere in the Joburg suburbs to meet Ms Nowell Fine.

(PDU goes to the washing line and gets Nowell's outfit together)

You know her. Big hair. Large rings. Eternally young, with an accent that could shatter glass. The Jewish-South African princess? Or who we

lovingly call our kugels. My kugel is Nowell Fine. She's been with me since 1981, suffering the indignity of being a liberal in a fascist country. She would say: 'There are two things I can't stand about South Africa: apartheid and the blacks.' She wanted to emigrate, but couldn't get all her money out. And then Mandela walked out of jail and into her life. She joined the ANC. She's alive and well and living in Johannesburg where she is reconstructing and developing like it's going out of fashion. Here's another moment of democratic transparency: you choose – do you want the kugel to have hair? Or a beret with Madiba's image on it? When she wears this beret to the supermarket, she hopes no one will mug her, rape her or rob her in the parking lot, because they can see who's her friend. Okay, the hair wins. If the beret won, I'd still do the hair, because I'm in charge. That's also democracy.

(PDU changes into Nowell Fine, who through her monologue puts on a full makeup)

(Light change)

NOWELL: I'm absolutely finished!
(She studies her face in the hand mirror) Oh my God, I've got such a hangover from yesterday's ANC Woman's League meeting. When will I learn not to mix chardonnay and kaffir beer. No, I'm sorry, if anyone asks me: 'Nowell Fine? Are you enjoying your new democracy?' I'll just vomit! I'm having a terrible time. Firstly, my maid Dora is on a go-slow. Won't do the washing, cleaning – just watches TV all day. After everything I've done for that girl?

(She adds rouge to her cheeks)



PDU as Nowell Fine

When I found out she was a Xhosa, I learnt Xhosa. IsiXhosa! For three years, every Wednesday between four and seven I studied Xhosa. Those clicks nearly paralysed my tongue, but I did it. And the day I knew enough Xhosa to go up to Dora and surprise with a Howzit Dora, she answers in Zulu! Then on top of it, the garden boy's in therapy. Plus my husband just phoned me to say that our construction company has been banned from putting through tenders to build houses for the RDP, because of affirmative action. What affirmative action? Wake me when it's over! It seems our board of directors is too white. Yes, it's me and my husband! Have you ever heard something so racist in all your life?

(She adds eye makeup)

And to put the cherry on the cake ... no, that sounds too Eurocentric ... to put the mopani worm into the putu pap, I now find out we have got squatters on our front doorstep! Me! After everything I did for the struggle! No, please don't get me wrong. I don't want to make an issue out of this. So I went down to them this morning and said very civilly: 'Sayibona. I'm Comrade Madam from the big house.' I said: 'I just want you squatters to know that we are all on your side. I mean we all know you were promised houses and cars and degrees and transparency in government and all that shit, and now you're still living in cardboard boxes like garbage! It's a damn disgrace and we're all very sorry. Okay? But you can't have a squatter camp on my doorstep!'

(She adds eyeshadow to the upper lids)

I said: 'Look. It's not that I'm against squatters. Some of my best friends have squatters.' I said: 'It's just that when my mother died, she left me this piece of land in her will. And if my mother finds out that there are kaffirs squatting on her land, she'll platz on the spot.' I tried to negotiate with them like any other decent South African. I wrote out a cheque. They didn't know what it was. I waved a new R200 note at them; they just waved back. I thought of giving them my watch, but they'd already taken it last week. I said: 'Please understand. I'll help you move. I'll find you another nice place to live. In someone else's backyard! Just get the fuck off my land!'

(She adds glue to the two false eyelashes)

My God, I mustn't raise my voice ... my tubes ... maybe that's why my silicone's gone sour. I just can't calm down. Nothing helps. Aromatherapy makes me sneeze. Valium's a joke. Even the dog spits it out. All I'm left with is Prozac. But how many Prozacs can I take in an hour? So call me old-fashioned. When I'm stressed out like now, I just fall back on an old therapy that's helped me through traumas for the last 30 years. Yes, after two husbands, four children, 24 maids and last year's election, it's simply just sitting down like now and putting on loads of makeup! So forgive me. I can't think straight until I can see a real mouth. *(Adds lipstick)* Better ... so where was I?

(She adds the left false eyelash)

Oh yes, schlepping around the cardboard boxes trying the blend in. I didn't even speak English properly. I didn't want them to accuse me of Eurocentricity, or racism or, God forbid, class. I was so politically correct in my conversation with those squatters that half the time I didn't know what the hell I was talking about. Then suddenly I had a brainwave. In my own brain! I remembered my husband's phone call, telling me that our company letterhead was too white for business. And so I said: 'Excuse me, have you people heard of affirmative action?' Not a word, but an eye appeared in the cardboard's hole. I spoke to it. 'Affirmative action means you become the king of the castle thanks only to the colour of your skin.' Not a word, but another eye appeared. I realised I had a captive audience. So I said: 'Comrade Madam is going to make you an offer you can't refuse. Think about the big car, a white chauffeur, a mansion, a maid, a pool, Jacuzzi, servants, pets, aromatherapy, Hydro? You'll live like a politician,' I said, 'All you have to do is become managing director of our company. Okay?' Not a word.

(She adds the right false eyelash)

And then I realised how insensitive I was being. Shame. These were severely disadvantaged people who didn't know how to talk to a highly sophisticated modern woman like me. So I went down on my knees and put my eye to the hole and said very slowly so that they could understand. 'Are you squatters shy because you can't read or write?' I think they

nodded because the box shook. 'Thank God,' I said, 'we'll read and write for you. All you have to be is managing director. Be black. Be beautiful. Be on time once a week, and leave all the boring little details to us. Okay?'

(She adds mascara to both eyes)

Solved! We'll have our token schwartzes on the letterhead. We'll get the biggest RDP contracts to build houses for the disadvantaged that will only collapse in 1998 by which time we're safely in California. And in the meantime, we'll get rid of all this cardboard shit and put up a casino. Isn't that outstanding? Not so fast. This is a democracy. They must now also negotiate. So I wait. They talk in at least eight of the 11 official languages and I think Zimbabwean thrown in too. They find a forum; a quorum. I said: 'You're driving me crazy! I've got to be at the hairdresser!' I said: 'Here's my spare cell phone with my number. Once you've decided what sort of car you want, give me a call. If my maid Dora answers, don't talk. Just breathe heavily with intent.' No, Dora must be frightened off. She wants to be our managing director and she can read and write. And that's our fault. She makes me so nervous and in my own house.

(She adds red lipstick. She studies her appearance)

Outstanding!

(The makeup is complete. She picks up her phone)

Sayibona, Dora? It's Madam ... Yes, Dora, Madam upstairs ... No, I don't want to get out of bed. Stay, stay, go slow and *zei gesund*. I just want to know: has the chauffeur gone down to the garage? Please fax down to the garage and tell Philemon to bring the new Mercedes to the front. I want to go down to the squatters ... No, Dora, I don't bend over blackwards any more. I want them to see me at my best and I have some old clothes for them ... Not your size, doll ... Yes, I am wearing my ANC colours, so no one will hijack the car ... Yes, Dora, Madam's got her gun and the condoms in her bag as always. I'm on my way. Tell Philemon I'll be down in 10 seconds ... Don't be so cheeky, Dora ...

(She ends the call)

(She adds perfume)

You see, the blacks have taken over. Good news and bad news. The bad news is: the shit's hitting the fan. The good news is: the fan's also not working.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: One night after doing that sketch, a woman came up to me and said: (*In the same accent as Nowell*) 'Pieter-Dirk Uys, I don't know why you keep doing that character, because I don't know anyone who talks like that, I swear to God!'

President Mandela has a framed photo on his desk. A picture of him with a glamorous middle-aged white woman. It's not Baroness Thatcher, or the Queen. Or the Pope. Or Mother Theresa. It's the most famous white woman in South Africa. Her name is Evita Bezuidenhout and she doesn't exist. And here she is:

(*PDU transforms into Evita Bezuidenhout. The following is her address from the London season*)

(Light change)

EVITA: Baie dankie, liewe vriende. Thank you dear friends. Sayibona, dumela, molo, hello. And to our Saudi Arabian friends: shalom. My name is Evita Bezuidenhout and I'm so happy to be here in London. Last time I was here was to help Mrs Thatcher pack up 10 Downing Street. Who knows, I might just be in time to lend a hand to Norma Major. Then I was here as the South African ambassador to the independent homeland republic of Bapetikosweti.

You might remember there were eight pieces of Bapetikosweti dotted all over white South Africa. No, shame, there was a ninth little piece, but it washed out to the sea during the floods. Even in those days there was such an interest here in our homelands policy. Maybe a homeland

for the English, one for the Scots, one for the Welsh and two for the Irish? But now the homelands are no more. The white minority regime is no more. Apartheid is no more.

The first year of our nonracial, nonsexual, nonsensical democracy is over. And we in the National Party are still part of the future. Of course the New National Party is now open to all races and at our election meetings, you'll see people queue up to join: blacks queue up here, whites here and Coloureds there – and the Indians fax through their cheques. We are now a respected multiparty democracy, and thanks to Mrs Thatcher, you are now an acknowledged one party state. How quickly shoes

end up on other feet. And that's why I am here in London, to thank all of you for everything you did to kill apartheid. No, if it wasn't for you, we'd still be locking up political prisoners and suffering under those horrible sanctions.

Now our old political prisoners are our cabinet ministers and business has never been better. So thank you for pointing out the folly of our ways. It's because you refused to eat our Outspan Oranges and Granny Smith apples. It's because you wouldn't take holidays in South Africa as you couldn't afford them. It's because you wouldn't drink our excellent wines until you decanted them into Spanish wine bottles. And now we have as our leader Nelson Mandela and you have ... what's his-name ...? Now you don't have to worry about us anymore, but concentrate on becoming part of Europe, if they'll have you, shame. And because we



PDU as Evita Bezuidenhout

are back in the Commonwealth, if things really get too unbearable here – too hot, too dry, too intolerant, too many foreigners – you are welcome to emigrate to South Africa. Of course, in the old days crime didn't pay, but don't worry, today it's an investment.

(She refers to the cardboard boxes)

So thank you on behalf of all our people, especially the millions waiting for homes, for your generous donation of this magnificently equipped cardboard city fresh from the South Bank. We didn't realise you had alternative living down to such a fine art. When our people squat in these boxes, they will smell the River Thames and really feel at home.

(Her cell phone rings)

Excuse me ... hello? Ah, President Mandela! ... I'm having a lovely time here in London ... Yes, I popped into the high commission in Trafalgar Square today to check if your official portrait is up in the entrance hall ... well, it's not there. Maybe they've never heard of you? Never mind, I spoke to someone at Buckingham Palace. They'll try and have that statue on the column in Trafalgar Square named after you. They just have to add the surname ... Yes, I know that Nelson only has one eye and one arm, but who can see from the ground?

I'll try and get you some nice shirts at Harrods ... No, you can take the Number 6 Springbok jersey off now ... Look after yourself, Madiba. Remember to take your eye drops ... two eye drops every four hours ... no, not four eye drops every two, otherwise your eyes go blue and we don't want a black president with blue eyes! ... yes, we love you too. All of us here love you.

(Holds up the phone so he can hear the audience clap)

Aren't we lucky? Not only do we South Africans live in the most beautiful country in the world. Not only we share in it some of the most generous people in the world. Not only do we have the world's youngest and most dynamic democracy, but we have as our leader Nelson Mandela. What more could we wish for? All we have to do is just make it work. We don't need a crystal ball to see what will happen to our country tomorrow. The future of South Africa is certain. It's just the past that is unpredictable. Amandla. Vrystaat!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: I have met Nelson Mandela three times during the last year, each time dressed as Evita Bezuidenhout. The last time was in Bloemfontein at the ANC conference last December. I did a cabaret for them. Talk about the ultimate audition. I was waiting in the wings for my turn, wearing the new flag dress and merging in with the shadows, when I heard the familiar tone: *Evita? Evita!* He came surging across. We embrace and hugged. I could count his ribs. I thought: Oh God, the old man's getting so thin. Who's cooking for him now?

I said: 'President Mandela, we can't go on meeting like this. Every time you see me I'm wearing a dress!'

'Don't worry, Pieter, I know you're inside!'

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

Curtain Call

THE END

(In the New York production, PDU changed from Evita into US Foreign Secretary Madeleine Albright and then President Bill Clinton)

(PDU takes off the Evita hair and adds the Albright wig with the Clinton wig inside, plus a suit jacket with a big brooch)

PDU: Just before leaving to come here to New York, I watched a video of a Bette Davis film. And it hit me like a bolt out of the blue: Madeleine Albright! So here she is:



PDU as Madeleine Albright

(Light change)

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT: Firstly, as secretary of state, we wish to state that we, the acknowledged policeman of the civilised world, will not tolerate South Africa's continued involvement with terrorist states like Libya and Cuba. We have made it clear that the full might of the American people will be used against those who disobey. However, we will not break off relations with Pretoria, because President Clinton needs those photo ops with Nelson Mandela to boost his credibility. We will not send the US armed forces like we did in Kuwait, because South Africa has no oil. We will find a safer solution to impose our will democratically.

We'll just wag a finger and say: Naughty Nelson naughty.

Secondly, as far as the Middle East situation between those Jews and Arabs ... between us Jews and those Arabs, is concerned, what can I say? Maybe it's time that the Arabs and the Jews started living together like Christians.

And thirdly, as far as Paula Jones's allegations with regard to President Clinton's anatomy are concerned ... hang on, here comes the president ...

(PDU takes off the jacket and removes the Albright wig, leaving the Clinton wig on his head)

(Light change)

BILL CLINTON: Hi! My name is Bill and I'm American. Yes, I do have a very special tattoo on a very special private place. To the casual onlooker it reads 'Kansas'. Only one woman can see it to read 'Arkansas' and that woman is not Paula Jones. That woman is my wife... eh ... (*Thinks*) Hillary!

(BLACKOUT)

(*Lights*)

PDU: I have met Nelson Mandela three times during the last year, each time dressed as Evita Bezuidenhout. The last time was in Bloemfontein at the ANC conference last December. I did a cabaret for them. Talk about the

ultimate audition. I was waiting in the wings for my turn, wearing the new flag dress and merging in with the shadows, when I heard the familiar tone: *Evita? Evita!* He came surging across. We embrace and hugged. I could count his ribs. I thought: Oh God, the old man's getting so thin. Who's cooking for him now?' I said: 'President Mandela, we can't go on meeting like this. Every time you see me I'm wearing a dress!'

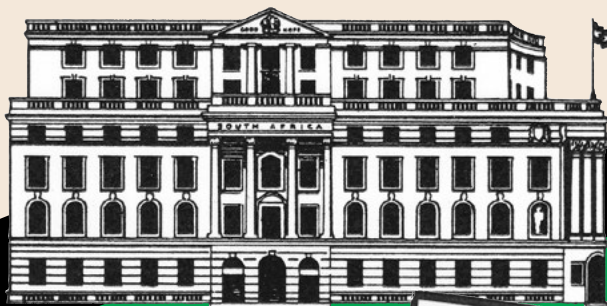
'Don't worry, Pieter, I know you're inside!'



PDU as Bill Clinton

You ANC Nothing Yet (1995) – the set
Right: Brooklyn Academy of Music,
New York
Below: South African House, London
Bottom: Tricycle Theatre, London





YOU ANC NOTHING YET
AN EVENING OF POLITICAL
HUMOUR WITH
PIETER-DIRK UYS

THURSDAY 8 JUNE 1995
AT
SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE

IS THE GRASS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE?

In South Africa, how easily political shorthand can put across a point. Explaining is the death of performance – rather toss a rusty blade of facts hidden in the cotton wool of entertainment to the audience and how surprised they are to see the bloodspots on their hands. My international onslaught, *You ANC Nothing Yet*, started with one performance at South Africa House in Trafalgar Square, London, before diving head first into the full season.

In an extraordinary evening, likened by Pieter-Dirk Uys to playing ‘Fiddler on the Roof’ in Nuremberg, Uys performed his new show ‘You ANC Nothing Yet’ at the South African High Commission. The satirist who has been attacking apartheid for years, was clearly overwhelmed by the experience, as was the audience, many of whom wondered how the colonial paintings of white bosses looking down on their black workers still had such a prominent position on the walls after a year of Mandela’s government. At the end the spic-and-span wife of the Deputy High Commissioner came on stage to say thank you – or was that just another of Uys’s creations? – *Time Out* (London) June 1995

South Africa House:
The ambassador and the High Commissioner



Evita Bezuidenhout with Cheryl Carolus

'YOU ANC NOTHING YET' - An evening of political
humour with Pieter-Dirk Uys

Pieter-Dirk Uys was born in 1945 and has outlived official apartheid that came to be in 1948. He started irritating politicians with his plays from 1973. In 1981 he launched his one-man total onslaught against the regime of the narrow-minded, the bigoted, the amateur and the fool.

Pieter-Dirk Uys has been on a self-imposed honeymoon with the government of national unity (GNU) since the election days in April 1994.

This honeymoon is now officially over. He introduces you to the new life under a world-approved democratic government: South Africa today - truly an equal opportunity satirical chorus line. The first year of the GNU is over.

Comrade, you ANC nothing yet!

You ANC nothing yet! is his first revue in democracy. During the performance Uys introduces familiar shapers of the new South Africa. He demonstrates what has been with PW

Botha. He inspires what is now through President Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Speaker Frene Ginwala and Ms Nowell Fine. He veers from the sublime to the ridiculous - from Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout, his famous creation, to Mrs Winnie Mandela, a creation of her own undoing. Truly a revue of reconstruction and development with tongue in cheek and finger on trigger.

THURSDAY 8 JUNE 1995 AT SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE
LONDON.

A few wonderfully idiotic things stick in the mind, enshrined forever as examples of how wrong one can be. Those crates of tins of tuna stored in the garage before the big election of 1994? We're still chewing the remains of that. I heard of a family who cemented up their house, each window and door, and left the country for Australia before 27 April. Sheepishly they came back a year later. A bush fire had burnt them out in Sydney. When they got back their shrine in Johannesburg, the bricks were still intact. Squatters had just turned the fireplace into an entrance.

Uys's talent is to poke fun and puncture pomposity rather than to tear to shreds; it makes for a soft show, but maybe that's all South Africa can take at the moment

– *Time Out* (London) June 1995

So, how to put my London audience in the know-how. Remind them of all the murmurs in 1994 (*the previous year*) of new government corruption and theft on a grand scale? Well, they were all correct. We are now one of the most crime-ridden countries in the world. But the divorce of Michael Jackson from Elvis's daughter makes page one. Today anything is believable. Some in leadership are known criminals, and that's because a few guilty heads haven't been chopped off with a guillotine during lunch hour in front of the city hall.

In 1995 we have civil corruption and a state gravy train. We have broken promises and feeble excuses for not delivering basic services. We have two million homeless and four million without any structured employment. Most of us can't read for meaning. A small percentage of the population has most of the wealth. There's hard-core pornography available at the corner café and real swearing live on TV. We have a bigger civil service than we've ever had and most of it cannot deliver, because no one knows how to work it. To some in the audience, it sounded like home.

31 AUGUST - 23 SEPTEMBER

From South Africa

Pieter-Dirk Uys

in the full length version of his sell-out revue

YOU ANC NOTHING YET!

Don't miss the chance to catch the genius impersonations and biting wit of Pieter-Dirk Uys on his return visit. Renowned for his irreverent mud-slinging at the old South African government, Uys now skilfully pokes fun at the good guys - Mandela's new regime - and all those living under it.

You don't have to be familiar with South African politics to enjoy the sheer fun of Uys' journey through the lows and highs of life after apartheid...

"WICKED WINNIE MANDELA, A BOUNCING BISHOP TUTU AND A BRILLIANT IMPERSONATION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW PRESIDENT MANDELA" *Sunday Times*

"UYS' FROlicking DESMOND TUTU...EXCELLENT" *Evening Standard*

"GLORIOUS CREATIONS" *The Guardian*

RETURNING BY POPULAR DEMAND

The flyer for the Tricycle Theatre, London

The route down from the moral high ground is a slippery slope indeed, and South African satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys has found that if you wait around at the bottom of it for long enough, eventually everyone will join you there

– *Ham & High* (London) June 1995

It was a particularly South African kind of night, full of a weird kind of nostalgia and sentimentality. A little close to the bone. Uys has a real talent for getting under the fingernails, especially those of his South African audiences.

– *Jewish Chronicle* (London) June 1995

I had a riveting year feeling the pulse of the nation and reproducing that heartbeat on overseas stages. So much for the assurance that ‘democracy wouldn’t need satire’. So much for my plans to retire and work in the garden growing spinach. The government in Pretoria had always written my material. I paid tribute to them for giving me the gems like PW Botha, a total onslaught, a River Rubicon and a new Suid-Afrika! One just couldn’t have made up a Group Areas Act or the Publications Act – and I didn’t have to; I just had to break the law for 15 years and report back from the stage. Hopefully it helped end a system of bad government.

Funniest Boer in town. *You ANC Nothing Yet* is his first live show since the elections – enough time for the Government to provide him with new material, a task it accomplished with ease.

– *Morning Star* (London) June 1995

Top comic hits target every time. No one is spared his razor-sharp wit

– *Paddington Times* (London) June 1995

As we went from a criminal-driven dictatorship to a criminally insane democracy, I could see a remarkable difference in the reaction of the public to my work, at home and abroad. My local support had come

from mixed-race Coloureds, Indians and whites. Blacks had little access to television, most didn't even have electricity. Overnight, as far as the eye could see, alternative housing bristled with poles and the shimmer of cables. Every tin shack had a TV aerial. The potential audience grew in 600 days from a few million to a huge nation. Even outside the laager, I couldn't keep up with the new material being shovelled my way.

I was happy to perform in Afrikaans in Turnhout, Belgium with *You ANC Nothing Yet*, a celebration of our third year After Madiba – and the democratic chorus line on show in the UK, Europe and the USA glittered with targets.

He is famous for proving, apparently singlehandedly, that white South Africans have a sense of humour and can laugh at themselves. In the wake of apartheid, that's akin to Nazis being able to smile after the fall of Berlin. It's as well, for a satirist of a society that has undergone such a change, that old prejudices die hard; or that the whiff of them at least lingers on. *Plus ça change.*

– *The Guardian* (London) June 1995

I had Winnie Mandela, the mugger of the nation, sitting in the wings and preparing for her 1996 comeback, flanked by her toyi-toyi boys, her Xhosa Nostra. President Nelson changed costumes that defied wardrobe logic: from the Number 6 Springbok Rugby jersey to the Bafana Bafana soccer shirt to a Cape Coon Carnival multicoloured suit. Jay Naidoo did his tango on the broken glass of RDP promises. Speaker Frene Ginwala stored the statues of past National Party clowns in Parliament's basement. Pik Botha reinvented amnesia and made it the new perfume of political correctness. Archbishop Tutu sat in his glass cathedral, pelting the guilty with truth and reconciliation. KwaZulu-Natal was our own Bantu Bosnia and the last outpost of the Laurel and Hardy empire of Chief Gatsha the Good and Premier Frank the frank. Even the Western Cape was struggling. Someone was laughing all the

way to a Swiss Bank. But at least it was no longer illegal to point out the illegal. If you don't like it, say so. Vote so. Do so. At last we were all in the same boat, as the captain once said on the *Titanic*.

Pieter-Dirk Uys was severely inconvenienced by the arrival of democracy, peace and justice in South Africa. But in order to invest his funny take on the new regime with real weight, Uys needs something strange and potentially disastrous to happen. A Winnie Mandela presidency would do nicely.

– *Evening Standard* (London) June 1995

So I told my audiences: Now that sanctions are gone, if you find yourself a tourist at a fashionable South Africa resort with a lot of extra ice cubes floating in your cocktail, it might not just be good local service. Maybe we have hit that fatal iceberg, but no one's been on duty to notice. After all, it takes more than two to toyi-toyi.

FROM THE CAPE FLATS TO BROOKLYN HEIGHTS VIA CHANNEL FOUR

(The performance of You ANC Nothing Yet was recorded by both SATV and the UK's Channel 4 on the same afternoon in the Coloured township of Manenberg on the Cape Flats. PDU was asked to write a background piece to introduce British viewers to the experience they would view on Channel 4 on South Africa's Freedom Day, 27 April – two years into democracy.)

You ANC Nothing Yet opened at a theatre in Cape Town exactly one year after the dramatic birth of the new South Africa in 1994. Two years later, it would be screened on British television on 27 April, South Africa's Freedom Day. The original show was a celebration of our democracy. But actually it's also just a konsert. Standing on stage with a few cardboard boxes of props and a washing line of clothes, I presented the new enhanced chorus line: President Mandela and his ex-wife, Winnie; that crafty old survivor from the bad old days, Pik Botha, still a minister in government; and Desmond Tutu, doing his tango of delight in front of the firing squad of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Audiences in the new South Africa love laughing at their leaders. Memory is faint. Everyone had been against apartheid, a bit like Germany in 1945. No one had supported Them! Some whites laughed louder because the targets on stage were no longer white and Afrikaans.

Some blacks frowned because the butt of my jokes were often black and far from pure as snow. It became a full-time job keeping up with the politics of the day, as former icons of the liberation movement went whizzing by with their fists clenched in the national cookie jar.

During the apartheid era, laws like the Group Areas Act emptied the city of Cape Town of its people of colour. The population of District Six ended up huddled on the sand dunes of the Cape Flats, a vast expanse of arid land that joins what Sir Francis Drake called 'the fairest Cape in the whole circumference of the earth' to the rest of Africa. During the 1980s these townships on the Cape Flats were the bloody core of revolutionary passions. Violence became the means to end apartheid. Then poverty, gang warfare, bleakness and fear turned places like Manenberg into no-go areas for most Capetonians.

Except, on a Saturday morning, 13 April 1996, we set up our show in the Dutch Reformed Church hall in Manenberg, just a block down the road from the great Star-Wars-like superstructure known as Nyanga Junction. Why there? Because as a performer I have always sought out the trenches of entertainment. During the 1970s and 1980s the government censors banned most of my work, so normal outlets were closed to me. I had to create my own theatrical reality: five cardboard boxes, a 90-minute show without interval or blackouts, and a car with its engine running backstage.

In those bad old days, it often felt like doing *Fiddler on the Roof* in Nuremberg in 1930s Germany, but it was more important to perform in the marble palaces of boer culture, like the State Theatre in Pretoria, than to play in a township preaching to the converted. In 1996, on the second anniversary of our freedoms of speech, one could now perform anywhere in South Africa freely. In Cape Town I would have an enthusiastic audience, mainly of whites, many Coloureds, a few blacks and some Indians. Up in Johannesburg, maybe more blacks and fewer Coloureds. In Durban, more Indians and fewer whites. But I wanted to go onto the Cape Flats and share my konsert with the people there. And through the lenses of Channel 4, to also share it all with the foreign people in the United Kingdom.

And so it happened, but not as we had planned on paper. There were two shows. The matinee, due to start at 2:30 p.m. only started at 4 p.m. because the posters said: come between two and four! The afternoon audience comprised of some young people from the university, cynical but informed, plus a smattering of old ladies who thought *Evita Bezuidenhout* was our answer to Joan Collins. And mothers with their babies. Some were breastfeeding. I had a gurgle of infants crawling around the church hall floor, shaking their rattles noisily and squealing their comments in a cacophony of 11 official languages. I thought I could hear a chicken squawk. Someone's supper?

The stage was lit for a TV shoot, bright and hot. The hall had no ventilation. I had small radio mikes jammed into every dark and mysterious place on my person. During the matinee, gremlins played havoc with the PA system, but thanks to drama school training, one could project one's voice to the back wall, for the babies on potties to hear. My heart sank deep into my heels during that two-hour ordeal. Most of the material was way off the mark. These were people who didn't have the luxury of watching TV. They didn't read newspapers, because they cost too much. They possibly didn't think a crooked democracy was as funny as I did. After all, they'd been the ones who had been promised the earth. Now, they had to be satisfied with a half-moon.

When the show finished, however, this was not the end of the entertainment for *The People*. The organisers had arranged for a local choir to perform with our blessing. We'd expected them at the start of the fun, not at the end. We were excited to see local talent, but with less than an hour to set up the second show, the warblers were thanked and despatched.

Take Two loomed. The sun had gone; Table Mountain and Devil's Peak sat hunched on the icy-pink horizon, framed by the sharp barbed wire clusters that surrounded the church. Were we in prison? There were armed guards patrolling the parking area to prevent theft, murder and mayhem. This was Manenberg after dark. Police sirens mingled with the odd scream, then laughter, hoots, shouts. An SAA Boeing

hissed overhead on its way to land. Mangy dogs barked. People spoke. Movement happened in the dark. A shooting star shot.

This could be Harlem USA. It could be Brixton UK at a push. It could be near Sarajevo at a shove. No, it was Manenberg on the Cape Flats, home to some, homeland to others. The evening audience now filled the hall, a well-dressed, middle-class, mainly Coloured gathering. Smart mothers and fathers, stern grannies in Muslim veils, shiny children on and in their best – relatives and survivors of those who had been forcibly removed from their homes by the Group Areas Act. When during the show as part of the ‘transparency’, the audience was asked ‘who voted Nationalist?’, many put up their hands without irony. It is hard to explain how the National Party of apartheid was voted back into power in the Western Cape, democratically, thanks to Coloured support.

FW de Klerk had been on an election junket right in this very church hall three days before and was mobbed with love and support. There is very little I have to make up about my country. What you hear is what you get. Even the female icons in the show don’t actually exist. Evita Bezuidenhout ended the show with a purring phone call to ‘her’ Madiba. Her designer democracy and transparent hypocrisy brought the house down. They loved her here on the Cape Flats. She was not a man in drag; she was an all too real white madam, and she knew it and played to the audience as one. In fact some of the first audience returned to see Tannie Evita in action again.

The second show went without hitches. The babies slept; the radio mikes didn’t develop a life of their own. Even the odd audience participation fitted in with the agreements and nods. There was the occasional ‘hallelujah’ that one usually associates with a religious meeting. By midnight everything was unplugged, unknotted, rolled up, packed in, loaded, secured and removed. As we drove away from our township Palladium experience, exhausted, a knot of fans still stood by the barbed wire and waved for autographs. Evita smiled back, leaving for the next unreality.

Sunday afternoon saw a fundraising cocktail party in aid of three ANC candidates in the upcoming municipal elections, which had been

delayed by six months in Cape Town because of bureaucratic bungling and confusion. The city was going to the polls on 29 May, in six weeks. I was asked by ANC Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa to assist him in presenting the occasion. It was billed as *An Evening with Cyril and Evita*. Having already enjoyed interviewing Comrade Ramaphosa for *Funigalore* and remembering how well he got on with 'her', off we went for the next phase of this 'typical' South African weekend.

The gathering was predominantly white as the candidates, all white, were standing in former white areas. Those there of colour were Important People: comrades, cabinet ministers, secretaries, chairpersons and bosses. The rest of us palefaces had enough change in our pockets to pour into the coffers of the party at the later auction of, among others, Nelson Mandela's autographed autobiography and Evita's signed copy of hers. I got changed in the ladies loo that had been kept apart for Evita. On the door a sign: 'Evita/Private'; no lady ventured near. I put on my famous white woman and ventured down to appear at the end of Cyril's speech.

'Didn't I hear that speech six months ago, Cyril?' Evita murmured as they kissed. The audience roared, the cameras rolled, the evening was on. Evita was still a true Nationalist and admitted it: '... and as a Nationalist, I can tell you that we are so confident of regaining power at the polls, that we will happily help you in the ANC to raise money. Shame, there's none left; it's all gone ...'

She can say things I couldn't dare, and she does. The newly-appointed minister of finance, Trevor Manuel, was due, but didn't pitch, an old ANC ailment. 'African time?' purred Mrs Bezuidenhout. 'I must congratulate Trevor on his new job. Goodness me, the rest of the world's finance is digital, while ours is still manual.'

She then auctioned a R150 bottle of red wine for R1000, '... or else I'll buy it and give it to Eugene Terre'Blanche ...' She also refused a tycoon's offer of R1000, if she showed off her tits. There are some things that a chap can't do in one Cape weekend!

And then *You ANC Nothing Yet!* was invited to perform at BAM 1997.

THE NEW YORK TIMES / Thursday November 20 1997

Review by Lawrence van Gelder

BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC

WITH FLATTERY FOR NONE AND SCORN FOR MANY

Humor, like wine, often travels poorly. So it is a pleasure to report that the volatile cargo of satire packed by South Africa's comic conscience, Pieter-Dirk Uys, has arrived in the United States in most savoury form.

This vintage material has been uncorked as part of the 15th Anniversary New Wave Festival at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, where its all-too-brief run ends on Saturday. This one-man show, titled 'You ANC Nothing Yet!' is well worth the trip, although Mr Uys (pronounced ace) is quick to confess that he really could be spending his time doing something else while he's here: seeing the real Africa in 'The Lion King'.

Brimming with potent irreverence, Mr Uys's work is a refreshing jolt to the sense of Americans dulled by sitcom humor and inhibited by the bland norms of correctness in a nation afflicted with political apathy. It is also a showcase for a fine actor, gifted political humorist and courageous humanitarian.

Mr Uys has honed his wit on the grindstone of oppression. And having survived the apartheid Governments of South Africa, he does not shy from turning his scorn on the shortcomings of its democracy, among other targets.

Like all great comedians, Mr Uys is no respecter of persons, from Nelson and Winnie Mandela, Bishop Desmond Tutu and former presidents and prime ministers to Michael Jackson, President Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright.

But before he skewers them, he first dissects himself: middle-aged, fat, bald, Calvinist, Jewish and queer are the words he uses. Mr Uys uses words well and without inhibition.

Unsparring in his targets, he is a man who says he remembers Michael Jackson when he was black, disdains the old Jew who escaped the Holocaust only to sell 'whites only' signs in South Africa, ridicules visiting blacks searching for their roots and saying 'Oprah was right', and observes that Nelson Mandela is an unusual officeholder, having gone to jail before going into politics, not the other way round.

Mr Uys views the world's willingness to forget the horrors of the Holocaust, of genocide in Bosnia and of torture in South Africa as a collective case of Alzheimer's disease. And he likens the South Africans who now deny supporting apartheid to the post-World War 2 Germans who denied casting their votes for the Nazi party.

In the most chilling and poignant portion of his show, Mr Uys recreates a meeting at a Michael Jackson concert in South Africa between a Jewish communist back from exile and the man who subjected him to hideous torture under the old regime. Having confessed that his crimes were politically motivated, the torturer now has amnesty for life. And he is a security agent for President Mandela. 'Maybe the new Government wants to learn from an old master,' he says.

Performing in the cabaret-like setting of the Hillman Attic Studio at the Brooklyn Academy, the rotund rubber-faced Mr Uys stands on a small stage before a clothes line hung with his costumes and scarves, many of them in the yellow, green and black colours of the African National Congress. He has a

box filled with wigs and accessories, and women are among his most vivid characters.

He has brought with him his most famous creation, Evita Bezuidenhout, who expresses her happiness these days at being able to admit while visiting the United States, that she is an Afrikaner and no longer pretends to be an Australian. And he has studded his show with some biting local and topical references to Brooklyn, Marv Albert and Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani.

As advertised, Mr Uys is a national treasure, and in 'You ANC Nothing Yet!', he stimulates the mind and invigorates the conscience while tickling the funny bone.

BEING THE WOMAN I SOMETIMES AM



Evita Bezuidenhout at Parliament

The middle-aged man in the shiny black dress with silver inlay sits in the back of a stretch limo. Through tinted windows he can see the ornate wrought-iron gates they are passing through on the driveway to the office of the president of the new South Africa. The man in the

dress glances up at the new flag waving its cheeky rainbow of colours in the crisp breeze of the Cape winter, so different to the former bureaucratic mixture of three little flags on orange, white and blue.

The man in the dress glances down at his hands, clenching a small clutch bag in his lap. His nails are varnished a deep red. There are two diamond rings on his fingers, one on the pinkie of the right hand, the other glittering snugly against the gold marriage band on the third finger of his left hand. His hands look feminine. His legs are crossed and shaved to just above the knee, where no one will notice some hair. He glances at the small mirror foxily fixed to the velvet upholstery of this luxurious chariot. The face of the most famous white woman in South Africa stares back at him. Her eyes are greener than his, her lips fuller, her face longer. Her hair is supposedly tucked away under a soft black scarf. The huge white and black picture hat with its broad rim encircles her head completing the picture. The man in the dress with matching hat whets the lips of the woman he is made up to be. Through the veranda of heavy false eyelashes, he sees the grand pillars of Parliament slide by on his left. He can see ahead television cameras waiting.

The man in the dress remembers the many times in his life when he had watched, mainly on television, how the white Afrikaner leaders of his land had made this same journey: the architect of apartheid, Dr Hendrik Verwoerd and mousy wife, Betsie; Boere führer BJ Vorster with his quiet Tini; the imperial PW Botha and his blowsy Elize; reformer FW de Klerk and his stony-faced Marike. They would stop in their state cars exactly where the man in the dress will now get out in high-heels. They would go up the stone steps to enter the hallowed halls of Parliament, where no man in a dress would ever be welcomed, let alone tolerated.

The long car glided to a halt. He knew the cameras were trained on the opening door. He took a deep breath and melted safely into the disguise this famous woman offered him. This was not the arrival of a man wearing a dress; it was the appearance of a superstar in their midst. She got out of the long white car. She was wearing her original Chris Levin jacket, flowing into a perfect line round the back, out to

below the waist. The silver threads in the shiny black material glowed. The jewellery at her throat sparkled. The matching earrings highlighted the classical line of the Chris Levin hat round her head. Evita Bezuidenhout had arrived at Parliament dressed to kill.

Her eyes looked up at the forbidding exterior of the iconic building. This is where in the bad old days apartheid made its laws. This is where the new South Africa was now establishing its democratic self.

Evita Bezuidenhout started walking up the flagstone pathway to the steps where the Speaker of Parliament was waiting to greet her. The man inside the dress, behind the lipstick, under the hat, in control, but never ever seen, whispered to himself, 'Eat your heart out, Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd!'

It was too surreal to understand and too absurd to believe. You had to be there, watching Mrs Bezuidenhout carry her heavy bust into Parliament followed by the television cameras to see where she would choose the place to leave her concrete likeness. For real.

You can see episodes of *Evita's Funigalore* on YouTube. You could even follow the high-heeled foot-steps in the pages of the book of the series, and read what was said in each of the television episodes between Evita Bezuidenhout and her (in)famous, new political friends.

All this happened in a week of birthdays. My 50th. Oh my goodness, why did the person I know as me then still feel 12? It was also the 60th birthday of this female character who still lives in a box under the dressing table back-stage. For that excursion into the Harry Potter land of rainbow



Evita Bezuidenhout carrying her bust
into Parliament

democracy, I lost 10 kilos so that Mrs Bezuidenhout would look gorgeous while doing her job. Twenty-seven years later I still diet for this woman who doesn't exist!



Evita Bezuidenhout posing with (top centre) Jan Smuts (above left) Hendrik Verwoerd, and (above right) JG Strydom

EVITA'S BUST EXPOSED IN PARLIAMENT



Evita and Frene Ginwala in the foyer of the National Assembly

I spent a fascinating day in 1994 with the Speaker of Parliament, Dr Frene Ginwala. Ambassador Bezuidenhout interviewed her for *Evita's Funigalore* in an episode that saw this elegant Indian lady dressing the most famous white woman in a sari under the portrait of former State President PW Botha in the parliamentary dining room. Presenting Parliament with Tannie Evita's bust in October 1995 was the logical follow-up.

HER SPEECH:

‘Sayibona, dumela, kunjani, hello. Being here in the Houses of Parliament, I was going to start out of habit with “*Dames en here*, ladies and gentlemen”, but that is no longer correct. So let me affirmatively address you all collectively: Comrades, democrats ... and others; persons of political clout and members of the media; Madam Speaker; members of Parliament; the Rainbow Nation.

‘Today is indeed a very suspicious occasion. A white Afrikaans woman’s bust is to be unveiled in parliament. Truly this has never happened before, and it is my privilege to be so honoured. Of course I know this parliamentary building very well. I was here when most of you were still in jail or in exile.

‘I came here for the first time in the mid-1950s, a year after marrying my husband Dr J.J. de V. Bezuidenhout. He was the NP MP for Laagerfontein. I was merely his wife. In those days, Madam Speaker, women didn’t speak. They just stood one step behind their husbands. But slowly I realised that behind every strong politician in the National Party stood a stronger woman: silent, polite, smiling, grateful, sometimes overweight, but never overpowering. The bearers of children and the wearers of large wide-brimmed hats, these were the parliamentary wives, who kept their husbands more or less sane, and so saved this country from a fate worse than unbridled nationalism.

‘I am happy to represent them here today. Although it may not be fashionable or politically correct, I pay tribute to them. The bust unveiled here today could, therefore and in fact, represent the collective bust of all the parliamentary wives of the last 100 years. But it is my bust and I must bear full responsibility for it.

‘Comrades, believe me when I tell you that I have seen and heard everything here in this Parliament: Harold Macmillan’s wind of change speech; Hendrik Verwoerd’s pronouncements of that new miracle cure for a country too dark with ethnicity, a cure called apartheid. I saw them carry Dr Verwoerd out of the assembly chamber feet first. I saw John Vorster pick up the bloody crown of karoo thorns. I saw PW Botha scoop it out of the gutter of scandal.

'I was here when FW de Klerk copyrighted the new South Africa; when he decided to free all political prisoners from jail and all the banned political parties from limbo, and allow them entry to parliament from where they can never escape. I am happy to know that I will be here in parliament to prevent history from repeating itself.'

The media reaction was expected as a tongue-in-cheek mention on page six, certainly not as front page news.

PAGE 6 OF *THE CAPE TIMES*, 27 OCTOBER 1995:

'Mrs Bezuidenhout said the statues of former leaders still gracing the halls of Parliament should be locked in cells on Robben Island and the whole place called "Boerassic Park".'

PAGE 1 OF *THE PRETORIA NEWS*, 27 OCTOBER 1995

SAPA REPORT: 'Evita takes her place in Parliament'
Cape Town

Evita Bezuidenhout (alias Pieter-Dirk Uys) brought smiles and laughter to a large crowd of parliamentary workers, officials and tourists yesterday, when 'she' presented a bust of herself to national assembly Speaker Frene Ginwala. Looking her elegant best in a black lace dress with golden trimmings, the former 'ambassador' to the mythical homeland of Bapetikosweti told the gathering filling the old House of Assembly's lobby and its overlooking balconies: 'It is my bust and I must take full responsibility for it.'

She said to guffaws of laughter, that it was 'too heavy to remove and the jewels have been specifically glued on to the surface to discourage affirmative shopping.' As she unveiled the plaster-of-Paris effigy,

made by Cape sculptor Willem Branca, she proclaimed: 'Nkosi Sikelele, ons vir jou, Afrika Boera, Amandla/Vrystaat!' Thanking her, Dr Ginwala said she was not sure where in the parliamentary complex it could best be placed. But she invited Evita to investigate the premises and make a suggestion herself. Dr Ginwala said she believed it would be only the fourth representation of women in the parliamentary complex, after the portrait of Helen Suzman and of two women in a group photograph of the 1935 Union Parliament.

Asked over tea and koeksisters what her plans were, Evita said she had three grandchildren to look after and they were teaching her how to toyi-toyi. She said she had no ambitions to be a politician. 'I am the wrong colour,' she explained. Asked where next she intended accrediting herself as an 'ambassador', she said: 'I hope not Oranje!' Dr Ginwala added with a mischievous smile, that it could be leaked to the press that Evita was indeed looking to Oranje, a white Afrikaner 'homeland' on the Orange River.

Evita presented Dr Ginwala with a copy of her new book *Funigalore: Evita's real-life adventures in Wonderland* for the parliamentary library. It describes her recent series of television interviews with the 'new leaders of our democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, nonsensical South Africa'.

The Afrikaans media's tongue was more in cheek than cheeky:

DIE BURGER, 27 OKTOBER 1995

KAAPSTAD: Evita neem stelling in Parlement in.

Die beeld is te swaar om te verwyder, en die juweliersware is spesiaal vasgegom om 'regstellende

inkopies' te ontmoedig. Met die woorde het Evita Bezuidenhout, die land se gunsteling politikus, met fladderende wimpers 'n borsbeeld van haarself onder gelag van parlementêre personeel en toeriste onthul. In die portaal van die ou Volksraadgebou het die satirikus Pieter-Dirk Uys gister die soveelste keer die politieke ys in die land gebreek. Want nog niks is verander nie in die gange, wat oorheers word deur reuse portrette van mans met pruie en togas uit bedelings van weleer.

Uitgevat in 'n swart kant-rok met goudgekleurde afwerkings, het sy die eerste beeld van 'n vrou - en van 'n fiktiewe karakter - aan die Parlement geskenk. Die klein gipsbeeld van die opgedolliede gewese ambassadeur van Bapetikosweti is deur die Kaapenaar Willem Branca gemaak. As vrou van die NP LV van Laagerfontein (nog 'n mitieuse plek), ken sy die Parlement goed. 'In daardie dae,' het sy aan Dr Frene Ginwala, Speaker, gesê, 'het vroue nie gepraat nie. Hulle het twee tree agter hul man gestaan.' Maar sy het gou besef dat hulle sterker is. 'Stil, beleefd, glimlaggend, dankbaar, soms oorgewig, maar nooit oorweldigend nie. Hulle het hul mans min of meer by hul volle verstand gehou, en die land gered van 'n lot erger as onbeteulde nasionalisme'. Hoewel dit nie modieus of polities korrek is nie, bring sy hulde aan hulle.

Dr Ginwala het gesê die Parlement aanvaar die beeld in die gees waarin dit gegee word. Sy het Evita - 'die enigste persoon wat ek sedert my terugkeer ontmoet het, wat erken dat sy apartheid ondersteun het' - gevra om haar te help soek na 'n geskikte plek. Daarna, aan 'n teetafel met koeksisters en *samoesas*, het Evita gesê sy sal die rol speel 'so lank as wat politici 95% van die begroting vir hulself vat.'

Columnists had a field day:

WEEKEND ARGUS, 28/29 OCTOBER 1995

EDITORIAL

Always ready with an 'uys' up his sleeve, Pieter-Dirk Uys has served another publicity ace by having Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout's bust ensconced, with due formalities, in the portals of Parliament. A little levity is good for us all - not least for those who might have a tendency to take themselves rather too seriously. This particularly cunning little stunt will help to put Uys on a high ... without impairing the dignity of Parliament. Of course, it was just a stunt, wasn't it?

The Argus, 14 NOVEMBER 1995

TAVERN OF THE SEAS: BUST UP!

I must admit I find it puzzling and more than a little strange that Evita Bezuidenhout, one of the few South African women who genuinely has no bust, should have her bust displayed in the Houses of Parliament!

Even the readers jumped on the bandwagon:

CAPE TIMES, 3 NOVEMBER 1995

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'According to the *Oxford Dictionary*, to transvest is to clothe in other garments, especially those of the opposite sex. Therefore, the *Cape Times* report on Friday, of a bust of the fictitious 'Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout' on display in parliament, was

terribly sad. The comment that it would probably be retained at parliament due to 'her' popularity with many politicians, is evidence of how these people are unable to distinguish between fact and fiction, between rainbows and reality. That portraits of those stern politicians of a bygone era will soon be removed, shows the hypocrisy of this generation. Whatever failings those men had, and whatever sad laws they passed, they did not bring into legislation the abolishment of the death penalty, the sanctioning of abortion or the promotion of pornography. Is this a case of the pot calling the kettle black? Or, to be politically correct, the iron cooking utensil calling the kettle dark and unshiny?'

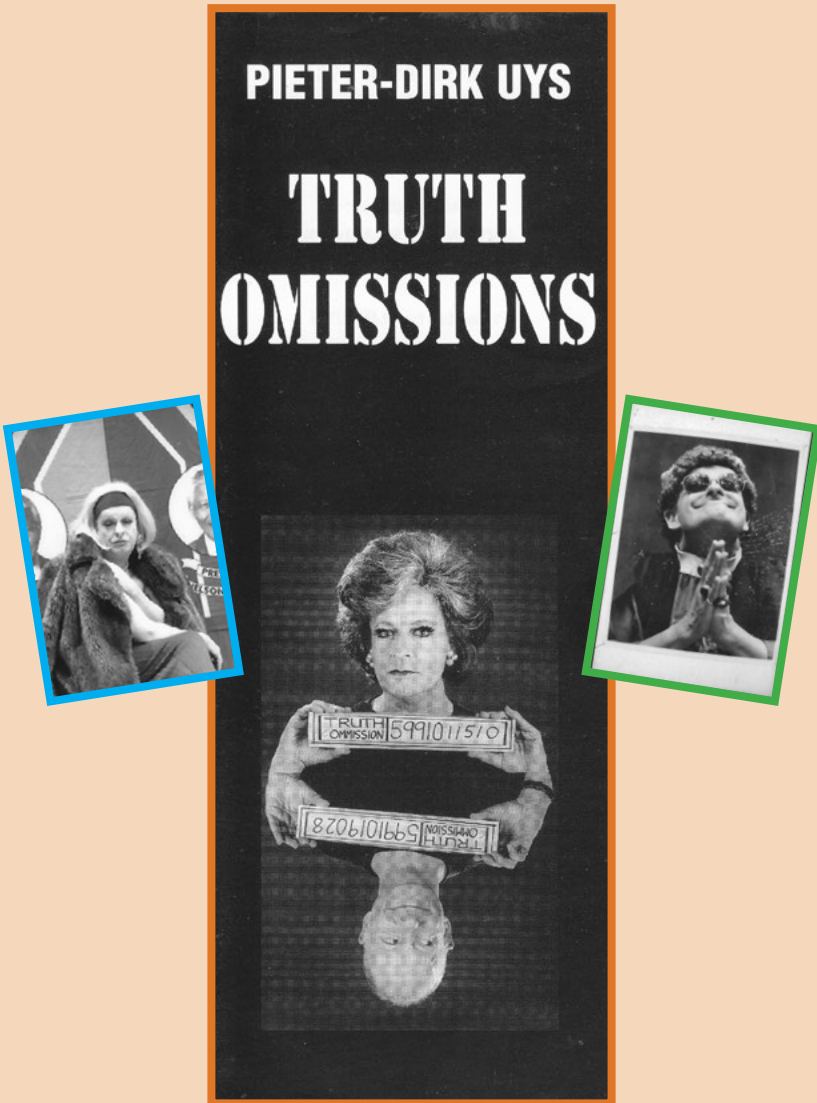
(Chris Nel / Villiersdorp)



Evita's bust finally placed alongside that of Hendrik Verwoerd

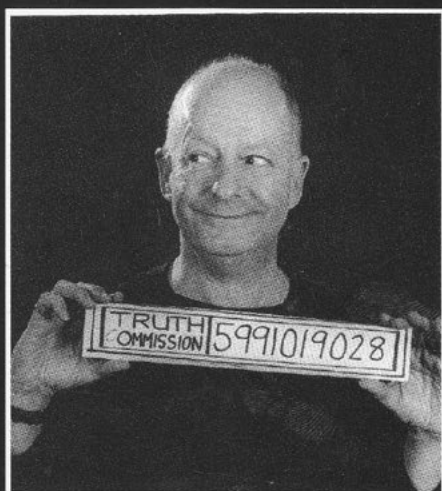


1995
TRUTH OMISSIONS



PIETER-DIRK UYS'

TRUTH COMMISSIONS



JHB CIVIC THEATRE
2 - 7 OCT
1995

NUREMBERG AND ALL THAT JAZZ

Fifty years after the Nuremberg trials, South Africans stood on the eve of their Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in search of what happened in the past and to demand that the guilty step forward. To be forgiven? To be punished?

On the other side, the former terrorists and tired ANC rebels, who now rest in the armchairs of power, seek the truth. How else would our people find out what happened to them and their loved ones during that era of darkness and fear?

There's nothing funny about having a TRC, but happily we had a man with a great sense of humour leading it. Archbishop Desmond Tutu was probably the only person in the land who could sit in a glass house and throw stones.

People accused of crimes against humanity, all determined to be seen telling the truth their way, started queueing up to get onto the stand where they could passionately admit to pulling triggers, hiding bombs and cutting up bodies, but only because someone else told them to do it.

'We were only obeying orders,' they muttered. The jackbooted survivors of the shadowlands of apartheid, toyi-toyi with clenched fists in the air. They all have blood up to their elbows, but they tell us these are the 'long red gloves' of their overalls. And we must believe them for the sake of peace.

Of course they'll not be packed off in disgrace with the facts branded

across their faces. They'll get away with murder, as so many others just like them have done all over the world. It's the grey clerk who pushed the pen for 56 years, doing his dreary job without question, who'll get pointed out. And probably rightly so. We, the people, were responsible.

And suddenly you can't find any white person who voted for apartheid. The white policeman says he often fought the system secretly by looking the other way and not applying the law. The black councillor insists he subverted the bad policies. The Indian doctor swears he sewed up the terrorists. The Coloured journalist says he sneaked in quotes from banned persons. The white parents say they told their children the truth. Of course they did. We were all in The Struggle.

When we look back to those bad years, when the lights of our civilisation seemed to be dimmed forever, one can see how truth, as we think we know it today, passed through its three stages. First, it was ridiculed, and as a result the bearers of that truth were imprisoned, banned and killed. Then, it was opposed as being a lie, the subversion of goodness, even Satan. And now it is regarded as self-evident? It is said that the man who fears no truths has nothing to fear from the lies. But then it takes two to speak the truth – one to utter it and one to hear it.

The sinister minister of police during the 1980s said it all as only he and his kind could: 'The public is entitled to know what is happening around it. But at the same time, it is equally entitled to the truth.' We had looked forward to seeing this man on the stand. When he did, his eyes filled with krokodil trane as he repeated over and over: 'This is the pure and simple truth, Your Honour. I just didn't know what was going on!'

Same old story. Truth is rarely pure and never simple. And fifty years after the Nuremberg Trials, we saw history not repeating itself, but taking tragedy and turning it into farce.

How could the TRC find the truth when so much evidence was destroyed? Files were shredded, names redacted, the past hurriedly forgotten. While all we wanted was to win the bid for the Olympic games.

PLANNING A PARTY

We've all at one time or another been hauled before some kind of truth and reconciliation commission. As small children, made to stand in front of a giggling class with an angry teacher. 'Did you bring that frog into the room?' Of course you didn't. It was the biggest bully in the class who put it down your shirt. But if you pointed a finger at him and told the truth, your fate was worse than the teacher's punishment. That bully was prepared to beat you to a pulp. So you lied and admitted to something you didn't do, and got a few red stripes on your bottom. The lie became the truth.

What ends up being the truth? What you think happened? Your point of view, which is white, while someone else sees it as black?

Within two years of that wonderful Inauguration Day – 10 May 1994 – the facts of a 40-year-old horror story called 'Apartheid South Africa' made way for the fiction of a reborn democracy. But people have died, gone forever, and the empty spaces they've left are facts that cannot be ignored by their loved ones.

Forgive and forget? Forgiving is the gift of someone who knows there is life after a death. Forgetting is the curse of a nation which doesn't want to remember the deaths that gave it life. The sacrifices of the past have made the present possible.

If one grieving mother can find out what happened to the son she has not seen for 15 years, no matter how terrible, the Truth Commission has earned its place in our democracy. Far too many mothers have no tombstone at which to weep. Their children vanished. Who did this? Who is responsible for their pain? Someone crippled those families.

Politicians signed papers. Persons in uniform delivered envelopes. Dominees in black said it was okay. How can anyone find humour in the TRC?

The 'fun' lay not in its findings, but in the hypocrisy. PW Botha made it clear. 'I did nothing wrong,' he said, wagging a finger and licking a cracked lip. Ons eie Pik insisted he had nothing to confess. Former security police monsters pointed fingers at their old bosses. For others it became fashionable to say sorry, the in-thing to admit guilt and expect to be forgiven, get on the stand, show your humanity, and get away with it. Here are a few easy steps on how to say you're sorry and not mean it.

1. Hint that throughout the years you voted for the National Party, you were pro-liberation but anti-ANC.
2. Suggest you had a black lover at university during the 60s, 70s or 80s.
3. Find an old *Free Mandela* T-shirt and say you'd had it hidden under your mattress.
4. Drink neat vodka and say you visited Russia.
5. Practise the double handshake of liberation so that you don't get your fingers in a knot when you meet an ex-terrorist.
6. Apply to be allowed to confess to the TRC. Send many rambling letters. They'll probably just ask you to fax in your crimes.
7. Plead ignorance. Of everything. How should I know? I supported the Struggle, but had to keep a low profile because I have five children! – OR – I think I was overseas when that happened! – OR – I was definitely overseas when that happened! – OR – I must have been overseas when that happened! – OR – I am a Christian! – OR – I stand accused on behalf of my fellow man. Blame me for his sins.

This latter comment is impossible to argue against. Have a video camera ready to record when you say it. Who knows, it might even get you onto the TRC itself one day.

(This is the first of three articles written for a national newspaper during May 1996 in preparation for the season of *Truth Omissions*. They were all rejected as ‘unsuitable under the circumstances’. It was also suggested that I replace the articles with something nice about Evita Bezuidenhout. That wasn’t difficult.)



Evita presents Nelson Mandela with koeksisters at a pre-election ANC rally in Retreat, Cape Town (Photo: Benny Gool)

ANNOUNCING A NEW SHOW

This was the press release announcing *Truth Omissions*, the latest Pieter-Dirk Uys foray into the political minefield. It was not published by any of the major newspapers. But a picture of Evita Bezuidenhout with her wrists in handcuffs made the front pages with ease.



Evita in handcuffs

The whole country was gripped and convulsed by the TRC. Nothing could be less entertaining or further away from humour than the daily horrors of the evidence presented to Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his commissioners. But there were issues left out of the proceedings, past realities that also needed to be addressed - with a good dose of bitter laughter. While we have heard the tragic accounts of loss and bereavement, mostly at the hands of soldiers, policemen and the brutal guardians of the apartheid order, too little was said about the commanders who gave the orders. These were the truth omissions.

If criminal actions took place under the mantle of security, someone in power must have activated them. Where were those old Broeders, the führers of the Boere Reich? We remember them clearly. We had often seen them on television, wagging fingers and licking lips: a state president, a prime minister, a cabinet minister, a general, a managing director - all tin-pot gods during their days of glory and now quietly hidden behind amnesties and pardons and drawing multiple pensions, while special forces veterans wrote questionable versions of their history with themselves starring as Rambo.

If there is any humour to be found in horror, it is the exposure of the hypocrisy. The guilty are now affronted at anything that reeks of 'sordid old apartheid'. TRUTH OMISSIONS would rip off the masks of compassion and remorse and show the villains for what they were: ambitious, charming, amusing, familiar, fearsome, fearful and frightfully funny. The show, with a title that spoke for itself, was the next opus - shockingly satirical and horribly hilarious.

PREPARING THE PARTY

Prime time TV was full of pain, filled with the faces of widows and mothers creased by grief as they relived the horror of their losses. A numbed audience reflected our inability to understand what had happened. How could these things have taken place among us?

Imagine going to a mortuary and identifying the remains of your son shot multiple times by the South African police? Then finding the contents of his skull removed and his head stuffed with plastic and paper? As Mrs Nonceba Zokwe did. Or Mrs Mhlauli, who asked the TRC to secure the return of her husband's hand, hacked off by his police killers. His body was never found, but his hand was still kept in a glass jar at a police station. All in the name of Christian Nationalism, commonly known as the policy of separate development.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, that small remarkable dynamo of energy and passion, lead the TRC from one blood-soaked memory to the next. A special room for weeping was set aside wherever the Commission sat, but it was seldom used. The weeping took place in the hall, among the people and led by the Archbishop.

Rumours of a mass grave outside Cape Town, where victims of police shootings were buried in a large sandy hole, had been going around for decades. Now people came to the fore, fearless and angry, to see the bodies thrown into that grave in 1961, beneath the massive freeway that links the Mother City with the rest of the continent.

We'd seen mass graves in Bosnia on CNN. We'd seen numerous documentaries about the death camp at Auschwitz. We'd been exposed to the excesses of Idi Amin and Pol Pot. But Afrikaners doing the same?

Good Christian people with civilised backgrounds and decent educations? The sons mothers would be proud of look innocent and wholesome. Some even have funny nicknames, like *Bommel* and *Slang* and *Spyker*. But fine pearls of sweat on their foreheads belie their casual stance. They are in a race against time, for as they stand in wait for that official stamp of forgiveness, their nicknames are being mentioned to the Truth Commission.

Meanwhile the mothers of the sons they have murdered have kept their names in their hearts for 20 years; fathers crippled by their loss cannot forget who ended their dreams. So come to the wailing wall, one and all. Nail their names to the cross of sacrifice. Let a nation realise that out of the cribs of privilege can creep the poisonous snakes of torture and pain. Our young security men took the evil tentacles of apartheid across the land, even beyond our borders. Some smilingly took to terrorising the families of their victims. And while we whites now watch from the safety of our democratic indemnity, we cannot but sense that we too are responsible. We didn't pull the trigger, but we paid for the bullet. We didn't bury the dead in unmarked graves, but we knew and we didn't raise a finger.

Someone was in charge? So where are the former all-powerful leaders of our land? Those who sat in the highest branches of the tree and signed executive orders? They're not all dead. Some are in quiet retirement; some are on parole; some are on Valium, but most of them are just sitting pretty in seaside homes, bitter and poisoning our democracy. Some even brag in whispers about their deeds, or curate their memoirs, living lavishly off huge state pensions still being paid to them for the bloody work they did not so long ago.

PW Botha was prime minister and then state president. He was the boss. Why was he drawing two huge state pensions? Why was he not under arrest? Pik Botha was a minister in the racist government of John Vorster; PW Botha and FW de Klerk. He was drawing pensions for three past jobs while he was also a salaried senior minister in Mandela's government. There sat the former apartheid ministers of police and security, and defence and education and welfare and finance and health

and environment – all still walking the streets of South Africa, free to spend the spoils of their plunder. They are all responsible for the death of Mrs Zokwe’s son. They are to blame for the disappearance of Mrs Mhlauli’s husband except for that part of him still in a glass jar.

People forget quickly.

(This, the second article written for a national newspaper during May 1996 in preparation for the season of *Truth Omissions*, was also rejected as unsuitable under the circumstances. It was suggested I replace the articles with a nice recipe from Tannie Evita Bezuidenhout. That wasn’t difficult.)



Evita preparing her dried fruit bobotie

DRIED FRUIT BOBOTIE

Evita's recipe for reconciliation

INGREDIENTS

6 dry apricots	10 ml turmeric
6 dry apple rings	1 kg minced beef
125ml seedless raisins	2 thick slices old white bread,
cold black tea, orange juice or	crumbed
water	50ml vinegar
2 large onions cut into slices	salt and pepper
200 ml boiling water	2 eggs
25ml cooking oil	125 ml milk
15 ml curry powder	fresh lemon leaves (optional)

METHOD

1. Soak the apricots, apple rings and raisins in a bit of cold black tea for a while
2. Drain the fruit, halve the apricots and cut apple rings in pieces
3. Preheat oven to 180°C (350°F)
4. Grease the ovenproof dish well
5. Boil onions in water till soft
6. Add cooking oil and fry onions lightly
7. Add curry powder and turmeric and fry lightly
8. Add minced meat, breadcrumbs, vinegar, salt, pepper and soaked fruit, then mix lightly with a large fork
9. Leave mixture to simmer; stir slightly
10. Place mixture in ovenproof dish
11. Beat eggs and milk together and pour over mixture
12. Fold the lemon leaves into triangles and push them into the mixture here and there
13. Bake bobotie on the middle rack for 45 minutes, or until the egg custard has set
14. Serve hot with rice, chutney and sambals, starting with the President and work your way to the left

PIETER-DIRK UYS

TRUTH OMISSIONS



Written & Performed by:
PIETER-DIRK UYS

Truth Commission Interrogator:
PROFESSOR MAVUSO

Photography by:
ANTON GELDENHUYS
RUPHIN COUDYZER

Presented by: **P.D. UYS**
PRODUCTIONS

THERE WILL BE AN INTERVAL

Dear Member of the Audience

Tonight is your chance to subject Evita Bezuidenhout to a Truth Commission. How transparent is the most famous white woman in South Africa? You can ask your question during the second half of the show from your seat, or write it down in this space and put it in one of the marked boxes on the edge of the stage during interval.

MY QUESTION IS:

.....

.....

.....

MY NAME IS:

.....

V.R.P.

Truth Omissions

Performed in the Baxter Concert Hall Cape Town * the Monument Theatre Grahamstown Festival * Civic Theatre Johannesburg * Civic Theatre Bloemfontein * Darling Arts Festival * Hermanus Whale Festival * Guild Theatre East London * Opera House Port Elizabeth * Nico Malan Theatre Cape Town * Playhouse Opera Durban



THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

Filamon

Evita Bezuidenhout

PW Botha

A Coloured policeman

Pik Botha

Desmond Tutu

A soldier in Soweto

Nelson Mandela

Nowell Fine

THE STAGE SETTING

A Truth Commission setting: a table, chairs, TRC items

THE SHOW

VOICEOVER ANNOUNCEMENT: *Ladies and gentlemen, dames en here, appearing tonight before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission here at the (Name Venue) on (Day and Date) where she will expose all: Comrade Evita Bezuidenhout! (Pause) Calling Evita Bezuidenhout! The Truth Commission calls Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout!*

(Light change)

(Filamon is voiceover only during the first half. He appears in the second half with Evita)

FILAMON: Why is the commission being kept waiting? Where is she?

(Evita enters breathlessly)

EVITA: Oh, the traffic is horrible. Your Honour, ladies and gentlemen of the commission, members of the free press and others, observers, monitors, fellow South Africans of all races, sexes creeds and cultures: I apologise for being late on this suspicious occasion, but I have come straight from a state dinner at President Mandela's residence. I was in charge of the catering as standby first lady, but I come here with a plea to you from my heart as a former white South African, as a reformed Nationalist, a Christian, a democrat, a wife, a grandmother – indeed, a mere woman.

We did not know. We did not know what terrible things were happening in South Africa during the so-called apartheid era. We did not know! I cross my heart and hope to die ...

FILAMON: Be still. *(He reads the summons)* 'Evita Bezuidenhout. Born Evangelie Poggenpoel on 28 September 1935 in the little town of Bethlehem in the former Orange Free State of apartheid South Africa. You have been summonsed here to this place by the people of South Africa. To appear at this Truth and Reconciliation Commission where you will: A) Give reasons why you supported and upheld the policies of apartheid for most of your life ...

EVITA: Apartheid? Me?

FILAMON: B) Apologise to the people of South Africa for the sufferings imposed on them by your insensitivity ...

EVITA: I always gave my maids the day off on their birthdays ...

FILAMON: C) Beg their forgiveness!

EVITA: For what?

FILAMON: D) Return the millions you and yours stole from them and ...

EVITA: How dare you!

FILAMON: ... promise that you will never, never, never and never again believe that you are better than they are just because of your sex, race and creed.

EVITA: You are violating my democratic rights.

FILAMON: Are you prepared to strip away the facades of boer hypocrisy and show yourself to the people as you really are? What is your plea? What is your decision? What will you do?

(MUSIC: *Evita strips down to PDU*)

(*Light change*)

PDU: It's only me! Evita Bezuidenhout doesn't exist. Really. I'm just a fat bald middle-aged drag queen from Cape Town. Shame – and you thought you'd see Tannie se tiete? Look! I'll show them to you.

(*He takes out the rugby socks and puts them on*)

The boys in the Springbok rugby team also have them. No Evita Bezuidenhout. How can someone appear before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission if they don't exist?

FILAMON: That's the biggest problem we have. It seems we can't find anyone who existed in the past. In fact, we can't even find a past. Shouldn't you get dressed? Or do you want us to believe that you do these shows just as an excuse to wear woman's clothing?

(*PDU gets dressed*)

PDU: Better keep this on ... anders val my pêns en poephol op die grond. Brought a white shirt. Very unfashionable. Nelson Mandela never wears white. The dark suit that I used to wear on stage between 1981 and 1994 while doing those old Afrikaner Broederbond Nationalists, my bread and Botha. The trouble with poking about in the past like this is that the costumes don't fit. Sensible men's shoes. After 15 years in high heels, flat shoes are hell. Right. I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

FILAMON: So help you God?

PDU: So help me Mandela.

FILAMON: Are you ready to present your evidence to this preliminary hearing of the first sitting of the fourth interim committee attached to the transitional court hereby in session and herewith associated to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of 1996 at present being held under the chair of Archbishop Desmond Tutu?

PDU: (*Mutters:* Under his chair?) I do. Your Excellency, honourable comrades of the Interim transitional standby substitute jury. In order to have a Truth Commission, we need the truth. In order to find the truth, we must acknowledge the lies. In order to expose the lies, we need the evidence. That is the problem. Where is the evidence? The official files have been destroyed. The confidential documents have been shredded. The acknowledged murderers now have amnesty for life. The confessed torturers have indemnity against prosecution. The former terrorists and freedom fighters, the former racists and fascists, are now MPs and cabinet ministers. The former convict is a president; the former president is not a convict.

FILAMON: Where do you suggest we look for the truth, if everyone only believes the lies?

PDU: Shouldn't we just let sleeping dogs lie?

FILAMON: Present your first evidence.

PDU: Suid-Afrika 1986. A civil servant prepares to make a major speech, which will run his ship of state aground in the River Rubicon. 1986. Blacks, whites, Coloureds, Indians, English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana, Sotho, Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Chinese, honorary whites, ex-Rhodesians, British immigrants: about 27 million of us lived in South Africa in 1986, of which about four million were white, of which about three million had the vote, of which about one and half million used the vote, of which 900,000 voted for the National Party.

The National Party called itself the government of South Africa. Nine hundred thousand supporters out of 27 million? That's not a democratic government; that's more like a small municipality. Maybe that's why

the civilised world was so anti-South African in 1986. Demanding sanctions and boycotts ...

FILAMON: Britain was against sanctions.

PDU: Yes. The world was just jealous. They all wanted to rule a country of 27 million people while needing only 900,000 votes. How do you get to control a country for over 40 years with the support of less than 5% of the population?

FILAMON: Maybe in the UK you start by being in power for 14 years?

PDU: It was so easy in South Africa in 1986. All you needed was control of the police, control of the army, control of the education, control of the media: radio, TV, newspapers. Control of the fear. And, of course, God was on your side. Then all you needed was the dark suit, a cluster of carnations, a National Party rosette, rose-coloured spectacles, what we still call die Boerekroon, the boer crown, and heigh presto: any egocentric, self-centred, humourless power-mad, ruthless, brutal and boring Afrikaans civil servant could become state president of the Republic of South Africa!

(Light change)

(PDU changes into PW Botha 1986)

PW BOTHA: Revolutionaries may stamp their feet! The communists and the socialists in the West may scream their lies! Our enemies worldwide may try and undermine us! But here is the reality.

It is 1986 – and let me state here most categorically: Apartheid is dead. We no longer practise apartheid in South Africa; we don't need to – we have it down to a fine art. Don't blame the Afrikaner for apartheid! The Afrikaner did not separate the races; God separated the races. So who can point a finger at us? Where in the world is there a society that is as just as ours in South Africa? Australia? After the systematic massacre of its aboriginal peoples, the Australians now accuse us of racial genocide? Let me tell you: today we have 23 million blacks alive in South Africa, while they only have 160,000 left in Australia!

And Great Britain? Can Great Britain point a finger at us? Or are her fingers still deeply embedded in the pies of racial chaos that we hold as a heritage of the great British Empire? Can Great Britain ignore Northern Ireland and the civil war between Protestants and Catholics and point a finger at us in South Africa, where we enjoy religious freedoms on every segregated front? And while everyone bends over backwards, where in Africa is there a society that enjoys the freedoms we grant those in South Africa who deserve them?

And the mighty United States of America? After hundreds of years of racial discrimination and slavery, the Americans now conveniently ignore the black ghettos of Los Angeles and Chicago and point a finger at our African townships of Sharpeville and Soweto, cities of which I hold the freedom. Does President Ronald Reagan hold the Freedom of Harlem?

We whites in South Africa are facing a total onslaught! We are fighting a war on terror. I will not beat behind the bush; I will not negotiate with terrorists. The African National Congress is a terrorist organisation! Nelson Mandela is a terrorist! I will intensify our war on terror. He who is not for us is against us. We Afrikaners in the National Party are sick and tired of being represented as Nazis and thugs. I warn you!

If you continue to besmirch us in this way, you will unleash forces in South Africa the end result of which cannot be foreseen. I will keep law and order in South Africa and no one in the world is going to stop me! And so I say it here with determination. I say it here without fear of contradiction. I say it here with supreme confidence. We are white. We are right. And the world can go and fly a kite!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

FILAMON: Why is former President PW Botha not here in person? Has he also manipulated an amnesty for life like the others?

PDU: No, Your Honour, the poor man only has his double pension of a

quarter of a million a year. Shame. It was very difficult to locate him in the Wilderness where he now lives ...

(Light change)

(PDU changes into PW Botha 1996 – at a braai, a chop in hand)

PW BOTHA: No, go away. I refuse to appear at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Tell Tutu I say: no, nee, nyet. I did nothing wrong. What I did, I did for my people. I did it for God. I did it for the blacks. Where would our blacks be without me? They would have still been treated like kaffirs.

Under my dictate ... my democracy they were never treated like that. They were treated like separate developers: Ciskeians, Vendans, Transkeians, Bophuthatswanians. Aliens. Tourists. The fact that some of them behaved like kaffirs is not my fault.

I did what had to be done and I did it with the full support of the white voters of South Africa. Let no white South African today say they didn't know what they were voting for. They were voting for white supremacy and they got it. I was voted into power time after time, in spite of puny opposition. But opposition is the essence of democracy, so I encouraged opposition within reason. The PFP, the DP, the UDF. I could see where the opposition was. And then I controlled it for the sake of South Africa. I banned it and locked it up.

The fact that it often accidentally died in custody is not my fault. The fact that it would slip on the soap in the shower and bang its head against the wall 15 times or more had nothing to do with me. But I kept a Marxist revolution at bay. That was the true opposition.

Where is the opposition in today's nonracial, nonsexist, nonsensical South Africa? All Mandela has is General Constand Viljoen and Chief Gatsha Buthelezi. Shame, I had Helen Suzman.

Yet today her official parliamentary portrait lies next to mine and John Vorster's and Hendrik Verwoerd's – on the rubbish heap of the past. There is no memory. There is no thanks. There is no truth. There is

only history. And history will remember me for starting reforms, for removing the Immorality Law and the Mixed Marriages Act and the Pass Laws.

Black and white can marry! Of course, thanks to the Group Areas Act there's nowhere they can live together. History will remember that I as president poured tea for Prisoner 466/64 Nelson Mandela when he was still just a banned T-shirt.

So leave me alone. I was not responsible because I was also sick. I meant to change things for the better, but then I seemed to put everything into reverse. Ask my wife. I was sick ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: They warned me during those years: you keep on doing that man, you'll end up looking like him one day. While PW Botha was at the height of his powers, licking his lips and wagging his fingers, the Coloured townships on the Cape Flats were in flames. The United Democratic Front was banned. Reverend Alan Boesak was still a force to be reckoned with, and not yet a farce. Somewhere in the bleeding heart of Mitchell's Plein, a Coloured man watches the sun rise on another day in a state of segregated civil war.

(PDU changes into the Coloured policeman. His police cap is back to front, so we only realise he is a policeman when he turns it round at the end)

(Light change)

THE POLICEMAN: The dawn is breaking, soon broken; find the glue. *(He laughs)* Ja, it all seems a little quieter now. Ironical, hey? All this rioting here in the Coloured townships, causing so much 'unhappiness' in government circles. President PW Botha still expects us Cape Coloureds to be grateful for everything he and apartheid did for us.

So we say: thank you, Baas Botha! Thank you for giving us our own little separate parliament, just a stone's throw away from the real seat of PW's white power. Ja, come to Cape Town and get stoned!

We Coloureds here behind the Grape Curtain are the symbol of the new South Africa – ek meen nou, check vir my: my pa is white, my ma is nonwhite. Never knew my pa. No, we always lived here in this Coloured township – even now call it a 'suburb'. We live there past the police barricade where those yellow Casspirs are parked. Down that little road next to the school that's on fire. Ja, that's where I went to school.

That's where I got this scar. We were playing soccer one day and some kids pushed me up against the barbed wire. Here there is always barbed wire. Anyway, we live there in the little house where our grannie used to live. Shame, old grannie had already passed away.

The move killed her, they say. The move. From Cape Town! My grannie used to live in that beautiful house in Newlands in which the white people now live. High ceilings, big windows, wooden floors and a veranda that curls three parts round the house. Ja, my grannie lived there till she was old, and then she was forced to move. Group Areas Act. Ja, I'm sure you've heard of it.

No, my ma doesn't want to talk about it anymore. She says: Ag los dit uit; let bygones be bygones. But my grannie had some beautiful things in that house. A big stinkwood table that could seat six people, and a green velvet sofa. And an organ ... it's true – an organ in the lounge. Ja, the church got the organ. For the white weddings. My little sister Anna still likes taking the bus to Cape Town to check out the white brides at those weddings.

Ja well, anyway, ou grannie was eventually told to leave her house in Newlands and move into this new little township house on the sand dunes of the Cape Flats – two rooms, no electricity, no water, no garden. A bucket toilet outside with no door. Anyway, the authorities in Cape Town told grannie she'd get all the decent facilities one day, but she went and died before she could. Shame man, none of her beautiful things would even fit into this little house – not the stinkwood table, not the chest of drawers, not even the bed my mother was born in.

Nee man, net so 'n stoeltjie hier en 'n tafeltjie daar.

Anyway, the white people in Newlands, you know, grannie's neighbours and friends from the old days, they said they'd store her beautiful stuff and grannie was so pleased that she could leave all her nice things there, till she could fit them into her new little house. Somehow. And then grannie went and died. We don't even know who's got all her stuff. Listen man, you can't go around Cape Town nowadays knocking on the white man's door saying: 'Excuse me, Master, but I think that stinkwood table and the six matching chairs belongs to our dead grannie. Can we have it back please?' Never, where! You knock on the white man's door today, he shoots you before he says hello!

(He turns his police cap round; we see the badge)

Ja, we still live in that little house. Actually I'm married now, so it's me, my ma, my sister Anna and my wife. It's very cramped. Ja, I think when I'm finished this stint, I'll build a spare room for the babytjie. No man, when I finished this stint in the police. You look surprised? You didn't know there was Coloureds and Indians and blacks also fighting on the side of PW Botha's boys in blue? Ja man – there's no colour bar in desperation!

Ironical hey – my little sister Anna now out there throwing stones at me! Can you blame her? Can you blame me! I'm just doing my job, man! But I must say, every time we patrol past that house in Newlands, with the high ceilings, the big windows, the wooden floors – and the veranda that curls three parts round the house – and I think of my old grannie sitting here by candlelight and crying for her lost life, I can't help but also hate! Each time a little more ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

FILAMON: How can this man stand accused? He suffered under apartheid. His life was destroyed by the Group Areas Act. He must be given compensation. Why is he not here to accept our condolences?

PDU: Because he now represents the township as a bona fide member of the Coloured parliament.

FILAMON: The ANC can be proud of him.

PDU: Actually he's an MP for the New National Party. My next piece of evidence is pure hearsay, as most of the facts have been 'mislaide' during the last 700 days of designer democracy. And what we have on video is so absurd, no one would believe it, even though most of the members of the commission have seen it on TV news with their own eyes during the last 10 years. So as it is part of the national legend, it must be taken with a pinch of salt. Or in this case, a tot of whisky.

We start again in the mid-1980s. Let me paint detail into the rough picture. Apartheid is alive and well. Nelson Mandela is on Robben Island, a faceless enemy. Winnie Mandela is in exile in Brandfort, beloved Mother of the Nation and sister to the Virgin Mary. Michael Jackson is still black. South Africa is isolated from the civilised world. Economic sanctions. Cultural boycotts. The last lights are about to be switched off.

And yet there was one Nationalist politician who still had hope. Rehearsing that special speech, just in case against all the odds, as South African foreign minister, he would be invited to speak at the United Nations. The dynamic Errol Flynn of the National Party: Roelof F Botha. Known to Maggie as 'Dear Pik'.

(PDU changes into Pik Botha at the height of his power)

(Light change)

PIK BOTHA: What shall I start with? Whisky? Brandy? Or the truth? My speech needs a strong introduction. No apology. No whinging. Let me see: 'South Africa will one day have a black president ...' No, that one didn't work. 'Apartheid is a pigment of the imagination.' No, that's on every lavatory wall. 'I come to you from a new South Africa.' That's better. 'The season of violence is over.' More like it. 'I assure you, apartheid is dead. So let us not bandy about provocative phrases like



Pik Botha meets Evita Bezuidenhout

status quo. As we all know, status quo is a Latin phrase to describe the mess we're in. But leave Latin out of it. It's all Greek to me anyway.

'I would like you to disregard everything I have said in the past in good faith. As you know, I had to recently apologise in my Parliament for predicting that there would one day be a black president in South Africa. I know I was right. You know I was right. Everyone knew I was right. PW Botha thought I was left, so I had to apologise to keep my job, to reform South Africa from within...'

No, no, no! Never apologise. Being a white South African Nationalist means never having to say I'm sorry ... baas!

'And so, fellow colleagues at the United Nations. As the South African minister of foreign affairs, let me come straight to the point, diplomatically and unemotionally. What the hell has it got to do with any of you? Who the hell are you people to interfere in the internal affairs of my country? The present reformation of apartheid is an internal affair of the government of South Africa. Foreign affairs can be your affairs, but all internal affairs are my own affairs.

‘We are not insensitive. We know things are not perfect between blacks and whites. After all, we are nearly human. Let me underline my point clearly by admitting that if Jesus Christ came back to South Africa today without letting us know in time, he would not, because of his non-European origins, he would not be allowed to live in a residential area of his choice. This we know. This we regret.

‘Education, welfare and health systems in South Africa can still legally discriminate against Jesus Christ because of the colour of his skin. For this we are truly very sorry. We are trying to make amends. Just give us time. But let me state here most categorically to assure you all: my government is quite prepared to make an exception where Jesus Christ is concerned. As you know, we Afrikaners are a deeply Christian people. So whenever Jesus Christ sets foot in our beloved South Africa, my government will and can, under the Population Registration Act, declare Jesus Christ an honorary white.’

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

FILAMON: And where is the former minister of foreign affairs?

PDU: After the 10 May 1994 he was recycled into the government of national unity.

FILAMON: Which will cease to exist at the end of June.

PDU: Yes, after that I’ll be the only white person left in my show. Unfortunately Pik has a problem remembering anything that happened before he became a reborn.

FILAMON: Such an illustrious career. Supporting apartheid in the cabinets of John Vorster, PW Botha and FW de Klerk.

PDU: No, he insists that he never supported apartheid.

FILAMON: So has he returned the two state pensions?

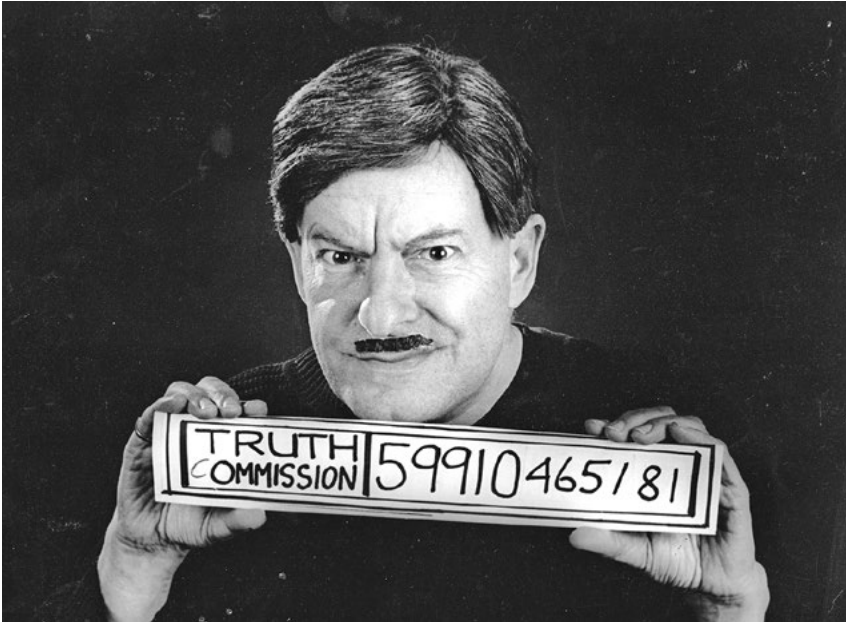
PDU: He couldn’t be found to appear today.

FILAMON: Writing his memoirs?

PDU: Serious wine tasting.

(PDU changes back into Pik Botha as a member of the ANC)

(Light change)



PDU as Pik Botha with his police number

PIK BOTHA: I'm not here.

Let me state that most categorically and I'll repeat it with conviction: I'm not here. I have nothing to confess. Nothing. Niks. Sweet bugger all. So if I have nothing to confess, I have no reason to be here. And if I have no reason to be here, then there is no reason for me to be here. So I'm not here. And I can assure you, that is the truth as you can see with your own eyes, and because you are here, I have to be here. So now see if you have it in your heart to blame me for apartheid.

Yes, during the 1970s I was a minister in the apartheid government of John Vorster, but he never liked me. I undermined him by being there. I gave some of my salary to the poor. Yes, at the end of the 1970s I stood against PW Botha for the prime ministership and lost, but that was to undermine him, which I did. And look where he is today? And

look where I am today. And look where South Africa is today, and then see if you can have the heart to drag me in front of a Truth Commission. I knew nothing about apartheid. I'm as shocked as you. I just hung around for a helluva long time. And so I eventually became the longest-serving foreign minister in the history of South African politics. And being in charge of foreign affairs, meant that I was always there. So how the hell could I have been here? I was just doing my job. *Pretoriastroika!* I never knew nothing about anything.

All I saw about South Africa on overseas television in the 1980s was the typical leftist communist-inspired anti-South African propaganda. And because propaganda was the name of my game, I knew a good publicity stunt when I saw it. And the Anti-Apartheid Movement took the cake when it came to cheap publicity. We gave them apartheid on a T-shirt! They had it so easy with us. They didn't need PRs like Saatchi & Saatchi; they had Botha and Botha!

But I knew nothing. In fact, like millions of South Africans who suffered under the apartheid regime, I was also a victim of the system. They spied on me. They had a security file on me. My phone was tapped. Ask anyone. When they phoned me, they could hear the tap running. My mail was tampered with. Ask any male. Believe me, I didn't know about these things. How could I know? They never told me anything. I was always in the pitch dark. In die pik-donker. And now they even accuse me of knowing about a third force. Listen, I didn't even know there was a second force.

So, I'm not here. Soon none of us will be here. In fact, most of us now wished we were never here in the first place...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

FILAMON: I see you do have a file. General Magnus Malan's file?

PDU: No, there are too many files on former Minister of Defence Malan to even fit into this venue. No, this is from the files the National Party

kept on Mrs Helen Suzman. Each year the government was forced to answer one question in Parliament, a question always asked by the same person: Helen Suzman.

An example of how one lone woman could singlehandedly irritate a government for so many years that they eventually gave up and did exactly what she demanded: 'Free Mandela', 'Get rid of apartheid.'

She simply each year asked for some facts and figures. 'How many South Africans were racially reclassified during the last year?' The reply she forced out of them was annually published in the *Government Gazette* from 1950 to 1989. Just the numbers changed year by year:

'In answer to a question from the Honourable PFP MP for Houghton, Mrs Helen Suzman ... nearly 800 South Africans officially became members of a different race group last year in accordance with the Population Registration Act:

518 Coloureds became white

14 whites became Coloured

7 Chinese became white

2 whites became Chinese

3 Malays became white

1 white became an Indian

50 Indians became Coloured

57 Coloureds became Indian

17 Indians became Malay

4 Coloureds became Chinese

1 Malay became Chinese

89 blacks became Coloured

5 Coloureds became black.'

It used to be proudly called Nationalist government policy. Now is it universally regarded as ethnic cleansing. And now, a soothing word from the Truth Fairy.

(PDU changes into Tutu)

(Light change)

DESMOND TUTU: Thank you very much my dears, thank you very much my friends. We are the rainbow people. And as you know, at the end of every rainbow is a pot of gold. Ours has been stolen. But joking aside. A truth commission is sometimes an exquisitely painful thing. Yes, it is sometimes easier to forgive a nation for being wrong than to forgive a man for being right. And yet, the man who speaks the truth is always at ease. What therefore is the pure and simple truth? It is the fact that truth is seldom pure, and never simple.

Yes, Pik Botha, in our democracy every white man now has a right to utter what he thinks is true. Now every black man also has the right to donner him for it. So if you speak the truth, always have one foot in the stirrup.

To those from the former apartheid regime, let me say: the man who fears no truth has nothing to fear from lies. To those in the liberation movements I repeat: if you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything. And to all those here who expect a Nuremberg trial from my Truth Commission? To the guilty we don't plan to give hell. We will just find the truth. And they will recognise it as hell.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)



PDU as Archbishop Tutu

FILAMON: We thank the patron saint of the commission for making the world realise that, as far as the truth in South Africa is concerned, the supply has always been in excess of the demand.

PDU: Was it Baroness Thatcher who said: 'Truth is something you stumble into when you think you're going someplace else.'

FILAMON: The Truth Commission has been hearing terrible stories of police torture and military brutality. Where are the generals? The colonels? The minister of defence? The commander-in-chief?

PDU: They have taken out a supreme court interdict preventing us from using their names here, but I can take you all back to a scene of police torture and military brutality. One of the states of emergency not so long ago, we are now in Soweto before it was turned into a Broadway musical and its 14-fourteen-million rand sequel.

(PDU changes into the soldier)

(Light change)

THE SOLDIER: It's happened again. How can a person swallow a blade? I just can't understand it. Last week my buddy from Pretoria went and swallowed crushed glass. I read in the paper that since the unbanning of the ANC in 1990 and the freeing of Mandela, it's been happening quite a lot. Also in the suburbs when some men came home and then shoot their wives and kids for no reason. Is this our Vietnam backlash? Like in those movies? No one makes movies about us. White and losers. How can you kill your wife and kids for no reason? Maybe that's something I can understand, but swallowing crushed glass? Or a rusted blade? You've got your gun and your bullets. You know how quick it can be. So why swallow glass or blades when the SADF gives you the weapons to kill yourself with cleanly.

I didn't even know him that well. But when we were sharing so much on the border, we discussed what the terrorists would do to us if they caught us. Maybe blow off part of our bodies and then what would my ma and his girlfriend say when they showed them the bits and pieces to

identify? I remember those films they showed us in basic training of what the ANC terries did – not only to us whites, but also to their own comrades.

Unspeakable things like putting tyres round their necks and burning them alive. Don't forget what those Russian limpet mines can do. And now suddenly De Klerk smiles at the ANC and overnight your mortal enemy becomes your best friend? And even tomorrow's leader.

How can I respect that face that was banned for all those years as the most dangerous terrorist in the world? Now suddenly Nelson Mandela's tomorrow's leader? Over my dead body. I'd rather swallowed crushed glass. I don't know what to believe any more. Maybe what they told us was a load of shit. Just the usual brainwash.

Maybe it was our own people who secretly put those so-called terrorist bombs into supermarkets and parked cars. Just to make us whites hate the blacks more. And it worked. I hate blacks. They killed six of my buddies. I hope I killed 20 of theirs. But now we're told no longer to hate blacks. Now black is the new white. They say we must now live together in the same area as if nothing happened.

Jesus, how can I forget patrolling those dark streets of Soweto in an open Casspir, smoking a joint to stop shitting myself, just in case some fucking teenage brat threw in a hand grenade or we hit a Cuban landmine. And now suddenly it's all forgive and forget? My buddy got a medal once for being in the forefront of the war against the Cubans. Only because no one told him where the backdoor was to get the hell out! He won't get a medal for swallowing crushed glass because it was too much shit having to shoot at those who could so easily be the teenage kids of the maid who used to bath you when you were small.

The nanny who would tell you the stories of her little piccannins in the location or the kraal so far away on the dark side of the moon. And now we're here and no matter what they say about a rainbow nation, those piccannins hate me and wish me dead. Call me a fucking Boer! Listen I'm not a Boer. I've never voted for anyone in those white elections.

Got a postcard from my friend Andre the other day. He got his call-up papers same time as me and managed to get out the next day via

Zim. And now he's in Australia teaching Vietnamese kids how to speak English in Perth. He also spent time demanding sanctions against us and no rugby matches. Now suddenly he sees Mandela's smile and wants to come home as a returning political exile. Fuck him! Where was he when the lights went out?

Ja well, I suppose if I had the guts I would have also said: fuck it, I'm getting out of South Africa. I'm not going to kill the kids of our maid Mary. I also wanted to go. But then someone said: If you drop your gun and run, those right-wing AWB Nazis will pick it up and use it with passion on innocent people. Black people. Maybe even old Mary. Maybe at least if some of us stayed here to watch them, they can't ever get away with it.

I wasn't watching. My buddy swallowed glass in the same tent. I'm sorry. I know if I'd been awake and not so fucked with dagga and booze, he wouldn't have panicked like that. I would've said: hang in there, man. They say the new South Africa will be different. They say here can be a good life without an enemy. They also keep saying that what we did in the SADF was right.

They say it defended democracy. They say it was our Christian duty to defeat the communist onslaught. Maybe. But now the Soviet Union is gone. We're still here. I hope it was right, because I can never say: I didn't know what was happening in those bad old days of apartheid. I knew. I just hope it was right ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

FILAMON: This young man should be compensated for his suffering too. Even though he was a misinformed racist. He was just doing his job, obeying orders.

PDU: Yes, well, he died.

FILAMON: In the border wars? In the townships?

PDU: I don't know where he shot himself. Third time lucky.

FILAMON: We have seen white nationalists exposed here; Coloured sell-outs. Let us not be too one-sided. Were those on the other side of the struggle all innocent?

PDU: A senior comrade in the collective leadership of the ANC has requested to appear here today, Your Honour. He will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

FILAMON: Bring him in please.

(PDU changes into Nelson Mandela)

(Light change)

NELSON MANDELA: Before I give you a chance to ask your question, let me reiterate once again: we in the ANC government believe in transparency in all things. We must ask questions. We must encourage questions. And we must give answers. The fact that lots of those answers do not fit the questions, or that after all the answers have been given truthfully, no one can remember the original question, this is the reality of politics today. I am learning fast. I hope that answers your question.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

FILAMON: But what about the ordinary men and women in South Africa? How did they regard this quest for the truth?

PDU: Then let me take you to the former whites-only suburb of Constantia, not yet renamed Guguletu East. The home of a prominent white member of the ANC, neighbour to Mark Thatcher and a former white liberal, Ms Nowell Fine.

FILAMON: A former white liberal? We don't seem to be able to find a legal definition of that rare and protected species.

PDU: A white liberal was often a prominent member of the opposition Progressive Party and the later Democratic Party who voted Nationalist.

(PDU changes into Nowell Fine)

(Light change)

NOWELL: I've been summonsed to appear in front of one of the Committees of the Truth Commission? You must be joking? What do I know about the truth? I'm just a ordinary South African. Some amnesty committee; something to do with Nimrod, a former garden boy who worked for us in the 80s. I don't specifically remember any specific Nimrod. They were all called Nimrod. I'm supposed to give him some character reference so that he can get amnesty. I hope it's not the other way round, with a garden boy who will give me marks out of 10!

Wait listen, there was one Nimrod ... I always knew that Nimrod was a terrorist. I remember saying to my husband: 'Herbert? Look at the way that boy weeds the lawn. He's a terrorist!' Now suddenly he wants amnesty as a freedom fighter? Do me a favour! I wonder what he did during the struggle?

Kill innocent people in cold blood? Blow up kids in bars? Bomb families in churches? If he did any of those things, he will get his amnesty. And to think that he worked in my garden? And in those days, when I didn't even have a gun or a Rottweiler! Makes you shudder. Which reminds me: my maid Dora comes up with this incredible story yesterday on the way to the ANC Woman's League meeting. Dora's got a new boyfriend called Sipho. Dora says he's her cousin from Nigeria.

Please! I know a cocaine dealer when I see one. Very political. Never smiles. Hates whites, but likes eating fancy American hamburgers, wears the best Italian shoes and Irish linen suits. Violently anti-everything Eurocentric. You know the type? So I say, if you don't like Eurocentricity, switch off the lights. Give back the shoes. Go back to the bush already. Anyway, Dora tells me that Sipho says there's only one person the Truth Commission must expose and that is Nelson Mandela. I said: what? For God's sake leave him alone. He's all we whites have got between us and the refugee camps. No, Sipho says Nelson Mandela is not real. Sipho says he's an imposter. Can you believe it? After 27 years in a lime quarry

and jails, he comes out half blind, half deaf, TB, prostrate, no wife. How more real can you get?

No my dear, Sipho says the real Nelson Mandela died in jail. Somewhere in the 70s. But no one knew because he was a banned person, so when he died it made no difference. But President PW Botha knew and his generals knew. So they got some fancy Jewish plastic surgeon, who wanted to keep his son out of the army.

This doctor goes over to Robben Island and chooses four tall blacks and gives them plastic surgery to get them to look like he thought Nelson Mandela would look like – which no one knew, because his picture was banned. But they had a T-shirt from a Trafalgar Square anti-apartheid rally.

Anyway, if no one knew what Nelson Mandela looked like, who'd know the difference? I said: 'What rubbish. I saw Nelson Mandela come out of jail six years ago!' Yes, says Sipho, out comes Mandela and becomes the most famous man in the world. And what does he do? He speaks Afrikaans.

He forms a government with the very people who locked him up. He's nice to whites. He goes and has tea with Hendrik Verwoerd's widow. He's mad about the Springboks and wears the Number 6 jersey. In fact, Nelson Mandela's come out of jail a reborn Afrikaner Nationalist! But no one would ever dare say that, because he's now 'Nelson Mandela'. Except, of course, Winnie Mandela. She knows, but because of what she's done in the past, deals were made. She keeps their secret so that her Stompie and the others also stay secret. But she can't sleep with an imposter, so that's why they've divorced.

I said: I swear to God, this is the biggest kak I've ever heard! For heaven's sake: Nelson poeps and the rand vanishes! I said: 'Don't you realise that we're all terrified to death of what will happen to South Africa after Nelson Mandela dies?' 'No,' says Sipho, 'Nelson Mandela will never die.' Sipho says there are five other Nelson Mandelas waiting in the closet! Sipho says President Mandela is programmed to live till at least till 2045!!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

FILAMON: But Ms Fine has not turned up.

PDU: I think she's scared you'll confront her with the facts regarding her husband's former business.

FILAMON: Ah yes, breaking sanctions and importing illegal British arms to the SA police and army via Iraq?

PDU: Of course, we all know there were no British arms to Iraq.

FILAMON: Great Scott, of course not!

PDU: Comrade Nowell Fine apologises for not being here. She did send a cheque in lieu of.

FILAMON: As compensations for victims of apartheid?

PDU: Yes, a cheque ... a cash cheque.

FILAMON: That's nice. I'll put it with the others. We'll post her the amnesty for her garden person. Now what about Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout?

PDU: Isn't this where I came in? (*To audience*) So that, ladies and gentlemen of the commission, comrades, Broeders and other reborns, is some of the evidence I have collected over the last 15 years. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is now in session, 50 years after the Nuremberg trials, when some of the monsters of Nazi Germany were on display for all to see. They say when history repeats itself, it takes tragedy and turns it into farce. So where are our farcical monsters? In government? In opposition? In jail? Insane? Dead? Recycled? Innocent of politically motivated murders? Immune from prosecution and accusation?

FILAMON: Yes, yes, yes, yes and yes.

PDU: We are all innocent, because no one is allowed to be guilty. All of us were in the struggle: white, black, Coloured, Indian. If it wasn't a struggle to gain power, it was a struggle to retain power.

FILAMON: And apartheid? Is it, after all, just a pigment of the imagination?

PDU: If all of us today who say we were anti-apartheid then, voted anti-apartheid then, there would have been no apartheid. Then. And that's the truth. I rest my case.

(PDU exit)

(Offstage he ad-libs as Evita while putting her together: wig, glasses, coat, high heels – eyeshadow if there's time)

(We hear Evita speaking offstage. She enters)

(Light change)

EVITA: Liewe aarde, I thought you were all out for the interval.

FILAMON: Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout? You have been summonsed to appear before this Truth Commission ...

EVITA: Filamon? Is that you?

FILAMON: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: What are you doing here?

FILAMON: I'm on the Truth Commission, Madam.

EVITA: In your spare time, Filamon, you can do anything, even be an MP. But when you work for me, you work for me.

FILAMON: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: There are some things in the car. Please bring them in.

FILAMON: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: And Filamon? Park the car in a secure place.

FILAMON: Are you parked illegally, Madam?

EVITA: Toemaar, we'll bribe the police.

FILAMON: We're not home now, Madam.

EVITA: Don't be cheeky, Filamon. Now hurry, comrade. *(To the audience)* I'm sorry, I'm not ready yet. Let's now have a short interval. Go out and have a drink. When you come back, it will be my turn to show how transparent we are in South Africa. Evita Bezuidenhout on trial! If you want to ask me a question after the interval, you can. Or you can write

it down on your programme form and put it in one of these two boxes.
It's like voting. Practise. It's just, in this case something will come of it.
See you in 20 minutes? Kom Filamon.

(She exits)

FILAMON: Yes, Madam.

(Light change)

INTERVAL

(Lights)

(Evita enters. Filamon follows her, carrying presents for Tutu and members of the Commission)

(The Q&A follows: Filamon will take both boxes and have access to all the questions. Some of them have been placed already. He will sort and hand Evita the questions, some set, most from the audience. This will prevent the silly questions from holding up the action)

(Questions already set in the boxes:)

What will happen to your homeland of Bapetikosweti?

Where is Winnie?

Who comes after Mandela?

Can the National Party be in opposition?

Will the corruption of the past be exposed?

Is apartheid dead?

How come 11 official languages?

Do Afrikaners like Nelson Mandela?

What is the right-wing threat now?

Violence and crime could destroy the future?

Will SA be in the Olympics 2004?

What should be done with past leaders?

Are you in having an affair with Pik Botha?

What will you say to the Truth Commission?
Are you sorry for apartheid?
Do you still believe the Afrikaners are a master race?
What is Filamon's job?

(... Plus what the audience has added)

Written & Performed by
PIETER-DIRK UYS

Truth Commission Interrogator
CYRIL NRI

THERE WILL BE AN INTERVAL

Dear Member of the Audience
Tonight is your chance to subject Evita Bezuidenhout to a
Truth Commission. How transparent is the most famous
white woman in South Africa? You can ask your question
during the second half of the show from your seat, or write
it down in this space and put it in one of the marked boxes
on the edge of the stage during the interval.

MY QUESTION IS:

.....

.....

.....

MY NAME IS:

.....

Programme insert

(The second half of the show will be approx 45 minutes)

(When the session is over, Evita will thank all, remind members of the Truth Commission that their cheques are in the post and exit, followed by Filamon, who is carrying boxes, files, her fur coat etc.)

(She exits)

THE PARTY IS OVER.

AFTER THE PARTY

One hopes one's dreams will come true. In the 1960s, I dreamt that I would one day be an entertainer, although I was told I didn't have the necessary talent. During the 1970s, I hoped that I would one day become the most famous white woman in South Africa, but it was illegal. In the dark 1980s, I prayed that apartheid would go, but no one up there was listening. By the 1990s, all those dreams had come true. Now I was fantasising that those who were responsible for what happened in the past would live with the stain that said, 'Here goes a man who nearly got away with murder.'

Humour, of course, abounds, although there is an edge to the fun ... far more enjoyable and far more inventive than one dared to hope

– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) October 1995

The show is vintage Uys ... but its star and drawcard remains the outrageous, outlandish, but somehow lovable Evita

Bezuidenhout – *The Star* (Johannesburg) October 1995

But it is after interval, when the audience gets a chance to ask Tannie Evita all the questions they always wanted to ask, that the quality of his brilliance is so stunning. There are few people in this world who can think like this on their feet

– *Beeld* (Johannesburg) October 1995

Uys reveals himself to be a master at slipping a stiletto into the soft underbelly of the feel-good truisms of the new South Africa – *Mail & Guardian* (Johannesburg) October 1995

It's exhilarating to see a comedian think on his/her feet, and it is 'the most famous white woman in South Africa' who steals the show as she invites the audience to fire away

– *Pretoria News* October 1995

The destruction of dreams need not entail murder. Under apartheid millions of dreams had been put on hold or just abandoned as hopeless. The memory of all that was so appalling during the apartheid years also became hazy as we moved away from the place of weeping towards a future of negotiation and compromise, even though there are mothers still waiting to know what happened to their children decades ago.

Intelligent and powerful! Uys, the master, demonstrating how inhuman laws bruised the spirit and maimed the soul, at his best adlibbing, pretending to be friendly, but utterly ruthless in demolishing pretence

– *Business Day* (Johannesburg) October 1995

It is brave and it works!

– *Business Day* (Johannesburg) March 1996

Very few performers have the confidence, wit or intelligence to cope with the unpredictabilities of a live audience. Evita does so with aplomb – and never tires of challenging prejudices and presumptions

– *Argus* (Cape Town) March 1996

If only theatre was always as spontaneous as this

– *Sunday Times* March 1996

In fact, if there is any truth, it is that Uys is at his sharpest ever here, relentlessly exposing the rot which we have all, on one level or another, contributed to. And his approach is insidious. Long may he/she reign! We need Pieter-Dirk Uys to poke us in our collective ribs. Perhaps even more than a truth commission – *Cape Times* (Cape Town) March 1996

What startles most about Uys's clever display is what a lone voice he has become in the crusade against cultural amnesia. Watching his troglodytes of the past makes it all the more obvious why we need a truth and reconciliation autopsy. The past might be missing, but Uys's engine most certainly isn't! – *Mail & Guardian* (Cape Town) March 1996

The 1996 audience that sits out there every night and shares my latest show, *Truth Omissions*, is comprised of some of those who suffered through the last two decades of oppression. And so when doing PW Botha at the height of his spit-flecked power trip, making his Rubicon Speech of 1986, I can feel how I'm pulling painful scabs off unhealed wounds. But there are others in the audience who were only 10 years old in 1981.

Liewe aarde skatties! Just when you thought the New South Africa had put paid to Pieter-Dirk Uys's mass slaughter of sacred cows, the Truth Commission has provided yet another opportunity to open the proverbial can of worms. The blend of quick-witted social commentary, the familiar, sobering reverie of a blighted history dressed up as black humour, and Pieter-Dirk's inimitable brand of caricature, makes this a sure-fire entertaining night out

– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) July 1996

Uys is a shrewd political animal and good at turning a funny question into an even funnier answer

– *SA Financial Mail* (Johannesburg) July 1996

Over the years Uys has honed his art and sharpened his focus to the point where it's devastating, razor-sharp cutting edge spares no one, and his puissant study of reconciliation – South African-style – provides much food for thought

– *Eastern Province Herald* (Port Elizabeth)

October 1996

In the second half we have a show which is hosted by Mrs Bezuidenhout herself. And this presents a whole new facet of Uys. Off the cuff answers to questions are delightful and it is amazing how quick and agile his mind is – turning the apparently most mundane question into a hot political potato, served with lashings of this caustic yet humorous dressing

– *Evening Post* (Port Elizabeth) October 1996

How fortunate is it that Uys is here to remind us. As long as this consummate master is on stage before us as a kind of conscience with comedy, we can never say 'we didn't know' or 'we can't remember'

– *Daily Dispatch* (East London) October 1996

Wry laughter, guffaws and giggles – there's plenty of that.

The odd thoughtful silence is all the more significant in this context

– *Argus* (Cape Town) November 1996

So when I dig back into the past and produce a Coloured policeman remembering his grannie's house in a white area, and how the Group Areas Act destroyed her life, it is a new story to them. That story was told to me by a Coloured man who'd experienced it, but there was also the tale of the white soldier in the township at the height of the states of emergency whose friend swallowed a blade rather than end up having to shoot the children of his maid. True stories.

The words that tumbled out of the mouth of the Botha & Botha empire wrote my material. From the vantage point of our new South

Africa, it's hard to see, but in the 1980s, it felt like the world was ending. That's where the sketches of the past – the PW Botha, Pik and Piet are anchored. Everything you hear is true.

Uys wroeg hier 'n bietjie, en is geneig tot prekerigheid. Of dalk is dit net die waarheid wat seermaak. Gaan kyk en speel self regter
– *Burger* (Kaapstad) November 1996

Old lies, old absurdities, old jokes, old hopes and old enemies – all find place in an hour-plus which holds up a cracked mirror to reflect the new face of democratic shock. Truth Omission's second half is a different fettle of kitsch and by far the highlight of the evening. Something old, new, borrowed and true
– *Natal Mercury* (Durban) March 1997

The bite of his humour is still sharp enough to draw blood from the corpse of apartheid ... whiplash humour ... what is most impressive is the structure and presence of Uys on stage. He is larger than life, articulate, witty and never for a moment at a loss for the witty repost. Uys shows himself to be a stand-up comedian of international stature
– *Star* (Johannesburg) July 1996

Uys entrances once again! The humour and razor-sharp comments are peppered with the latest in politics. This is a satirist who devours newspapers. Uys's own Truth and Reconciliation Commission is funny and sharp!
– *Beeld* (Johannesburg) July 1996

Dredging up old material is exactly what a truth commission is supposed to do. Old murders, old lies, old absurdities, old jokes, old hopes and old enemies. The audience of 1996 is not simply the audience of 1986 ten years older. There is a new white generation. There are new black generations – returned exiles, freed prisoners, new citizens. Many were

not here during the years of terror. To them it's a rollercoaster ride of discovery through a satirical chamber of horrors.

With this new democratic chorus line of the best political hijackers in the world, it is a joy to look ahead and point a comic finger at the clowns and fools of the future. But a search for the truth in a past that has been coated with the camouflage of hypocrisy required research. And my research ends in the scripts I wrote in the years when it was illegal to write those things, let alone perform them – a decade when white people ruled supreme in this land, confident of the fact that it would go on for another thousand years.

Uys has sharpened his focus, so his rip-offs are not just tricks. Instead they all play a role in his often-chilling look at reconciliation. Uys is deliciously wicked, especially in Evita Bezuidenhout's famous question-and-answer session in the second half – *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) July 1996

I urge you not to miss it!
– *SA Financial Mail* (Johannesburg) July 1966

In his latest theatrical enterprise, the perspicacious man who has pricked more consciences than any other South African entertainer through intellect, a razor-sharp wit, and a healthy grasp of the ruthless demands of satire, performs a political striptease to ensure the continued survival of Evita Bezuidenhout – as bright as ever, ad-libbing as though to the manner born, and with a quick and sassy answer to every question from the audience

– *Eastern Province Herald* (Grahamstown) July 1996

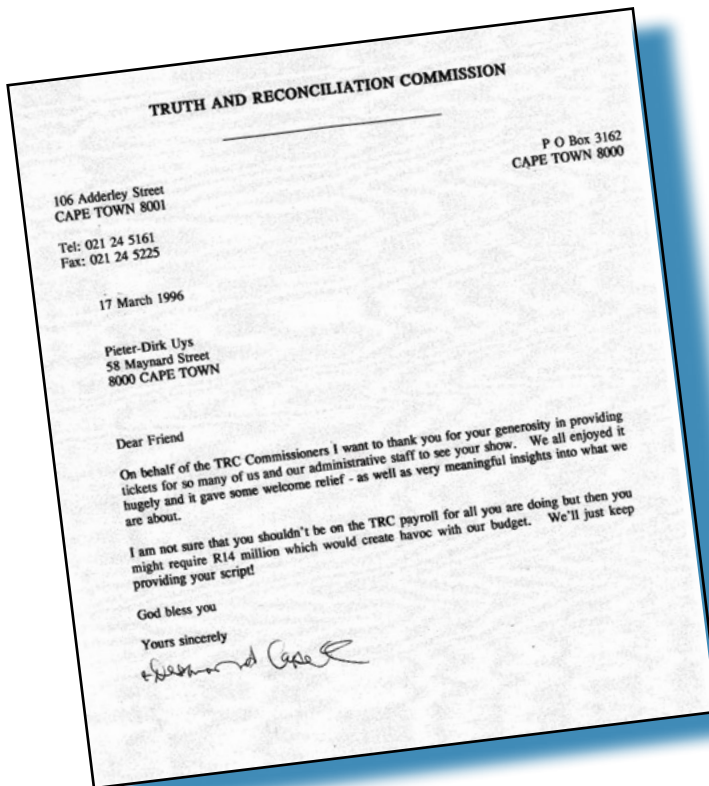
Something about Pieter-Dirk Uys is a lesson to us all ... a sly slanging act ... the theatre of news ... lethal portraits of now-criminal jokers ... the country's most successful stand-up comedian has matured that appalling movie-slut Evita

Bezuidenhout. Their verbal dexterity is legendary. He takes dare-devil risks ... our genius entertainer ...

– CUE (Grahamstown Arts Festival) July 1996

We don't need a crystal ball to see what is going to happen to South Africa tomorrow. The future of South Africa is certain. It's just the past that is unpredictable.

(The above is the third of three articles written for a national newspaper during May 1996 in preparation for the season of *Truth Omissions*. They were all rejected as unsuitable under the circumstances. They suggested that I stop sending them articles. That wasn't difficult.)



Original letter from the TRC

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

106 Adderley Street
CAPE TOWN 8001

17 March 1996

Pieter-Dirk Uys
58 Maynard Street
8000 CAPE TOWN

Dear Friend,

On behalf of the TRC Commissioners I want to thank you for your generosity in proving tickets for so many of us and our administrative staff to see your show. We all enjoyed your show hugely and it gave some welcome relief – as well as very meaningful insights to what we are about.

I am not sure that you shouldn't be on the TRC payroll for all you are doing, but then you might require R14 million* which would create havoc with our budget. We'll just keep providing your script!

God bless you

Yours sincerely

Desmond Cape Town

**the amount the Deputy Minister of Health gave out of her budget for the production of an anti-AIDS musical that saw three performances. The money was not refunded.*

UNDERSTUDYING PW BOTHA

When PW Botha angrily refuses to appear before the TRC, PDU went instead. The following open letter to a retired politician appeared in the *Cape Argus* on 17 April 1998.

Dear Mr P.W. Botha

Your reappearance on the national and international news in April 1998 is like a recurring nightmare. I spent most of the 1980s studying your face, your mannerisms, body language and the pyrotechnics of your famous finger and sharp tongue. I got to know that face very well. It was my bread and Botha.

I noticed your first stroke in the mid-1980s before it became the stutter of rumour, then your second, or was it your fifth? In 1989 I took you out of my chorus line and made way for FW de Klerk, someone, you will be happy to know, I couldn't easily come to grips with, satirically speaking. I just left a blank space and people laughed at that.

But here you are back again with the same wagging finger and the same lolling tongue, although in all fairness to your age and fragility, they are not always in the right places, as in the old days of your *kragdadigheid*.

I'm very sorry to soon see you in court. I think you deserve imprisonment without trial, as you so

lavishly decreed during the 1980s, but then being a sentimental Afrikaner performer, I try to see you as a relic from a past successful show, long ago packed away with John Vorster's golf cap and H.F. Verwoerd's guile.

'Love your enemy; it will ruin his reputation.' It works. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a living example of the gentle folly of forgiveness. You don't punish has-beens; you remember them with loud laughter and little regret, acknowledging the passing of time with some relief.

For there was a time when people feared you. There was time when you were all powerful. You could order lives ended and you did. You could demolish hopes and you did. You could rewrite the alphabet of logic and you did. I think the TRC has made a mistake by playing your game of *ek is meer bedonnerd as u*. They should have taken your trite refusal to appear in front of them as an admission of guilt. Shall we allow a blanket admission on behalf of your apartheid government? Those of them who still draw huge pensions for the follies they committed in the name of so-called white Christian democracy.

Anger is never an answer to the question: 'How does he get away with it?' Humour is the only weapon left, and it is with that pen and not the sword that you will be felled. You will not become the Che Guevara of the white right through your *bedonnerdheid*. You might even go to jail, but it will be to cries of mirth and laughter. And if you play your last trump card of one-upmanship on Nelson Mandela and die in prison, it will be a final punchline to a funny pointless life.

There is no question of whether you should have

appeared at the TRC or not. Of course you should have. You owe it to your job. You were president and managing director of the National Party. Under your guidance the firm went bankrupt and many of its staff died. Not just blacks. There are countless white parents who still want to ask you why you sent their sons into a border war and an early grave, just to be cancelled. While you lot still draw pensions and headlines, those boys are lying limbless and lifeless. Just another sad forgotten generation who will never have songs sung about them, or monuments raised.

You owe it to history to leave the political stage as a professional and not a fool. Because if I have my way (and I can now, because you and yours are no longer here to stop me), even if it takes me the rest of my life, I will make you out to be the fool. So welcome back to the chorus line, *Ou Krokodil*. It's 10 years since I did you on stage as an item of real news. Ironically, as they warned me in the 1980s, I've ended up even looking like you. But my offer still stands.

I'll go to the TRC in your place - in my PW hat and PW glasses. At least you will make the cartoon pages as a joke and not on the editorials as a loser, or the rude graffiti on lavatory walls where the likes of you belong.

Pieter-Dirk Uys
15 April 1998

(PW Botha walked down Adderley Street and entered the building. Few people took any notice of his shuffle. He got into the lift. The two other passengers kept looking down at the carpet. He got out on the fourth

floor and shuffled down the passage to the offices of the TRC. He rang the bell. His voice in the intercom was familiar. 'I want to see Desmond Tutu. The name is Botha.' The door opened. He went in. Peals of laughter welcomed him. Then common sense took over. Photographs were not advised. A possible front page picture was withheld from the media. To make fun of the TRC would be counterproductive. And so PW Botha removed his hat and NP rosette. Pieter-Dirk Uys then went home with the secret tucked away with many others.)

SHARING THE PARTY



Truth Omissions was performed in London at the Tricycle Theatre. Most of the material, while not changed for a 'foreign' audience, needed to be adapted for the London supporters, many of them ex-South Africans. While back home the show was firmly anchored in the XYZ of familiarity, in London the ABC of the South African nightmare needed to be subtly woven into the entertainment.

As part of the preshow publicity, I recorded the following in Cape Town for BBC Radio 4 on 20 June 1996. It was not broadcast.

'Where is Cuba? Cuba is a little island near America, like England is a little island near Europe. And Cuba irritates America like England irritates Europe. In 1996 South Africa has become many things to many people. A miraculous democracy. A free society. The most violent nation in the world; the most beautiful pictures on television and the place where Nelson Mandela lives.

Unique blend of well-done gallows humour ... the ingenuous humour of a drag queen who pads out his bra with a Springbok rugby sock, is a rare treat. Uys's onstage qualities – his adorable transparency – seem all the more precious in times when the truth has become harder to pin down

– *Time Out* (London) June 1996

'South Africa also plays the double-date game to perfection. We are good friends with the United States and Germany; we are best buddies with Libya and Cuba. We prefer Beijing to Taipei, because their cheque was bigger. But if there is one people we feel a special affinity for, it is that loud crowd living not on the Falkland Islands: it's the United Kingdom with its ethnic homelands. One for the English, one for the Scots, one for the Welsh and two for the Irish.

'South Africa has become a home from home to so many Brits. Some who were sent there in 1820 by their government to shut up, settle and multiply. Some recently managed to come just in time to benefit from apartheid and to get the cheap labour and lovely houses

they'd never get in Manchester or Scunthorpe. Others, having had their fill of the sunny skies, now dream about eventually getting out of their South African rut and going home with a capital H. Some are even going back to a place they'd never seen, other than on the British Movietone newscasts.

Luckily Uys is not yet redundant. The characters are played with great skill. An enjoyable, funny show, especially if you are South African!
– *The Stage* (London) June 1996

‘Then there are the South Africans who were forced to live in the United Kingdom because apartheid South Africa wouldn’t allow them back. Some of them we called terrorists and thugs, communists and unwanted elements, political exiles who irritated Maggie no end. Now they’re back as ministers and MPs in a democratic South African government. And by the by, who’s this Maggie? So be nice to your foreign exiles. You just never know ...

‘Afrikaners like me were always warned about the English. ‘The English are your arch enemies,’ they’d hiss in Afrikaans through clenched teeth, memories of the Anglo-Boer War still fresh as new blood in their old veins and minds. I didn’t see that movie, or the TV series, so I can’t speak of first-hand experience. But if the truth must be told, the English did create the success of concentration camps in South Africa, long before Adolf Hitler was born.

‘When Hendrik Verwoerd dragged us out of the Commonwealth in the early 1960s, we children, boere kinders, celebrated our white liberation from the imperial monster. Life would go on without the umbrella of British fair play and the British way of doing things right, if not left. But there was still always the bottom line: Made in London. Fashions and fetish, theatre and innovation, movies and pop, royalty and fame. Language. It all happened in London, the centre of the world.

Uys surveys the chaos with expert wittiness
– *The Independent* (London) June 1996

After the interval the implacable Mrs Bezuidenhout
reappears. Even sharper satire here!

– *The Times* (London) June 1996

‘Everyone had to refuel there to go somewhere else. Everyone popped into the small island for a quaint experience before going somewhere bigger. And soon the British standard of excellence was the only standard. One didn’t think of America as other than a wrong carbon of the right original. Germany was far and foreign, the French were rude and drove on the wrong side, and didn’t speak Anglais.

‘For most of our lives in South Africa, in Cape Town, the most southern tip of nowhere, we would strive to be like the British. No, let me be specific and fair: to be like those living in London. The magical way the British spoke their language. The English language. Listen to me. This pathetic attempt to disguise the fact that I am an African with an Afrikaans accent that exposes my savage roots.

‘It is only in middle age that I now realise, after a lifetime of apartheid, that maybe the British have the perfect weapon of segregation: that English language. Speak it perfectly and you’re one of us, or be damned through your own mouth as a wog – or in politically correct terms, as a tourist, a Scot, an Irishman.

‘In the bad old days, the solutions were so simple. Send us your Northern Irish Protestants and we’ll send you all our blacks. Maggie wasn’t keen. Ironically, she’s now in Cape Town visiting her only son; in Cape Town, the one place anyone with something to hide can hide because it’s too dangerous for those on your tracks to enter.

It is fascinating to see how South Africa’s best-known artists react to the post-apartheid world: Uys keep his instinct for savage mockery alive. Far from losing his bite, Uys has actually sharpened it. It is an angrily funny show: what it proves is that satire is still the best vehicle for moral protest

– *The Guardian* (London) June 1996

‘In 1996 we saw the extraordinary spectacle of an old African ex-convict riding in a royal carriage down Pall Mall with the longest serving monarch in the world. ‘Who’s that old lady with Nelson Mandela?’ someone asked outside Buckingham Palace. Britain took our president to its heart. Seldom has such hysteria been seen from British fans. Is it because they haven’t seen an honest politician for the last 300 years? We certainly haven’t.

‘Nelson Mandela freed us all from the prison of habit. He broke the flawed mould of leadership and danced in the parliaments of the world. The feared noble savage turns out to be the beloved grandfather we have all waited for. After Mandela, Jesus Christ will have quite an act to follow. Will He speak proper English? Or will the BBC just do a voiceover?

A fresh array of barbed comments and piercing wit. Evita is a fine comic creation and Uys is a supreme satirist who thinks on his feet and is never short of sharp answers, which are even more cutting for being so charmingly delivered.

Brilliant stuff! – *What’s On* (London) June 1996

Here Evita Bezuidenhout was on trial. Members of the audience fired questions at her and the off-the-cuff answers were quite brilliant. A must for any ex-South African, as well as any lover of comedy

– *The Star & SA Times International* (London) June 1996

There are chilling echoes in the insistence of one of his characters that the whites ‘did not know what was happening in South Africa’ or that ‘the trouble is that we can’t find anyone who existed in the past’

– *Jewish Chronicle* (London) June 1996

‘London still has great theatre, but Lloyd Webber is as much at home in New York or Sydney, in German or Afrikaans. London still has the

language, but it doesn't sound as accessible as our international mid-Atlantic Anglo-American. At least London still has fair play, as long as only 30 refugees come over, and not 3000. Happily London still has a sense of humour, but usually only when Londoners make the jokes.

'When the world was just your vision and what you dreamed, it was huge and full of detail. Now the world lives in the television tube and dreams are prepackaged. Detail is just the cost of living. In such a world, London is just another place with too many noisy cars and too few happy children.'

LOOKING FOR THEATRE IN A LIVE WORLD

(Published in the *Cape Times* on 25 April 1997)

In the list of government priorities, the theatre cannot be found in the first two dozen. Health and welfare, education and security, social structures and democratic responsibilities all crowd into the top six. Arts and culture have their own letterhead, but they have to share it with science and technology – a combination as illogical as putting a carpenter into a room with a kiln. The 1990s has dragged every aspect of modern life across the threshold of being untouched by human hands – into the realm of button control, cyberspace, internet-ball. Most things that matter have been tied to the digital language of a computer.

Culture is a cold, political rose that cannot wilt because it's not real. Art is the tatty umbrella under which any eccentricity called old mutton can be dressed up as rare ham. And where does theatre fit in here? Controversially, the theatre that creates the most interest and anger in South Africa today is that place in a hospital where nurses strike and doctors are on a go-slow. The theatre of drama and dance and music and song is a small, sick beast in the background of dramatic chaos and it has a dry nose. No one seems to care if it lives or not. Because if it vanishes, alternatives could so easily step in and take over.

There was once a place where one could go and be seen. And see and listen and think. It was the theatre. Drama reflected our life and

asked questions, forcing us to find answers. It was also entertaining and diverting and original. That was acceptable when life started with an A and cleanly ended with a Z. Shorthand was a way to help you remember, not a way of life. Today everything is shorthand: long shot: Earth; close-up: a nipple.

The theatre has become a treasured memory of silent movies in a world of sound-bites and pop videos. The immediacy of daily drama has made the rambling structure of plays a luxury most of us cannot afford. The films: fashion or fascism on video makes staying home a logical and safe choice. Television is where we believe prerecorded to be live. The world will end, but not before the live broadcast begins. CNN Breaking News: the White House will herald the Second Coming, but only if they can find a sponsor. Meanwhile, give Jesus a Coke in the dressing room and tell Him to wait.

We can VHS history on our VCR while it is being made and then watch it at our leisure, replayed on fast forward. So we sit with the universal question: *Quo vadis* theatre, darling? Every society has the same problem. People are not going to the theatre in the UK, in the US, Europe and Australia. Certainly not in the way they used to; not in the way they are going to sports arenas. The West End of London and New York's Broadway are just two areas of the theatrical Jurassic Park that still attract the crowds. There are dinosaurs on stage who are recognised as movie and TV stars. Here they can now be heard in the back row. Without amplification – Zikes! Wow! Cool! Radical! Boring!

But writing a play in 1997 is not extending the envelope that holds the world. Eugene O'Neill would today be with an ad agency. Noël Coward would have died young of AIDS; Tennessee Williams would have probably given it to him. Would any of them have had the courage to speak now as they spoke then? Would anyone have been there to listen? 'Thanks boys, we've seen it all: been there, got the T-shirt. Cut to the car chase and let's have some blood, man, blood!' To be a dramatic exception today, you design a video game or computerise a dream. Special effects have taken over from live. Computer enhancement could make the Second Coming possible. 'Just no live appearances,

thank you! (And get that Coke to the guy in the dressing room. Say we don't need him, but to stand by, in case ...)'

In our new democracy, we can still look back over the fence into yesterday's *Boerassic Park*. There theatre existed, but not for all. We lived in a freeze frame from that moment in 1948 when nationalism pulled South Africa into the dark under the tarpaulin of bad politics. The world moved on and forgot us, until the stench of apartheid attracted its revolted attention. Our theatre stayed a 1940s' colonial museum of drama. The 1970s' cultural boycott withheld new directions in theatre. A 1980s' brainless regime brutally controlled thought and formed opinion. Through the arts councils it subsidised what it wanted to hear from the people in order to seem human. But literal rot set in and against all odds, South Africa started producing its own racist reflections of life through drama.

Athol Fugard broke the glass that kept the sacred button silent. He rang the bells and South Africa started listening to its own accent. Protest theatre broke the rules and the laws, and became the single live platform of free information. Some people came to the theatre to hear what the shots down the road meant. It was new. It was also not very entertaining. Our theatre had some of the answers. 'Free Mandela!' 'Get rid of apartheid!' A short play. Repetitive dialogue. No surprises. A clenched fist can only attract attention so many times before it becomes the knockout blow that ends the night. Theatre must ask questions, not give answers. But bad politics demanded that our theatre hung up its tap shoes and feathers and waded through the blood and guts that sloshed about the trenches of life under apartheid.

Now we cut to the car chase! It is 1997 and we are democratic and decent and dying only because that's what happens when people finish their lives. We do not shoot and maim and kill to protect a politically corrupt elite. We have freedom of speech, but no speech. After all the years of the illegality of opinion, South Africans have yet to grab their right to form opinions and change them when challenged. Our theatre has stumbled out of the darkened room where it remained kidnapped for 40 years. Eyes blinking in the light, hair too long and

clothes out of fashion. It's clearing its throat and wondering if it can still be heard.

In 1997 it's no longer fashionable to go to the theatre. It's dangerous, and too often, it's boring. But it's wonderful being entertained. So a small venue with a clown at the mike can fill the room for a year, while the great mausoleum on the hill stands empty. This is the car chase. We are in the eras of choice. We can now choose what we want to spend our time on. Time is worth so much more than money. And maybe sitting in a row like a schoolchild for three hours, watching something unnatural on a stage, the repetition of words that someone wrote and someone else is saying, having been directed by yet another 'else' is all too much like last week's food warmed up? If it's live on TV; if it's live in life, maybe theatre must be as live: an interaction with those watchers who can become participants, reflecting the reality of what is happening outside at that moment?

There is no reason why our theatre should not find its own tightrope on which to balance shockingly. Our TV is on a dreary, middle-American loop. We have no local films to do for us what the Australian film industry has done for them. No one is reading books for fun, because it costs too much. Or it's just too hard to read if you don't know how. The cities of South Africa are imploding, the way they did in the US and the UK during the 1970s. We are just catching up with the world. The former cathedrals of art in the cities are standing empty and bitter. Small monasteries of drama are establishing themselves in garages and cafés and warehouses, not always in the centre of cities, but often out in the platteland. Or at the arts festivals that are becoming the supermarkets of theatre, where audiences can come from all over the beleaguered country and shop for laughter, ideas and inspiration.

Renewal. Reinvention. Taking chances. Loving what we do. Not waiting for money from ministers. Delivering. Growing. Extending. Being brave. Being generous. Being honest. Being patient. Telling a story. Just a few ingredients for South African theatre in the future. Now, put it all in the cooking pot of your brain, add your special herbs and flavour and enjoy.



Preparing for our long walk to freedom, the great trek
from Cape Town to Darling with Mrs Violet Smoorvis

MEANWHILE BACK IN THE REAL WORLD (1995)



Darling meets Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout

I really do live in a town that is called Darling. It's up the West Coast, 90km from Cape Town. I wasn't supposed to even go to Darling. It was a wrong turn that changed my life. The first Freedom Day in South Africa, 27 April 1995. Three hundred and sixty-odd days since the T-word 'terrorist' became the G-word 'government'. I got into the car and decided to have a drive to McGregor up in the mountains beyond Worcester. Never been there; heard it's very pretty.

After about an hour on the road I found myself in Darling. Darling? That's like setting out for China and ending up in Brazil. I saw a sign for a German restaurant called *Zum Schatzi*. Maybe I'll have a Wiener schnitzel in Darling, darling. I was a bit early, so the owner, Herman the German, said, 'Nein, the cow is still in the field'. He suggested I walk about the town for an hour and then come back. I said, okay, and went back into the street. Outside, I met the local estate agent who was selling the house across the road.

'Pieter-Dirk Uys? I saw your show at the Baxter Theatre last week. What are you doing here?'

'I'm on my way to McGregor.'

'Do you know Darling? Get in the car. I'll show you around my town.'

So she did. And it is a pretty town. Beautiful Victorian house here, charming Victorian cottage there, Victorian cat, Victorian dog. She turned to the right, up the hill.

'Just need to drop a cooldrink at this house. We're having an open day. Disaster. The house has been empty for seven years. There are snakes under the floorboards.'

And there it was amid the tall elephant grass: an old Victorian house with missing shutters and cracked window panes, a real old lady without teeth or a smile. I bought the house while still in the car!

'I want to buy this house.'

'What?'

'I want it.'

'No.'

'Yes!'

'No ...!!!'

'What do you mean, "No"? You're the estate agent!'

'It's going to cost you a fortune to renovate. Besides, it's far too expensive; we must negotiate.'

'Oh no, we are now a democracy. No more negotiation. See that new Mercedes with Durban number plates coming up the road? Bet you it's full of rich Indians house hunting with cash in the boot! I want this house!'

And so, three hours later I left Darling with a schnitzel in my tummy and a house in my hand. Got back to my Cape Town house in the Gardens and said to my friends:

‘I bought an old house in Darling.’

‘Why?’ I didn’t have an answer. What had I done!

So come Saturday morning I drove back to Darling (not via McGregor) to say that I had made a mistake. I stopped in front of the house. It was in even a bigger mess than I thought. ‘Back to the estate agent you go, darling ...’

Just then, a small car drew up and a young man got out.

‘Hi, are you Pieter-Dirk Uys? I believe you’ve just bought this house?’

I was just ready for my monologue of yes-but no-but. ‘I restore Victorian houses. I’ve just got back from the UK. I’d like to fix this house up for you as a showcase.’

Hey? Are some things just meant to be? If I’d left a few minutes earlier and he’d arrived a few minutes later, I wouldn’t be where I am today. It turned out to be the best wrong turning in my life. The renovations took six months. I said: Don’t bring in people from outside, use the local talent here: carpenters, painters, electricians in the Darling community. And there were many. Everything was done by locals. In fact, even today when I am in the Darling Spar with my trolley going down the aisle, and I turn the corner and crash into Ant’ Sarah se trollie, and she says: ‘O nay, Mister Uys, jy’s soos ’n dronkie met jou trollie! You know, when we renovated your house all those years ago, I took a double lunch break on a Friday to come up and scrape all that horrible green paint off your toilet doors. Maar o, ek was bang vir die slange!’

There was a family of cobras living under the floor. I said: ‘No animals get killed or hurt. No snakes die, because then other snakes will come to look for them.’

‘No,’ they said, ‘there’s an old oom in the community who catches snakes live.’

‘Bring on the oom!’

He arrived in his hat. ‘Waa’s die Schlange?’

He caught them and took them down the road and threw them over the fence into the garden of a local Broederbond. And so I moved into my house in Darling – lock, stock and false eyelashes.

The carpenter who had restored all the shutters on the house was working from the old Darling Station, which was his studio. When he decided to move elsewhere, the estate agent asked if I could use the little tin building as a storeroom. Otherwise the municipality would demolish it as a hazard. I certainly had enough high-heeled shoes to tempt Imelda Marcos to ask for political asylum just to see them. And what about the dresses of the most famous white woman in South Africa? Tannie Evita always had a choice of two: medium and large. (Alas, no more room for small.) I stood on the gravel next to this small pink and blue derelict building as a diesel train grumbled by slowly. And then I had the idea!

Perron is Afrikaans for station platform. Evita Peron was that lady in Argentina who sang all those songs and then died. Tannie Evita Bezuidenhout is in the boot of my car! I'll turn this old station into a theatre and call it 'Evita se Perron'!

So the next time I went to Cape Town, I said to my friends: 'I'm going to open a theatre in Darling!'

'Darling, you're mad!'

Yes! Mad is good. Mad means no one's thought of it yet. If people agree, usually there are fingerprints all over your bright idea. Evita se Perron has been going as a work in progress to this day. Recently, the BBC Travel Show had a section on South Africa and at the end listed various highlights for a visit to Cape Town:

1. You can now have a bath!
2. Take a torch, just in case.
3. Go to Robben Island and see Nelson Mandela's prison cell.
4. Go to Darling and visit Evita se Perron.

From the sublime to the ridiculous. The longest street in the town – you can check in the palm of your hand on your GPS Google Earth map – is the Evita Bezuidenhout Boulevard. (Does the late Winnie Madikizela-Mandela have a boulevard?)

The first show in 1996, on the Perron's small stage with an audience of 60, was Evita Bezuidenhout surrounded by familiar portraits of the past leadership and iconic symbols of the former state sharing her unique vision of the state of the nation. It was called *Tannie Evita praat Kaktus*. It is still performed at Evita se Perron every Sunday at noon.



The first media review of *Tannie Evita praat Kaktus*
at Evita se Perron in Darling: (Len Ashton,
The Argus Tonight, Cape Town, September 1997)

This is not a review. Critics are worthy folk who approach their work with conscious earnestness, and suffer for it.

The hour's entertainment started at noon and finished with awesome precision at 1pm. It was funny, perceptive and a powerful example of crowd control. Evita Bezuidenhout can read an audience like a pro

politician. Which is what she is. Perhaps that's one of the many reasons why she retains such a grip on the white South African imagination. The character is survivor incarnate.

She, like Piet Koornhof, has always managed to ride the winds of change. Regimes may come and go, but Tannie Evita will ever be among the *amabenzi*, tut-tutting her way into the corridors of power, a self-anointed sacred cow. These days she is sporting a flamboyant new African outfit - apparently one of Winnie Mandela's cast offs with only slight bullet hole damage - and from a position of impregnable self-satisfaction, cheerfully castigates every political grouping in the land for moral, administrative and aesthetic shortcomings.

The energy never falters. Evita knows precisely how to take the mickey without reducing anyone to tears. Tears of laughter, certainly, but don't cry for Evita. She knows a thing or two about human nature and she's undaunted. Only those who have seen her perform in other contexts, here and abroad, will know how brilliantly Evita adapts to the mood of a particular audience. The character is consistent, but she is always instinctively, professionally versatile in her exploitation of the specific needs of the crowd.

Evita gets away with murder because she's the essence of all the moms, teachers and trad social dictators rolled into one. And because she makes you laugh - even when it hurts.



1996
TANNIE EVITA
PRAAT KAKTUS

Tannie Evita praat Kaktus

(As performed in January 2023 and reflecting the politics of the moment)

The version performed at Evita se Perron from May 1997 was mainly in English. This version here is where the text and performance stand in 2023. Arguably this is the longest running show in South Africa, having been (and still being) performed at Evita se Perron every Sunday at noon since 1996. Topical political references are also essential in the lead-in and ending of her revisionist monologue.

ON THE STAGE

- * *The backdrop of the Battle of Blood River/die Slag van Bloedrivier*
- * *The kaktus of separate development on a stand*
- * *The kaktus of democracy under a covering cloth*
- * *Four blocked pictures of: the Drommedaris; Maria van Riebeeck; Jan van Riebeeck; the landing on the beach*
- * *A model of the Voortrekker Monument*
- * *A pair of wooden Dutch clogs*
- * *An 'ossewa' from the great trek*
- * *A basket in which a small doll in the shape of Julius Malema is placed*

THE SHOW

(SOUND: *the Evita anthem into the Desmond Tutu introduction*)

‘Dear friends of South Africa, this is me, the Real Desmond Tutu. When I tell you that we have the most famous white woman in South Africa, I’d be lying to you. Evita Bezuidenhout is not a woman; Evita Bezuidenhout is a legend. And because we in South Africa can survive

and enjoy Tannie Evita, we are stronger and wiser. So be warned: here comes Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout!’

(Evita enters)

Thank you, dear Archbishop Desmond Tutu, for those lovely words of introduction. It’s a lovely day and although it is winter, the sun is shining. And here we are together in Darling, which is not in the Boland; Darling is in the Swartland – the only part of South Africa honest enough to call a spade a spade. And sadly we don’t have the beautiful wild flowers in the veld to show you. That only will happen in September. Please come back then: we have the rarest wild flowers in the world, which you only find here on the West Coast and around Darling. And do you know why? Because the Ice Age never came to Darling. The National Party came to Darling, but never the Ice Age. But I do have my own personal flowers here that actually come from Taiwan. They are open 24 hours a day and you don’t have to water them. You just dust them off once a week.

Our lives are being polluted by politics, day in and day out. And this morning, knowing I would be with you, I just thought: Am I going to talk about politics again? I have to do that all the time because I’ve been involved with politics for over half a century if not longer. Yes, but remember politics is here today and gone tonight! There are far more important things for us to worry about, think about, celebrate.

So let us remind our politicians that we don’t work for them, they work for us. And so I’ve decided that today I won’t talk about politics. Or a recent virus. Ag nee wat, I want to celebrate something far more important and lasting: it’s called South Africa! We live in the most beautiful country in the world. We must keep it beautiful and strong, not just for the sake of our children and our grandchildren, but also for our Zimbabwean maids’ children.



HER NEW LOOK

And yes, this is me, but first let me explain. Of course during the Covid lockdown, I could not do some things I would automatically do on my normal week's to-do list. Like going to Helmut my hairdresser. Yes, once a week I would stick to my Monday 10am appointment and that is why I always looked the same so that you could easily recognise me and say: there goes Tannie Evita! But lockdown made that impossible. And then one morning in the bathroom mirror, I saw the real Tannie Evita: the 87-year-old Evangelie Poggenpoel looked back at me. The dreaded grey roots! I panicked. Maar boer maak 'n plan. I realised that every brown cloud has a silver lining. And so I took my scissors and snipped here and there and look at me now! My son De Kock says that I look like Helen Mirren. Nee wat, I think Helen Mirren now looks like me!



Evita Bezuidenhout's new look

THE BOOKS FOR THE GRANDCHILDREN

I must also just thank the lady who brought these books to the dressing room. Beautiful gifts for two of my grandchildren's birthdays next week. Yes, my oldest granddaughter, Winnie-Jeanne Makeoloeli, is now second year at WITS – her first year was virtual – doing a political-

science degree. How clever for them to put politics and science together. She is planning to focus her studies on the effect of colonialism on the human rights of the indigenous peoples of South Africa. Ja-nee mense, dis 'n mondvul. And of course it is important to help her with her research – and so I am so glad you have given her this book on Nelson Mandela. *Mandela: a motion picture*. Oh, I see, this is a book about the film ... And the film was about the book. And yes, look it has the preamble to the Constitution as a foreword, something we all treasure, something we have all learnt off by heart so that we can repeat it every day and remind ourselves that we have a Constitution that will protect everyone's property rights.

(She reads from the Mandela book)

'We the people of South Africa / Recognise the injustices of our past / Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land / Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country and / Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.'

Haai mense, what wonderful words, written by the greatest brains in the country – who have not been heard of since. And then my youngest grandchild, LaToya Ossewania, is in Grade Seven and is mad about Harry Potter! So you gave her the latest masterpiece from JK Rowling: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. Wat 'n aaklige titel? How would one translate that into Afrikaans? *Harry Potter en die Vervloekte Kind*? O nee dis naarl!

(She reads from the Harry Potter cover blurb)

The eighth story? Nineteen years later ... liewe aarde, but the Potters have been busy! 'It was always difficult being Harry Potter ... recognising the injustices of the past and honouring those who suffered for justice and freedom ...'

(She pauses. Looks at the Mandela book, but then decides against it)

'It isn't much easier now that he is an overworked employee of the ministry of magic ... as well as being a father of three school-aged children, who wonder if the world of magic belongs to all who believe in it, united in their diversity ...'

(She now checks in the Mandela book)

Goodness me, I never knew that Nelson Mandela also read Harry Potter...

THE KAKTUS IS INTRODUCED

And now, soos hulle soms sê: van die os op die Menora blade, let me introduce you to something very familiar to all South Africans: a cactus.

How do we say in English? One cactus, two cacti?

And in Afrikaans? Een kaktus, twee? Kak...ti ...

cci. I always thought this was the ugliest thing in my garden during the old days. I remember saying to my garden boy: 'Filamon? You eat that for breakfast. I don't want to see it there by lunch time.'



But then Pik Botha, in his wisdom as minister of foreign affairs, pointed out the socio-political significance of the cactus. Really? Sociopolitical significance of a cactus? I just didn't understand what he meant. But then Pik can be very deep. Na ses-uur in die aand, ontsaglik diep! So I said: 'Pik, please explain: what's the difference between a cactus and a caucus?' He said: 'At least with the cactus, the pricks are on the outside.'

You might not know this, but the cactus and the Afrikaner also share a lot in common: we can both thrive in drought-stricken areas. Do you remember those terrible years of sanctions and boycotts? When everyone was so horrible to us? Nobody would talk to us. I would go overseas and ask them: 'What is wrong with our politics? What's wrong?' They knew, but because of sanctions they wouldn't tell us!

Oh yes, we Afrikaners suffered deeply under sanctions. We were forced to go all the way to Germany to buy spare parts for our hairdryers. And yet in spite of sanctions, we Afrikaners survived. Of course, like the cactus we Afrikaners are not always very attractive. I mean, look at Steve Hofmeyr at nine o'clock in the morning! But then, like the cactus, we Afrikaners sometimes come forth with a beautiful rare flower – like in this case: me!

THE AFRIKANER'S STRUGGLE

During the last 800 days we have all been in the same boat – the SA Corona – going into our 28th year of democracy, and in spite of a pandemic, everyone in South Africa is still free to acknowledge where they come from, to celebrate their struggle and look forward to where they are going. Everyone. Except the Afrikaner. We don't even have a history. The Afrikaner's history was made up behind a politician's desk in Pretoria in 1948! En die donners her vir ons gelieg! How can we look forward to where we are going if we don't even know where we come from?

And yes, it is time that we Afrikaners rediscovered the truth about our history and are once again proud, especially of the wonderful contributions we Afrikaners made to bringing about this great democracy of the people, for the people and by the people! Wonderful things! I can't think what they were now, but they were wonderful contributions! And so with the help of this cactus, I would like to share with you the survival spirit of the Afrikaner, om weer die oorlewingsgees van die Afrikaner te ontbloot.

DOES EVERYONE UNDERSTAND AFRIKAANS?

O gits, does everyone here understand Afrikaans? Who does not understand Afrikaans? (*Some put up their hands*) Where are you from?

(*She chats with several in the audience*)

I just want to say to those here who do not understand Afrikaans: We South Africans have been given the greatest gift, the gift of communication. We have 11 official languages. No one can ever say they didn't know what was going on, because eventually someone will say it to them in their own language: English, Afrikaans, Zulu, isiXhosa, North Sotho, South Sotho, Venda, Shangaan, Swati, Pedi ... O gits, wat het ek hier uitgelos. Cape Coloured ... nee.

Do you think this is practical? Having 11 official languages? What do we do at home if we have a vicious dog, a Rottweiler that now also bites whites? We must put a sign on the gate to at least warn the DA candidate. So what language do we put on the sign? One language? Or all

11 languages? Does the sign now become the gate? Just imagine: Beware of the Dog, Oppas vir die Hond, Umkhonto eSizwe ... on on on ... and by the time your Venda guest has found his language, the dog has already bitten him on his backside! So I will speak English so all of you can understand. Maar ek moet sê, Afrikaans is nog steeds die mooiste taal in die wêreld. (*And if there is applause from Afrikaners, she adds*) Ja-nee al ons vriende van Brakpan wat so lekker klap! Let me get back to this controversial exhibit. Please be warned ...

THE KAKTUS OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT

... this is a dangerous cactus. This is a politically incorrect cactus. I had to get a special permit from three ministers in the security cluster to bring it here today from its display cabinet at the Apartheid Museum. This kaktus started all the trouble in South Africa. It is called the Kaktus of Separate Development and it arrived here in the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 from Holland. (Anyone here from Holland? Do you want to apologise for apartheid now?)

THE DROMMEDARIS

On 6 April 1652 three boats arrived here in Table Bay from Holland – *de Drommedaris*, *de Reijger* en *de Goede Hoop* – and those of you who remember our history classes from the days of our Christian Nationalist education, will also remember the picture that our teacher showed us of the *Drommedaris* ... and there you can see on the back deck, the kaktus of



separate development. And our teacher also told us that on the *Drommedaris* was this very clever Dutchman called Jan van Riebeeck. And that Jan van Riebeeck brought civilisation to South Africa. Do you remember? It was a lie. It was the

Evita Bezuidenhout with a picture of the *Drommedaris*

first colonialist lie that we all believed without question. It was also an early example of how politicians rewrote our history constantly to make themselves strong and to keep us frightened.

JAN VAN RIEBEECK

How could Jan van Riebeeck have brought civilisation to South Africa? He came from Holland. At least now we know the truth about Jan van Riebeeck: he was an escaped Dutch convict who came to steal chickens from the bushmen. And he wasn't even on his way to South Africa. That was another lie. Jan van Riebeeck was on his way to Brazil to open a coffee shop, because that is what Dutch people do. Have you ever known a Dutch person to be an explorer? What can you explore in Holland except Belgium? *Dis alles so klein.*

And there Jan van Riebeeck, sailing across the South Atlantic on his way to colonise Brazil, was suddenly blown off course by a terrible wind – the El Niño of 1652. (Of course we don't call it El Niño in South Africa. We just call it Winnie!) And there he finds himself in Table Bay which, as you know, never looked like Brazil. *Kwit, die man was bang!*

MARIA VAN RIEBEECK

But he wasn't alone on the *Drommedaris*. Besides all the Dutch sailors, there was a woman on board called Maria van Riebeeck. And again from our history classes we all remember her picture ... (*She shows the picture*) and our teacher told us that Maria van Riebeeck was Jan van Riebeeck's ...? Wife? No, brainwashed, brainwashed, brainwashed. That's what they told us and we believed them,



Maria van Riebeeck

but it was another colonialist lie! Maria van Riebeeck was not his wife; she was his mother. Because Jan van Riebeeck turned out to be one of those sensitive, artistic Dutch boys that didn't go anywhere without his mother. (En daar is baie waar hy vandaan kom.)

And here is the familiar picture of Jan van Riebeeck that we all remember from the old ten rand note – in the days when 10 rand was worth 10 rand and not 10 cents. A nice friendly young face; clean hair, blue eyes. Well, I'm sorry to disappoint you, but this is not a picture of Jan van Riebeeck. They lied. They couldn't find a picture of him, because no one painted him, he was so ugly. Hy't 'n groot karbonkel op sy neus gehad. This is a picture of his boyfriend, Gys van Hoogenstraaten. See? Just another example of how the colonialist politicians rewrote our history to make themselves strong and to keep us frightened.



Evita Bezuidenhout with a picture of Jan van Riebeeck

THE DUTCH CLOGS

And Jan and his mother and his friend walked up and down on the deck of the *Drommedaris* trying to find out where they were. And they walked up and down on the wooden deck in their wooden shoes, because Dutch people wore wooden shoes. Clogs. (*She picks up the pair of clogs from the table*) Hout klompen. Nog steeds? Very incompatible with the European Union. Today every country in Europe wears leather shoes, but the Dutch still wear wooden shoes. Kwit, maar julle's dwars. But then I expect if your country's half under water, you need something to drift in.

So there they were, walking up and down on the wooden deck in their wooden shoes, making a noise that had never before been heard in the

Southern Hemisphere. A distinctly Eurocentric noise. And as a result, the historically disadvantaged black tribes here at the Cape: the Hottentots, the Bushmen, the Khoi-Khoi and the San-San – they were all on Blouberg beach having a go-slow. They looked up and through the mist they saw the *Drommedaris* appear. They'd never seen something like this before. They all screamed 'Hau tokoloshe!' and ran – right up to Griqualand West, leaving the Cape empty. Empty!

Don't believe all this ANC propaganda that now tells us that the Cape was full of happy blacks when the whites arrived. Mense, daar was nie eers 'n plat neus in die Kaap nie. Even Robben Island, which would soon be turned into a timeshare for Hottentots, was empty. It was for penguins only.

LANDING ON WOODSTOCK BEACH

And so Jan took his mother and his friend and put them into the rowing boat of the *Drommedaris*. He filled the boat with some important things for their survival – a Dutch flag, a map of the world, lots of vegetables in case they were hungry. He also took with them the Kaktus of Separate Development, which you must remember was on the back deck of the *Drommedaris* on its way to Brazil. Just imagine: if this kaktus had got to Brazil, the ANC would have been the government of Brazil! Although looking at the present Brazilian economy and corruption, maybe the ANC is the government of Brazil!

Jan van Riebeeck rowed to the shore, setting foot on Woodstock Beach – and again from our history classes we have the famous picture of Jan van Riebeeck bringing civilisation to South Africa on the 6th of April 1652 – and how can you blame us for believing that this was true? (If you can't see it clearly from your seat, just google it in the palm of your hand.) Such a familiar picture: there's Devil's Peak. Here's the Dutch flag. And here Jan van Riebeeck looking very important in his big black hat, surrounded by all the other Dutchmen from the *Drommedaris*: Van Graan, Van Eeden, Van der Merwe and Van der Byl. Hier staan Harry die Hottentot wat hulle verwelkom in vlot Hollands – so 'n slim ou ding. En daar agter sit Saartjie Baartman en dagga rook.



Jan van Riebeeck arrives at the Cape of Good Hope (Charles Bell, 1850)

Of course, we believed this picture to be true. And yet it breaks my heart to tell you that this picture is also a terrible colonialist lie. No one can keep a hat on in the Southeaster wind. And that's exactly what happened. The Southeaster wind came up and blew away Jan van Riebeeck's map of the world – now he didn't know where he was. In the middle of the night, the hungry bergies came and stole his flag – now he didn't know who he was!

And so to protect his valuable vegetables from the hungry bergies, Jan van Riebeeck dug a hole in Woodstock Beach, put the vegetables in the hole and sat on the hole. And by doing that, started the first Eurocentric, ecologically sound vegetable garden in the Southern Hemisphere. But he also did something very bad. In the confusion, he planted the Kaktus of Separate Development, starting over 366 years of bad politics in South Africa.

NEEM 'N KLUIT ...

But don't blame Jan. Not only was he Dutch, he was also stupid. He didn't remember his instructions and they were so clear. For six weeks

before he sailed from Holland, they went to him every morning and when they woke him up, they said: 'Jan? Jan! When you reach your destination, take a stone and build a station. Neem een kluit en bou een stasje.' All he could remember was: 'Neem een meid en bou een nasje' and that's exactly what he did!

Of course, as soon as the other countries in Europe found out that the Dutch were having such a nice time at the Cape of Good Hope making Coloured people, they also wanted to come and have a chance. And so one by one the great countries of Europe colonised us and brought everything for their own comfort: their language, their music, their culture, their art – but none of their democracy.

THE EUROPEANS ARE COMING

Who came after the Dutch? The French Huguenots; Franse Hugenote! – dronk! You had to be drunk to end up in Franschhoek. After the French, the German settlers arrived, but as you know, the German settlers invaded us, because Germans must invade, otherwise we think they're Swiss. The Germans invaded, but brought us something very valuable. They brought the recipe for sausage. Wurst. Leading to the cornerstone of Afrikaans culture: boerewors. (Mrs Margaret Thatcher didn't know what it was. I said: it's haggis with a sense of humour.)

THE BRITISH INVASION

As soon as the German settlers had moved into Tamboerskloof never to be heard from again, the British Empire woke up to the fact that the Cape of Good Hope was an important halfway house on the sea route to India. So in 1795 the British invaded us and brought something incompatible with the European way of life here at the Cape: they brought English cooking.

Can someone explain English cooking? It's a contradiction in terms. Who here likes eating bread-and-butter pudding? We couldn't even give it away to the prisoners on Robben Island. And Toad in the Hole? Padda in die gat – asseblief! Spotted Willy ... Billy ... don't say that loudly! ... Spotted Dick? Sies, how does a decent woman order that in a restaurant.

BOER MAAK 'N PLAN

By now the Dutch settlers were known as *boere*. They were farming next to the Liesbeek Rivier. They saw this British invasion as a total onslaught against their independence, their self-respect and their sense of humour: three things that the Afrikaner has never had at the same time. So in order to get away from the horrible British bread-and-butter-pudding, the boere decided, instead of learning English and communicating with the hated colonialists, that they would just pack up everything and go on a great trek. Can you believe it? After working so hard on their small farms, they now packed up all they had into their little ox-wagons, small and frail, like the Volkswagen Golfs of the day ...



Evita with an ox-wagon

(She shows the ox-wagon)

... because that the Afrikaner was always very poor. Poor, poor, poor – till 1948, but up to then very poor; genetically and generically, very very poor. We packed our meagre belongings into our little ox-wagons: some Pierneef paintings, some stinkwood chairs. We also took with us the Kaktus of Separate Development to keep it out of the clutches of the British Empire, and there we went on our Great Trek.

DIE GROOT TREK

Die Groot Trek. Ek kry somaar hoendervleis as ek dit in Afrikaans sê. Imagine: 127 branches of the Great Trek starting in Cape Town on the same Saturday afternoon, because there were 127 Afrikaners who couldn't agree on anything. Going into the hinterland – with no roads, no maps, no Ultra Cities, no Eskom. Dit was donker Afrika. We even crossed the mighty Drakensberg. Barefoot. Ja, ons Afrikaner vrouens is kaalvoet oor die Drakensberg. Wel, wat de hel kon ons doen? Die Hotnots het ons skoene gesteel.

We dismantled our ox-wagons and had to carry them bit by bit across the Drakensberg. The men carried the wagons, the women carried the oxen and the children smoked everything in the way. En daar gaan ons oor die Drakensberg until we found ourselves in beautiful, green, peaceful Natal – which we thought was empty. But that's a problem we are still faced with. Natal might look empty, but Natal is not empty ...

NATAL AND THE ZULUS

... Natal is full of Zulus – especially after noon when they wake up. And the Zulus are a magnificent race, a nation of compassionate considerate people, as we know after hearing words of wisdom pour forth from the lips of our former Zulu President Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma. But let us not forget (as we are not allowed to forget) that the Zulus can also be difficult and temperamental.

My mother, Ouma Ossewania Kakebenia Poggenpoel, always warned me about Zulus. She says there are only two things you can do with a Zulu: Put him in government, or put him in jail. There's nothing in between. Of course the moment the Voortrekkers got into Natal, they knew the Zulus were there. They couldn't see them; but they could hear them, because Zulus make a terrible noise. Not just today on the pavement with their portable radios and cell phones, but even in those days across the Valley of a Thousand Hills, singing and dancing the toyi-toyi till three o'clock in the morning and then breaking valuable things.

So immediately, the Voortrekkers knew they had to prepare to make battle with the Zulus. Because even in those early days, politicians were dividing us in order to rule us. Politicians were saying to the blacks: work for the whites! And saying to the whites: pay the blacks with cheap wine!

BLOEDRIVIER

And so the Voortrekkers found a small river in Natal. On the banks they put their wagons in a circle, a laager, filled the spaces between the wagons with cacti and thorn trees to keep their cats and dogs in, picked

up their guns and sat ready to fight the Zulus. For three days the Voortrekkers waited: morning, noon and night, waiting to fight the Zulus. 'Waar de donner is die Zoeloes?' Waiting! Obviously the beginning of African Time. Waiting ...

Suddenly, after three days, the Zulus appeared on the hills around Blood River. Two hundred and fifty thousand Zulus in their ostrich feathers and rare and protected animal skins and assegais and shields. Imagine, a quarter of a million Jacob Zumas without cell phones. The moment the Voortrekkers saw so many angry Zulus surrounding the laager, the Voortrekkers reacted like any other normal white South African would in a similar circumstance. They got on their knees and prayed to God, because in those days, God was an Afrikaner.

And the Voortrekkers said to God that if He would allow them to win this Battle of Blood River against the Zulus, that we Afrikaners would celebrate that day, the 16th of December, as a sacred day for the rest of time. Which is what we did ... well, till 1994. Because then something shocking happened to us. In the Voortrekker Monument.

16 DECEMBER AT THE MONUMENT

(She shows a model of the Voortrekker Monument)

I don't know how politically incorrect it is to even admit how inspired I still am by this great erection on the hill outside Pretoria, this Voortrekker Monument that encapsulates everything that is passionate and patriotic in the history of the Afrikaner. And a wonderful thing happens to us Afrikaners in this monument on that day; on the 16th of December at noon, a sunbeam comes down



Evita with a model of the Voortrekker Monument

from heaven specially for us. It beams down through the hole in the roof ... no, it was planned like that; it was not built by Indians ... and then falls onto the words in the basement in marble that say *Ons vir Jou Suid-Afrika*. We for Thee South Africa. Every year, on the 16th of December, at noon. Can you blame us Afrikaners for truly believing that God was on our side? Till 1994.

Ek sal daardie dag nooit vergeet nie. Pik Botha and I were standing there in the Voortrekker Monument on the 16th December 1994, waiting for the sunbeam. No, I lie, Pik had a headache; he was sitting, but I was standing. We didn't think the sunbeam would come. Why should it? Nelson Mandela was now our first democratically elected president and had brought us all the sunshine we needed. So I watched as the second hand reached noon and looked up. And my heart nearly stopped. Because there it was!

A TOILET FOR WHITES ONLY

The little sunbeam came down through the hole in the roof, down, down, down, and stopped right in front of me – and then went onto a sign on the wall that said: This toilet is for Whites Only! That's when I realised something was wrong. That's when we knew how politically incorrect it was to even conceive of the fact that we Afrikaners could win all battles against the black tribes of South Africa because God was looking the other way.

DISMANTLING THE SYMBOLS

And so I am so happy to share with you here at this imbizo the breaking news that will probably change the future of South Africa. We Afrikaners have decided to lead by example, knowing how important our national need for reconciliation is on every level of our society: we Afrikaners have, after many secret meetings, conference calls, arguments, lawyers, lengthy disagreements, Skypes, Zooms and golden handshakes, unanimously decided to dismantle the hurtful symbols in our history, of which there are many, but none as hurtful as the Voortrekker Monument.

Can you imagine how it must have affected our former Zulu president Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma, as he drove past the Voortrekker Monument every morning on his way to his office in the Union Buildings – or on his way somewhere – passing the monument, just to realise that God is still an Afrikaner? No. Nee. Nein. Non. Aikona. And so let it be known across the length and breadth of our land that as from now, this erection no longer represents anything to do with the history of the Afrikaner; it can now become a casino. Maybe more Afrikaners will visit it then? Or they can film the next Big Brother in here, want daar is mos nou 'n lekker loergat bo in die dak.

DISMANTLING THE BATTLE OF BLOOD RIVER

Of course, when it came to dismantling the symbolism around the legendary Battle of Blood River, that was much more complicated, because I think many of you have recognised this picture? Yes, it was in our classrooms at school! Onthou julle? Dit was in ons skoolklaskamers; in die vroue toilette van die *Landbou-weekblad*? In die voorportaal van die ACVV? This picture terrorised me as a little girl!

I was in the Emily Hobhouse Meisies-Laerskool in Bethlehem in Standard 4 for two years, because I broke my leg at netball and then a snake bit me twice at a



Evita with a painting of the Battle of Blood River

Sunday school picnic – so 'n duiwelse bliksem. And this picture was hanging on the wall next to my school desk and every morning the children and the teachers would come into the classroom and said: Kyk daar! Ons land, ons Volk, ons Taal! All I saw were images of violence. Voortrekkers wat Zoeloes skiet! En Zoeloes bloei – en tannies skree – en kinders kots – en honde blaf! En daar in die river lê die Zoeloes besig om te vrek – op hulle rûens en hulle maens. En die rivier is rooi van die bloed! The river was red with blood! Isn't that terrible? No wonder we Afrikaners are so deeply disturbed.

THE BRAAIVLEIS!

So maybe I think it's time to tell you, at last, the truth about the Battle of Blood River. There was no battle. It was a braaivleis! It was a wonderful example of reconciliation between Voortrekkers and Zulus. And if you look at this picture – and yes, on first observation it looks very violent, but I can assure you, it's not meant to be violent. If you look closely, you can see it was painted with a very subtle Afrikaner sense of humour. Well, no, you'll never find it; let me point it out to you.

Here you see Voortrekkers aiming at the Zulus, but they're not shooting at the Zulus; they're actually shooting the springboks behind the Zulus with which to feed the Zulus at the braaivleis. Hier is 'n tannie wat baie benoud lyk asof haar handsak gesteel is, but no, she's just doing the toyi-toyi like any school teacher on strike. And yes, the river is full of Zulus. It reminds me of Durban beach on Christmas Day.

But if you look closely you can see what a lovely time they are having! They've converted their shields into surfboards and their assegais into paddles. They've turned this into the first Dusi Marathon, proving once again that sometimes we must rewrite our own history, in order to force the square peg of the past into the round hole of the future.

THE BRITISH WAKE UP

The moment the British colonialists at the Cape found out that the Voortrekkers and the Zulus were having such a nice time at Bloedrivier,

they decided to come into Natal and take away the nice time – which is what British do. And so the British Army invaded Natal and forced the Voortrekkers to repack up their ox-wagons, dismantle them and carry them, bit by bit, back across the Drakensberg: twee keer in een jaar. Because in their meanness, the British didn't even tell us that there was a nice tarred road all the way from Bellville to Pretoria.

Once in the hinterland, we Afrikaners could form our own independent republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, which should have been the end of the story – because at last, the Afrikaner had independence, if not self- respect and/or a sense of humour. But no, nee, nein, aikona. Two terrible things happened to us.

THEY STEAL OUR DIAMONDS

Gold and diamonds were discovered on our land – and as you know, we Afrikaners don't want worldly things like gold and diamonds. We want aesthetic things – like cheap servants. But the British knew the value of those diamonds and so sent their army to invade our sacred republic of the Orange Free State in the middle of the night. Ons was nog aan die slaap. They got to the border, took off their army boots and tiptoed barefoot through the veld while digging holes for our diamonds. And the next morning when we woke up, what did we find? Holes for Africa: die Groot Gat van Kimberley. Die Groot Gat van De Aar. Tannie Sannie se groot gat op haar plaas.

The British took our precious diamonds back to England and put them into the crown of the British monarch. So now every time you see Queen Elizabeth wearing the state crown, know that her crown is full of our diamonds. Ons donnerse diamante! Did you know Her Majesty is wearing stolen goods? I remember being in London with Nelson Mandela to celebrate his 90th birthday, and saying to him over breakfast that morning: 'Madiba? Tonight you're having dinner at Buckingham Palace with the Queen. Please, while you're there, ask her to give back our diamonds?' He just smiled and said: 'No, Evita. Our diamonds are safer on her head than in our Parliament. Los hulle waar hulle is!'

THEY STEAL OUR GOLD

By now gold was discovered on the Witwatersrand and overnight all the unwanted elements from every society invaded Johannesburg: Uitlanders. Ausländer. Ama-kwêrekwêre. Followed by the British Imperial Army, which once again entered our sacred republic of the Transvaal uninvited, this time at noon – crossing the Vaal River with the sun glittering on their gold buttons and red jackets, while marching to Pretoria while whistling a cheap song, taking away our independence, stealing our gold and then doing something we Afrikaners never forgave them for: bringing back that horrible bread and butter pudding! That was the last straw. The next step was obviously the Anglo-Boer War.

I don't need to go into any detail about the Anglo-Boer war because it was a long time ago and maybe some of you had relatives who actually fought in the Boer War ... although looking around here, some of you could have been in the Boer War yourself ... I just want to remind you that the British Empire excelled itself during the Boer War by bringing something unique to South Africa and that was the concept of the concentration camps.

THE BOER WAR

Do we have any Germans here? I want you to feel better. The British started the concentration camps; the Germans and the Japanese perfected them. But the British came and set up their camps in the middle of the Karoo at the height of summer. Imagine the heat, the dust, the flies, the snakes, the scorpions? Vieslik! Aaklig! Daar was g'n roomys vir die kinders nie; nie eers 'n swembad nie; so tiepies Engels! The Anglo-Boer War. Die Engelse Oorlog. I can't start to tell you the stories my mother shared with us about being part of a young Christian, Afrikaans nation under the iron fist of the British ... wag, ek wil nie hê die Engelse moet sleg voel nie ...

AN ASIDE IN AFRIKAANS

... laat ek nou liewers Afrikaans praat. Daardie donnerse Rooinekke! Hulle's nie genooi nie! Daar was nie 'n krieket-wedstryd om the speel

nie. Hulle't hier ingestorm, bak-ore sonder ken. Daar staan ons trotse Afrikaners gasvry en vol Christelike vriendelikheid met koeksisters en melktert, koffie en beskuit in die hand. O nee! Hulle't ons behandel soos 'n klomp kaf ... naturelle! Ons kon nie ons taal praat nie. Ons moes 'Sarie Marais' fluister buite in die toilet. Hulle't hulself afgegee met ons kultuur, hoor, afgegee ... I'm just saying how much we learnt from you English ...

But then I don't think war is supposed to be fun. I don't think people make war. The mother of a child doesn't agree to a war. The father of a son does not support a war. Politicians make wars – to become powerful and rich. And when they have enough power and enough oil, they cancel the war, but don't tell anyone. Then overnight mortal enemies must become instant friends.

THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

It happened after the Boer War. It happened after our struggle. It has happened in Northern Ireland. It's not happening in Ukraine. Suddenly reconciliation is the most important reality – and I'm so happy to tell you that eventually, after years of squabbling, the English and the Afrikaner reconciled, by forming the Union of South Africa on 31st May 1910, and burying the hatchet in the back of the blacks. Because our black people had no rights under British rule. They were being tortured by the Kaktus of Separate Development.

THE KAKTUS IS BACK

You'd forgotten about the kaktus? It had been lost for ten years, but now it was found under the desk of the former president of the Transvaal Republic, President Paul Kruger, who as you know, became the first Afrikaner politician to take someone else's gold, run off to Switzerland and never return. Starting a lucrative fashion among future members of the Afrikaner Broederbond and today's princes in the BEE Buttibond aristocracy.

Of course, the British knew the value of this terrible kaktus. They brought it down to Cape Town at the dead of night under armed guard

and put it into its own anonymous broom cupboard in Parliament, allowing it to exude the terrible energy of naked racism, influencing not just all of us in South Africa, but also affecting those politicians in their Parliament in London next the River Thames, forcing them into passing grim laws of segregation that affected the whole British Empire ...

THE ELECTION OF 1948

... we were part of that empire, living under the Union Jack, waiting waiting waiting for our moment. And eventually it came. When the general election of 1948 was announced, we Afrikaners realised that at last we could revenge ourselves on the British Empire by using the weapon of democracy. And that 1948 election is also a good example of how voter apathy could change the history of a country. Because when that election took place, the British colonialists were so sure they had South Africa in the palm of their hands, they didn't bother to get involved with that election. They did not get their ID books with barcodes; they did not register. They didn't even vote! They played cricket and drank tea. But we Afrikaners knew the value of the vote, that's why we kept it away from so many people for so long.

And so in the 1948 general election we Afrikaners all voted and so thanks to British colonial voter apathy, the National Party came to power and apartheid became the policy of our land. A policy so successful that we couldn't kill it in 1994. We had to sell it to Bosnia and Burundi as ethnic cleansing.

EXPLAINING APARTHEID

I'm so happy that I don't have to explain any aspect of apartheid to any of you here today, because I can assure you, apartheid will never come back again under the same name. But do not underestimate the inventiveness of bad politics. Of course it will be back. It made money for a political elite then; it will make money for a political elite now. It won't be the segregation of colour: we've done that one. It might be the segregation of education, the segregation of language, the segregation of tradition – or in Gauteng, the segregation of tollgates.

TEA WITH TUTU

I remember mentioning this to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu when we had tea together at his house in Milnerton ... it was his 88th birthday, just some months before Covid ruined everything, having kocksisters and melkert ... I get so emotional when I just think of that wonderful man, remembering what we did to him during those years of apartheid. We called him the most terrible name! We called Desmond Tutu a Communist! No man, he's an Anglican!

I said: 'Arch Tutu, you are my last resort! What do I do? I will never forget how easily I looked away in those days when we knew what was happening. But now here we are going into the 28th year of our democracy? My priority is the future of my grandchildren and everybody's children and yes, of all the young born-frees of this land who don't have the fingerprints of separate development smeared all over their bodies like toxic tattoos! I want to say to them: embrace your freedoms and protect them with education and care, celebrating the chances to make your dreams come true. But, Arch Tutu, do I first have to apologise for apartheid and colonialism before I can say anything with optimism?'

MOVE ON!

He just laughed. 'Ousie,' he said, hy noem my Ousie. So 'n ou kabouter! 'If apologising for apartheid and colonialism makes you feel better, by all means apologise – but then move on!' And yes, he's right. It's time to move on! Are we still going to blame apartheid for everything we don't like today? Like in the 1960s, blaming Adolf Hitler for the miniskirt? Did we whites ever think we would get away with apartheid? We did! Nothing happened to us. There was no Nuremberg Trial. None of us was hung like Saddam Hussein for crimes against humanity. A man came out of 27 years in darkness and gave us light – and Eskom gave up.

ENTER NELSON MANDELA

Where would we have been today if Nelson Mandela had come out of jail angry? How would you have felt? In jail for 27 years for what you believe in? Away from your children? Your wife goes mad? Nelson

Mandela could so easily have come out of jail and spoken like Robert Mugabe or Julius Malema, and said: 'To hell with democracy. Take the farms and kill the whites!' And yes, hundreds of whites could have been killed and nobody in the world, or on CNN, would have looked in our direction. But he didn't say that: Nelson Mandela came out of jail with that beautiful smile and said: 'Tannie Evita, give me another koeksister!' Nelson Mandela gave truth to the old saying: Love your enemy, it will ruin his reputation.

And the day Nelson Mandela swapped prison for Parliament and became our first democratically elected leader on the 10 May 1994, the terrible Kaktus of Separate Development died. It made a noise in the parliamentary broom cupboard like a Volvo backfiring, and within minutes after the death of the Kaktus of apartheid, the new kaktus of the democratic South Africa was found in the men's toilet of Parliament by Roelf Meyer and his new friend Cyril Ramaphosa. Look at the difference; kyk net die verskil!

PRESENTING THE NEW KAKTUS

A lovely erect cactus with a healthy head, lots of affirmative pricks going out in all directions. The cactus of democracy that will now prove to the world that, in spite of all the terrible things we South Africans did to each other in the name of politics, that we've now decided to take each other's hands ... to go into a future filled with hope and optimism ... knowing that if we believe it ... and if we work towards it ... and if we vote for it ... South Africa can still become the greatest democracy on our continent ... as long as our young people realise that having a shower after unprotected sex won't cure anything!

(She places the new cactus where the old one was; looks at it closely)

Oh? Ah. Made in China?

(She hears something from the basket)

Is die kind wakker? Ag nee ...

(She coos into the basket)

Is jy wakker? Waar's jou sjokolade? Sorry, there's a child in here ... please don't tweet ... Hold your little toy ...

THE JUJU DOLL

Let me just put you in the picture here. I am a member of the ANC ... don't worry, you've got more important things to worry about ... I spend a lot of time in my kitchen in Luthuli House cooking for reconciliation. One thing I have learnt is the way to a politician's mind is not through his brain; it is through his stomach! Two weeks ago I was on a deadline for 10 dozen koeksisters for a tea party at a kraal in KZN. Mshowerlozi likes his koeksisters! It was also raining in Gauteng. That always depresses me because it means some boer in the Western Cape has prayed for rain. I suddenly heard a cat outside in the alley. A cat? So close to the Chinese restaurant at the end of the alley? I must save its life. So I opened the kitchen door with difficulty as no one ever uses a back door here. It's always the front door.

What a mess in that alley. Empty J&B bottles, KFC take-away boxes, copies of the Constitution ... Then I realised that it wasn't a cat; it was a child in distress sounding like a cat. And that's when I found him, half in a puddle of water and covered by soggy pages of a *Sunday Times*. A little boy. I brought him into the kitchen and dried him off carefully. Found him a nice fresh koeksister covered in syrup for him to lick.

I went up to the 6th floor of Luthuli House, to the office of the chairman of the ANC, Gwede Mantashe. Gwede Mantashe is always in his office. Gwede Mantashe never leaves Luthuli House because he knows they won't let him back in again. I said: 'Gwede, I've just found a child outside in the rain. Phone the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund; we need help.' He laughed. I said: 'Why are you laughing?' 'Evita, I can't phone them. None of us can. The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund was meant only for Nelson Mandela's children.' So now I'm stuck with this little thing. Like having to look after a rescue kitten.

(She looks into the basket)

Ja, jy dink ek praat oor jou? Kom ons wys die mense hoe oulik jy is ...

(She takes out the juju doll)

... and look, he found an old Xmas cracker and in it was a toy watch. He calls it his Breitling; I think 'breitling' is a Tswana word for 'something nice'. A very clever little boy. Teaching himself English. Last week in



Evita with the Juju doll

Sandton, we drove past a Nedbank and he pointed and said: 'Nationalisation!' What has it to do with him? Start again with a new little life? Ek is te oud; ek is te moeg! But my grandchildren who are not black, not white; they are Barack-Obama-Beige – want him as a new little brother ...

Well, we'll be back in Luthuli House on Wednesday and President Jacob Zuma is coming to collect his pension and the melkert ... and I want you to meet Jacob Zuma. You know, he might even be your father!

(She puts him back in the basket)

THE EPILOGUE OF HOPE

So what does it all mean? Very simply: democracy will never be perfect, because everyone's fingerprints are on that silver chalice of freedom. But as long as we still have the freedom to have opinions, to allow arguments, to celebrate common sense against all the odds of political correctness, we will overcome. In a healthy democracy, the people must lead and the government will follow. So lead by example. We cannot keep driving the truck of state by looking at the future through the rear-view mirror!

I believe that we whites have been given the greatest gift of all: we are now totally irrelevant! No one cares about us, because whites will never again lead – but what about leading by example? We don't need to apply for tenders or ask permission to make this country a better place. Yes, in 1994 we were all given a second chance to make our dreams come true. There will not be a third chance. Once my year had 365 days; now it has two: today and tomorrow. Confront today with passion and care and tomorrow will present its own reward.

A SECOND CHANCE

Which other nation got a second chance like we did? Not even the Jews. Look at the mess in the Middle East! They don't have a Mandela; they didn't have a De Klerk. And the Jews are the chosen people of the Northern Hemisphere. (We Afrikaners are the chosen people of the Southern Hemisphere!)

I remember meeting Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, during one of his visits to Pretoria. He was at Clicks buying the new tea, towels. I said: 'Yassir? What is going on in the Middle East? Why are you people killing each other all the time? Can't you learn from us in South Africa?' If we in South Africa can reconcile with each other – as we have done – anyone in the world can reconcile. We in South Africa who have shown the world that the only answer to any political question is the word 'reconciliation'. We in South Africa who have proved to the world that reconciliation can take the impossible and turn it into the ordinary. I said: 'Yassir, los hierdie goed by Clicks. Go back to Gaza, go back to Beirut and Damascus and tell your people that Evita Bezuidenhout says: it's time that the Arabs and the Jews starting living together as Christians!'

HER OPRAH MOMENT

And I sincerely hope the world is still taking note of our examples of reconciliation. But more than that, that we don't so easily forget what it feels like to be winners. That we don't so easily allow ourselves to be frightened into silence by third-rate politicians with their fourth-rate ideas. That we will always look at each cactus of policy with care and make sure that we don't make the same mistake again. That we will always toast our unique country with a glass that is half full and never, never, never half empty.

Let us remember where we come from so that we can celebrate where we are going, with the assurance that the future of South Africa is certain. It's just the past that is unpredictable. Nkosi sikelele, Ons vir jou Afrika Bura, Amandla/Vrystaat!

(Evita exits)

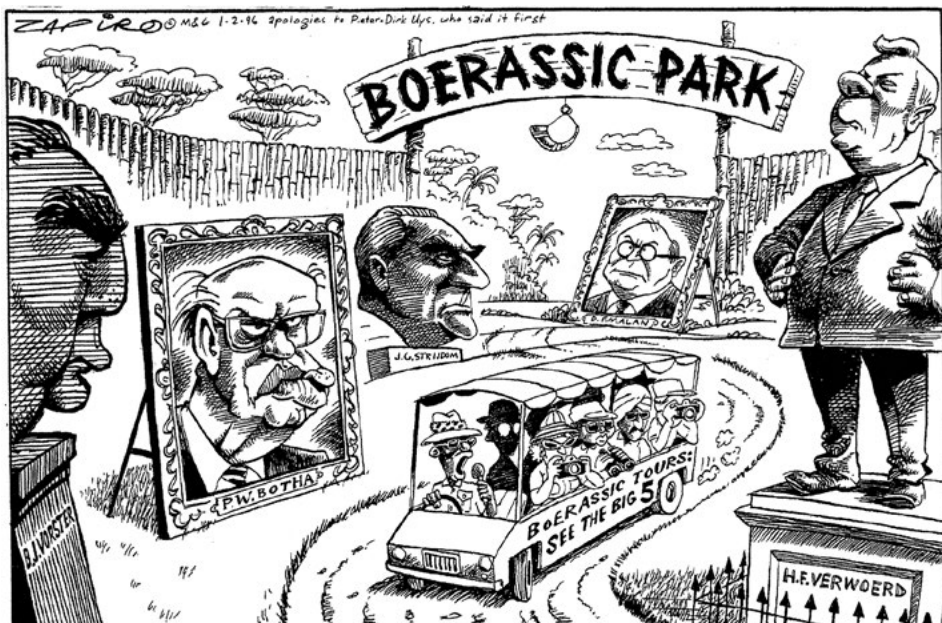


'Ja skat, jy sal eendag
net soos Tannie lyk!'



1997
LIVE FROM
BOERASSIC PARK





1 February 1996

Removal of apartheid relics from Parliament re-opens the debate about what to do with them

A BOERASSIC PARK IN THE SWARTLAND

To recap: in 1995 on the first Freedom Day celebrating our democracy, I drove to a small village up the West Coast, also known as the Swartland, and bought a derelict house. A week later I returned to Darling to inform the estate agent that I had made a mistake. At the house, I met a young man who introduced himself as a restorer of Victorian houses, who asked if he could restore my house to its former glory as a showcase for his work.

A year later I moved in. After six months I took over the former railway station and turned the small building into a theatre. I named it Evita se Perron. During the next few years the venue extended into a larger theatre, art gallery, bookshop, restaurant, museum/nauseum and a satirical garden called Boerassic Park.

I have always enjoyed collecting kitsch from the past, such as framed pictures of the once sacred symbols of my youth: the Voortrekker Monument, prints of the paintings of the Battle of Blood River, sweating Voortrekkers and their ox-wagons trekking over the Drakensberg. All of it historical rococo, hysterical kitsch and an inspiration to exhibit and be damned, in the same way that my stage shows reflected the madness and mayhem of our bad politics, finding the humour in the hypocrisy.

After the blockbuster films of *Jurassic Park*, the cluster of boer leaders and boer politicians and the entire Boere Baroque culture cried out for their own Disneyland, their own Owl House of memory. I wrote letters to artists suggesting sculptures. I requested unwanted statues of

political hasbeens and monsters to be sent to Boerassic Park, where they would be kept in a safe environment, only punctured by snorts of laughter and crapped on by hadedas. It all had to lead to a stage show where the characters would be historical, hysterical and live from Boerassic Park. The day Zapiro featured it in one of his cartoons sealed the success of the venture.

Boerassic Park is still a work in progress with empty spaces today reserved for aikonas like Cecil John Rhodes, Hendrik Verwoerd, Paul Kruger and Queen Victoria, among many others. Its collection of apartheid signs were all copied from YouTube, as the real signs probably hang on the walls of struggle stalwarts. It has happened that young locals will not venture into the park having seen the *Whites Only* signs. Once explained, they do enter, but it just shows that oppression does not dissolve with democracy.

I once heard reactions of three generations of an Afrikaans family to some of the pictures of political leaders from the apartheid era in our museum/nauseum. The white Afrikaner grandparents were emotional at the sight of the architect of apartheid. 'Ag, kyk vir Oom Hendrik ... !' The parents herding their children through the exhibition were disgusted and irritated. 'Nee, sies Mama, ek kan hierdie mense

nie verdra nie!' And then from one of the small grandchildren: 'Ouma? Wat beteken "whites only"?' That's the point: this good Christian ouma in her early eighties must now, probably for the first time, explain to her granddaughter the meaning of something she took for granted all her life. There are no explanations in the displays on view; the items speak for themselves. They demand questions. The viewers must find their answers.



PDU with a bust of Hendrik Verwoerd as a lamp

Bapetikosweti Basuin

THIS WAS THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE INDEPENDENT BLACK HOME! AND OF BAPETIKOSWETI 1981-1990

Volume 4

Pieter-Dirk Uys was on his way to the town of McGregor one fine day in 1995 and took a wrong turning. He arrived in Darling, ordered a schietwit at Zuss Schutzi and outside the restaurant met Dale Gremels, who was selling a house. She'd seen his show in the Baxter the week before.

"What are you doing in Darling?" she asked.

"Come to eat a schietwit," he said.

"The cow is still in the meadow. In the meantime, let me show you the town."

And so she took him around the village, pointing out the charming Victorian houses nestled in the cozy elbow of the hills.

"There's just one old house we're trying to sell. Difficult. Empty for years."

She turned a corner and there amid wild elephant grass, shutters askew, stood the most beautiful wreck of an old house Uys had ever seen. He bought it in the car, even after being told that there were snakes under the floorboards! But instinct has never let him down.

Pieter-Dirk Uys left Darling some hours later, having had a wonderful schietwit and now the owner of a crocked old house.

It took six months to renovate and as magic would have it, Darling had all the people to do the job: a young man who specialized in Victorian restoration, a Danish electrician, a wizard-carpenter and a community of artisans who painted, scraped, oiled and gently put the old house together like plastic surgeons.

Once Pieter-Dirk Uys had moved from Cape Town, Jochi Gremels casually mentioned that the old station building in Arcadia Road was now empty. It had been derelict for some years, and then became the workshop of that wizard-carpenter who decided to move on. And so, in 1996, it stepped into the pages of the unique and became EVITA SE PERRON.

Inspired by the legends of Argentina's Evita Peron and our own Evita Bezuidenhout, this was the ideal place for a theatre. Besides, the word peron is Afrikaans for station platform! For the first year all activity was centred round the small *Mik* building in its strange colours next to the railway line. We inherited the colour schemes. When the station was derelict and rusted, concerned townsfolk looked in their garages and brought whatever paint they could find. So we proudly display pink, lime-green, blue and white as our international colours.

To look at the buildings today with the two theatres, restaurant and bar, arts and crafts activities, Darling Trust Craft Centre and Boerassie Park, one finds it hard to remember that this was just a rural railway station once that served the best meat pies in the Swartland. And that, in spite of Evita's use of the word *skietwit*, the town has always been called Darling. The station was closed in the 1970s. Various people used the building for a variety of things, but the gravel expanse next to the railway line stayed dusty and hard on the eyes and feet. When Pieter-Dirk Uys, already settled in his old house up the road, was asked if he could use the building as a storeroom to hold off the demolishers, the dormant idea of his own theatre rekindled in his imagination.

The venue was hired — could it have been R80 a month? — restructured with a small stage and enough space for 12 tables with chairs. The kitchen went squeeze into the small area at the back where the carpenter kept his tools.

EVITA SE PERRON DARLING STATION

A stress-free zone where humour and enjoyment are the primary aims - hosted by Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout, the most famous white woman in SA.

Open
Tues to Sun
10H00 - 16H00



Photo: Randi Kroe

To book ph Beryl - Tel 022 492 3330 email: bookings@evita.co.za - website: www.evita.co.za

"I've opened a theater in Darling, darling," Pieter-Dirk Uys said to his friends in Cape Town. "Darling, you're mad!" they replied. Yes. Mad is good. It means no one has thought of it yet.

And so Evita Bezuidenhout launched her new legendary monologues on Afrikaans history: *Tannie Evita Pret Kaizer*.

People from the town came forward to meet the outpost of entertainment. Tony Bradshaw ran the booking; Naomi Matlakoosi oversaw the venue; Andrew Brown performed miracles in the closest-kitchen, producing the best curry in the Swartland. Daily goods trains rumble by and everything shivers on the walls, and shakes on the tables. Some of the Perron cats even purr. Guests think it's just a sound effect, but when they see the approaching diesel monster, which looks as if it will plough into the building, they are thrilled and shocked, the check of it all. As it clatters by, often the drivers wave a greeting to Evita, the most famous white woman in South Africa.

After that year of experimentation (1996), the remainder of the gravel land was

purchased and the building was extended to include a restaurant-cabaret venue. By its tenth year, EVITA SE PERRON could entertain an audience of up to 130 people.

The focus is on weekends, when varied shows are presented at lunchtimes and in the evening. The main attractions are the various Pieter-Dirk Uys shows and his famous chorus-line of political charmers, some that have been with him since 1980. Of course, Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout is the superstar on the stage.

The years have passed with extraordinary success and original surprises. The addition of the ARTS AND CRAFTS (Tannie Evita's A on C) launched The Darling Trust, the Elsie Bath Art School and Gallery. Architect Jakes de Villiers has kept the style of the original station in all the additions, so people often think that they have all been there since the 19th century.

TANNIE SE TUIN has become an integral part of daily life in Darling. Besides the seasonal flowers and the trees that are flourishing under the gift of an old windmill there is a playground for kiddies centred

round the old Land Rover donated by JC van der Westhuizen. Under the trees, no longer forgotten and dusty but with leaves, the community rest on their way back to their homes from the banks, the shops and the bottle store. A faux Renaissance statue of a nude lady (*Is dit onse Moë Evita?*) has become a good luck touchstone for the many who pass her by: *hy's om haar tette en maak 'n wens!*

On the other side of the compound, an eccentric art garden has developed. Called BOERASSIE PARK, it reflects humour through the display of political icons and symbols — from apartheid signs to a grey train, led by a smiling Nelson Mandela as the happy engine. The garden also reflects local crafts and artefacts specially made for inclusion in this wonderland of *Mama's k­ dhar!*

The Perron garden was designed and nurtured by Dr Richard King and is a monument to local plants, shrubs, wet plants and bird life. Pests against plastic, these flowers thrive and grow, some by being watered, others drenched. The only real animals that stalk the terrain are six PERRON CATS. They are a major feature with the public and the Peronists. At all true theatres need a resident moggie, within days of relinquishing the new additions to the old station, the first four felines arrived: Mantiya, Moggie, Windup and Die Kooi. Additions took place amid regular gasps of surprise. Ginger Rogers waddled in from nowhere, invited to be the tough trade and punch bag for the tough boy-cats. He turned out to be a bit of a kitesophile and has brought two small kittens into the Perron. Boesman and Two-Kay joined the cabaret. The most recent addition, Elsie, appeared out of the dithin aged 6 weeks. Dalfen Kruger nurtured her in the cleft of her Rubensian bosom and to this day, Elsie takes a flying leap onto any passing chest. She confronted a passing train some years back and lost her front leg, but is now obliviously chasing visiting dogs on three legs as if it were the new fashion.

The local SPCA Depot is on the R315 back towards the R27 and after a visit to our cats, waiting pets have been adopted on the way home.



The former South African Ambassador to the Independent Homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti holding her symbols of state - a rugby ball and a protea. (1981-1993)



Rally - 1994 - Retreat

MOST FAMOUS WHITE WOMAN IN SOUTH AFRICA

From the *Bapetikosweti Basuin*, the Perron's seasonal newspaper:

On Heritage Day, 24 September 2003, Evita Bezuidenhout opened Boerassic Park. Since then it has delighted thousands of visitors with artworks. The many plastic flowers from Taiwan have basked in both sun and rain, and are open 24 hours a day. Inspired by the legendary concrete garden of Nieu Bethesda, Boerassic Park focuses on more than just plastic blooms and Voortrekker Monument birdbaths. There are various original artworks to enjoy.

Students from the UCT Michaelis School of Art created the ultimate gravy train: a concrete chook-chook with Madiba as the smiling engine, chugging along the rail to freedom. Behind him, he drags the baggage of our young and controversial democracy: Comrade Thabo Mbeki flying overseas on his plane; former leader of the opposition, Tony Leon, in his pram throwing his toys; the Reverend Alan Boesak (rehabilitated fraudster and former jailbird), pious and free with a ball and chain attached to his ankle; Winnie, the mugger of the nation, reclines in her bath like Medusa, with rubber tyre strips for her hair, and a small soccer-booted foot just visible above the murky waters. Evita Bezuidenhout in her flag dress waves them goodbye, surrounded by the cats, while AWB leader Eugene Terre'blanche falls off his horse (as he did in real life) and lies on the tracks, poepdrunk and irrelevant.

Opposite this remarkable joyride is a *Groot Trek Oomblik*, created by art students from Stellenbosch University. The concrete oxwagon is bogged down in the mud of the past, with four great stone oxen struggling to get out of the quicksand of history,

buried up to their heads while trying to wedge themselves and their heavy load through the golden arches of the McDonald's sign to the future.

There are also rough and rusted figures of African people, reflecting the hard slog of survival from the mines, the roads, the fields, on their way with buckets on their heads, picks and shovels in their hands. Scattered around are apartheid signs once regarded as normal. Small yellow notices have been attached to each sign: *This is a pre-1994 sign*. Mixed-race couples love posing with their children in front of the signs that once declared them illegal and immoral.

A 1959 cream and green Ford Fairlane takes pride of place. This car belonged to Evita's husband Oom Hasie when he was minister of water affairs as well as minister of black housing in Dr Verwoerd's government. He then combined his two portfolios by building a black township in a dam. It was in this ministerial limo that Dr J.J. de V. Bezuidenhout was shot at. The two bullet holes are still in the front windscreen, even though they missed the minister.

However, he was found some months later on the backseat of his car in the parking area of the Laagerfontein Hotel having a sexual dalliance with a black waitress. His breaking of the Immorality Act caused no end of upset for his wife, who managed to hush it all up with bribes and threats. The woman disappeared. From the passionate reactions and saucy tales coming from visitors, it seems that in the lives of many South Africans over a certain age something remarkable and memorable happened on the back seat of a 1959 Ford Fairlane.



Top: PDU at Evita se Perron. Above: On stage as Evita Bezuidenhout

Live from Boerassic Park

THE TOUR

Performed at the Spier Festival Stellenbosch * the Opera House Port Elizabeth * Guild Theatre East London * Theatre on The Square Sandton * Civic Theatre Johannesburg

THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

President Nelson Mandela

A German tourist in Cape Town

A Matric school boy

Nurse Beryl Frick

Nowell Fine

Evita Bezuidenhout

THE SHOW

(PDU enters as Nelson Mandela)

NELSON MANDELA: We ... in the African National Congress ... we are committed to transparency in all things. But ... before we invite you to ask us any questions you wish ... with regard to the ANC's role during the years of the struggle etcetera etcetera etcetera ... we wish to state here most categorically ... that there is freedom of speech in the ANC. It is after speech that freedom goes.

We dispensed with the services ... of Comrade Winnie Madikizela-Mandela as deputy minister of arts and culture ... for the simple reason ... that she did not pay her telephone bill which was lost in the post. That is all ... The fact that the Post Office is an apartheid wedge in the machinery of democracy is irrelevant.

We sent our son ... the Reverend Allan Boesak ... to America not because of rumours of financial corruption, but ... only because he has proved that ... he is more a man of religion than a servant of politics. There was no other reason.

We were forced to discipline ... Comrade General Bantu Holomisa ... not because of what he said to the Truth Commission with regard to an honourable ANC minister in the government. Bantu Holomisa told the commission that ... Comrade Doctor Princess Minister Stella Sigau took a bribe from ... Sun City hotel magnate Sol Kerzner. We wish to state here most categorically that ... this was not a bribe; it was a gift ... of R30,000. In other words ... 12 dollars. We threw Comrade Holomisa out of the ANC ... because that was the only reason ... 12 dollars.

We have also been assured that Sol Kerzner did not ... give millions of rand to the ANC so that corruption charges against him can be dropped ... which we have done. We wish to reiterate here and now ... that the ANC has not ... does not ... and will never take bribes. We only take large cheques to fight apartheid. We therefore thank Comrade Kerzner for his support. He is a soldier in the struggle.

There is also no reason ... to demand the resignation of the Honourable Minister of Health Comrade Doctor Nkosazana Zuma-Zana ... Zama-Zama? We have known her ... for many years. She gave us a Disprin to remove ... a headache after being in jail ... for 27 years. It worked. She is also a medical genius for bringing Cuban doctors to South Africa ... and teaching them to toyi-toyi.

All criticism of the ANC is therefore simple racism. But ... before we invite you to ask us any question you wish ... we wish to repeat that we ... in the ANC believe in transparent reconciliation. Some of our best friends are those white racists who once locked us up. Some of our best international relationships are with those leaders who blow up airplanes in midair. Some of our best sponsors are those nations who hang or shoot their opponents. They are all transparent in what they do, as we are.

We in the ANC ... are so transparent ... that you won't know what is really going on. I hope that answers your questions. If not ... you must

ask First Deputy President Thabo Mbeki. I must find my girlfriend ...
Graça? Graça ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: I thought I'd start with the most famous South African in the world and work my way towards the most famous white woman in South Africa. I come to you here, a rare and unprotected species: white Afrikaner Calvinist *PieterDirkUysosaurus*, live from Boerassic Park, that former lost world at the southern tip of Africa, where the past mingles with the present to suggest a future. Where the square peg must make do with the round hole.

Good news and bad news: the good news is that our democracy has just celebrated its third birthday. It's very bright and already talking in 11 official languages. It sings! It dances! It can add up and divide by two. It is still crawling around, but hopes to take its first steps soon, a healthy three year old who still poeps in his pants. The bad news is that everyone expects this baby to be able to fly a plane, father a family, catch a criminal, wage a war and solve a problem. Come on, it's only three fucking years old! I'm nearly 52 fucking years old.

My good news is that, in spite of having been a white Afrikaner Calvinist for most of my life, I am no longer suffering from those symptoms. I am now just another South African who happens not to be black, not to be Xhosa or Zulu or Anglican – but alive. Which is quite an achievement in arguably the most violent country in the world. We have many obstacles to being alive: car hijackers, bank robbers, muggers and murderers – and those are just the ones still in jail. Till tomorrow and then they get released to make room for those South Africans who haven't paid their TV licence yet.

'So what are you going to do live from Boerassic Park?' they ask. Well, I can't do you a show full of white South African racist politicians, like I used to in the old days, four years ago. In those days you knew who

your leaders were. You switched on SATV Channel 1 and there was a Botha. Switch over to SATV Channel 2 and there was another Botha. Then onto SATV Channel 3 for Bothalezi. Today politics is not such a full-time job like it used to be, no long-term investment: here today, gone tonight. So I can't guarantee any politicians.

What will you do without politicians? they ask. We'll see what happens. But people expect you to do Evita Bezuidenhout, they say. Well, I'm sorry, I don't do her any more. She does herself. But what about the old favourites? PW, Pik, Piet? Hey, we're in 1997. They're has-beens, gone, past it, irrelevant. So be warned, this will be a Botha-free show.

Okay, so I start with Nelson Mandela. How can you do a show in 1997 without Nelson Mandela. Then there's Winnie Mandela. How's that for a comeback kid? Bounce back Winnie! Bungee-jumping champion of the ANC. And if I'm lucky, she might even be president in the year 2000. Winnie is now divorced. She has added gravitas to her name: now it's Madikizela-Mandela, president of the ANC Woman's League, but still strapped for cash. So she's selling soil. I swear to God, could I make this up? Winnie has opened a small shop in the garage of the house in Vilakazi Street, Soweto; the house she shared with Nelson for those seven-and-a-half minutes. I bought some ...

(He holds up a small glass bottle with soil)

Winnie then offered her life story to the BBC for three million pounds and was turned down. Now she's convinced that Brits are just colonialist Eurocentric racists who vote Labour but think Thatcher. Fresh original Mandela soil. If you look carefully you can see his footprint. And ... what's this? A Kentucky Fried Chicken bone? Or someone we knew? Then Winnie's also selling some genuine Robben Island Rock.

(He holds up a rock)

From the quarry where he spent those 20 years. If you hold it against your ear, you can hear ... not the sea ... could it be Michael Jackson singing 'We shall overcome'? This rock is a must for anyone who wants to make a career in Johannesburg. Throw it from your car through a jewellery shop window; a first time smash hit and no finger prints. And of course the Winnie Goodyear tyre ashtray.

(He holds up the ashtray)

Put out your stompie in it like she did. And to think two weeks ago, Winnie was a has been? Okay, that gives me two Mandelas.

Of course, there's Comrade Doctor Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, our minister of health, who diverted out of her budget, which was meant to deliver free health care to the nation, three million dollars (work that out in rands) towards the production of *Sarafina 2*, an anti-AIDS musical that still doesn't exist. Is that satire or just scandal. The Truth Commission led by Archbishop Desmond Tutu is still herding us through the minefields of the past with care and tissues. That's not satire: that's sore sore sore.

Apartheid is dead. From all over the world they are coming to see for themselves. Tourists. African-Americans in search of their roots. Australians coming to find out where their dentists and doctors and vets come from. The Brits: slutty Sloanes and Euro trash. And the Germans. Do Germans go to a special tourist-outfit shop? Why do Germans always look like extras from the film *Out of Africa*?

(Light change)

(PDU changes into the German tourist)

HERR BETTELMANN: Ach du lieber Gott! 'What a place to live!' That's all you people say to us here. 'Cape Town is the most beautiful city in the world.' If you've never seen Berlin or Copenhagen or Paris or Venice or Rio. Ja, Kapstadt is sehr schön. Very beautiful. Me, Otto Bettelmann and my wife Renate Bettelmann, come here in December on our first visit to Cape Town. We see it advertised in a good German magazine. With colour pictures. A paradise on earth, it said. Blue sky und Table Mountain und white beaches. Und wild animals in the Kruger National Park.

Not true. There are wild animals also in Adderley Street und in Wale Street, Long Street, Loop Street, The Waterfront, Sea Point – all over. Before you know it, they are on top of you. They grab what they can.

You know the old joke: camera, spectacles, testicles, watch und wallet? But that is not enough. 'Please take it,' we say, 'bitte. We bring it specially for you. German investment in South Africa. Renate?' I now say, 'give them your wedding ring...' But by now they have already got the ring by cutting off Renate's finger.

'Bitte let us just get to our hotel,' we say on our knees. The little wild animals take photos of us with our own camera. They throw our new ostrich leather wallet into the gutter. They tear up the Deutschmark because they don't know what it is. They urinate on the pictures of our grandchildren. Then they laugh at us. 'You German tourists? You look so stupid,' they laugh. 'with your white socks and sandals, funny hat, T-shirts that say: "I survived Cape Town in eleven official languages". You deserve to be donnerd.'

We try and laugh back. These wild animals are even younger than our grandchildren back in Stuttgart. Maybe by laughing we make friends. They take out a knife and stab me in the arm and laugh. They stab Renate and laugh. Renate dies and they laugh. I die and they laugh. I tell you about it and you laugh. Wait till it happens to you. If you do not control this madness with some discipline, soon there will be none of us stupid tourists left for your wild animals to feed on. Then it will be your turn.

Ja, Cape Town is very very beautiful. But there is no place like home. Far ... far away from here...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Poor Herr und Frau Bettelmann. Wonder what they thought of the legendary service in Cape Town restaurants? Maybe they also popped into one of the eateries in the Waterfront to order a little pasta und salat and lovely Backsberg Chardonnay? And after a long time waiting, they nervously attract the attention of the young waiter standing to one side in a BOSS-model pose, studying his hands, his

ponytail shining, his golden earring gleaming. 'Excuse me, could we order? We have been waiting for some time ...' 'Will you get a life, man! Don't bother me. Can't you see I'm a waiter here. Fuck off. And have a nice day.'

Was Cape Town always so otherwise? I grew up here. I just remember a wonderful centre to my universe. The Grand Parade selling everything from old *Stage and Cinema* magazines to Dinky Toys. Matinees at the Metro and the Colosseum. Your Elvis Seven Single on a plastic gramophone; learning to bop and eventually twist at the Clifton Hotel, the air thick with hairspray. Having the first drag of a Peter Stuyvesant on the way to the library to get another book about *Angelique and the King*.

I had a map of the world on my wall next to my bed. I was in Standard 7. Loved geography, but couldn't live with the fact that every time I looked at the map, there was Europe, here was Africa and daar onder was Cape Town. So I turned the map upside-down and since then the Cape Peninsula has always been on top of the world like a crown and not hanging on the bottom like a piepietjie.

I grew up in South Africa during the 1950s when there was a population of four million people. And 27 million blacks. A country where the NG Kerk was the wagging finger of morality. Jy moet jou naaste liefhê soos jouself, maar 'n kaffer bly 'n kaffer. Except on Saturday night somewhere behind a bush when a kaffermeid wasn't so bad. God was Afrikaans and apartheid was a gift from God. It was in the Bible: woodcutters and waterhewers. We had Coloured servants and garden boys and never treated them badly, but they never ate at the table with us like the dog and the cat.

My imagination was formed, not by Christian Nationalist Education, or die *Huisgenoot*, of die *Patrys*, but by Springbok Radio: the Radio Record Club hit parade, *Consider Your Verdict*, Lux Radio Theatre and the daily Mark Saxon serial. I has a small plastic radio that I used to put on at night under the blankets and listen to pop music from LM Radio. The valves made it so hot, I could've burnt the house down.

Politics was a dirty thing and few of us had ever heard of the doings and

whatnots of Dr DF Malan or Adv JG Strydom or Dr Hendrik Verwoerd. Don't talk politics! Not at home, or school or in life. So we never auditioned those old buggers and soon they were on the stamps and the coins. It's different now. Is it? Do you know the names of the present cabinet? Don't we ever learn?

Anyway, they were not politicians; they were ooms. Dr Malan was a cousin of my pa. Advocate Strydom's kids took piano lessons with my ma, and I was in love with Hendrik Verwoerd! The leader. Der führer! I used to sing to him and Tannie Betsie in church in the choir. To the father of the nation. What else was there to do at school but believe what they told us: We Afrikaners were the chosen race. Thank God my mother was Jewish. At least I belong to both chosen people.

At school I learnt the trick of making people laugh and then getting away with it. The big boys would get me into a corner – Uys, jou klein poep! – and after taking off my pants and throwing them up in a tree, would look menacing. Without pants there are a few effective way to combat violence, but I was too young to be creative in that direction. So I'd say something funny and as they laughed uproariously, escape and hide. In the girl's toilets. Something must have rubbed off somewhere. Got my Matric and then a degree to fall back on. Do we still say that to the kids? What about a degree to fall forward on. Always the retreat mentality. That was over 30 years ago. Wonder what it's like to be in Matric today ...

(PDU changes into the Matric schoolboy)

(Light change)

RALPH PIENAAR: Hell man, is this some sort of a joke? *(He holds an envelope)* We wrote our Matric exams last November and when we got the results, they tell us they were all wrong. The kids who failed, actually passed. Those who passed, didn't even write. And now the results arrive. The Department of Education now says: 'the computer made a mistake!' How can a computer make a mistake? Maybe they're

programming it in Xhosa and Zulu and it only understands American? I'm too scared to open this. When I see what's in here, I stop being a school kid. I've got to become a real person. I can't believe it's all nearly over. You know, four years ago in Standard 6, I was always the oldest in the class. But now in Matric I'm one of the youngest because some of the black kids look like they're over 20! Well, you know ...

Schools changed a lot since the election in 1994. Classes are much bigger now; 110 kids with one teacher who only comes in Tuesday and Thursday, if they can find the extra security. And the new teachers are weird. If they're not on strike, they're Cuban. In the old days teachers used to teach. Now they seem to know less than we do. My favourite teachers have all been retrenched and given retirement packages and golden handshakes. I especially miss my old history teacher. He's now living in Natal somewhere where they say he's running a sex shop. Hell, I don't know ...

I used to be good at South Africa history. I won a prize in Standard 6 with my essay on Jan van Riebeeck. (*He remembers*) 'Jan van Riebeeck came from Holland on 6 April 1652. He arrived in Table Bay with three ships: *Drommedaris*, *Reijger* and *Goede Hoop* to start a refreshment station. Jan van Riebeeck brought civilisation to South Africa.' That's what we learnt in Standard 6. Now in Matric we learn that Jan van Riebeeck was an escaped Dutch convict who came to the Cape to rape black women on Robben Island. Hell, I don't know...

They say there is now a special department up in Pretoria and all it does is rewrite South African history. Like the 1820 British settlers? In Standard 6 we learnt that the 1820 settlers brought culture from England. In Matric we find out they were 'racist colonialist imperialist Eurocentric whites who came and annexed the sacred land that belonged to the historically disadvantaged tribes'. And do you know what they did with the Bushmen? They killed all the Bushmen, who had already found the cure for cancer. No, *sis* man, shame ...

In Standard 6 I used to like learning about the Voortrekkers who took their bibles in one hand and their ox-wagons in the other and trekked barefoot across the Drakensberg to get away from British imperialism.

Not for long. By Matric they were not even Voortrekkers, just boers running away from the cops, because they wouldn't pay their bills. And that Piet Retief? He was no hero. They now say he was a cattle rustler who slept with black women. And wouldn't even pay them! Typical racist pig, they say. And so, you know what they did to the Xhosas? They killed the cattle belonging to the Xhosas and those cattle could speak Latin! Hell, I don't know man ...

I didn't know the Struggle was worse than the Holocaust. I know in the Holocaust six million Jews died. Now they say 10 million blacks were killed by the whites since 1652. And I didn't know Beethoven and Michelangelo were black. I suspected that Jesus could have been sort-of Coloured because of the area he came from. Mozart had to be black with a name like Ama-Deus. Of course everyone agrees that Verwoerd and Hitler and Mrs Thatcher were white. Ja, well, there you are ...

But Mr Xhaba, my Xhosa teacher, just laughs when I say I don't know what is going on. He says: 'So Pienaar, if you don't believe what people say, get a book and read. It's a democracy now, Pienaar. You don't have to believe everything people tell you. Make up your own mind. Find an opinion, Pienaar.' And then he laughs. Mr Xhaba was in jail for 10 years for terrorism during apartheid. I said: 'Gee, Mr Xhaba, what did you do? Burn down a building?' No, he just burnt his passbook. Ten years? 'Hell, I'm sorry,' I said, and he just laughs. I say: 'Why do you always laugh, Mr Xhaba? You were in jail.' He says: yes, he survived jail because he could laugh. Weird hey ...?

Mr Xhaba says: 'Pienaar, you must work.' So I say: 'Gee, Mr Xhaba, you work but the computer fails you. You get all qualified, but no one wants you. You go to university, but that's like going back to kindergarten, because no one there can read or write. You get a degree, but there's no job. And the only security you have is a gun and a Rottweiler and a high wall. Mr Xhaba didn't laugh. He says: 'So, Pienaar? What's the most common phrase used by university graduates in South Africa today? "Chips? Or baked potato?"' And then he laughs. I don't get it ...

Hell, don't look now, but there's that black girl in my class. She's so beautiful. I can't believe I'm having these thoughts about a black girl.

Four years ago she was still illegal. I'm scared to even look at her, because Mr Xhaba caught me looking. He said: 'Pienaar, don't stare.' I said: 'I'm not staring, Mr Xhaba, I'm just looking.' He says it's all the same. It's called sexual harassment. I said: From where? He says it's protected by the Constitution. No man, that? In the Constitution? Now Mr Xhaba says all we white boys can do is pay out front and bring our own condoms. Do you think he's joking? I never know because he's always laughing.

I can really kick myself. I could've bought my exam papers last year like some of the others did. No, this South Africa doesn't want you to be honest, just clever enough to stay out of the shit. Just do anything to pass. Like Mr Xhaba says: In an upside down world, the lowest common denominator stays on top. I didn't quite understand that, but I think I know what it feels like. No man, I could've bought my English and Maths papers for R30 at the video shop and got a Sylvester Stallone movie free.

(He starts opening the envelope)

Well, here goes. Hope the computer is cool to whiteys the second time round. *(He reads)* 'Here are your Matric results. Congratulations ...' Radical ! I must've passed! ' ... you've been given a retirement package and a golden handshake.'

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: During the 1960s I was definitely on the right track. I had all the pictures on the walls of my room like any other normal teenage Afrikaans boy would have. Firstly the orange white and blue flag of our new republic. In 1961 Hendrik Verwoerd marched us out of the British Commonwealth and made us independent. We were stuck with the Union Jack in the centre of our flag. Every time we tried to cut it out, the whole flag fell to pieces. Hell man, I don't know ...

In our classrooms were pictures of our first state president, CR Swart

and his wife Tannie Nellie, next to picture of Prime Minister Verwoerd and his wife Tannie Betsie. Also the famous picture of the first Nationalist government of the Republic of South Africa. 1961: 99% sour-faced men in black and white on the steps of Parliament. All looking like this (*Show this*) and thinking: Wie't gepoep? (*Show that*) And in the back row, among up and coming deputy ministers, the smiling face of he who had poeped: PW Botha. (*Do his smile*)

Then I fell in love with a beautiful girl. She was eleven years older than me. She came from Naples in Italy. I put her picture up on the wall next to my picture of our prime minister. The next day Dr Hendrik Verwoerd fell off the wall. He stayed off my wall; she stayed on my wall. I think Sophia Loren saved my life.

We were a very tight-knit family, living in the Cape Town suburb of Pinelands. pa and ma were pianists; my sister Tessa started playing the piano at the age of three. I didn't compete; just played with my Dinky Toys in the garden. In the kitchen was Sannie, our maid, and the one in the family who taught me to speak Afrikaans properly. Hey, tel jou blêddie kak op! Ek is nie jou meid nie! In the garden worked ou Henry who would plant special things – and smoke them. The Afrikaans ouma would have tea with the prime minister, while the German oma treated us to Wiener schnitzel and apfelstrudel.

On Sundays we would have family concerts in the sitting room. Tessie would play the piano and I would sing in my soprano voice and entertain pa, ma, Sannie and the oumas. Somehow it was okay doing that on a Sondag, because we were raising money for the SPCA. Shillings in a tin. Then I had my appendix out at the St Joseph's Hospital run by the nuns. I fell in love with the nurses. They were so sweet to me and treated me like a little man, even though my appendix was bigger than my piepie. At the first concert after my return from the ward, we went round with the tin and the oumas each put in some shillings. 'Dit gaan mos alles vir die diertjies, nè?' reminded Ouma Uys. 'Nee, Ouma, dit gaan vir die nonne.' 'Sies!' sug ouma and took back her shillings. 'Pietertjie?' she said, 'onthou altyd: die Engelse is jou aartsvyand; die Katolieke is die anti-Chris en die Jode is almal

diewe!' She had no problems with the blacks. Blacks have never been the problem in South Africa. The problem was Calvinist, white and Afrikaans.

Beryl Frick is also a white Afrikaans Calvinist. She's a nurse at the huge Chris Hani Memorial Hospital in Gauteng. That's Johannesburg. It's a simple story: overcrowded hospitals, understaffed, underpaid, high expectations, passionate promises, little delivery. Everyone it seems now wants to be treated for free!

(PDU changes into nurse Beryl Frick)

(Light change)



PDU as nurse Beryl Frick

NURSE BERYL FRICK: Some nurses say we should strike? *(Calls)* Vanessa? Where's my lighter? Are the matches in the kitchen?

Sister Winnifred Banda said there was witchcraft in the intensive-care ward. She said it in Zulu, but I understood. I don't know why all the nurses looked at me. It is because I'm white? Or gay? Does that make me a witch? No, I've always wanted to be in the medical profession, ever since I was a kid. I used to enjoy playing nurse-nurse. I used to do operations on my only doll, Missy. Poor old Missy. I'd cut off her legs and then sew them back on again, often not in the right places. An arm coming out of her neck, a leg sticking out of her arse, shame. But the stitches

were small and firm and gran would say: Beryl, one day you're going to be a dressmaker or a nurse. And I'd say: No, gran, I want to be a doctor. And I will be a doctor. And gran laughed. I can still hear her laughing. Well, there are a few things I've become that would quickly wipe the smile off her face. Hey, gran? Good thing you're dead. I would not like to explain the word *lesbian* to you. (Calls) Vanessa? The matches, doll? Yes, live in a house with a nonsmoker! Anyway, I never got to become a doctor after all that, but being a nurse is actually also okay. Listen, you need a certain type of brain to be a doctor. A one-track mind maybe? I'm not stupid. I'm bright. Maybe not the best doctor material; the best nurse I know. Hell, but my training seemed to take forever. I was dying to get into the operating theatre and assist. Like when I was a kid, playing with my cousin Basil, who also turned out to be gay. 'Nurse Frick? Scalpel, clamps, knife, hammer, nails ...' Shame and poor old Basil is also dead from AIDS like so many others. The closest I ever got to an operating theatre was watching that programme *ER* on TV. My girlfriend Vanessa and I would be eating a pizza while watching the TV and she'd say: 'Nurse Frick? Knife, fork, ketchup, Camel...' (Calls) ... matches?

The best medical training in the world we once had in South Africa, remember that? Heart transplants, kidney-, liver-, cornea grafts, fabulous healthcare. Okay, okay: just if you're white; okay, maybe not so good for all people because of politics, but still it was here. Now if you want an operation that was routine then, better go overseas or die. Someone here even said: Blacks get AIDS, because they're too poor to go to the movies and just stay at home and fuck all day without condoms. Jokers, hey?

I read up every journal. I studied. No, I'm qualified to take over duties from Sister Banda, but there's snag, a handicap. It's not being white, or a woman, or even a gay woman, because I'm protected by the Constitution. It's because I haven't got a sense of rhythm. Rhythm, man, rhythm! Listen, my friend, you get nowhere in the medical profession nowadays without rhythm! I said: I know every component of the human heart. I can deliver babies...' 'Yes, Nurse Frick, but can you toyi-toyi?'

I said: I know how to resuscitate a drowned child and give him life. 'All very well, Nurse Frick, but can you toyi-toyi?'

Toyi-toyi? Didn't that once mean 'good luck' in French? Call me old-fashioned, but I still believe the patient comes first. I'm sorry, I don't just go on strike, so they attack me. 'Do you believe in the tokoloshe? Do you support your local sangoma?' Listen, I wished I did, because there was witchcraft in Ward 3B. Every Friday the patient in intensive care dies. For no reason. Week after week. Witchcraft? Can't be. This is medicine. This 1997. So I looked up in the medical journals to try and solve this mystery. The other nurses went into the parking lot, leaving their sick patients to stew in their own shit. And there they toyi-toyi for Africa, for better conditions, for higher wages, for more money, longer holidays. Or maybe just to get onto SATV breaking news.

Then a young sangoma with a new BMW and cell phone comes and throws the bones with animal skins hung carefully over his Calvin Klein suit; some rare and not so well protected species: lion skin, cheetah skin, zebra skin and who know, even foreskin? Shuffles in his fancy Caterpillar shoes. But come Friday noon, a patient in Ward 3B is dead. Fok-it! No, that's what I thought: fok-it! 'Fuck it' means nothing, but a good fok-it has angels falling out of the sky! I'll go and investigate.

So come Friday, I slip into Ward 3B and slide under old Mrs Lapanza's bed. She's got tubes coming out of everywhere with a tired life-support system working overtime. Not a well woman. I lie under her bed and wait. Feet come in; feet go out. No tokoloshe. Then just before noon old Gladys, the cleaning lady for Wards 3 to 7, shuffles in. I recognise her by her slippers with little cat-faces on the front, and the big Hoover she drags behind.

She's proud of doing the floor so shiny. Never mind you slip and break your damned neck, they're Gladys's floors, okay? So I watch her slippers shuffle across the floor to the wall. Then she pulls out the plug of the life-support system and plugs in her Hoover! The floor of Ward 3B is polished, but Mrs Lapanza is dead. Problem solved. No tokoloshe. Just get Gladys another plug somewhere else.

I go up to matron. I forgot old Matron Scott is gone; got the golden

boot. There's a new matron, a cousin of someone in Parliament. I tell her what happened. She calls me a racist: typical for me to point a finger at the black cleaner. I say: I'm not a racist, matron. I'm a nurse. 'Really, Comrade Frick?' she says with a smile, 'but can you toyi-toyi?'

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Sometimes you just can't win. I started doing PW Botha back in 1981. Then he was prime minister of apartheid South Africa and a force and a farce to be reckoned with. It was also illegal to even say the words 'anti-apartheid'. PW Botha was the power and the glory, the man who gave the orders. Then Roelof F Botha joined my chorus line. Pik was the longest-serving foreign minister in the civilised world, a record – like the man with the smallest feet in church. So I did Pik. It was my job. Then came Piet Koornhof, the clown prince of separate developments. Not difficult to do him, with his ears and that nose and the voice. So I did him too. I did them live, while they were still around, with the police, army, secret service, the third force, sometimes the audience, often the critics on their side from 1981 till quite recently.

Now when I did PW and Pik in *Truth Omissions* last year because they are still around, but now responsible for 20 years of South Africa history, people said: 'Vintage Pieter-Dirk Uys; it's the same old characters all over again'. Then, yes. But when I decided not to do them on stage like tonight, because they're now irrelevant and should be forgotten, people will say: 'But where were the Bothas and Piet Koornhof?' You can't win. But I think we did win. PW Botha, Pik Botha, Piet Koornhof – they're not in power any more. They only exist as a revue sketch to be laughed at. That's a victory of sorts?

Then came Tutu; then came Mandela. So to satisfy everyone and leave no one out, let me do a recap-medley on those who made me famous; those I will keep alive in my gallery of legends, rogues, knaves and fools. Usually I have bits of costume: hats, wigs, moustaches, rings and

Winnies. But by now you know them better than I do. So use your imagination. You've all got a great imagination. I mean look how well you've all done with democracy so far. So welcome to Boerassic Park.

(PDU does all the following characters without props or costume, but with voice and gesture)

PW BOTHA: my bread and Botha. Now living in the Wilderness where he belongs, refusing to appear at the Truth Commission. Imagine the famous hat ... no, don't need the hat. I even look like him. Kaalkop. The orange, white and blue carnations; orange, white and blue NP rosette, gold-rimmed tinted spectacles, the dark Broederbond-friendly suit. Add the wagging finger and the darting tongue, and don't feed the crocodile! Die Ou Krokodil!

(As PW Botha): Suid Afrika? Fok u!

ROELOF F BOTHA: also remembered as Pik. Now retired, writing his memoirs of how he single-handedly fought apartheid from within in the governments of John Vorster, PW Botha and FW de Klerk. Once a legend in his own launch-time, now a burnt-out but still unguided missile. Add a black greying head of hair, darken the eyebrows to get that sinister sexy look, outline the yellow lion eyes to a piecing stare, add the now grey and drooping moustache like a dead mouse in the top lip, hunch the shoulders, curl the lip, deepen the voice, fill the glass:

(As Pik Botha): Amandla. I am not guilty. Aikona! I repeat with conviction: not guilty!

DR PIET KOORNHOF: now living happily in Milnerton with a new off-white companion and copper-hued offspring. Having had a Damascus Road experience in a massage parlour in Long Street ... (... a Rivonia Road experience? ...), apartheid would now not melt in his mouth. So take a head of hair carefully dyed reddish with rooibostee, add ears like two halves of a satellite dish, a long nose, two twinkly eyes and a disarming sense of humour.

(As Piet Koornhof): Baie dankie. Thank you very much! I said it first:

apartheid are dead. I now practise against what I preached. Viva! Amandla! Jou kombers en my matras en daar lê die ou dingetjie!

DESMOND TUTU: temporarily in Boerassic Park to underline the need for equal-opportunity laughter. Archbishop Emeritus, Nobel Peace-prize winner and truth fairy of the commission. Take a faded purple gown, a curly Afro crown whitened with worry, add gold-rimmed sun glasses, glittering rings for Africa and a box of tissues. Oh, and no prostate.

(*As Tutu*): Thank you my dears, thank you my friends. Do what I do. Love your enemy. It will ruin his reputation.

And now, Nelson Mandela who, as yet, shouldn't be in the park, but just couldn't stay away from the party. The most famous person in the world, divorced but living in a loose but loving connection with a widow. Grandfather to the nation and ready to step down as supreme leader of the ANC in December, after which the shit will hit the fan, or visa versa. Take another shorthaired Afro head with white patched into black, a colourful Madiba shirt, tired, sloping shoulders, skew sunglasses to protect fragile eyes, a small hearing aid that is sometimes tuned to Radio 702, a lined and nearly Griqua, sometimes even Chinese face.

(*As Mandela*): Ah ... me again? Very good, very good. We eh ... we wish you ... a Merry Christmas ... very good ...

Very good? Just shows how out of touch our Madiba can also sometimes be. And so am I! Desmond Tutu showed Evita Bezuidenhout how to toyi-toyi in his flowerbed at his home in Bishops court. Nelson just does it carefully with his hands ... (*Demonstrate*)

My toyi-toyi teacher is a Xhosa actress the same age as me. We found out, back in the old days, that we grew up in the same neighbourhood in Cape Town, just a stone's throw away from each other. Me in Pinelands and Thoko in Langa. We were separated by a fence, a train line and apartheid. Like me, she would also go into town to the Parade on a Sunday to swap comics. I would be there on a Saturday. Like me, she also had a picture of her political hero on her bedroom wall. Hers was illegal and banned. She now admits always having had problems with us whites. I'm appalled. I said: Is it because of what we did to you

under apartheid? She says: No, I just can't tell you white people apart. You all look alike!

Well, I don't look like Evita Bezuidenhout. Ever since I started with these shows in 1981, the most challenging thing was: how to get from being me to being her. How do I change from a middle-aged, bald, fat person into a glamorous, ageless icon without surgery or at least a blackout? I found the perfect crossover: my Jewish-African-princess, Ms Nowell Fine. In 1981 she was a white liberal having an affair with her garden boy.

In 1985 she was a white liberal trying to smuggle money to the UK. In 1989 she was a white Liberal illegally raising money for the ANC while saying 'there are two things I can't stand about South Africa: apartheid and the blacks!' In 1994 she voted loudly for the ANC. In 1997 she is a member of the ruling party anxiously waiting delivery of her Australian passport.

There's one constant: she loves putting on makeup. No matter what the political climate, Nowell Fine puts on lipstick. I can even do that without a mirror. And so, when Nowell Fine is done, Mrs Bezuidenhout is eyelashed, powdered, lip-glossed, rouged and ready!

(PDU adds an ethnic kaftan and blonde wig for Nowell)

(Light change)

NOWELL FINE: I'm absolutely finished! Please don't say a word. Don't say anything. If I hear another Amandla Awethu, I'll platz!

(She calls)

Dora? Are you ready?

(She wipes her face carefully with a cloth)

Listen, I've just got back from Robben Island, and not as an inmate. Do me a favour, if I was I'd be a very important ex-convict, winned and dined worldwide, Nobel prized and Oscar presented. Forget. I went as a normal everyday member of the public, you know, one of the 1.4 million of us schmucks paying taxes in this democracy of 46 million



PDU as Nowell Fine

potential criminals? Fine, so now you know how I feel, knowing that millions of our taxes are going, not into health or education or welfare, but into the preservation of Robben Island as a 'monument to the struggle for democracy.'

Oh, wake me when it's over! What about us? Has no one told them about us? We white liberals who treated our servants like decent human beings, in spite of the fact that they sometimes behaved like k ... well never mind. No monument to us.

(She carefully adds lipstick)

Please: Robben Island? We're talking real estate here. We could refloat health and education on what we'd get for selling Robben Island. We could sell it to ... Michael Jackson! Imagine what he would do with it, or should I say, do to it! Start a human

rights ... crèche! And then we can build houses for the homeless and cure the sick and put a symphony orchestra into every squatter camp. And that's the truth. But God forbid I should tell the truth. I'm a member of the ANC. If I tell the truth, I'll be thrown out of the party.

(She calls)

Dora? Hurry up, doll, we don't have much time!

(She carefully adds powder and rouge and brushes her face lightly)

So this morning I get up at 5 a.m. to stand in line to buy tickets to go to Robben Island. Me? In a queue? For two hours? Eventually I said: 'Excuse me? Why am I waiting in a queue?' The black man in charge

gets up. I read his T-shirt: *I was on Robben Island 1953 to 1967*. Oi salaam salaam. He says: 'You whites want to go to Robben Island? So, suffer, baby, suffer.'

I suffered. Me! After everything I did in the struggle? All those years when everyone ran off to London with stories of how they escaped apartheid with their lives! Yes, so that they could make real money! But I stayed. While Thabo Mbeki and the other ANC elite exiles were sitting sloshed in Swedish hotels sipping whisky paid for by the Anti-Apartheid Movement, I was in the black townships bathing black babies.

(She carefully adds black eyeliner to each eye)

I swear to God. I went to Khayelitsha in 1984 and took those little hungry naked black babies back to Bantry Bay and bathed them. Not my maid Dora. Oh no, she says they don't bath black babies; they have new ones. Oh ha-ha-ha! I bathed them! Me. I got their fleas and they took my silver. Did I complain? No. But now I'm waiting in line for a boat to take me to Robben Island.

Listen, I wished you were there. Germans in shorts, French incognito, Italians in their droves. African-Americans in tears, Brits in pairs, Aussies incontinent. And the usual cluster of minor former Robben Island prisoners who were probably only imprisoned for stealing handbags, suddenly now all politically motivated. Affirmative shopping, if you get my drift? Who appear on television and cry about the good old days at the University of Robben Island? Schmucks.

(She carefully adds eyeshadow)

Then the schlep across the bay. I expected the worst, but it was just another perfect fucking day in Africa, as someone once said. The sea was like glass. I stood there thinking: why did Nelson Mandela not escape from Robben Island on such a day? For why escape? He had free board and lodging. He was separated from that irritating woman. He didn't have to say anything for 20 years and still became the most famous political prisoner in the world, more famous than Princess Diana. He could write a best-selling book. He had his own nice little vegetable garden. The man's nostalgia for the place is unhealthy. But Dora says that Nelson Mandela would never walk across the water to

freedom, because the boere would just say: 'See? Nelson Mandala can't even swim!'

(She carefully adds glue to both false eyelashes)

Anyway, we get to the island, shuffle along in single file to Section B where most of them stayed. I'm sorry, but I have a nose for renovation. All that fresh paint? The whole place is a little bit too much revolutionary rococo à la *Schindler's List*. And the emotion? Even the Japanese are in tears. You'd swear this was Disneyland. And wherever you look, those white ex-warders in their T-shirts: *I was nice to Mandela*.

Eventually we get to the souvenir shop, called the Hard Rock Café or something. I got a few nice things there: this kaftan, a pair of Winnie's sunglasses that she must have left on the boat; a toilet roll with PW's face on it; a penguin moon bag, still warm.

(She carefully adds the left eyelash)

So now we all get back on the boat heading for Cape Town. Everyone's bonding, having shared this 'experience', holding hands, singing protest songs: 'We shall overcome'. 'Nkosi Sikelele', 'How much is that doggie in the window'. Then we get to the Waterfront. Chaos! Pagad, the People Against Gangsterism and Drugs, are having a peaceful demonstration. Blood and Muslims everywhere. Eventually I get back here to the house in Bantry Bay and I feel I've been on Robben Island for 20 years without hope of becoming a president.

(She calls)

Dora? I'm not waiting any longer. Comrade Madam will go without you!

(She carefully adds the right eyelash)

Of course, you know the United Nations has now put Robben Island on a par with Auschwitz and Hiroshima. I don't know about that. I never met anyone who spent 20 years in Auschwitz, and no one came out of Hiroshima to become president. I mean all the ANC seems to be doing on Robben Island is making money. 'Have your party in the quarry: R250,000 a couple!' S'true's God, I never came across Jews having bar mitzvahs at Dachau!

(She carefully adds mascara to the eyelashes)

But I suppose it just goes to show how bad things were supposed to be, when they weren't that bad at all. No, excuse me! If things were so terrible on Robben Island, how come everyone survived? A whole government! And it seems they can't wait to go back. But I'm glad I went. No, everyone should go and see it for themselves.

They won't make a sequel to *Schindler's List* on the island, because everyone is too busy writing books and getting degrees to make lists. I suppose Robben Island will just be what it is – everything to everyone. Like democracy.

(Nowell is now made up and in her ethnic outfit)

This is really not me, but Dora says it's what all Xhosa virgins look like. God, is that the time?

(She calls)

Dora? We must get to the airport without being hijacked or stoned. I sent the luggage ahead. That's done! Quantas doesn't wait for people who are late.

(She sighs and closes her eyes for a moment)

Can't believe I'll be seeing my two children and their families in Australia tomorrow. Four grandchildren! I brought them all wonderful things from Robben Island. And for my son and his wife, a signed copy of *The Long Walk to Freedom*. And for my daughter and her second husband the perfect present from Cape Town: my maid, Dora!

(She carefully adds lipgloss: a grand finale)

I suppose over the weekend I will be in Perth surrounded by homesick South Africans, hanging onto every word I say. 'Yes dolls,' I'll say, 'I was on Robben Island. Let me tell you, it was worse than in *Schindler's List*. Makes *Bridge on the River Kwai* look like a picnic, as true's God!'

(She adds a matching turban over her blonde hair; looks in the hand mirror)

Outstanding!

(She calls)

Let's go, Dora! Comrade Madam and her Domestic Supervisor are on their way Down Under!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(PDU takes off the Nowell outfit. Looks in the hand mirror)

PDU: No ... this does not look like Evita Bezuidenhout's face. Jennifer Ferguson maybe? Too dark for Michael Jackson. Evita Bezuidenhout will be here – live – after the interval, so let me get the hell out of here before I meet that woman face to face. And while you're out there having a drink, ponder on this: how can someone be live, if she doesn't exist?

(Music starts)

Here's something from *Sarafina 2*. I think it's a Freedom Day anthem, the taxpayer's personal 14-million-rand contribution to the last three years of cultural transparency. Take it away, Deputy Minister of Culture Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma!

(The music is from Sarafina)

INTERVAL

(Music from Evita: 'Don't cry for me Argentina')

(NOTE: In South Africa, Evita's monologue reflected the 1997 issues of the day in South Africa. What follows here are moments from her monologue as given at the Tricycle Theatre in London during the season of *Live from Boerassic Park* in June 1997.)

(Evita enters)

No please, that's the wrong music. That's not about me; that's another Evita. She's dead and I'm not! Sayibona, dumela, molo, kunjani, hello, and to all the British and American guests, salaam. I am Evita Bezuidenhout, the most famous white woman in South Africa and probably one of the three most famous Afrikaners in the world. The

first being FW de Klerk, the second being ... (*Thinks*) ... it'll come to me just now.

My head's a little dizzy, having answered so many questions today. Your British press is so inquisitive. 'Mrs Bezuidenhout, will Nelson Mandela marry Mrs Machel?'; 'Will Winnie Mandela then kill Mrs Machel?'; 'Are you planning to move to the United Kingdom now that we are also a democracy again?' *HELLO* magazine must have the best interviewers in the land. Yes, I've just spent the day having photos taken for my eight exclusive pages in *HELLO* magazine.

I was posed in front of the statue of Nelson Mandela on the South Bank. He looks so lost there. Why is he not in Trafalgar Square? The column is already there. Just take your Nelson off and put our Nelson on.

I wanted a nice picture like Diana with all those ballet swans from *Swan Lake*, but they were busy with something Russian and we couldn't find anything as nice, so I posed on the South Bank steps of the Festival Hall, surrounded by fans who turned out to be all the homeless people living in those cardboard boxes. Gosh, it was like being at home in Johannesburg, except these homeless people didn't kill me here. One of them just didn't give me change for five pounds. All they wanted was a nice cup of tea. So charmingly English.

Then to South Africa House, now our high commission in Trafalgar Square. What a panic to find a nice picture of Nelson Mandela to be on the wall behind me. There are still so many images of the old apartheid regime. When will someone from Pretoria tell them that we have a change of government who might sell the building, knowing how short of cash the ANC always is.

Then to the high commissioner's residence, Highveld. He was out; she was out, so I could have the run of the house like in the good old days. I went straight to the kitchen and prepared my famous bobotie. Although it was just for a photo op, everyone's mouth was watering.

Then to the Tower of London to be photographed in front of the Crown Jewels. Most of the really nice diamonds actually belong to us. Someone did mention it to the Queen when she was in South Africa on her visit that she was wearing stolen goods, but she just nodded and laughed.

Happily no one mentioned the British concentration camps during the Boer War. Did you know that you people started all that? And then look who followed your example?

Then just to be fairly democratic, I went off to the ANC headquarters in some funny little street in North London. I think we tried to blow it up in the 1980s. Or maybe we did? You can never tell with some of the buildings here in London.

Then finally in front of Buckingham Palace, and then to the first floor to unveil the plaque: Nelson Mandela Slept Here. That's why I'm a bit overdressed for you here at the Tricycle in Kilburn NW6? Yes, it sounds so glamorous, but shame, look at how casually you're dressed. Maybe that's what you all enjoy, being so blandly British. Ja-nee, for the first time in nearly 10 years you people are smiling at last. You're happy. You're optimistic. It's quite shocking to observe. At first I couldn't imagine why all the smiles, but then I put two and two together and it said Blair.

The sun is shining. The German chancellor's in trouble. The French president is redundant. The Royal Family's quiet. You won the Eurovision Song Contest, Glenda Jackson's wearing makeup! You're also winning all the sporting events in soccer, cricket, rugby and tennis. And all just because you voted a new government into Whitehall. Really? You people have Whitehall; the Americans have the White House – and then you blame us?

We also smiled three years ago on the 27th April 1994 and a new democracy was born. Everything changed. Here yours today is just younger and with a different hairstyle. There it was a different colour – oh yes, and we also won all the sports. Viva Springboks! It's part of the reward for being good. While I'm here, I want to pop into Downing Street and share my experiences with your leader. Honeymoons do end, you know. I know. Now where are my plants.

(She has some small pots with cactusses)

No more black and white; I've gone green. I've brought some wonderful specimens with me to demonstrate the irony of change. *Cacti*. In Afrikaans: *kaktus*. I was made aware of the important symbolism of the

cactus last time I was here by none other than that nice young man in John Major's government. The one who looked like a film star playing a gangster. Yes, Portillo! Michael Portillo. I asked him: what is the difference between a cactus and a caucus. He said: at least with a cactus the pricks are on the outside. He really knew what he was talking about. By the way, what ever happened to him?

(She points out the little plants)

Now, these two are South African and those two are English.

(The one is strong and erect, the other one small and rude)

(NOTE: Now she takes the daily newspaper and comments on the state of the nation. Issues include:)

- * Mark Thatcher in South Africa;
- * Diana's dresses auctioned in New York: Evita bought one;
- * David Hockney designing livery for British Airways. Could he do it for SAA?;
- * Tensions in Hong Kong; can South Africa get the doctors?
- * Cherie Blair wants to start a garden at Number Ten – what about a cactus for her?;
- * There was a lottery scam, just like at home;
- * How similar Mandela's ANC is to New Labour: casual clothes, kids parties – even Tony Blair wore the Chelsea football jersey copying Mandela's Number 6 rugby jersey stunt;
- * Michael Jackson reminds her that the Reverend Jesse Jackson is the only member of the Jackson family who doesn't look like Diana Ross;
- * Scotland and Wales talking devolution shows that they want to copy South Africa and the homeland policy;
- * The National Health Service in the UK is complex and expensive compared to South Africa's Mrs Zuma as minister of health imported Cuban doctors and sponsoring a virtual musical with tax payers money.

EVITA: Aren't you lucky? Not only do you live in one of the most charming and quaint islands in the world; not only do you have in your

country some of the most friendly people in the world – the Scots and the Welsh. And that sweet Irish couple on the Isle of Man. Not only do you have one of the world's oldest and most respected democracies, which you run without a written constitution or Bill of Rights – but you now also have as your young and vibrant leader, little Tony Blair. What more could you wish for? All you have to do is to enjoy your honeymoon with him while it lasts. Give it a few more weeks before you become depressed and grumpy and negative as usual.

No, shame, I'm only joking. Relax. And remember what Desmond Tutu said: Love your enemy, it will ruin his reputation. And who is your enemy? It's up to you to fill in the name. And now we will sing the national anthem. It's yours, so you better stand.

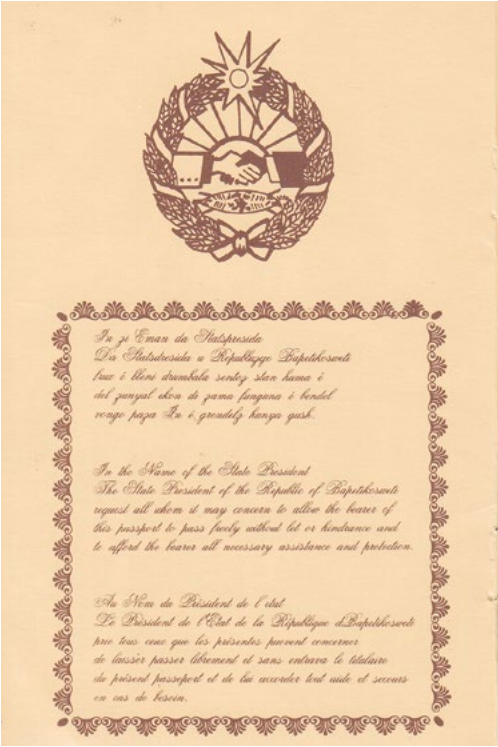
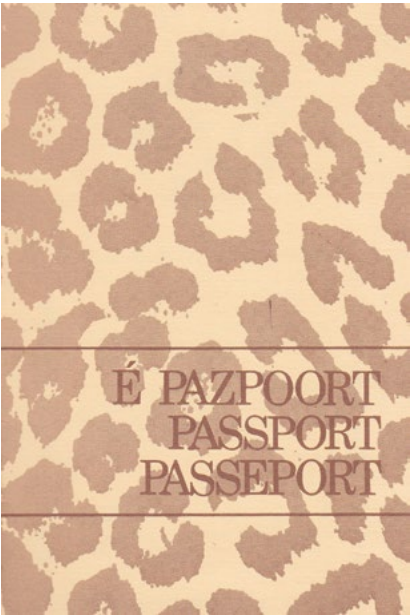
(MUSIC: 'God save the Queen' is sung)

(Evita stands to attention to the end and then waves and leaves.)

(The audience leaves.)

THE END

The Bapetikosweti Passport



ENDOSSEMENT ENDORSEMENT

PULA TRAVIZ LOLLI
FOREIGN TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

1. Lolli ze pana fungul asipatza zamba funni.
Allowance may be used only for travel and subsistence purposes abroad.
2. Grenda lel za bula vander benk za Bapetikosweti.
Unused amounts must be resold to your banker in Bapetikosweti.
3. Gossipa zel dir unyaharia sela lolli fruta ba en banda e Bapetikosweti.
All information relative to travel allowances may be obtained from any commercial bank in Bapetikosweti.
4. Zippa de 1 e 2 fungana bladdaro.
Contravention of 1 or 2 above is a criminal offence.

COMRADE GREL AU UYUHAZI FRANO KITIEPI
THE HOLDER MUST COMPLETE THE PARTICULARS
BELOW—

LE TITULAIRE EST PRIÉ DE COMPLETER LES DÉTAILS
CI-DESSOUS—
PERMANENTE VERBLYFPLEK VAN HOUE:
BEARER'S PLACE OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE:
RÉSIDENCE PRINCIPALE DU TITULAIRE:

WENYA—STREET—RUE
HOI—PLACE—LIEU
STAN—COUNTRY—PAYS

FUNDA HELL SA VREKA BLAW E YU:
IN CASE OF ACCIDENT OR DEATH NOTIFY:
EN DAS D'ACCIDENT OU DE DÉCÈS, PRIÈRE D'AVISER:

ENAM—NAME—NOM
BUTI DI—RELATIONSHIP—A TITRE DE
WENYA—STREET—RUE
HOI—PLACE—LIEU
STAN—COUNTRY—PAYS

TO THE BEARER OF THIS PASSPORT
U DRELLA GRASO PAR TE PAZEPORTE

Dear Bearer

You are now the proud owner of a Bapetikosweti Passport, which, till recently, was known throughout Southern Africa as the one type of passbook/dompas that just could not burn. It is made of fireproof paper and the luiperd-lap covering has in its most delicate fibres, the most important vitamins and basic nourishment — so that, by chewing at it carefully, you can survive a famine, a period in solitary confinement without nice food, or just an attack of the elizebothas i.e. nibbles.

The edges of the pages have been cut at such an angle, that when attacked, you can open your book and use it as a panga. If you keep it bent at a 45-degree-angle and then throw it forcefully at your enemy, opponent or mother-in-law, the passport becomes a boomerang and will damage your enemy swiftly, before returning to your outstretched hand.

The number on the second page of this passport has various uses: it is a phone number that you can use when you find yourself in Paraguay and need a place to stay over for the night or a plastic surgeon.

It is also the Swiss Bank Account Number of a Very Well-Known Afrikaner Politician (who will Remain Nameless). Use it at your own discretion in Geneva, because when it comes to these things we Afrikaners don't have a sense of humour.

The Bapetikosweti Passport will open many doors for you: the hallowed halls of South African Transport Services will welcome you if you wave your passport every time you see someone in uniform: it will be construed as a greeting. All restaurants belonging to the "Alfreds Grill & Grill" will give you 60% discount. Ster-Kinekor also admit bearers of a Bapetikosweti Passport free of charge, after you have paid a surtax of the entrance price.

Holders of this passport only pay tax once a year (10c to the Rouble) if you manage to establish the fact that you have given up your South African, Irish, Canadian, British or Channel Island passports. Holders of Transkei passports need not apply, they already qualify.

This passport is also equivalent to a PETROCARD, GARAGECARD, AMEXCARD, DINERSCARD, BIRTHDAY CARD AND ID-CARD so don't lose it. If you do — come back to the place where you got it and see if you can get another one (bring money, chocolates, disprins and pictures of Princess Diana and/or Joan Collins).

Enjoy your Bapetikosweti Citizenship!

The Republic of Bapetikosweti is a State of Mind and anyone can be a citizen. All you need is the guts to stand up to what you demand of life and make your dream come true.

Bapetikoswetians don't ever say "Ja Baas".

Bapetikoswetians don't ever say "I'm sorry".

Bapetikoswetians don't ever pretend that they're not involved or responsible.

Hold out your hand and it will be taken — hopefully not off at the wrist.

Be happy, be positive, be practical, be useful and above all be a real citizen of the Republic of Bapetikosweti. Need I say more.

Evita Bezuidenhout

EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT
Ambassador of the former Republic of South Africa
Nobel Laurette
Huisvrou en moeder.
Kloset-Afrikaner.

WHAT THE MEDIA SAID IN SOUTH AFRICA

Pretty damn unique. That's P-D Uys. It's 16 years since his Evita made her unforgeable entrance, *pronking* in pink all the way from above the Baxter's organ to the front of the Concert Hall stage while the audience collapsed in a state of hysterical laughter, and he – and she – is still reigning supreme as the country's top solo entertainer. His trump cards are personality, topicality and humour. No need for elaborate sets, orchestras, flashing lights, backing bands or gimmicks. It's nothing short of a miracle in the way he does it. Every time too

– *The Cape Times* (Stellenbosch) January 1997

Pieter-Dirk Uys is alive and well and sending it up as good as ever. Performances like this should be compulsive viewing for all politicians so they can get some guidelines about getting their act together to get the country up and running for the benefit of everyone and not just for those on the gravy train

– *The Cape Argus* (Stellenbosch) January 1997

As some expected there was more bad news in the new South Africa than good, and yet the fantasy of a perfect democratic solution to an improbable combination of extremes went from strength to strength. Nelson Mandela said we're okay. The bankers nodded; we're okay. The

world out there gave us a passing glance and said; they're okay. Our rainbow nation's democracy was working very well, because everyone was complaining about something. Whites complained about blacks; blacks complained about whites and other blacks.

Top satirist in a masterly look back. It has been a country of vast change and Uys parodies everything – allowing us to laugh at the wrongs of the past and perhaps more wryly, at the many misgivings of the future

– *Evening Post* (Port Elizabeth) April 1997

Pieter-Dirk Uys combines wide-ranging knowledge with a unique insight into our contemporary culture, to make an indelible mark in the file of local satire. Here Uys shows himself to be thoroughly comfortable with his emotions. He recognises them as the nuances that surface to complicate life, little jolts of joy and fury that, because he is a great comedian, he can control reliably. His sketches show both the punishing demoralisation of our new dispensation, as well as the glories that might well sustain it. He breathed a fresh immediacy into our current situation and took us where only a great clown can: to the frontiers of the marvellous

– *Business Day* (Johannesburg) May 1997

We became the perfect third-world democracy. Former Afrikaner politicians were publicly decrying apartheid: 'We did not know what was happening.' Killer cops were falling over themselves to blame other killer cops: 'We were only obeying orders.' Doctors admitted to not noticing how political prisoners were being beaten to death. Small fry are easy to paint into a corner with their own brush.

Uys is still very funny and his jibes are uncompromising. His gift for expressing our secret fears in outrageous satire is as potent as ever. It seems to me that Uys the comic is still Uys the tonic – *SA Financial Mail* (Johannesburg) October 1997

Sometimes it's a blessing that the more things change, the more they stay the same. In the maelstrom of transformation, reformation, electrification, reconstruction and development and truth and reconciliation that South Africa is experiencing, Pieter-Dirk Uys and Evita Bezuidenhout are as sharp and politically incorrect as ever. It's Uys's alchemical wit at work as ever, taking the base metal of our politician's vainglories and transmuting them into satirical gold. But the new flotsam and jetsam it has brought in its wake are the subject matter of the show. The satirist might refer to himself as Pieter-Dirk *Uysosaurus*, but runs no risk of extinction. Long live Pieter-Dirk and Evita, long live! – *The Star* (Johannesburg) October 1997

Meanwhile, big business was being beseeched to appear in the dock and apologise for keeping apartheid going – the same big business that today sit with Mandela at gala dinners to raise money for his children's fund. Yes, they say, mistakes were made and they are very sorry. 'Here's a cheque for any charity of your choice. Just fill in the amount,' they whisper and wink. And business is business, as it was, so it is now. It is struggle history vs apartheid propaganda: a monumental task of rebalancing a society wobbling on damaged wheels.

In the hands of a genius such as Uys, even the most predictable material can be side-splittingly hilarious. With Uys's incendiary intellect firing on all cylinders and sending one-liners whizzing around the crowd's ears, the show was top-class entertainment

– *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg) October 1997

Black empowerment and affirmative action held hands and cleared the decks of experience, filling the empty spaces with wide-eyed innocence and unrealistic expectations. The 11 official languages quickly adapted to political correctness. People no longer stole, they went 'affirmative shopping'. Politicians buried corruption in chaotic records – 'struggle accounting'.

He is sharp and snappy, taking the paranoia of white South Africa and reducing it to a laughing matter of self-inflicted pain and equally mocking the confidence blacks have derived from political freedom. *Live from Boerassic Park* sometimes skates on thin ice

– *Sunday Independent* (Johannesburg) October 1997

If anyone survived The Struggle with black eyes and bloody noses, it was the South African news reporting community. Reporters were banned and imprisoned. Newspapers were closed down and censored. The public was brainwashed and confused. The news was no longer news, it was propaganda. Well, that was the official line ...

Sy swaard is weer van die tweesnydende soort. Sy rypheid en skerp, kernagtige skeppende verbeelding is voluit aan 't werk. *Live from Boerassic Park* is 'n verrassende, selfs prysenswaardige terugblik op die Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis waar hy, as't ware, kontropuntal afsku teenoor hoe ons nou in die nuwe bedeling en 'n nuwe regering teen wil en dank moet leef. Dit is die proses van selfondersoek en nuut verworwe perspektiewe wat van *Boerassic Park* iets besonder menslik maak. Met 'n skerpheid van gees en sy sin vir daaglikse aktualiteite, deel hy klap na klap uit

– *Beeld* (Johannesburg) Oktober 1997

Through all of these characters, each brilliantly, physically achieved right before the audience's eyes, runs the rich vein

of trenchant Uys humour at the expense of what is
happening currently in this country

– *Weekend Post* (Port Elizabeth) February 1998

The reality, of course, is more complex and less appealing. Some newspapers thrived because they blatantly supported the National Party and apartheid. Most newspapers weren't closed down, because they censored themselves. As they say: freedom of speech ends at the editor's desk. Most newspapers couldn't afford to tell the truth, because they would lose their advertising revenue. Newspapers were focused on selling their newspapers, not to expose a corrupt and decadent ruling class. And the simple truth was that so many of the people out there just didn't know how to read!

Hoewel dit deurgaans duidelik is waarom Uys as die beste
satirikus in die land beskou word, is dit asof die nuwe
politieke bedeling hom net so effe minder skerp gevang het.
Uys sny en dissekteer links en regs, en krap van Mandela tot
Tutu waar hulle sekerlik nie gekrap wil word nie

– *Die Burger* (Port Elizabeth) Februarie 1998

As a critic I have been singing Uys's praises for nearly three
decades and the man simply gets better all the time. As Uys
and as the characters he becomes on stage with a minimum
of fuss and props, he remains something akin to a national
treasure. But beware, the barbs that prick our rulers past and
present, can inflict a measure of discomfort on the audience,
as well as the victims

– *Eastern Province Herald* (Port Elizabeth) February 1998

Today we welcome the Constitution that protects democracy,
as well as minority rights. It is doubtful if the government of
the day will have the time, or the interest, to spend millions
protecting the Constitution from abuse. It will be the job of

the South Africa media to keep an eye on the fragile fabric of our young democracy. A huge challenge for a profession and an art, for surely journalism is both. And so for the media itself? It will be up to them to prove the old adage wrong: that they call themselves the media because they're never well-done nor rare.

– Pieter-Dirk Uys, *Cape Times* (Cape Town)
5 September 1997)

Moods of darkness and light alternate through the show, for though Uys, the man, appeals to us to celebrate our new democracy and give it time to grow, his characters reveal the dark underbelly that makes us uneasy. We can be sharply but kindly reminded of exactly where we come from

– *Daily Despatch* (East London) February 1998

WHAT THE MEDIA SAID IN LONDON

Some of the throwaway darts are politically so incorrect that our laughter is shot through with wonder at the daring as much as the shrewdness. The crusader from the Cape takes us into the realm of the grotesque, where comedy is shot through with dismay and we are not quite sure what we can do to react. Political satire delivered by a world expert

– *The Times* (London) June 1997

Pieter-Dirk Uys is living proof that comedy can matter, that satire has a function even when the ostensible enemy has been defeated. It is, in our glorious leader's phrase, the 'eternal warrior against complacency', a thorn in the monkey's arse

– *The Observer* (London) June 1997

Lefty satirists wondering what to do now that the Tory Government they have spent the past 18 years attacking is no longer there, should hurry to Kilburn where Pieter-Dirk Uys, the white Afrikaner, once the satirical scourge of apartheid South Africa, is now performing the same function for the new. Uys manages to be clever and honest

– *The Sunday Times* (London) June 1997

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to the frontiers of the marvellous'
South African Business Day

Live from Boerassic Park
an evening of fearless satire



'A rare treat'
Time Out

'An instinct for savage
mockery... an angrily
funny show...'
The Guardian

'Uys at his
entertaining best'
Cape Times, SA

Reviews of Pieter-Dirk Uys
in *Truth Omissions*, 1996

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Flyer for *Live from Boerassic Park* 1997

As ever, Uys remains wry, witty and linguistically inventive, with an ability to form such cleverly autistic lines as 'in an upside-down society, the lowest common denominator stays on top'

– *Time Out* (London)

June 1997

In *Live from Boerassic Park*, Pieter-Dirk Uys, the impish man behind the monstrous woman, has fashioned a show out of the most unfashionable subject for comedians: politics. He must be just about the only stand-up left who is prepared to utter the P-word in public. And he is not short of targets. Such defiantly non-PC daring is to be applauded. Politics, it seems, need not be a dirty word for comedians

– *The Independent*

(London) June 1997

Razor-slashing forays into the political, social and racial arena, his humour acting as an impenetrable shield protecting him from any retribution (as in the past). He takes enthusiastic pot-shots at Mandela and his government ...

the marvellous Evita Bezuidenhout ... Uys's greatest creation is his Jewish princess, perhaps because she cuts deep into my ethnic guilt and sensibilities and reminds me of at least three old girlfriends
– *Ham & High* (London) June 1997

Uys is a highly talented performer and, with exuberant storytelling and brilliantly executed material, he serves up a hugely funny evening. You will laugh, whether you know South Africa or not
– *Jewish Chronicle* (London) June 1997

British gay audiences will, I suspect, be left out in the cold by the show, like myself
– *QX* (London) June 1997

Another Uys ace has them rolling in the aisles. Uys has a brilliant knack of finding a funny and new, yet familiar take on the good, the bad and the ugly. A great show at a great venue
– *SA Times* (London) June 1997

1998
EUROPEANS ONLY



Evening Standard

14 MAY 1998 HOT TICKETS



sir peter ustinov on...

PIETER-DIRK UYS

I've always held that the time war became inevitable in Europe was when the first comedian was imprisoned for doing a skit on Goebbels or Hitler or somebody like that. Comedians act as the litmus paper of a society and Pieter-Dirk Uys is South Africa's litmus paper. I first saw him on stage in Durban last month while I was shooting a television programme on Mark Twain's trip around the world. I'd vaguely heard of him as South Africa's version of Edna Everage but he is much more flexible than Barry Humphries because Edna, marvellous as she is, is always Edna.

Pieter-Dirk's is not a transvestite show as he can switch from President Mandela to Mrs Verwoerd to his alter ego Evita Bezuidenhout (right), the ambassador of a fictitious place called Bapeti Kosweti. He flits from person to person, sex to sex, character to character, as difficult to catch up with as a cake of soap in the bath. One second he's an extremely sexy woman, the next he's an old Boer farmer or Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

During the time of apartheid his targets were easier to obtain but he continues with the new ANC regime like a safety-valve. He's an instinctive comic with a first-class intellect which has nothing to do with comedy. He's a thinking man, at times an outraged man, which he conceals with temperate comment. His show is like a shot in the arm - gradually the serum takes. I had no idea what he looked like until we met. It was a surprise. He was completely unrecognisable, like a newly born chick - he is very bald - with a face full of humour. We got on like a house on fire recently extinguished by well-wishers. His new show is about Evita trying to get South Africa into the European Union and finding a job for President Mandela in 1999.

Pieter-Dirk Uys's *Europeans Only* previews from Monday 18 May and opens on Wednesday 20 May at the Tricycle Theatre, Kilburn High Road, NWS (0171-328 1000).



THE BACKSTORY

Europeans Only was the only revue I premiered outside South Africa. It was 1998 and the New Labour government had moved into 10 Downing Street. It was time to audition the Brits and it was South Africa's chance to be a touch holier-than-thou, its cheerleaders being none other than Nelson Mandela and the most famous white woman in South Africa.

With the focus on her culinary achievements, Tannie Evita would inform and entertain her London audience with a cooking demonstration while sharing her thoughts on the state of her nation's African Renaissance as compared to Tony Blair's People's Renaissance. A surprise meeting with a young South African woman who'd been in her employ during the early 1970s allowed Mrs Bezuidenhout to include her in the presentation. Cookie peels and chops and nods, and says either 'Yes, Madam' or 'No, Madam'. But she is no servant or maid. Unknown to her former madam, she introduces herself to the audience as an academic.

The material had its roots in the countless corporate demonstrations, interviews and presentations that Evita Bezuidenhout had shared with South African audiences, who understood where she came from and how she was expected to act. In London the only experience of Mrs Bezuidenhout had been in my revues performed since 1981, so it was important to make sure that she represented a character British audiences would identify with.

Drag culture has a specific space among Brits, brought up on the Monty Python magic and the glamour of Danny La Rue. Mrs Bezuidenhout should not cross into that area. She is a three-dimensional

character with no sense of humour. She doesn't understand irony, so the danger of doing campy asides is lethal. She is 'a lady', polite enough to laugh with an audience while not always sure why. She is constantly aware of her boer aristocracy: white and Christian. She is more Margaret Thatcher than Joan Rivers.

Looking back at the text of 1998, one is aware of the impending dawn of political correctness, but not yet in the clutches of 'cancel' culture. Evita's survival is thanks to her instinctive understanding of the need to change her opinions and see black as white.

The programme also included a page on which members of the audience could write a question for Evita. There were two boxes on either side of the stage in which these could be placed during interval.

A PROGRAMME NOTE

SLEGS BLANKES is Afrikaans for WHITES ONLY. To some UK visitors it sounded like the name of a tired stripper from Birmingham. In apartheid South Africa most of us who were used to those signs were either white, or 'European', but not always both. And often those who were not European, like the Americans, wouldn't go into the places that said EUROPEANS ONLY, because they weren't from Europe. Instead they went into doors that said NON-EUROPEANS ONLY and were arrested for using toilets meant only for blacks. Very seldom you'd get a BLACKS ONLY sign. Signs were usually NON-WHITES ONLY or NON-EUROPEAN FEMALES ONLY, as if they were a protected species from the Himalayas.

I had the little black and white sign you see on stage tonight specially made in a bric-a-brac shop in Cape Town some weeks ago. I couldn't find the real apartheid signs anywhere in our new democracy. Even the antique and bric-a-brac shop owners just smiled and shook their heads. 'The tourists snap up the apartheid signs. Cabinet ministers hang them in their bars,' was the excuse. Even the old NO DOGS OR NATIVES ALLOWED was a rare item. I don't remember those, probably because we never had dogs.

And so I went to another shop in Cape Town that specialises in

making car number plates. I asked them: 'Do you still make those signs where the letters are pressed out of tin? Like the old days?'

'Old number plates?' asked the owner, who was black.

'Well, no ...,' I found myself whispering, '... the old ... you-know ... apartheid signs?'

There was a long pause. The shop filled up.

'Actually I'm doing a show in London,' I said. 'I need a EUROPEANS ONLY sign.'

A young woman who was not white came out of the office. She was the owner's wife. 'You really want a sign that says EUROPEANS ONLY?'

I nodded.

'In April 1998?'

'It's for ...' She didn't let me finish. She said something in Xhosa to her husband. He laughed. Others joined in. I repeated. 'It's for ...'

'Pieter-Dirk Uys,' she smiled. 'Only for you, I swear to God, comrade. Only for you!'

Pieter-Dirk Uys

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Europeans Only

At the Tricycle Theatre, Kilburn High St London NW6

THE CAST

Cookie (*performed by Lavern Archer*)

Evita Bezuidenhout (*performed by Pieter-Dirk Uys*)

THE STAGE SETTING

A fitted kitchen was meant to have been assembled. It wasn't – closed boxes that have kitchen items litter the stage. We read 'stove', 'small fridge', pots, pans etc.

We are aware of the labels from different EU countries and in different EU languages.

The audience is seated.

THE SHOW

SOUND: *A telephone caller gets a recorded message:*

VOICEOVER ANNOUNCEMENT: *You've reached the box office of the Tricycle Theatre. Please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can.*

EVITA (VOICEOVER): Hello Tricycle? This is Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout. You know, the Afrikaans lady who's coming to do the cooking demonstration? Nelson Mandela's friend? Listen, there's terrible traffic here on the way to you. I think we are still ... where are we? (Excuse me, driver, where are we? Hey? I don't know where that is) ... look, we'll be there as soon as possible, okay? Dankie hoor? Maybe play them some nice South African music till I get there ... or just one of Nelson Mandela's nice speeches?

(MUSIC TRACK: a Virginia Lee song, then Mandela speaks. He is interrupted by Evita's voice again)

EVITA (VOICEOVER): Hello? It's me again ... we're here in front of the theatre. Please could someone help us with all the things? *(To Cookie)* Cookie? You go in so long ...

(SOUND: Mandela's voice is back).

(Cookie enters through the auditorium. She carries familiar plastic bags from local shops. She goes onto the stage and unpacks her vegetables onto the table: carrots, potatoes, onions, etcetera. She sets it all up on the work surface. She puts on her apron while studying the boxes – also reacting to Nelson Mandela's words)

(We hear Evita speaking as she comes through the auditorium)

EVITA: Cookie? Waar is jy?

(She goes onto the stage)

There you are, Cookie. I wish you hadn't left me alone with that rude driver. Sometimes foreigners can really be so cheeky, especially here in Europe.

(She hands her bag and coat to Cookie and addresses the audience)

Dames en here, ladies and gentlemen, I'm so sorry for being late, but this time it's not my fault. The traffic here is really terrible. Ja-nee, just too many cars on the roads. You should find some clever system to control them. We in South Africa have experience in controlling influxes. Maybe cars with different colours should be allowed in London only on specific days? Red cars on Mondays, blue ones on Tuesdays, white ones on Wednesday, Thursdays and Fridays and black ones only on Saturdays between 3 and 5. Then on Sundays no cars unless you go to church.

And those horrible speedbumps in your streets? Nee asseblief, just look how flat my hair is? I hit the ceiling every time he hit a bump! And what

a terrible driver. I did ask for someone who was from London, and who could at least speak the English I could understand. No, it wasn't a Cockney or Liverpudlian. I got a man from Nigeria, who I didn't understand at all. Can you believe it, he calls the speedbumps 'sleeping policemen'! Liewe aarde! I said to him: 'Back home in South Africa our policemen are just too busy to sleep.' Then he said he'd heard that speedbumps in South Africa were out-of-work blacks. Sies, I think he's a racist! And it took him forever to get from Chelsea to here.

The Chelsea Flower Show is so beautiful. South Africa has a very special little horticultural display which yesterday won a gold medal. Now that black and white is no longer relevant ... well, we've resolved the white issue and come to terms with the black problem ... and now we are confronting the green reality. Ecology. So our South African display is called 'Blooms in Boerassic Park'. It's created in the shape of Robben Island, with a statue of our dear Nelson Mandela made from proteas and strelitzias in all the colours of our rainbow nation. Except, of course, black and white – which as you know, are not in a rainbow.

Oh yes, there is also a rose display named after me. Someone called it 'rosa menopausal mauve'. I must look that up. I so wanted to bring a few blooms to show you here, but the Queen and Princess Margaret wanted to look at them and so they were sent to Buckingham Palace. Shame, one doesn't want to take away one of the few pleasures they still have. I was hoping to have the Evita Bezuidenhout rosa menopausal mauve to show you ... (*To Cookie*) Gits, Cookie? Maybe the driver could have gone via Buckingham Palace to get some? No, he's too rude for the palace.

COOKIE: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: Pity the Queen wasn't at the flower show. I really wanted to see what she was wearing, now that she is trying to be more ordinary and people friendly. I hope she won't arrive in shorts and flip-flops. She'd look so South African! Or maybe just Cool Britannia?

(*She notices the boxes; inspects them*)

Ag nee man, wat is dit nou? I asked for a fitted kitchen. Is this it?

COOKIE: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: In all these crates and boxes? No no no! Look, in order to properly do my cooking demonstration, I felt it was right to have a kitchen made up of all the different countries in the European Union. 'n Ware EU kombuis! Oh I see, that's why nothing has been set up? They said they'd got all the different components delivered, but none are compatible! Nothing seems to fit!

COOKIE: No, Madam.

EVITA: No, really, the French plugs don't fit the Italian sockets, while the German AC doesn't fit the Greek DC! I should have done it myself. It's so easy to order a proper fully operational kitchen from Taiwan!

COOKIE: Yes, Madam.

(Evita studies the list)

EVITA: Ah ... that crate must have the fridge from France; that would have been nice ... and this crate ... a stove from Holland? Not so sure ... it's a microwave from Bavaria? Ah yes, München ... oh look, lights from Sweden? Really? Goodness, I remember lights just like these. Our security police used them in John Vorster Square during those years of sanctions.

See, Cookie, the Swedes also cheated with sanctions. Probably sent them for relabelling via Paraguay or Hong Kong. Nelson Mandela also had lamps like these in his new house in Houghton. Probably fell in love with them in prison? Shame, he's so sentimental. Oh look, Cookie, a dishwasher from Italy. You'd be pleased ... and this? A dustbin from the UK? Look! It works!

(She uses her foot to lift the lid)

Oh shame! Look, Cookie? It's a Diana Dustbin! A 'paperazzi'? I might take this home with me. Gosh, I've already bought so many tubs of her special margarine to take back to South Africa. Isn't this sweet? Shame, poor Diana. Every London newspaper or British magazine you open nowadays has a cover picture or article of either the *Titanic* or Princess Diana. I'm still so sad about that poor girl. But my son De Kock is more pragmatic. He says: 'Mama, you must see the positive aspects now.' I said: 'How can one be positive about the loss of this beautiful girl?' 'No,' says De Kock, 'at least now Diana can take Mother Theresa to

Versace for some new clothes ... (*She doesn't get the gag*) Ja, whatever ... An incompatible kitchen! What does that mean? You put something together to celebrate all the different nationalities in the EU and find out that nothing really can work? I suppose it's a bit like our new South Africa: a government made up of 14 different tribes and 11 languages. No wonder nothing seems to work either. Maybe there's an important lesson in that somewhere.

(*She sighs*)

Can you believe it? We used to have only four provinces and ... was it six, seven, eight? ... black homelands. Transkei, Venda, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana – and of course, my homeland of Bapetikosweti. Each had its own white departments of health, welfare and education, in addition to the other non-white departments of health, welfare and education that were each restricted to their ethnic group: white, black, Coloured, Indian? It made sense! Now all of that has got to be in one system for all! Looking for trouble!

The only area in which one doesn't want compatibility is the arms race. Of course, your Mr Robin Cook has his ethical foreign policy to keep him going ... what did I read yesterday: 'Holier than thou, unless thou can afford it'! His arms-sale boycotts to trouble spots like Iran, Sierra Leone and Iraq? Makes total sense. Shame, when I mentioned to Robin Cook that I once had a maid called Sarah Leon, I thought he would have a heart attack! Maybe she would also be on his list.

I think she's in jail for fraud. But we know his Labour government did sell arms to Indonesia in spite of the boycott – and look what happened? It was a good move. Just like in Sierra Leone, they both got rid of bad leaders. And there was no killing, because there was no compatibility in the arms from Europe! The Indonesians now have British guns, but their French bullets don't fit, and no one can understand the German instructions! You notice I didn't mention your boycotts against South Africa ...

(*She studies a few more crates*)

Dis nou jammer ... unfortunately I cannot take you through a step-by-step demonstration of how I make my most famous dish. I know we

have the Croydon Cooking Corporation here, who hired a bus to come specially. Waar is julle? Never mind, my dears, next month's *HELLO* magazine will carry the recipe in full detail and in at least 4 different local languages: English, Scottish, Welsh and Yorkshire. Cookie?

COOKIE: Yes, Madam?

EVITA: You'd better start preparing. Have you got the right utensils? You know how to dice the vegetables, like Madam taught you all those years ago? And be careful with your fingers, Cookie, we don't want you to cut off something here by mistake. It's very complicated getting plastic surgery on the National Health, especially if you're a migrant. So let me quickly introduce you to all our friends here.

(To the audience)

And how do I know there are friends in the audience? Because every time the British gasp, the South Africans laugh! So, ladies and gentlemen, dames en here, this is Cookie!

(She gets Cookie to stand and bow)

It's a small world that's getting smaller by the day. Before you know it, you end up sitting next to your maid in London! No, listen, I have had many maids in South Africa: Zulu, Xhosa, Venda and Sotho. Even Cape Coloureds, but they were usually too cheeky and tried so hard to be white. It's so sad, and quite sweet. Except you end up not knowing who's the maid and who's the madam!

No, I always treated my maids well. Even today. Although now it's very difficult finding a good maid. They're all either in Parliament or running Telkom. We now have to make do with British girls coming to work in our houses as au pairs and nannies, because they can't get those jobs in the UK, because they're taken up by French, German and Italian girls who are so much cheaper.

Anyway, Cookie and I go back a long way. Her Aunt Sofie worked for me all those years ago in Laagerfontein, Northern Transvaal. Sofie was my mai ... was my domestic supervisor. And her niece, little Cookie, was all over the place, like a little barefoot meerkatjie! Remember Cookie?

COOKIE: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: You were always so naughty, singing and dancing and ... oh, you

won't remember this, but I haven't forgotten! You once took the Easter egg meant for my daughter Billie-Jeanne. You took it and ate it, and then said there was no Easter Bunny and my child cried for days. Very naughty. If you were older, you would have been smacked many times with a cane, but shame, I stepped in and said: nee wat, it was okay. I think I saved your life, Cookie!

COOKIE: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: And now, can you believe it, after all these years, here I meet Cookie again in London. What happened to you, Cookie? Did you leave South Africa and come here to join the banned ANC? Or did they send you to Moscow to learn how to shoot an AK47? Don't tell me you went to China and learnt how to make petrol bombs? But then maybe you came to London to work for a nice family? Well, I must say, you look happy and healthy. Spekvet en gesond!

I met Cookie just by chance here on the 27th April, at our Freedom Day celebration in South Africa House. It was the fourth anniversary of our rainbow democracy. And you've just had your first? Three hundred and sixty five days of Tony Blair? What has he still got up his sleeve? I must say, it was a strange feeling being there in South Africa House, now a high commission and with all those black guests, so beautifully dressed and very nice, I must say...

COOKIE: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: Our High Commissioner Cheryl Carolus asked me to assist her with the catering for the party. It's very important here in London to have a successful diplomatic gathering, with lots to eat and drink. Did they have to chain the cutlery to the wall? No, *sis*, I'm just making a joke. Listen, I have experienced that kitchen in South Africa House. Back in the old days. What a business that was, smuggling the biltong and droëwors into the UK in the diplomatic bags. I remember specially making melkert for one of our most loyal British supporters. Dear old Enoch Powell. Of course, people now maliciously say that I fried boere-wors for the security agents in the basement who were making bombs, which is nonsense. Anyway they were usually too drunk to assemble anything successfully.

I spent most of the Freedom Day celebration in the kitchen, preparing all the nice snacks for Cheryl Carolus's party, just as I used to do as the South African Ambassador in the former independent black homeland Republic of Bapetikosweti for 10 years. I know how to balance the sweet and the sour. Cheryl especially asked for droëwors strips, biltong pieces, melkert, and mopani worms in a Mrs Balls Chutney sauce. Today how things have changed, hey? There I was the maid in the kitchen, and Cheryl was the ambassador, while only 10 years ago I was the ambassador and Cheryl ... wasn't. Anyway, that's where I met Cookie again.

COOKIE: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: Cookie, I didn't even recognise you. You've changed so much since you were there by us in Laagerfontein. How many years ago was that? Shame, and here you are in London, all on your own. So I said: 'Cookie? I have to do a very special, very secret project on behalf of Nelson Mandela here in London. It is the first anniversary of the presidency of Tony Blair and I really need some help to prepare. We'll make bobotie for the Blairs. I'll pay you in pounds! In cash! You can keep the uniform and you'll get a nice signed picture of Nelson Mandela. Like the Spice Girls did.' Remember?

COOKIE: Yes, Madam.

EVITA: So here is Cookie. In London. In Kill-Burn! Where's the nice pink and white uniform with matching cap I ordered for you, Cookie? Never mind, you look very nice.

(She asks the audience)

Don't you think she looks nice?

(They react)

Nou goed. Let me start with the reinvention of an old slogan: 'Too many cooks don't spoil the broth'. Cooking can change the world. I know it's not at all fashionable to state this, but I will. And I say this especially to the young women here today, but I don't exclude older women or even those men who are sensitive. Listen, it's time to go back to the kitchen! This word 'feminism' is just a way to make us women feel wanting. Cooking food is nothing to be ashamed of.

God has given us women a special gift and that is to make magic in the

kitchen! Let the men get on with ruling the world. It all means very little once you realise that without men, the world would run itself quite successfully. So let your man go out and be important in his fancy suit, rolled umbrella and briefcase, ready for that essential business lunch. Believe me, in spite of that, by the time he gets home, he's hungry again. And if you're not ready to feed him, then his secretary will fill the spaces. Just look at your Robin Cook. He did not cook; she cooked ... his goose! Your man should come home to his favourite dishes, all prepared with love by you, as an investment for your future. And yes, he'll eat without even a word of thanks, probably glued to his new Blackberry. Don't worry, it's when his mouth is full, then you can talk. In those precious moments you can change everything.

Look back in history how the women behind the scenes changed the way things were supposed to be. Take Frau Hannelore Kohl, wife of the German chancellor. She's not a blonde for nothing. And look at the size of her Helmut. She just feeds him blutwurst and knackwurst and every wurst you can think of. And behold, he's been the Führer in Germany longer than Adolf Hitler! This all came to me by chance.

In 1975 I was sent to New York to assist the South African Mission at the United Nations with their diplomatic catering. That's where I met Pik Botha, then our ambassador to the UN and later our foreign minister forever. He just said: 'Evita, you're the best cook in the National Party. Use that cooking art to make friends for South Africa!' But alas, we found no friends in New York who were prepared to be named. So the first person we invited was our worst enemy, Fidel Castro. From Cuba!

Listen, I didn't even know where that was. I thought: Cuba had to be as big as China, because America is so frightened of Cuba. Cuba? I couldn't believe my eyes. It's a small island near America, like England is a small island near Europe. And Cuba irritates America, just like England irritates Europe!

Anyway, Castro was in New York in 1975 to make a speech at the United Nations, but because he was a Communist leader from Cuba, nobody in Manhattan would feed him, or let him use their toilets. So I said to Pik:

‘Let’s invite that Castro to our apartment on Central Park West. Let me try my bobotie out on him. If it poisons him and he dies, no one will care.’ He accepted! Or maybe he was just hungry, or dying to use a toilet. Never mind, he arrived, all seven foot tall, wearing a stained green communist uniform, but with rows of medals on his chest. Real medals, not like our then minister of defence, General Magnus Malan, who used to cut his medals out of the Kellogg’s cornflake box.

Castro also had that bushy terrorist beard hiding half his face, with bits of junk food hanging off. Sies! Flies and wasps and bees buzzing around his face. I said to Pik: ‘Get the Doom! Spray him with Doom!’ But Pik just said: ‘No, he’s a third world leader. Those are just vitamins flying into his mouth.’ What can I tell you? Fidel Castro loved my bobotie. He said if Afrikaners cook so well, we can’t all be bad. And he was on his way to Pretoria to taste my waterblommetjie-bredie, but being a Communist, he veered to the left and ended up in Angola.

Just look at the negotiation process in South Africa! It actually started at my homeland embassy *Blanche-Noir*. The border between Bapetikosweti and South Africa ran right through my dining room table, which meant that I had a dining room in two countries. So I could legally have the ANC on the Bapetikosweti side of the border, while the National Party sat safely on the South African side. (With the *Playboy* magazine going back and forth under the table. Believe me, in those things all men are equal.)

You see, that’s where I got them eating together. And then talking together. You know, life can be so ridiculous. With politics and religion constantly dividing good people. Not so ridiculous in real life, because people get killed. But when you relax and eat, you can laugh at all that nonsense and move on.

And so our negotiations at CODESA 1 and CODESA 2 only succeeded because everyone’s tummy was nicely full. And believe me, it wasn’t difficult feeding all those ANC ex-convicts. They were so used to bread and water twice a day. All I had to do was put jam on the bread and sugar in the water and they were so grateful. And that’s how we all eventually signed off on our Constitution. It must be very irritating for

you people, knowing that in spite of the past, South Africa now has the best constitution in the world? Shame. And you people don't even have one.

No man, you people must really wake up! You're so quick to point a finger at everyone else, while in fact you don't even have a bill that has rights! Our Constitution now protects every citizen, especially minorities of whites, browns, reds, yellows, the disabled ... oh yes, people with one leg that's also protected. But then again, will we ever have a government strong enough to protect the Constitution itself? But so far, so good. Cookie, remind me to send the Tricycle Theatre some T-shirts with the preamble to the Constitution on it. The barman can wear one during interval.

Anyway, that night in my embassy, I saw it for myself. This miracle emerging from chalk to become cheese. Just remember where they all came from, those members of the ANC on the one hand and our National Party broeders on the other fresh from a civil war! So with a beating heart I watched from the kitchen, waiting for them to fight. That was part of their job; otherwise as politicians they lose their pensions and/or their claims on everyone else's pensions. One side hated blacks and wanted to kill blacks; the other side hated whites and wanted to kill whites. I was hoping my food would help them forget all that hate.

Besides, there will always be someone else to hate, but not in our new back yards! Even the Communists didn't come across too badly. Shame, I think South Africa is now the only country in the world with a Communist Party with plans for the future. I just knew the moment they started shouting slogans and behaving like spoilt civil servants, I'd bring in the dessert. My malva pudding! The recipe came to me from my great-grandmother, Sarie Marais, who fought in the Anglo-Boer war. It's a wonderfully sticky pudding and it works!

Yes, they stopped fighting to eat it and the sticky dessert glued their teeth together – and so they couldn't carry on insulting one another. In fact, many of the ANC delegates wore their free false teeth from Bulgaria, which never separated! Those of them without front teeth

now call it their passion gap. The lesson I learnt the hard way: the only way to a politician's mind is not through his brain; it's through his stomach. I mean, look in America. They shot Ronald Reagan through his head and it made no difference whatsoever!

Take the recent examples of the Euro struggle. Headline: Finance! In order to decide who would run the Eurobank in Frankfurt, President Chirac invited Chancellor Kohl to a dinner of truffles, wurst and beer. It was all settled before dessert, and Tony Blair as the new revolving president of the EU had to pick up the bill. Now Heer Duisenberg will run the Eurobank. Tony couldn't get his name right, giving 20 different versions in his speech. Some delegates thought he was referring to the seven dwarfs from Brussels.

Then at the G7 conference in Birmingham, to show their deep commitment to solving pressing problems, the leaders of the most powerful and richest nations of the world spent eight million pounds just on food and drink in order to discuss malnutrition in the Third World. Cookie? Where is your proper apron? No, hang on, I brought you a perfect one to wear, so that you don't get your nice C&A outfit all dirty. See, the new South African flag.

(She holds up the South African flag apron)

A wonderful design that works on anything: towels, T-shirts, caps. Even underpants. It has a perfect Y-front. I don't want to take credit for this flag, But during negotiations, I said to the chief architects of the new Constitution, Roelf Meyer and Cyril Ramaphosa: 'What about a new flag?' They hadn't even thought about it; too busy watching rugby on television. So I said: 'Here's a packet of jelly babies, a bottle of lemon squash and a box of Koki pens. Go into the lounge and make a flag.' And this is what they did. No, the old orange, white and blue flag was wrong. It represented all the bad things we were trying to forget – an apartheid state where health systems, education systems, welfare systems and all the systems worked, and where trains ran on time. Never mind, we've swapped all that for freedom of speech. Well, yes, not much speech, but a hell of a lot of freedom.

You can see the influences of old Europe in the former racist flag; all

the colours of Holland, Belgium, France, Germany – and of course, the Union Jack. Oh goodness, yes, you really had a big fat finger in our pie. So before we get to the recipe, I think it will interest you to know how Europe used South Africa to experiment on. Most things that eventually worked in the world were tried out in South Africa first. Remember? You sent your convicts to Australia, but thankfully sent missionaries to us.

(What did Desmond Tutu always say: ‘When the British missionaries came to South Africa, they had the Bible, and we had the land. And they said: Let us pray. And so we closed our eyes and prayed. And when we opened our eyes again, we had the Bible, and they had the land.’)

Europe tried out some of its most successful inventions there under the African sun. Die worsrol – sausage roll in Afrikaans – helped us to understand Flemish. Then there was the word ‘veld’, which was meant to describe nothing. It still does. Also the concept of ‘apart-hate’, a very European reality, was based on a natural need to develop separately. This has been happening for centuries under your very noses here at Eton College, Oxford and Cambridge.

Then don’t forget in the Boer War. We, the Boers, gave the world guerrilla warfare, which has become universal ever since, and in exchange the British Empire brought the world the concept of the concentration camp. (Although in reality, it was created by the Spanish, who didn’t have the sense to franchise it.)

I keep saying to Peter Mandelson: if you’re looking to highlight a British achievement to exhibit in the Dome, put in a British concentration camp. It cries out for a theme park with rides and candyfloss, because it was the first. (I know, the Germans and the Japs eventually perfected it.) There was also concentration-camp cooking, pioneered by a schoolteacher from Cardiff: green jelly with crushed green glass in it for women and children, or porridge with small glass chunks for men. Funny, when the Queen recently visited South Africa, we Afrikaners never thought of turning our backs on her, or demanding compensation for what her people did to us then. You see, we Afrikaners have learnt the hard way to forgive. Never to forget, but only forgive.

Let us take South Africa, now in its fourth year of true democracy, after the centuries of destruction at the whims of European invaders. The history of my beloved country is a jigsaw puzzle of ethnic supremacies. First came the Dutch in 1662. Jan van Riebeeck arrived in Table Bay with his three little ships. He was lost. His maps had blown away in the wind. He was actually on his way to Brazil to open a coffee shop, which is what the Dutch do very well. But to explore an African hinterland? How would the Dutch know about exploration? Their country is just too small. You put your foot down there and it ends up either in Denmark or Belgium.

So poor old Jan van Riebeeck walked up and down on the wooden deck in his wooden shoes. When are you Europeans going to sort that out? You all wear leather shoes, except the Dutch who don't. They say it makes sense when half your country is usually under water. The wooden shoes on the wooden deck made such a noise that all the local tribes on the shore ran away, leaving the Cape empty. Even Robben Island was for penguins only.

So he stepped on shore with his bag of seeds and started a vegetable garden in the shadow of Table Mountain. Yes, he called it Tafelberg, which shows his lack of imagination. Have you ever seen a table that looks like that? It looks more like a radio. But the Dutch didn't have radios in those days of the 17th century. Of course, as soon as the other countries in Europe found out that the Dutch were having such a nice time at the Cape of Good Hope, making Coloured people, they also wanted to come and have a chance. Today we'd call it tourism. Then it simply was a foreign invasion.

The French came and introduced winegrowing and drinking, and adding raisins to the diet of the Cape. And they ate all our snails, which was good for the gardens. They also put apricots in brandy and got the Dutch so drunk that the French took the best land in Franschoek (where they still are as we speak.) The German settlers invaded on a small scale, purely because that is what Germans do anyway, even on a Neckermann tour of Majorca.

They brought with them the fine art of sausage making, which in turn

led to the perfection of one of the symbols of Afrikaner power: boerewors. Country sausage? Haggis with a sense of humour? Sorry, but I have seen not enough of it here in London. (You'll love it. If you can stomach American hamburgers or Bengali samosas, just try boerewors.)

Then came the first British invasion of the Cape of Good Hope in 1795. I suppose the British were forced to keep invading other places, because in those days they could never find their own island because it was so small. And we in South Africa were confronted for the first time with what is still loosely called English cooking. Bread and butter pudding? Please, we couldn't even give it away to the prisoners on Robben Island! 'Toad in the hole' defies translation: *padda in die gat!* And as for that spotted Billy ... Willy ... Dick? No *sis*, how does a decent woman order that in a restaurant? Spotted dick, *asseblief!*

By now the Dutch settlers were known as boere – Boers. They didn't want to live under the yoke of the imperialist invader. So they packed up their meagre belongings in small ox wagons – their babies, their bibles, their biltong and their blacks – and they started off on the Great Trek to the north. They crossed the mighty Drakensberg barefoot! No roads. No maps. They had to carry their ox wagons across the mountains. (You try and carry your Toyota across the Pennines.)

They lived on food from the veld: leaves and bark. They ate some; smoked others. And once across the Drakensberg, who do they meet? The Zulus! Difficult people. Just look at Chief Gatsha Buthelezi. No, my mother always said: There are only two things you can do with a Zulu. Put him in government, or put him in jail. There's nothing in between.

And so the Voortrekkers found themselves on the banks of a small stream that would be their Blood River. Bloedrivier! They circled their wagons into a laager, putting thorn trees and cacti between the wagons to keep their cats and dogs in, picked up their guns and waited for the Zulus. For three days they waited, morning, noon and night. Obviously the beginning of African Time. But they knew the Zulus were there. They couldn't see them, but they could hear them, because Zulus make

a terrible noise. Not just on our pavements listening to their portable radios; but then noisily dancing the toyi-toyi on the other side of the hill.

After three days of waiting, the Zulus suddenly appeared on the hills around Blood River: thousands of angry Zulus. The Voortrekkers were ready. Forgive me for reminding you how the British ran from the Zulus. (Oh yes, show a Brit a black and they bolt.) Today of course they hug and carefully embrace. But imagine, all those angry Zulus in their ostrich feathers and rare and protected animal skins, like a quarter of a million Buthelezis without cell phones.

And then they charged down on the 150 Voortrekkers. It could have changed the course of history. But the Voortrekkers believed their God was an Afrikaner and it just shows what happens when you blindly believe. They got on their knees and prayed to God to give them victory. And he did! The guns against the assegais also helped. And so we Afrikaners now celebrate that day, 16 December, as a sacred day for us, God's chosen people.

Yes, the Battle of Blood River was for us what the Battle of Hastings is to you. Sadly the ANC is already rewriting our history to make out as if that sacred battle never happened, because they say God was not white. So please, protect your battles before someone takes that away from you too. Add them to the Dome exhibition. (By the way, wasn't that battle fought against the French? Well, in a united Europe you might find that politically incorrect?

Who is as yet not a member of the EU? The Canary Islands! Say *they* invaded you in 1066!) And so the Voortrekkers celebrated their victory after the Battle of Blood River, while mourning the death of their hero, Piet Retief. Brave boers; he and three Voortrekkers went to Zulu Chief Dingaan's kraal and were killed. Now it's said that the boers were drunk and chased after the young black maidens, but no *sis*, that's just typical communist racist propaganda.

By now the Great Trek had formed the two Boer republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, each with their own flag and constitution, independent of the hated empire. But God does not

sleep. Diamonds were discovered in Kimberley and gold on the Witwatersrand, creating an invasion from which we never recovered. All we wanted was peace and quiet. We shunned worldly goods like gold and diamonds; we wanted aesthetic things like cheap servants. But the British invaded our republics with their pork pies and that bread and butter pudding!

The obvious next step was the Anglo-Boer War, which set the might of the great British Empire against a group of God-fearing farmers. And yes, by the way, we won! Of course your British newspapers were better liars. I don't want to go into the details of the Boer War and the horrible effect it had on our feelings of goodwill towards Queen and Crown. But my mother, who is now nearly 100 and dreads a telegram of congratulation from Buckingham Palace, refuses to even take her pills because the labels are in English. We have to disguise them with false Scandinavian stickers.

The Union of South Africa was formed in 1910 and we believed that we would be independent of Britain, but no. We remained part of what would soon be known as the Commonwealth. Yes, clever; a union of former enemies; once a cauldron of hatred and despair. There was no need for a common currency, because no one dared to touch the enemy's money: the pounds, shillings and pence – with the monarch's head on each coin.

Remember also that South Africa, in spite of the past, fought alongside Britain in the Great War and then, of course, Jan Smuts (that traitor) dragged us into the Second World War. But God does not snooze! In 1948 our National Party came to power, only because the British in South Africa didn't bother to vote. They were so certain they had our country in the palm of their hands, they just played cricket and drank tea. But we Afrikaners knew the value of the vote. That's why we kept it away from so many people for so long. And so thanks to British colonialist apathy, the National Party came to power, and apartheid became the policy of our land thanks to a European. A Dutchman called Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd.

It was his plan to develop nations separately, but equally. It could have

worked if everyone got the same handout, but it seems some people were very greedy. It led to a horrible time for those who had nothing and got even less. Apartheid went on for 46 years, growing stronger by the decade. And yes, British support kept us in the loop of survival. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was our friend. Was it she who said: Apartheid is just a pigment of the imagination?

In 1994, against all the odds, the diverse nations of South Africa were united by Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. (Ja, try and get that round your Anglo-Saxon tongue.) Everyone was promised houses, jobs, food, flush toilets and running water, uniting us for the last four years. On paper. In real life it's a little more complicated. So be careful what your liberals wish for. I'm afraid our solutions might become your problems. Take language for a starter.

One official language? You should have four; we have 11. Nelson Mandela knew that to choose only two or three would throw more oil onto the flames. So he said, everyone is number one. Would you agree to 15 official languages? Or will English be official only on Mondays, French on Tuesday, German on Wednesday? And what if you have a vicious pit bull terrier guarding your property against the upsurge of illegals? Which language will you have on the gate?

One language, or all 15? Will the sign become that gate? Imagine: 'Beware of the dog, Oppas vir het hond, Achtung: Rottweiler, Sinn Fein'? On and on and on? By the time your illegal immigrant has found out that he doesn't understand any of the languages, he's made friends with your dog, and there goes your dog!

London shows the success of a multilingual Europe, because most here speak a different language. London, the new virtual Tower of Babel: French, German, Bosnian, Danish, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian. I still have to meet someone who is truly English. I want to photograph them and show the picture around: 'Look, I met a real Englishman! They do exist!' But with care you can still keep the upper hand. Make everyone feel free to babble in any language while in London. But remind them: if you don't speak English the way we English speak English, you'll get nowhere.

Then money. We all belong to the same currency called the Rand. It's more or less worth eight to the pound ... probably less than more. But here you are, refusing to join the Euro. I'm sorry, but that's very rude. It's like living in a commune and refusing to use the flush toilet!

(She notices someone coming into the auditorium)

Ah, Cookie, help is at hand. While you people have your interval, Cookie and I will pop down to the restaurant next door and collect the bobotie. There, you see? Boer maak 'n plan. I wasn't going to disappoint you on this suspicious occasion. Cookie? Where is the extra mince? And the curry powder? Ah, Mrs Ball's Chutney? We could auction this here for a Queen's ransom! Toemaar, Cookie, the rest is still in the taxi. You'd better ask that rude man to help carry things into the restaurant. But don't worry about him. I said: keep your meter running. He's now on our side.

(She looks at her watch)

Gosh, is that the time? Cookie?

COOKIE: Yes, Madam?

EVITA: Madam must go and get ready. Just look at my face? And my hair. What will the Tony Blairs think? We mustn't leave for Downing Street later than ten. Cookie?

COOKIE: Yes, Madam?

EVITA: Take these nice people out for their interval. I'm sure they're peckish after all this talk of food. Skatties? Try some of my koeksisters. The melkert is superb too, even if I say it myself. I gave my recipe to the kitchen here and I hope they get it right. The koeksister is a symbol of true reconciliation. You take three strands of dough and plait them together to form one single whole – one black strand, one white strand and one brown strand. Yet each is separate and independent. Then unite them all with the same sweet syrup, which can also cover a multitude of sins when in the wrong hands. It makes you fat! Wag, let me alert that driver on his mobile.

(She takes out her phone)

Hello driver? This is Mrs Bezuidenhout. The Afrikaans lady you drove here? Hey? Sorry, what is your name? Gazza? (Must be Nigerian ...)

Hey? That's a very rude thing to say to a white lady. Have you been drinking? What do you mean, this is Kilburn? No, I am not a white racist, white supremacist, or white hypocrite. (I think he's drunk. Don't worry, I can handle them. Home sweet home.)

Hello? Hello! Maybe his battery is flat. It can't be easy for him, being in England; being a foreigner – a non-European. And with a name like Gazza? Siestog, he also probably misses Africa. Cookie, I'll quickly pop out and talk sense into him. As you know Cookie, I've always been very good at talking to blacks.

(She takes a pistol out of her bag and exits)

(Cookie addresses the audience)

Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, before you go out for interval. My South African name was Cookie, yes, and my Aunt Sofie did work for Mrs Bezuidenhout. I was six years old. I earned a sixpence every Saturday peeling potatoes. My dear Aunt Sofie couldn't read or write, but knew how to feed a family. And yet, Mrs Bezuidenhout was the one who insisted that I go to school and learn how to read and write.

Anyway, my English name is Florence Brown. A nice easy name because here, believe me, no one can pronounce my real name: Xosile Mxwane. I gather that Mrs Bezuidenhout has decided that I am a domestic worker somewhere here in London. Actually no, I live in Oxford. I've been there for some years, at the university, as associate professor in the department of African studies.

Shhhh ... please, I can't tell her that. It's bad enough us blacks having the vote as a majority back home. If I have to tell her the truth, she'll think I was just being cheeky and too white. I don't want to upset her. Or ruin her new sense of humanity. No really, if I told her the truth, she'd probably have a heart attack and die. Or worse, accept it without question. Because you lead a horse to water, but what do you do when it floats on its back? So when in doubt say 'yes, Madam' or 'no, Madam'. Okay? Interval will now be served.

(She steps towards the stairs and holds out her hand to a man in the front row)

Master?

(Cookie leads the way out)

INTERVAL

(Evita brings in a potjie; Cookie brings a carrier bag)

EVITA: A traditional Afrikaans three-legged cooking pot. Ideal for potjiekos and stews and my bobotie. Just think, Cookie, your ancestors used to cook their ancestors in a pot like this. Even British missionaries, but I'm sure they tasted very bitter...

(She enjoys her joke)

Cookie? Quickly, go and get changed.

(Cookie goes off to dress)

Indira Gandhi had eaten my bobotie for lunch, when afterwards on her way to the kitchen for a second helping, she was assassinated by one of her security guards. Really, there was enough to share ... Before I give you all a chance to ask your questions, let me go through the bobotie recipe in detail so that there can be no mistakes.

(She opens her recipe book)

Making it here in London has its drawbacks. Things we would never confront back in South Africa. Your eggs have semolina ... salmonella poisoning? And the meat? BSE? Shame, mad cow disease? I thought BSE was a new car ... Then milk is always dicey in a foreign country. Is it true that much of the local greenery harbours e coli?

(Cookie enters wearing a Thabo Mbeki T-shirt)

Perfect outfit, Cookie. Let's take the first question from your T-shirt: 'Who is Thabo Mbeki?'

(She answers. The rest of the act depends on audience reactions and topicalities)

Where are the South Africans?

(She identifies them and leads a Q & A)

* Are you coming back to South Africa?

* Will you vote in the 1999 election from here?

* Will they let you?

Different than on 27 April 1994 when anyone could go into South Africa House and vote – and they did.

(She focuses on the upcoming 1999 election)

- * Power versus freedom?
- * Winnie Mandela as president?
- * Is there a strong opposition? Or are they just whites?
- * Has Blair learnt anything from Mandela?
- * Is there a job for Madiba in the EU?
- * Should he have stayed for a second term?
- * Should the capital be moved to Pretoria?
- * Who knows Graca Machel?
- * Maybe a local Truth and Reconciliation Commission could help here? Especially after what you people did to us during the Boer War ...
- * Mandela is the only politician who can lead a United Europe, because he first went to jail and then into politics – and not the other way round.

(When the Q & A session with the audience has come to an end – 30 minutes – Evita phones number ten to tell Cherie Blair ‘we’re coming’. She gets one of the children on the line)

Is your mummy there? Why are you up so late? Oh? Your daddy said you can design the Dome? What is the Dome? Never mind, he can explain ... just tell mummy, we’re coming with some nice food for the party. No, no, not Oxfam. Evita. Like the musical? Not yet ...

(Evita takes the ‘Europeans only’ sign)

... a special present from our rainbow nation, from our united South Africa – for Tony Blair. He can put it up on the door of Number 10 – Europeans Only!

(Then to the audience)

What a wonderful evening of reconciliation. Here in Kill-Burn. I shared my time with Cookie and also met some South Africans here who obviously have not paid their South African taxes for some time. I have also seen Brits enthused by our example of democracy.

South Africa’s democracy is a success, because no one is happy. Too many people are happy here in the UK, meaning that others are too easily exploited. At least we in South Africa are equally miserable.

Cookie, I want you to have whatever’s left over from the vegetables.

Take them with my best wishes. They are as real as my delight, standing here dressed like this in front of all these witnesses and calling you 'my sister'!

(Evita bows to the audience and exits. Cookie just stands)

(Evita on again, then off)

(Cookie stops the applause)

COOKIE: Please don't encourage her. She'll expect me to scrub the floors next. For my sake, go!

EVITA: *(Off)*: Cookie??

COOKIE: Coming, Madam.

(She exits with a wink)

(MUSIC: Virginia Lee)

THE END



Evita Bezuidenhout on the steps of Parliament, 10 February 1999

A PERFUMED ASSAULT ON PARLIAMENT



Evita with Speaker Frene Ginwala

In the last year of the 20th century, a man in a dress addressed the South Africa Parliament. Or was it rather, the most famous white woman in South Africa was invited by the speaker of Parliament, Frene Ginwala, to address members of the house during lunchbreak.

The speaker had heard about Evita's Election Trek, starting in Cape Town on 22 February, and she felt that an address by the lady herself on 10 February would be a good way to focus on the upcoming general election. There was still time to encourage citizens who were not yet registered to vote to do so – the purpose of the proposed 60-town trek.

So on 10 February, I parked my car in the parliamentary precinct, opened the boot, took out a small suitcase and wheeled it through the security entrance of Parliament. Men in uniform were expecting her.

Without any fuss, Tannie went through the X-ray, setting off all the red lights, perhaps the start of another revolution. The deputy speaker welcomed us in his office. An ensuite bathroom was there for Mrs Bezuidenhout to prepare her ethnic look, which was now essential.

The Old Assembly was where the National Party had sat; it was where all the apartheid laws were passed; it was where Dr Hendrik Verwoerd was stabbed to death by Dimitri Tsafendas in 1966. It was where I could dance on the graves of the vanquished past, while looking forward to the hopeful future. Her outfit fitted perfectly. The wig was partly covered by a matching doek, swirled around in a perfect copy of the Winnie Mandela look. I'd practised. My two cacti had already been placed in front of the speaker's throne in the hallowed hall.

Evita entered a sparsely filled house. Applause was tentative. My heart sank. But I should've known – African Time had to catch up. Minutes later the room filled up, as MPs scampered to seats, clutching their sandwiches and coffee mugs. The media were back in the press gallery of old. I recognised some friends, a few foes.

Evita's address wove together my best lines from *Tannie Evita praat*



Evita Bezuidenhout in the Old National Assembly hall



Zapiro cartoon, *Sowetan*, 12 February 1999

Kaktus, because she used the cactus as a symbol of what the Dutch settlers brought to South Africa in 1652 – the *Kaktus* of Separate Development. At the end of the speech, she introduced the new erect cactus of democracy brought to life by the democratic election of 1994. Some things she said skated on thin uys:



Evita Bezuidenhout addresses Parliament

Remember, I was here
while you lot were either
in jail or in exile.

We Afrikaners
apologise for
apartheid ...



... we apologise
on behalf of all
whites ...



... as well as the Coloureds
and Indians who
pretended to be Italians



Apartheid was a silly mistake from Holland that failed in South Africa. We are very sorry it didn't work ...

... we promise we won't do it again.



You people must now force the square peg of the past into the round hole of the future.

By the end of the 50-minute monologue, the Assembly was packed. The laughter was uncontrolled and on the mark. Political correctness took a backseat. When Evita ended with Amandla/Vrystaat! everyone stood and applauded. The speaker embraced her guest and they thanked each other. Where else in the world could this have happened? With a woman who didn't exist? But that didn't mean she was not real. Members of the media spread the news to the nation:

The Cape Argus, Thursday, 11 February 1999
- Sapa report

With a wit as prickly as the phallic cactus she used as a prop, the former ambassador to Bapetikosweti and now 'designer democrat', Evita Bezuidenhout, gave MPs an unforgettable lesson yesterday in history and politics. Giving a preview of the pre-election voter-education show she will be taking to 60 towns throughout South Africa later this month, she rampaged through racial sensitivities with all the subtlety of a warthog.

'We must look after South Africa, not only for our children and our grandchildren, but also the maids children,' she told a delighted audience of parliamentarians from all parties in the Old Assembly Chamber. 'You politicians have the task of putting the square peg of the past into the round hole of the future.' Useful for this job would be hypocrisy, which was 'the Vaseline of political intercourse.' The core of her presentation was a revisionist, expurgated and sanitised version of South African history. There was a detour to the battle of Blood River, where the Voortrekkers had faced 'a quarter of a million Buthelezi's without cell phones.'

The roadshow was being paid for through fundraising

shows he had done in Europe last year. There will be free admission to the shows held under the banner of 'Evita's People's Party (EPP)'.

Cape Times, Thursday, 11 February 1999

- report by Wilhelm Snyman

'In 1948 we Afrikaners knew the value of the vote and we voted. While the English were feeling secure and playing cricket and eating sandwiches, we voted. We knew the value of the vote and that's why we didn't want to give it to you people.' So said Evita Bezuidenhout yesterday, pointing at MPs and regaling them with her version of South African history. Yes, Evita Bezuidenhout addressed Parliament in what was once known as the National Assembly, the former whites-only wing of Parliament which saw the passage of the Group Areas Act, the Population Registration Act and the various states of emergency.

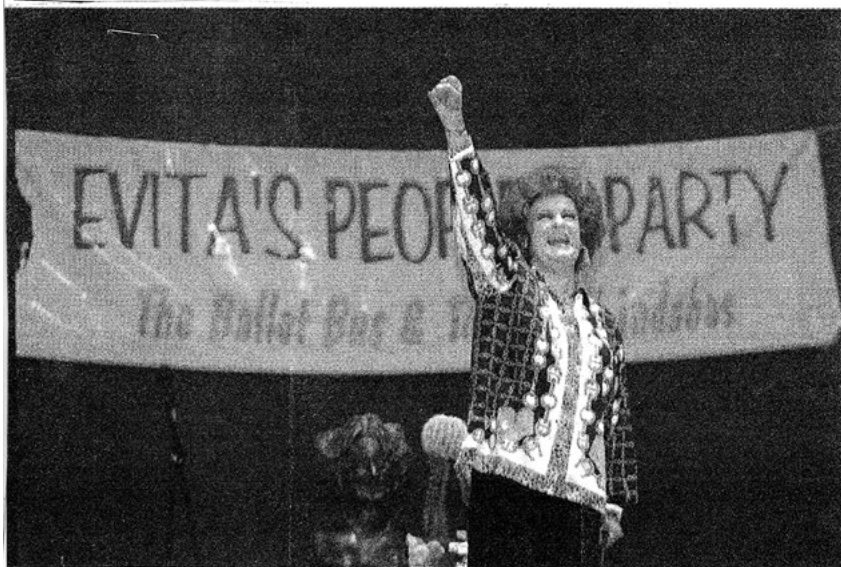
Pointing to PW Botha's old seat, Evita said: 'Don't worry - he won't be sitting there again.' (---) She even apologised for apartheid '... on behalf of all Afrikaners, the English - and Indians and Coloureds who pretended to be Italian. But we must stop apologising; it's become so fashionable to apologise. We spend so much time on our knees apologising, the skollies run off with our handbags!'

The irony of the situation didn't escape anyone in the House, local or foreign. Where else would a performer in drag nogal, be allowed to address a national parliament on history? As Evita put it: 'It's not the future that's unpredictable - it's the past.'

She then proceeded to instruct the House on how politics change history. 'Jan van Riebeeck was told

by the Dutch East India Company to "neem een kluit en bou een stasje"; he thought they said: "neem een meid en bou een nasje!" Her appearance ended with phone call to Nelson Mandela, reminding him to take his eyedrops. 'Not too much, Madiba, otherwise your eyes will turn blue. And imagine what that will do to the rand!'

P. Dirk Uys
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 Date - 2 MAR 1999
SOWETON



Pietor Dirk Uys, alias Evita Bezuidenhout, promotes *Evita's People Party* during her nationwide pre-election tour at Mamelodi Community Centre in Pretoria yesterday. The show is a humorous way of getting people in the country to register to vote in the forthcoming elections.

DIR-DET CCB/117

EVITA'S BALLOT BUS & VENUE PROGRAMME

Date	Town	Time	Venue
Mon 22 Feb	Bellville	12h30	Civic Centre
	Paarl	19h00	Town Hall
Tue 23 Feb	Laingsburg	12h30	Town Hall
	Beaufort West	19h00	Rusdene Library
Wed 24 Feb	De Aar	12h30	Town Hall (JJ Ellis Saal)
	Kimberley	19h00	Town hall
Thu 25 Feb	Potchefstroom	19h00	Town hall
Fri 26 Feb	Actonville, Benoni	19h00	Community Centre
Mon 01 Mar	Johannesburg	12h30	Wits Great Hall
	Roodepoort	19h00	City Theatre
Tue 02 Mar	Pretoria	12h30	UNISA - Sunnyside Campus Hall
	Pretoria	19h00	State Opera
Wed 03 Mar	Pretoria	19h00	Mamelodi
Thu 04 Mar	Nylstroom	12h30	Town Hall
	Pietersburg	19h00	Jack Botes Hall
Fri 05 Mar	Komatipoort	19h00	Town Hall
Sat 06 Mar	Nelspruit	12h30	Private (Chamber of Commerce)
	Nelspruit	19h00	Bergvlam High School
Mon 08 Mar	Johannesburg	19h00	City Hall
Tue 09 Mar	Newcastle	12h30	Town Hall
	Pietermaritzburg	19h00	City Hall
Wed 10 Mar	Richmond	12h30	Memorial Hall
	Uvongo	19h00	Town Hall
Thu 11 Mar	Durban	12h30	Univ. of Durban-Westville
	Durban	19h00	Natal Univ. Jubilee Hall
Fri 12 Mar	Ladismith	12h30	Town Hall
	Welkom	19h00	Ernest Oppenheimer Theatre
Sat 13 Mar	Kroonstad	12h30	Civic Centre
	Bloemfontein	19h00	Andre Huguenet theatre
Mon 15 Mar	Queenstown	19h00	Town Hall
Tue 16 Mar	Stutterheim	12h30	Town Hall
	East London	19h00	Orient Theatre
Wed 17 Mar	King Wm'stown	12h30	War Memorial Hall
	Fort Beaufort	19h00	Town Hall
Thu 18 Mar	Grahamstown	12h30	Rhodes Theatre
	Grahamstown	19h00	City Hall
Fri 19 Mar	Port Elizabeth	12h30	U.P.E. Auditorium
	Port Elizabeth	19h00	Feathermarket Hall
Sat 20 Mar	Knysna	12h30	Barnyard theatre
	Oudtshoorn	19h00	SANDF Auditorium
Mon 22 Mar	George	12h30	Town Hall
	Hartenbos	19h00	Hall
Tue 23 Mar	Swellendam	12h30	Town Hall
	Worcester	19h00	Town hall
Wed 24 Mar	Stellenbosch	12h30	Town Hall
	Cape Town	19h00	City Hall
Thu 25 Mar	Cape Town	12h30	C.T. Technikon
	Cape Town	19h00	Luxurama

THE BALLOT BUS INVASION



Evita, Basil Apollis and the Ballot Bus

How does one focus on the dreary fact that without registering as a voter, you lose your chance to vote. Essential information needed to be communicated; education delivered through entertainment.

I remembered newsreels, still in black and white, of American presidential candidates travelling the length and breadth of the USA in a special train. That's where it started: Evita's Amachoochoo Election Train.

Lynne Maree, whom I'd met at the Space Theatre in 1973, and who had acted in my plays and directed a few, was to be the perfect producer. And not with a train (not after she and I met Prasa bosses, drooling at the thought of their percentages and control), but a borrowed Kombi and a team of four technicians.

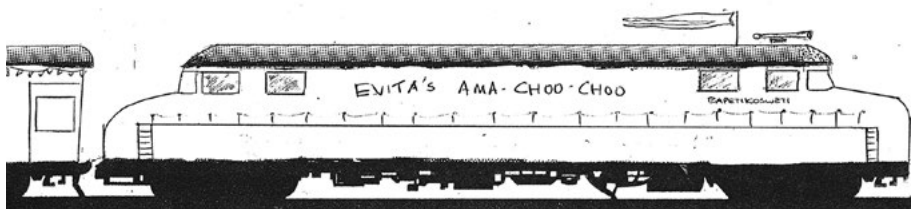
The trek in our Ballot Bus started with a farewell wave from Tannie at Evita se Perron in Darling on 22 February 1999 and ended back in Cape Town at the Luxurama Theatre in Athlone, a month later, having visited townships, hamlets, cities and towns with our indaba in church halls, city halls, school halls, community halls, occasionally in fully equipped theatres and even one huge opera house.

The main political parties were invited to send a representative to each indaba, where they would be given time to put across their party's platform and answer questions from the audience, while Mrs B watched the clock and rang a bell when their five minutes was up. Party attendance varied wildly from one venue to the next, and as Evita had a live daily report back session on SABC radio at 7:30am, such political laziness was often shared with listeners by party name and rank. Some towns had two indabas: one for the first world and one for the other world.

We started in Darling, followed by Cape Town/Bellville, Stellenbosch, Worcester, Touws River, Laingsburg, Beaufort West, De Aar, Kimberley,

DIESEL UNIT: "BAPETIKOSWETI"

The unit will be designed to carry the centre of the SA flag: the yellow diamond opening up on the front of the unit, with the green stripe in the centre topped by blue and underneath red, painted along the sides of the unit. The flag design goes through to Coach 3 and then breaks up into a vivid Rainbow Design that 'flutters' off the end of Coach 8. Illumination will be placed along the entire train to frame the coaches and the windows. Either with a neon effect or small lights, to give the entire train a magic glow at night.



Bloemhof, Potchefstroom, Vereeniging, Johannesburg/WITS/RAU, Pretoria Opera House, Pretoria/Mamelodi, Nylstroom, Warmbad, Potgietersrus, Pietersburg, Tzaneen, Hoedspruit, Komatipoort, Nelspruit, Waterval Boven, Ogies, Johannesburg City Hall, Heidelberg, Standerton, Newcastle, Pietermaritzburg, Estcourt, Richmond, Durban, Ladysmith, Bethlehem, Bloemfontein, Queenstown, Stutterheim, East London, King William's Town, Fort Beaufort, Adelaide, Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth, Oudtshoorn, George, Hartenbos, Riversdale, Worcester again and ending in Cape Town/Athlone.

A BBC crew joined us for our trek through Natal, while a French team shadowed us throughout the adventure. The media were important and gave the trek a national launch. A 40-minute, cabaret version of *Dekaffinated* was also part of the trek for big city venues, performed for invited media and local investors. The costs of the six-week trek were covered by donations. Evita's sidekick, Basil Appollis, and executive producer, Lynne Maree, as well as our team of technicians – Bruce Koch, Johnny Barbuzano and Mories Römkins – were paid



Basil Appollis, Evita and Lynne Maree on the Ballot Bus trek

'pocket money'. Free accommodation throughout the journey was thanks to the generosity of guesthouse owners and hotel managers.

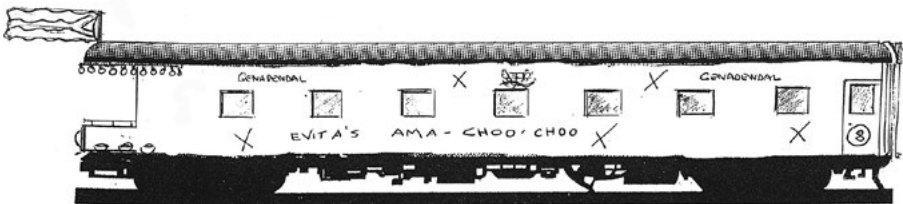
The entire budget for the Evita's People's Party Election Trek was therefore covered not by government sponsorship nor by subsidy, but by personal support from near and far. An early version of what became *Dekaffirnated* helped to raise funds in London, Paris, Copenhagen and Amsterdam during November 1998, mainly supported by South Africans abroad, citizens who would ironically not even be able to vote in the 2 June election as no state funds were allocated to set up voting stations internationally.

The Ballot Bus team were ordinary citizens with a theatrical flair for the absurd and did this project without professional fees or expense accounts. And because it was not another bloated government fiasco like *Sarafina 3*, people embraced the Ballot Bus and its Tannie with love. The South African media also came to the party. Evita's live five-minute daily reportback on SABC radio kept the nation informed and often in stitches.

COACH EIGHT: "GENADENDAL"
The Grand Platform

The last coach. It ends on an open platform from where there can be personal appearances as the train travels as well as media occasions.

This coach is the security and technical component of the train. There is accommodation for security and technical staff. Also storage for printed matter to be distributed on the trip.
Toilet/Shower.

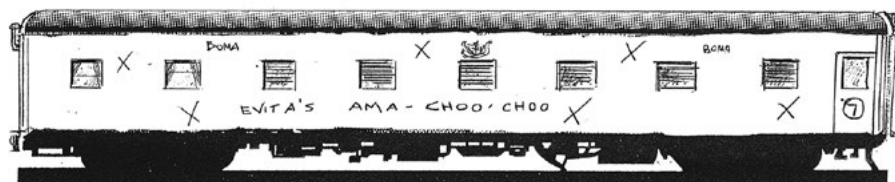




Evita in action

COACH SEVEN: "BOMA"
The Kitchen Coach

The catering coach. Kitchen facilities and storage. Fridges.
Accommodation for staff. Toilet/shower.



Our Lady of Politics goes on an Election Trek

THE SHOW

Evita's Election Indaba and Dekaffinated

THE VENUE

Soundstage in Midrand

THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

FROM: *The Star* 17 February by Janine Walker

Somehow you can't imagine Dame Edna Everage addressing the British Parliament, but then this bloody magnificent, bloody strange country of ours can hardly be compared to stuffy England. Where else in the world would a woman who doesn't exist be fêted by everyone from Madiba and Frene Ginwala, to Piet Koornhof and the King of Spain? And as anyone would tell you, Evita Bezuidenhout, self-appointed godmother of the nation and a recent convert to democracy, has a better dress sense than that obvious sheila. In fact she appeared at the launch of her Election Indaba in a dress by Errol Arendz that was meant for Winnie

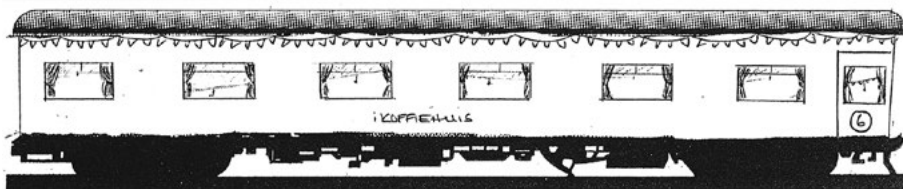
Mandela, but which was taken back because that lady hadn't paid for it.

From February 22 to March 25, Evita's taking her roadshow to 60 towns around South Africa. She'll be performing free and focusing on the basics and importance of voting. Voting she firmly believes, is supporting the future, although she quips that she's undertaking this gruelling journey, because she wants to see how many South Africans didn't get into Australia. The performance is mainly in English, although she has learned one sentence in all 11 official languages: 'I'm on your side.'

The audience is then treated to Evita's potted history of South Africa and how it has been rewritten recently. After all, Jan van Riebeeck (father of the white nation) arrived with the cactus of separate development which thrived until 1994. He was actually meant to go to Brazil! And the Battle of Blood River never happened; it was a fun braai. (Those three days waiting for the attack by Zulu impis was the beginning of so-called African Time.) The lady is convinced of one absolute. The future is certain; it's only the past that is unpredictable.

COACH SIX: "KOFFIEHUIS"
The Dining Saloon

The restaurant car where light meals and snacks can be served. Also as it is structured with tables and seating, conversation will be possible.
Toilets.



There are some wonderful lines: 'Boerewors is nothing but haggis with a sense of humour' and 'Apartheid was so successful, that we've sold it to Bosnia as ethnic cleansing.' Evita's true message is clear: you have to put your vote in the ballot box to make a democracy. The 33 parties contesting the upcoming election can thank their lucky stars that Evita's not standing for the top job. Our national treasure, now a mix of the pulling power of Princess Diana, the selflessness of Mother Theresa and the self-promotion of Felicia Mabuza-Suttle, would give them a run for their money.

When Pieter-Dirk Uys then takes to the stage in *Dekaffirnated*, you realise that the more things change, the more they stay the same. The characters are as familiar as the Table Mountain landscape, yet Uys gives them a new twist. He's as acute as ever at exposing the follies of the high and mighty. Old satirists never die; they just sharpen their tongues as the endemic ills of government live on. It is to Uys's credit that he has grown as a performer along with the Rainbow Nation. He makes you laugh until you cry; he makes you squirm as unpalatable truths hit home and he blinds you with his sheer intelligence. Characters we love and loathe are given a new slant. The beer-punching yob is back, still flaunting his bigotry, even though he finds himself, as we head for the new millennium, employed by a black family as a gardener.

Kugel Nowell Fine has been waiting in line for an ID book for three days. She's been coerced into voting for the ANC by her maid, because 'it's better having a good maid than a good government.' Even PW with his wagging index finger and lolling tongue is



Evita on the road to nowhere – and everywhere

back, although Pieter-Dirk dismisses him to the dinosaur scrapheap where he belongs. But all are not rapid-fire one-liners. Hendrik Barend Goosen's deposition to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will shock and repulse you with its raw power. *Dekaffirnated* affirms one universal truth. We may bitch about crime and falling standards, but you only have to examine Uys's material to see how far we've come, and for that alone Uys deserves a standing ovation.

THE SHOW

Evita's People's Party incorporating The Ballot Bus and Town Hall Indabas.

THE PERFORMER

Pieter-Dirk Uys

VENUE AND DATES

Pretoria: March 2 at 12h30 at Unisa's Sunnyside Campus Hall; 7pm at the Opera, State Theatre; March 3 at 7pm at Mamelodi.

EVITA JUMPS ON THE BALLOT BUS AND COMES TO TOWN:

Pretoria News, 19 February 1999 by Diane de Beer

Tannie Evita is on tour. She's got the dress from Errol Arendz which was made for Winnie, but she couldn't pay, so Evita's got it and it was not too difficult to camouflage the bullet holes. And those sleeves? They are a copy of a dress Graca Machel wore, and they're a great place to stash your handbag. Muggers will never think to look there! But that's just the couture, deftly designed in the ANC colours because Evita is a designer democrat, she says. She's electioneering, and not for any particular party. Simply for everyone to vote in this, the world's most exciting and youngest democracy.

'It's a party!' says Evita, and she wants everyone to go out and have fun. And listening to her talk about the old and the new, dropping Piet (Koornhof) and Pik (Botha) for Thabo (Mbeki) and Tony (Leon), the issue is to use the vote to make a difference, rather than just talking about it. Evita has once

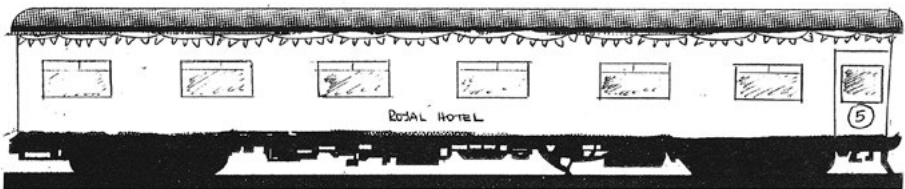
again nailed the mood of the country and taking her designer tēkkies and her bus, she will be touring from Kimberley to Komatipoort, stalking the towns, townships and dorps in her desire to get the country voting. 'Remember,' she says, 'it was apathy that got the Nationalists the country in '48.'

She's determined to blow her own hot air into the election vacuum and at least you will be entertained as she lets rip at all the holy cows, doesn't allow a PC word to escape those lipstick-lined lips, recalls the good times with Pik on Milnerton beach (overlooking Robben Island) and calls up her new chum Madiba to remind him to take his eye drops (after his eye surgery). There's no tiring of the Grande Dame of white angst, as she travels from the holy portals of parliament down the road of grassroots politics to Richmond and Nylstroom to preach her message. If no one else has the chutzpah, be assured that Evita will get them voting.

On Monday night at the Sound Stage where Evita was collecting funds for the coming tour with a grand konsert, her act was followed by her alter ego, Pieter-Dirk Uys and his latest show *Dekaffirnated*,

COACH FIVE: "ROYAL HOTEL"
Party Coach 2

The second of the entertainment coaches. A stocked bar and counter. Like Coach 4 it will be decorated in the rough style of a Royal Hotel Bar.
Toilets.



which will be playing at the Market Theatre in May, and later at the Standard Bank National Festival (in Grahamstown), where he will be doing that and four other shows, but more about that later. In the meantime, catch Evita when she's in town. It won't cost you a cent, you can't help enjoying yourself and she'll tell you just why you have to vote. It's a great idea, a patriotic one - and Tannie Evita certainly gets my vote. Who can resist?



PDU backstage transforming into Evita

DIE GALA VERTONING

Evita's Ballot Bus

WAAR

Sound Stage Midrand op 2 Maart.

ROU SENUWEES MET 'N VEERTJIE GEKIELIE

DEUR Hannelie Booyens vir *BEELD*

Evita Bezuidenhout is 'n vrou met 'n missie. As 'n mens die volksmoeder en voormalige ambassadeur in Bapetikosweti kan glo, is haar jongste reeks optredes die gevolg van amestie wat die Waarheids- en-Versoeningskommissie (WVK) voorwaardelik aan haar toegestaan het. Bezuidenhout is deur bisop Tutu voor 'n keuse gestel na sy haar apartheidsondes voor die WVK bely het: of sy gee alles wat sy besit vir die armes, of sy onderneem 'n reis deur die lengte en breedte van die land om kiesers opgewonde te maak oor die komende verkiesing met 'n reeks verkiesings Indabas. Tannie Evita het laasgenoemde gekies. Met haar Ballot Bus gaan sy van 21 Februarie to 27 Maart sestig dorpe en stede besoek om haar People's Party aan die massas bekend te stel. Vandeeweek se galavertoning was een van vier ten bate van die landwye optredes wat gratis sal wees.

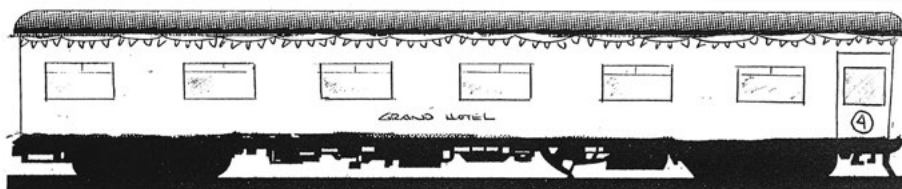
By die loodsing van die veldtog in Midrand het uitgelese gaste, wat kans gesien het om die R500 per kop vir die vertoning te betaal, behoorlik waarde vir hulle geld gekry. Die eerste helfde van die aand is gewy aan Bezuidenhout en haar verkiesingspraatjies, en later was Pieter-Dirk Uys aan die beurt met sy nuwe vertoning *Dekaffirned*. Bezuidenhout noem

haarself skaamteloos die bekendste wit vrou in Afrika. Die eintlike doel van haar landwyse toer is om te sien hoeveel blankes dit nie tot in Australië gemaak het nie, sê sy. Deur haar eweregse weergawe van Suid-Afrika se geskiedenis, na bewering geskryf deur Uys, plaas sy die komende verkiesing behoort in perspektief.

Met haar vlymskerpe tong en uitgeslape kommentaar deel sy klappe na links en regs uit. Geen groep of politieke party word ontsien nie. Jan van Riebeeck het sy opdrag verkeerd verstaan en het verdwaal op pad na Brasilië. Hy is die sondebok wat die kaktus van afsonderlike ontwikkeling na Suid-Afrika gebring het. Bloedrivier het nooit gebeur nie. Dit was niks meer as 'n gesellige volksbraai nie. Die drie dae waar die boere gewag het vir die Zoeloe-aanval was die begin van 'Africa Time'. Bezuidenhout is genial om, terwyl sy almal beskuldig, terselfdetyd almal van blaam te onthef. Sy is die gewete van 'n nasie wat sê: onthou, maar vergeef. Die grootste sukses van die vertoning is dat dit volledig slaag in die doel om mense opgewonde te kry oor die verkiesing.

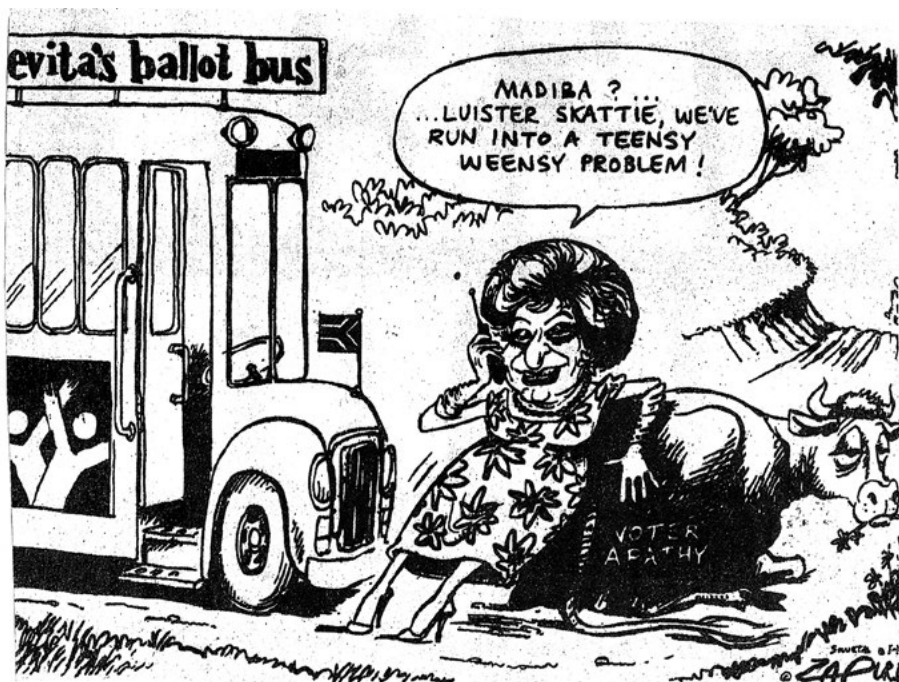
COACH FOUR: "GRAND HOTEL"
Party Coach 1

This is one of the entertainment coaches: it will have minimum seating and maximum standing area for cocktail parties and gatherings. A stocked bar and counter. Decor to match the atmosphere of an old Grand Hotel bar. Here and in Coach 5 the guests will be entertained between stops. Toilets.



Die vorige verkiesing het oor vryheid gegaan - nou is demokrasie op die spel, verduidelik Bezuidenhout. Om in 'n ry te wag om te registreer of te stem, is glad nie so erg nie, stel sy haar gehoor gerus. Toe sy tougestaan het om te registreer, het sy twee huis-hulpe en 'n tuinier gekry! Tussen die eindelose grappe en syndende kwinkslae, kom 'n mens tog onder die indruk van die erns van die vertoning. 'n Voorwaarde van demokrasie is vrede en versoening en dit is slegs moontlik as mense mekaar verstaan en vergewe. En watter beter manier as humor om dit te bewerkstellig?

In *Dekaffinated* wyk Uys van sy resep af om bekendes na te boots, alhoewel daar darem die troosprys is van PW Botha en Nelson Mandela. Al die karakters wat hy uitbeeld is eg-Suid-Afrikaans en ook verteenwoordigend van die hele politieke spektrum. Dit is ongelooflik om Uys in aksie te sien terwyl hy sy uiteenlopende gehoor oorrompel. Om die woord 'kaffer' soveel keer te gebruik en swart en wit in die gehoor te laat dubbelvou van die lag, is opsigself 'n wonderwerk. Uys kry dit reg om die rou senuwees van die kollektiewe Suid-Afrikaanse psige eers met 'n veertjie te kielie, en dan in 'n onverbiddelike greep te klem om te sê: kyk hoe absurd, kyk hoe seer: lag en dink! Die grootste teleurstelling van die aand is dat 'n mens nie in die verkiesing 'n kruisie agter Bezuidenhout se People's Party kan trek nie.



Zapiro, Sowetan, 1999

SOUTH AFRICAN ILLUSIONIST TRIES TO QUELL
DISILLUSION: EVITA SEEKS TO ENERGIZE
AN APATHETIC ELECTORATE

(From the *Chicago Tribune*, Sunday, 18 April 1999,
by Paul Salopek *Tribune* Foreign Correspondent)

Queenstown, South Africa: Evita Bezuidenhout a.k.a. The Most Famous White Woman in South Africa, was having a tough day on the democracy trail. Firstly, there were the usual paranoid calls from whites who wanted to know if her voter education shows were really free. ('That's code for "Are those unwashed blacks invited too?"') Then the Independent Electoral Commission bolloxed up the show times, so people were arriving at the local town hall an hour late - if

at all. ('We're still a young democracy; they're still learning to use the phones.') And, finally, the local politicians were such horrible speakers that one actually choked up reading his speech. ('Keep practicing, skattie, you'll get it sometime.') Still - and as always - none of this mattered.

Because after an hour of warming up the crowd with off-colour apartheid jokes, Bezuidenhout - a South African icon whose closest American counterpart would be, say, First Lady Hillary Roddam Clinton crossed with Carmen Miranda - had the citizens eating out of her manicured hand. They guffawed at her sly political gibes. They promised with a whoop to vote in South Africa's national elections this June. And, overcome with civic giddiness, the mayor even suggested Bezuidenhout run for office herself. 'Imagine that; a black mayor encouraging an old Afrikaner matron to get into politics,' Bezuidenhout cooed after the show. 'Who says we're not making progress in this country?'

And with that, South Africa's secret weapon against voter cynicism, apathy and general crankiness, dashed backstage. She doffed her towering Afro-chic headdress. She kicked off her gold-sequined pumps. She unsnapped her 16-year-old girdle - and became a paunchy, balding white guy named Pieter-Dirk Uys. 'The first time around we didn't just vote; we danced in the streets,' said Uys, South Africa's leading political satirist. 'Now we'll be lucky if we can pry people away from their soap operas. If laughing gets them to the polls, then please, let's start being funny.' Loading his birdseed-stuffed falsies and voter education pamphlets back into his dusty car, Uys waved to his assistants following in a van, and set off across the African

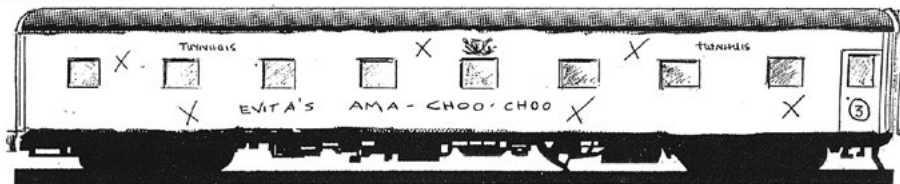
veldt to the next stop on Evita's Great Election Trek. He hoped for a decent dressing room this time. Shaving with cold water was hard on the legs.

Welcome to voter education South African style, where five years after dumping white-supremacist rule in a peaceful transition celebrated around the world, the electorate could sorely use a little comic relief. Spiralling crime and unemployment have long since sapped the euphoria that marked South Africa's first all-race elections in 1994. And today, the post-liberation hangover is only exacerbated by the loss of this country's only effective peacemaker between the races, President Nelson Mandela, who is retiring after serving one term.

The divisive tone of the new elections was set last month when, with Mandela's moral authority already ebbing, the major parties fired salvos of cheap shots at each other at their inaugural rallies. Thabo Mbeki, Mandela's technocratic successor in the African National Congress, needled the largest opposition group, the white-led New National Party, for adding 'new' to its name to distance itself from its

COACH THREE: "TUYNHUIS"
The Conference Coach

This area will have a small stage and lighting, to be used for press conferences or chat show-recordings for television. Seating for some, standing room for others. In coaches 3,4 and 5 there will be close-circuit television facilities.



apartheid-era roots. 'No one knows what is "new" about them, as they remain the ones who jailed Mandela and killed Soweto school children on June 16, 1976,' Mbeki told a cheering crowd at a Soweto soccer stadium. He was referring to Mandela's 27-year imprisonment under the white-led regime and to a brutal government backlash against black students protesting apartheid policies.

Meanwhile, the same day, the presidential candidate of the white-dominated Democratic Party skewered the ANC for a string of embarrassing corruption scandals that have dogged the ruling party in recent years. 'It's the ANC ... which wipes its Gucci shoes on the doormat of the people as it wades through the corridors of power,' Tony Leon declared at the launch of the DP campaign in Durban. 'Their policies are just making a small group of their cronies very rich, while the great majority of our people get poorer.'

'The people aren't apathetic. It's the political parties that are,' said Uys, 53, a veteran anti-apartheid activist who, increasingly worried about widespread voter funk, ponied up his own money to help launch Evita's Great Election Trek in February. 'None of the party candidates offers any concrete solutions to things like crime and jobs,' he said. 'They blather in generalities. The ANC says 'We beat apartheid - vote for us!' And the opposition, which is truly pathetic, says, 'Tired of the ANC? Vote for us!' Who wouldn't get disillusioned with that?' The only bigger source of voter alienation, experts say, is the mooted nature of the poll: the winner is already known.

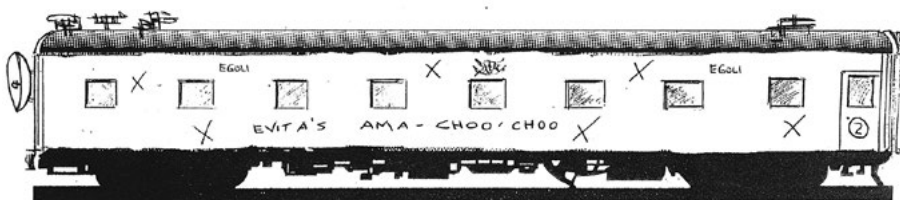
Maybe so. But with victory assured, even ANC supporters may stay away from the polls. Tellingly,

South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission was obliged to extend its registration deadlines three times to enfranchise some 18 million voters - a million fewer than in 1994. Which is where Evita - or Uys, rather - comes in. A genial, mild-mannered man who only lets his anger slip in wisecracks, Uys has a long history of tweaking the powerful. The son of an Afrikaner father and a German Jewish mother, he used comedy in South Africa's protest theatre during the darkest years of apartheid, and his caustic plays soon earned the attention of the Censor Board. When the police began tapping his phones, he tried out new jokes on the security men. When white audiences reacted belligerently to his anti-apartheid humour, he learned to keep his car engine running in theatre parking lots.

'Political satire was hazardous to your health in the bad old days,' he said. 'That's probably why there still isn't much of a tradition of it here.' Uys' masterstroke however was inventing Evita Bezuidenhout in 1978. Frustrated with the chronic banning, he donned a frowsy dress, declared himself the wife of a conservative white government minister, and started

COACH TWO: "EGOLI"
The Media Coach

This coach will be equiped to house the media. Facilities for fax and phone, for the transmission of material and a conference suite for interviews. There should also be two single coupes for emergency accomodation. Toilet/shower.



babbling in an effeminate Afrikaans accent about the absurdities of apartheid. That a young Afrikaner - one directly descended from the repressed, Calvinist, Dutch settlers who planted the first seeds to apartheid, no less - should take up cross-dressing baffled even the censors. 'They never really knew what to make of it,' said Uys, who is gay. 'Evita never got banned.'

Today, Uys is a passionate supporter of South Africa's new multiracial democracy. But that hasn't kept him from including heroes from the liberation struggle in his revues, which have travelled to Europe and the United States. He impersonates Winnie Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and even manages an uncanny imitation of Nelson Mandela, poking fun at the president's odd penchant for greeting every minor celebrity on a stopover flight through South Africa. ('He'll attend the opening of an envelope.')

'Her effect on people is completely amazing,' said Basil Appollis, an actor travelling with Evita's Great Election Trek, which is coordinated through South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission. 'Something happens when the make-up goes on. Local politicians get deferential and fawning. I think they honestly believe she's real. It's bizarre.'

Rolling like royalty into dusty rural towns and squalid urban townships, Evita cleverly tailors her voter education spiel to the circumstances. In audiences with large numbers of children she becomes the gentle godmother of the country, albeit one with the politics of Hitler's mistress, Eva Braun. In relatively cosmopolitan settings, she slips into catty Joan Rivers mode. 'People think the ANC is supporting our tour - not true. They're spending all the money on themselves,' she cracked when an ANC

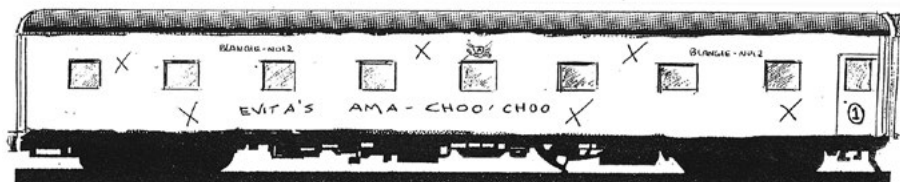
premier declined to join opposition party members on stage in the town of Bloemfontein.

And when a politician from the white-dominated New Nationalist Party urged voters at one rally to 'forget apartheid and focus on the future,' Evita rolled her eyes and snapped: 'Yes, skattie, and let's all go to the ocean and forget there's any water there. Maybe we'll even see the fish dancing the tango on the sea floor.' In fact, the urge for historical revisionism in the new, politically-correct South Africa is one of Uys' favourite targets. He has Evita retell the story of the battle of Blood River - an Afrikaner nation-building myth on par with Custer's last stand - as a hilarious picnic between Afrikaner settlers and peaceful Zulu tribesmen.

'South Africa's future is certain,' Uys likes to quip, 'It's the past that's unpredictable.' Just how certain that political future remains, of course, will be at least partly determined by voter turnout in June. 'I don't see any future with the parties running now,' said Nelson Dyonase, a 49-year-old unemployed truck driver in a black township in Queenstown, one of Uys' whistle stops. Asked if he

COACH ONE: "BLANCHE-NOIR"
The Sleeper Coach

This coach will be equiped as a residential sleeper. There should be sleeping accomodation for ten people. As well as a dressingroom for 'Evita Bezuidenhout'. Shower/toilets.



was going to vote, Dyonase just shrugged. He nudged his chin at the surrounding mud streets and tin shanties, 'Will it change this?' he said. 'A lifetime of white rule hasn't changed this. Five years of black rule hasn't changed this.'

Still, had Dyonase known or bothered, he could have caught a glimmer of that hoped-for change the evening before in Queenstown's dim and shabby town hall. A fleshy-faced white man clad in a wig had minced around the stage, firing off inane jokes about a painful past, and urging people to secure their young democracy with a vote. Black and white South Africans - some sitting under the same roof for the first time - had laughed together in the town hall seats. 'Afrikaner humour is different from English humour. Just as Zulu humour is different from Xhosa humour,' said audience member Zechy Coyte-King, ticking off a few of South Africa's many mutually distrustful ethnic groups. 'Evita skates over them all,' he said. 'Her humour has no colour. For this place, that's very, very rare.'



Miss Candida Butler with Mr and Mrs James Butler (above), Misses Daphne and Shelley Borkum (below)



22

EVITA'S ELECTION TRAIN

South African satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys gave a performance as acid-tongued Evita Be-zuidenhout at a charity gala at South Africa House. Evita's "ElectionTrain" will tour South Africa later this year to educate young people in preparation for the election in 2004.



Janet Suzman and Pieter-Dirk Uys (right), Mrs Mary Benson, Mr Ross Devlinish and Mr Nick Kent (below)



PHOTOS: DOUGLAS O'NEILL, EDWARD LLOYD

—DIARY OF THE WEEK—

Hello magazine after the London fundraiser

JANET SUZMAN GOES ON AN ELECTION TREK: from her diary

There's an election coming up in South Africa, the second of its entire history that can boast of being truly democratic. The first was euphoric with hope and optimism; this one rather less so. The ANC's governing role will not be in question, but will it gain the two-thirds majority it would dearly like in order to make adjustments to the constitution? And will there be anything like an effective opposition voted in? And who's got an answer to the violence that worries people so? Apathy is the enemy. Bar-coded IDs need to be produced at the polling station, pre-registration, long distances, queueing for hours, long ballot papers for 42 parties to choose from and so on. Forgone conclusionism is rampant. The other night I watched a programme about brilliant (British) comedians who 'do' women – Stanley Baxter, The Pythons, Steve Coogan, 'Lily Savage' et al – the whole grotesque gallimaufry of funny men doing even funnier sorts of females: filthy-minded, sublimely ugly, suburban, predatory, camp – it's an English thing, heaven knows why. I couldn't help thinking they'd left the best one out. But he's half-Jewish Afrikaner, so why shouldn't they have? Pieter-Dirk Uys (PDU) is not so much a comedian as a satirist, a combination of Rory Bremner and 'Dame Edna Everage', though he wouldn't thank me for that. More political, less smutty than either, and more daring than both at his best. Guilt and prejudice are his targets.

Evita's 'Vote' postcard



EVITA BEZUIDENHOUT'S 10 REASONS TO VOTE

1. If you don't vote, then don't feel you have the right to moan about the way the country is going.
2. Use the key of the vote to open the door to the future.
3. Vote and contribute to the direction in which the country will move.
4. Voting is not a right; it is an imperative.
5. By voting, we remind politicians that we're watching every move they make.
6. If you don't bother to vote, go to Australia! There it's compulsory!
7. If we don't vote for a democratic future, don't be surprised if we do become Zimbabwe, the Sequel.
8. Vote to prove that democracy is not too good to share with anyone.
9. You might meet your next gardener in the queue!
10. Vote and pay tribute to the thousands who died so that we can vote.

History has proven the enormous power of each individual vote.

- **Oliver Cromwell** won control of England in 1645 by one vote.
- **King Charles 1** was beheaded on the basis of judges voting 68 to 67.
- **France** changed from a monarchy to a republic in 1875 based on one vote.
- Ohio's **Rutherford B Hayes** was elected president of the United States in 1876 by one electoral vote.
- **One vote** during the American Revolution defeated a bill that would have abolished English as America's official language.
- And don't forget how **George W Bush** won America's 2000 presidential election by the skin of his teeth with 537 votes more than Al Gore, and that was after a legal battle over recounts.

Evita se Perron, Darling Station, Darling 7345 (27) 022 492-2831 / 2851
Website: www.evita.co.za email: evita@evita.co.za

Photo: Pat Bromfow-Downing

Out and about in the scrappy grassroots, his wardrobe just a cardboard box in the boot of his car (he doesn't possess a suit, scripts his own shows; no teams of hacks to write the punchlines), PDU travels in his torn tank vest and shorn pate, bringing entertainment to the troops on the front line of a brand new democracy – the voters. He decided that his country needed some voter education, and with no outside funding to tie his hands, he's been off on a mammoth tour of the huge country, from the Maputo borders in the far north to Cape Town in the south, giving free entertainment to the people. Education through laughter is his brief.

His modest caravanserai arrives at a local town hall, and half an hour later he is transformed into Evita Bezuidenhout, 'the most famous white woman in South Africa', repentant Afrikaner and the former ambassador to the daft homeland of Bapetikosweti (a pure invention). Bespangled, bejewelled, bewigged with big hair, scarlet talons, teetering heels, mouth shining with crimson lipstick, curling with hauteur and bonhomie, Evita has the local councillors almost curtsying. Once when the toasting hand of a Mayor Vilikazi of Ladysmith (a gentle Zulu) accidentally brushed one of Evita's thrusting breasts (football socks filled with birdseed!) he practically fainted.

I spent a week on the road recently with this friend of mine, from Johannesburg, through Natal and the Free State we travelled, doing two shows a day.

A gruelling schedule, and so hot that a packet of wine gums melted into a seamless blob of purplish goo on the dashboard. PDU's car, a minibus for the techs and an escort of curious press from France and BBC *Newsnight*, looking for scandals. A shadowing TV team from the SABC, seeking out vox pops, were a more informed presence. The central delight of Evita's modus operandi is to be equally rude to absolutely everybody. The constraint of political correctness is anathema to the informing genius of PDU, and Evita herself wouldn't dream of compromising her confiding frankness. She's the best friend of everyone who's anyone. Her mobile is constantly to hand to 'phone through' to Nelson and remind him to take his eye drops. She is clearly

indispensable to the well-being of the nation. Even the volatile Winnie Mandela finds Evita's caustic barbs forgivable:



Tony Grogan, *Cape Times*, 1998

‘Desmond Tutu said to me: “Evita, you are now in a new South Africa, but if you want amnesty, you must confess.” I said: “Ag no, Desmond, I’m just a simple Afrikaans woman. All my life I was the wife of Nationalist MP. I didn’t realise I have to apply for amnesty. I must be honest with you. If I’d known apartheid was such a terrible thing, I’d have had it stopped years ago. But (*Now in Afrikaans now, all innocence*) I didn’t know. I’m sorry, but I didn’t know. Look, Winnie Mandela apologised for Stompie in under three minutes and never looked back. So let me hereby apologise for apartheid, on behalf of all white South Africans, and refugees from Rhodesia and the UK. Let me apologise for apartheid on behalf of Coloureds and Indians who pretended to be Italian. We are very very sorry that it didn’t work. We promise we will never do it again.’

Or this: 'What other country in the world has been given a second chance like we have? Not even the Jews in the Middle East! I said to Yasser Arafat, it's time the Jews and the Arabs started living together like Christians!' Or this, in politically sensitive Natal: 'Your vote is secret. Nobody needs to know who you vote for. People will come and intimidate you and say: vote for us or we'll burn your house down. All you have to do is say: Of course I'll vote for you. LIE! God will forgive you. Lock your door, feed your Rottweiler, clean your gun and go and vote! Let's hope you don't get hijacked, but if you do, bring your hijackers along to vote with you!'

I've never seen anyone with such a genuine love for the curious, the suspicious, prejudiced, open-minded, ordinary people who make up South Africa. And most of all, who could make both black and white throw back their heads and roar with laughter at one and the same time. The man is a phenomenon.

President

Republic of South Africa

March 1999

Dear Pieter

Thank you for your kind invitation to join you for part of your voter education journey.

Unfortunately, I am unable to accept the invitation due to the heavy demands currently placed on my schedule, but please convey to Mrs Bezuidenhout our sincerest appreciation for her tireless efforts to encourage supporters of all parties to register to vote so that they can make a success of the elections and strengthen our democracy.

I was happy to see that her new programme had already got underway and was proving to be the joyous success which her ventures always turn out to be - whether in service of the Bantustan policy or of our new democracy! And it was a delight to get reports of her appearance in Parliament.

We wish Mrs Bezuidenhout all success and assure her of our full support for this important campaign of voter education.

Yours sincerely



NR MANDELA

Mr. Pieter-Dirk Uys
Pieter-Dirk Uys Productions
17 Station Road
DARLING
7345

1999
DEKAFFIRMATED



AFTER ALL THAT ... A PROGRAMME NOTE AT LAST

This new show is called *Dekaffirnated*. I could've called it *For Fact's Sake* or *Black to Front*. I could've taken the easy way and not done it at all; just sat on my stoep in my home village of Darling, watch the sun set and ignore the local news. And Kosovo is far enough away from South Africa not to really worry.

There used to be a clear meaning to the word satire: 'Tragedy + Time = Satire'. But we in South Africa have never had the luxury of 20-years grace in order to absorb pain and then comment on the causes with bitter smiles and sharp comment. What happens here today must be the issue tonight. During the apartheid era, there was no question about where the targets of satire lay. The issue was simple in its horror: black against white, good against bad, them against us, or vice versa. It is never that simple. But when a small child wears a T-shirt that says 'Down with apartheid' and understands why, you know where the target lurks.

Who has seen a T-shirt about Kosovo? Or Belfast? Or the Middle East? Even our political slogans created to put the election into our 2 June election were bland. There is no fresh imagination in fighting the negative with another negative. 'Stop crime!' or 'Prevent a two-thirds majority' doesn't have the same appeal as 'Let's go make it work', or 'Freedom is waiting'. Of course freedom never waits. Freedom is in the eye of the beholder, who always sees the other person as being freer and luckier. The grass is always greener in someone else's roach. So

when you are in a theatre of entertainment, reflecting both the theatre of illness and the theatre of war, can you still protect yourself with the umbrella of satire? 'I laughed because it was satirical. Not because I'm a racist.'

The line between satire and racism is often so thin that one is not sure where one stands. A racially charged joke about blacks and whites could so easily be offensive without exposing the racism in the attitude and offence in the laughing audience. I hate racism. My mother was a Jew who escaped from the Nazis. And yet my education in South Africa as a white Christian Afrikaner took my racism for granted. Like a foetal alcoholic who never drank, in my life as a foetal racist, I have to start my every day with the admission: I am, therefore I will not be! And so I decided to tackle a target that is too huge to define, and too dangerous to easily label.

With a politically controversial title that often exposes racism in those who complain about its meaning, *Dekaffinated* takes those terrible words and shouts them out. Not just K-words and H-words and M-words but all power words that are used to make children cry and people afraid; power words that cause some to feel superior and others to feel lost. It's a need to demystify and put into perspective through ridicule. Apartheid was for many years a God-given religion in my country. Those who ran the system were respected and feared. The one thing that caught them off guard was a sudden peal of laughter at their expense. It has been from the most unexpected places that this laughter has come so freely: the Auschwitz victim who survived thanks to a sense of humour; the AIDS sufferer who can joke about his impending death; the black man who has for years said 'yes, master' while laughing at the master's idiocy.

The vivid impression left by my 60-town election trek through South Africa is how black audiences enjoyed and laughed at those very things that white liberals find offensive. 'You can't say that, blacks won't like it.' And yet when Evita Bezuidenhout bewailed the fact that the only way she sees her black grandchildren in the dark is when they smile, the rows of seats in the dark are filled with glowing white,

laughing teeth. There will always be new ways to cut the world's foot to fit man's shoe. But as long as language, the greatest weapon of confrontation and reconciliation, is firmly kept in the mouth and not given the power of a bullet, children will not resent their colour or race or religion. Sticks and stones will break their bones, but words ...?

Dekaffirnated? Call it the Comedy of Prejudice.

K: Kaffir, *kaffer*

A mode of address or reference to a black regarded by most black and white South Africans as offensive; now an actionable insult.

Cf. Dutchman and US *nigger*.

Zu. Khafula Term of contempt for a person (black or white) of uncivilised manners. A swear word if used directly to a person.

(Doke & Vilikazi Zulu Dictionary 1948)

'Kaffir' is not a term used by the natives to designate either themselves or any other tribe ... the border Kaffirs know that the white nations apply this name to them, and many regard it as a term of contempt. (W Shaw, 28.12.1847)

The Supreme Court granted an interdict restraining a white Zonnbloem flat tenant from assaulting ... his black neighbour or calling him a kaffir. (*Cape Times*, 6 April 1991)

MADAM AND EVE

by S. Francis, H. Dugmore & Rico



Francis, Dubmore & Rico: Madam and Eve, 1999

Dekaffirnated



PDU with golliwog dolls

Performed in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg * Grahamstown Festival * London Tricycle Theatre * Amsterdam, Den Haag

THE CAST

Pieter-Dirk Uys

A sangoma remembers

PW Botha rebels

Bill Clinton remarks

Hendrik Barend Goosen repents

A white South African repeats

The Countess in Hillbrow reviews

The kugel with ID revolts

Christiane Amanpour reveals

A bergie revels

THE STAGE SETTING

A grand piano in which props and costumes are kept and revealed

THE SHOW

PDU enters and sits at the piano. He prepares to play, then:

PDU: Idulla ma karxhos be shoo banga Mozart. Mauga ma e Zadora bulaman keja banga Sheakespeare. Kejha banga Jane Ausen. Keja banga iEuropa! A la xha'bang a iAfrika!

That is Ukulha, the 137th official language of the new South Africa, spoken on a hill 34 kilometres north of Pretoria by 14 people and costing the taxpayer R10 million a year. Roughly translated it means: 'There will be no fucking Mozart here tonight. There will be no fucking Shakespeare here tonight, nor any fucking Jane Austen. This is not fucking Europe. This is fucking Africa. Xha'bang a iAfrika!'

(PDU changes into the sangoma)

(Light change)

THE SANGOMA: Once upon a time, long, long ago, in a far far land of milk and honey, before bread and butter pudding ruled the world, the happy sun rose above the African veld with a smile – a big big smile. And the springbok and the buffalo grazed side by side, while the giraffe and the rhino meandered peacefully. Behind them stood the mountain with the flat top, with on the one side, the sharp peak of rock, home to the smoking devil (Banga iZuma) and the other side, the smooth stone with the head of a lion. A fair Cape at the rocky end of the dark continent, where two seas meet and mingle. Atlantic/Indian ...(hau! Clifton Beach!) ... and of course, there waited the island, the terrible island.

Once upon an African time, in this place where the sun always rose with a smile and those who dwelled in this place, those with smooth ebony skins that reflected the blackness of night, with white ivory teeth that

shone like torches in the dark, those known as we-the-people-who-shall-amandla!; they started their day with a dance to the sun, a short happy dance called the toyi. They repeated it often and so called it the toyi-toyi and have repeated it ever since. And the people of the south celebrated their culture – iOpera and iBallet and iPicasso rock paintings, and no one broke anything in the kitchen. But of course, there waited the island, the terrible island.

Once upon an African Time (actually on the sixth day of the month of the bunny rabbit that brings the chocolate eggs, also known as April), into the bay of the mountain with its flat table top came something the people of the south had never seen before! A colonialist invasion. There floated the wooden Dutch boat, with dirty yellow sails, and flying the cloth of orange, white and blue, and the boat was called *Drommedaris*, and as we know, in the language of the people, the word ‘dromedaris’ means ‘this toilet is for whites only’!

On the deck of the ship stood a man, a white man with long curly hair with a white skin and a big hat full of feathers. And the birds saw the feathers and cried *Hau Banga!* And flew away! And this white man from the faraway L-a-n-d of H-o-l looked around and decided to play G-O-D. He said to his wife: ‘Maria? Check uit. Look! Freedom! Een Vrystaat!’ And it was a new world, because the land where he came from was not free. A small land, a platteland full of canals and windmills, and short, fat people with no chins wearing wooden shoes, and lots of dikes. Terrible dykes!

But the people of the south welcomed these centrics from Euro, and prepared food and drink, and cleaned the table and washed the dirty dishes, and the smelly clothes they wore, and did all the things they were known to do with a smile; these two tribes called The Hot and The Tot. And Jan from the Land of Hol knew it would be easy to play G-O-D. And he said: ‘Brothers? Comrades? Friends? Why don’t you trust me? I am a Christian! Let me give you civilisation. Close your eyes and hold out your hands and I will give you a present!’ And the people of the south loved getting presents, not knowing it would become their third-world debt. And so they closed their eyes and held out their hands. But

when they opened their eyes, it was too late! They had become historically disadvantaged. They were now known as *Jong* and *Meid* with no freedom or rights, except a long holiday on the island, the terrible island.

But the people of the south did not have revenge in their hearts, and they used their chains to sing and dance while they worked for Baas Jan: 'Shosholozo ... Nkosi sikelele' ... Januarie Februarie March '... And the white centric from Euro knew he was now Big G-O-D, and so he planted his colonial colours of orange, white and blue in the earth and his seeds in the womb. And the giraffe became a handbag for his wife, with matching shoes, and the rhino lost his horn and became a powder. And they put it into the white man's drink and he drank it and said: Godverdomme? Viagra!

And that is how African Time made way for the Euro-numbers 1652. And the sad sun set behind the mountain with the flat top, never to rise again with a smile for 350 years, because the people of the south had become kaffirs!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(PDU in a duet of words –
A is English; B is Afrikaner)

A: You can't say that word! How can you say that word in public!

B: Excuse me?

A: The K-word! It's as bad as using the N-word.

B: Nationalist?

A: It's as unacceptable as saying Nigger, Paki, Wog, Kike, Towelhead ...

B: Kaffir?

A: You can't say it.

B: What about my freedom of speech?

A: The K-word is totally politically incorrect.

B: Oh, you mean political correctness, which means you can think what you like, but don't say it?

A: It's a legacy of apartheid. It's racist.

B: It's language.

A: It's the K-word! We're in a multiracial nonracial, nonsexist democracy.

B: You forgot nonsensical.

A: Forget the K-word.

B: How can I? They're in charge; they run the country.

A: They don't run it.

B: They run it down.

A: You and I also have the vote. We also run it.

B: Most of us run away. How can I run South Africa. I'm not a kaffir.

A: There, you've just said it again! You Afrikaners with your racist words.

B: Oh, so you English-speaking South Africans never use words like that?

A: Of course not. We don't speak Afrikaans.

B: So what do you English-speaking South Africans shout out in the traffic jam? When a black township taxi cuts in front of you, and you nearly have an accident? What do you shout? You black beast! You naughty driver?

A: No, I hoot.

B: You hoot? Kak man! You shout: hey you fucking kaffir!

A: Never! I will never use that word.

B: You used that word in the old South Africa.

A: Sometimes I had to, otherwise I would've lost my job. But I didn't mean it. Today the K-word doesn't pass my lips. Besides, it can't. My managing director is one.

B: You never shout 'fuck off, you K-word'?

A: Never. I might shout 'fuck off, comrade'.

B: Ah, you say 'comrade', but you think 'kaffir'!

A: Please don't keep using words like that. Someone might hear!

B: You've just said it. 'Word'. It's a word! Don't give it so much importance. Anyway, it's an Afrikaans word, so maybe it means something different in English. Like the Afrikaans word *poes*. In English

it means 'cat'. *Fak* in Afrikaans means 'subject'. The Afrikaans word *kant* in English doesn't mean 'lace'. And so on.

A: So okay, if it's just a word, use another Afrikaans K-word. *Kas*.

B: *Kas?* 'Cupboard'? *Hey jou fokking kas!* Better than hooting!

A: You see, no one is offended.

B: Okay, but when I go into one of those coolie cafes ...

A: Careful! There's the C-word. Rather say 'Christmas cake'.

B: Okay. 'Hey, can I speak to the person in charge? Every time I come into this shop, you "Christmas cakes" cheat me at the till. You curry-stinking "Christmas cake"!'

A: You see, it's all relative.

B: Ja. But then when I get home, the meid ...

A: No, no, no, the wrong M-word. Try 'melktert'.

B: 'Hey jou donnerse vet lui melktert!' That's great: you fucking 'cupboard', you Barack-Obama-beige 'Christmas Cake', jou donnerse 'melktert'. Thanks for helping me. Truly, you're a real 'affirmative ... artichoke'.

A: A real 'affirmative artichoke'? What does that mean? That I'm an 'affirmative liberal'? An 'affirmative democrat'?

B: That's it. You're a real democratic liberal affirmative ... asshole!

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Sometimes the English language is sadly lacking. That word is so one dimensional. 'Arsehole'. It can only be one thing. The Afrikaans word, on the other hand, must be one of the most descriptive words in all our 11 languages. 'Poephol'. You can't translate that. It's not just an asshole. You can poephol it in so many different ways. You can see your best friend and say: 'Jis ou poephol!' Or you can say about the white liberals who fought for democracy and when South Africa got democracy, they moved to London? 'You mean those poephols?' Or just: 'Jisis, check daardie poephol!' Or, as people have been saying to

me recently: 'Jisis Pieter-Dirk Uys, you go through South Africa doing voter education through entertainment, travelling for 10,000 kilometres, doing 60 shows free in as many towns and cities without being paid? And you don't carry a gun? Are you some sort of a poephol?' I suppose elections bring out the poephol in all of us. And it's such a perfect time for all politicians to truly expose themselves, poephols and all. Usually I do a show in the theatre, but this time round we thought: let's take Mrs Evita Bezuidenhout out to the real people, to those who don't come to the theatre: the other 99.999%.

Voter education through entertainment. What most people take for granted in the old traditional democracies. Here we have still to learn that the vote is secret; that to vote you must make a cross and not a tick. 'No,' they say, 'when we were good at school, we got a tick; when we were bad, we got a cross.' Well, this is politics: think cross! And besides, we remember some of the parties (who will remain nameless), like the National Party, going round to black people: 'Ja, you hate the National Party of apartheid? Okay, now here's your chance to prove it. When you get into the election booth, you put a cross next to the name National Party!' We have to learn that we have freedom of choice, speech, expression. And that it's also okay to disagree. And that in the 1948 election in South Africa, British colonial apathy probably brought apartheid to power, and showing how voter apathy can change the history of a country.

Of course we started with big plans. South Africans always start big. I mean, look at the National Party before the 1994 election? Big. Now? Not so big. We thought very big: we would have our own train! Tannie Evita's AmaChookChook Peace Train. But eventually that would have cost two million rand, and we didn't want to be *Sarafina 3*. So we looked at Plan B: Mercedes promised us a luxury bus with Evita Bezuidenhout's People's Party painted all over it, with neon signs flashing 'Evita's Ballot Bus'; you'd be able to see us from the moon! Great moving target for a poephol with an AK47.

And with a new luxury bus, we would've needed another two small busses full of security guards with guns to protect our big bus. So we

went down the options and ended up with a borrowed Kombi minibus with us five in front and Evita at the back in the boot. I said to the team, we're going into uncharted territory here. This is the most violent country in the civilised world. Yes, it might be a technicolour Disneyland dream; it might also become a black and white Mad Max nightmare! But there will be no guns. We'll have false eyelashes, biltong, droëwors, cell phones and condoms, but no guns.

So off we went with the most famous white woman in South Africa taking a message of optimism and hope to the people: 'Democracy is no longer too good to share with just anyone.' And the new democrats came. Ninety percent of our audiences were not white, and so it should be, because we have a huge black country with a small white lining. And the shows were free. When last did you get something free? Except a virus and I mean the one in your computer. It's difficult to give away something free in South Africa. People prefer to help themselves.

'How much are the free tickets?'

'No, they're free.'

'Why?'

Especially black people. Very suspicious of a white man giving away something free.

'Hau, no, what's this? What's wrong with it?' 'They'd look in through the Community Centre doors. 'Is this some sort of experiment?'

I suppose it was a sort of experiment, if only to prove to ourselves that the negative does not rule supreme in South Africa. And after 60 indabas we found the answer: that for every negative there are three positives. Positives are normal; they lie down. The negative stands up and bellows and frightens people to Perth. And their incredible generosity of laughter. They loved Evita Bezuidenhout. They all knew who she was. Blacks might not have jobs, or food, but they have TV and they saw Evita in Parliament making a speech to the assembled MPs.

When I do this show outside South Africa, I have to explain a bit here: that the Speaker, Frene Ginwala, invited me to bring Evita to Parliament. She said voter education starts at home, and for her Parliament was home. Imagine drag queen Lily Savage in the British Commons?

(Maybe she is there!) Or Dame Edna Everage in the House of Lords? (Not impossible.) Monica Lewinsky in the US Senate? No, shame, she only came as far as the White House. So the potential voters had seen Mrs B on TV in Parliament and so she must be real. Maybe they knew there was something not quite right with her, but couldn't put their fingers on it.

It was the whites who didn't come to the free shows. The whites first phoned:

'Can't we pay? We'd rather pay and be sure of a reserved seat.'

'No, it's first come, first seated.'

'That's the problem. We don't know what element you might attract.'

The only element I attract are envious drag queens! Why is it usually white liberals who are so concerned about what blacks will think.

'You can't say that; the blacks won't like it.'

Don't worry, they've got freedom of expression. They'll tell me very quickly.

'You can't do that; blacks won't understand.'

Then they'll ask me. It's easy for blacks to communicate with whites: bang!

'Don't mention that; blacks won't think it's funny. They won't laugh.'

They won't laugh? Let me tell you: blacks have been laughing at us whites for the last 350 years! We thought they were just saying 'Yes, Master. No, Madam' in Zulu or Xhosa? They were just saying: 'Hey whitey? You poephoh!'

Apartheid is officially dead, but the smell lingers on, in some places more than others: Nylstroom, Komatipoort, Hartenbos, and especially as we drove along the Garden Route from Knysna to George, we passed the famous retirement resort called the Wilderness. Historical irony will have former President PW Botha still living in the Wilderness with a new young wife. Very strong smell of poephoh in the Wilderness, tinged with a whiff of Viagra. PW Botha, still around to remind us where we come from. He, unlike Chilean dictator General Pinochet, didn't go to London to have tea with Baroness Thatcher. Otherwise tonight the UK might have had two political prisoners!

(PDU adds the hat and glasses and changes into PW Botha)

(Light change)

PW BOTHA: *(Addresses the golliwog with the words of the old national anthem)*



PDU as PW Botha with golliwog doll

Uit die blou van onse hemel
Uit die diepte van ons see
Oor ons ewige gebergtes
Waar die kranse antwoord gee
Deur ons vêr verlate vlaktes
Met die kreun van ossewa
Ruis die stem van ons geliefde
Van ons land
Suid-Afrika
(He picks up the golliwog)
Ons sal antwoord op jou roepstem
Ons sal offer wat jy vra
Ons sal lewe
Ons sal sterwe

Ons vir jou Suid-Afrika?
Ons sal lewe?
Jy kan sterwe
Jy vir ons ... jou fokkin' klerekas!
(*He beats up the golliwog*)

(BLACKOUT)

(*Lights*)

PDU: I don't even need makeup to do that old fucker. This hat is now so politically incorrect. No one will give themselves away by wearing it. It's the ultimate symbol of South African political madness.

Each country has its own symbol: Germany had the Hitler moustache. Argentina has the *Evita* musical, the United Kingdom has... (*Takes out Maggie's handbag*) ... and the USA? I couldn't find Monica Lewinsky's little blue dress with the president's mayonnaise marks on it, but maybe this will fit the old Bill ...

(*PDU adds wig and changes into Bill Clinton*)

(*Light change*)

BILL CLINTON: Hi! My name is Bill ... (*Points down*) ... and his name is Dick. We're both a bit crooked, but that's okay with Hillary ... Oi vey, that's okay!

(*Light change*)

PDU: After the first five days of the Great Election Trek we had done 10 indabas and found ourselves in the Karoo heat of 40 degrees. In Laingsburg, a small town on the N1 from Johannesburg to Cape Town, famous for a terrible flash flood that 20 years ago appeared out of nowhere and washed all the whites to sea, while the blacks were safely

on the hill in their township. There we were in the small community centre still with its Christmas decorations up (in March?) and everybody from the town community waiting with great excitement: the postmaster, the garage owner, the butcher, the maids and their madams, the *ooms* eyeing the maids. All very democratic and normal. Twenty minutes into the show there was a commotion at the door. In peeped ten little brown faces of the kids who'd just come out of their school, having heard that Tannie Evita was there. Their teacher was in our audience and so, like many teachers talking to their kids in our new South Africa, said: 'Hey kinders? Fok off!'

'No,' says Tannie Evita, 'you can't say that! These are the future voters, the generation of tomorrow. Come in, kinders.' And so the 10 came in and brought 390 more. So it became an indaba for kids and not people. And Mrs B said: 'You're all too young to vote on the 2nd of June, but you must go back home to your parents and tell them to vote, because if we don't have a good second election now, we might not have a third one in 2004.' By the end of the indaba, music was introduced and we were all jiving and dancing together. And one little boy tugged at Evita's dress and said: 'Mrs Bezuidenhout? Are you a man?'

'Do I look like a man?'

'No ... but this thing you do here ... is it like on the TV?'

'You mean acting?'

'Ja. Is it acting?'

'Ja, it's acting.'

The little boy turned to his two companion and hissed.

'Sien? Ek't gesê dis 'n fokkin' man! But, Mrs Bezuidenhout? Don't worry. We won't tell anyone.' And he winked.

They now wanted Evita Bezuidenhout to go and meet their mothers and fathers in the township. Next time you drive from Cape Town to your holiday destination, stop in Laingsburg and go and look at the Coloured township. I think when God designed it, she had a migraine. Some really tatty planning in Laingsburg. The township is on an ash heap of hell. No shade, no green, no water; just sun and dust. And the little RDP shacks that reconstruction and development built? Open the

front door? You've also opened the back door. And the reasons the mothers and fathers are there is because they don't have jobs. That's the bottom line: jobs. But they have TV, and they all saw Evita on TV.

'Hey Mrs B? Why are you the first politician to bother to come to us in five years?'

'Are you going to vote on 2 June?'

She'd answer. 'No, why must I vote for those fat cats and give them a nice job, when they can't be bothered to give me one?'

'But you must get your barcoded ID,' Tannie reminded.

'Why? I can't eat a barcode.'

And wherever you look in the Laingsburg township and further in the towns, in the cities, in the streets, are the kids. The Generation Y2K, with their big eyes and runny noses and knock-knees and excitement and smiles. (*He holds up the golliwog*) Like my politically incorrect little friend here. An old lady in Soweto gave it to me. She said: 'Mrs Bezuidenhout, this will bring you good luck, and remind you.' I said: thank you. The old lady nodded. 'Yes, I hope it will remind you.' Of what ...?

(Light change)

(PDU talks to the golliwog)

I'm sorry. I know you hate being called that. The word 'golliwog' has been banned. It's now illegal and racist. I'm sorry it slips out. But it's also just a word. The meaning can be trapped in your head. It's what you want it to mean. Words upset the most people everywhere, where stupid poephols without brains have been giving words terrible meanings. Look how long blacks have been called 'kaffirs', gays have been called 'queers'? Like they called Jews 'yids' and Whoopi 'Goldberg'? And I don't want to make too much of a meal of this. I certainly won't say I'm calling a spade a spade, but we have to face facts: you are a golliwog. You were born a golliwog. I 'm sure you didn't want to be born a golliwog. You wanted to be a pretty white girl with soft blond hair? Me

too. But I'm not a pretty white girl with blonde hair; I'm a fat old Afrikaans moffie with no hair. But that doesn't stop me from going to the shop and buying a nice frock and a wig and putting on lipstick and going into the South African Parliament and telling them to stop behaving like poephols. So be proud of what you are. You're a golliwog in the new South Africa. You're the lucky one here, Comrade Golli. Brother Golli. Egoli!!

(The golly is replaced so that he can watch the proceedings)

(Light change)

PDU: Potchefstroom! There were only 15 golli-whites in the granite town hall of Potchefstroom when we arrived in our little Ballot Bus in this Afrikaans town that prides itself on being the religious core of nationalism. Doing our election indaba in Potchefstroom is a bit like doing *Fiddler on the Roof* in Nuremberg! The town hall is a good example of Neo-Berchtesgaden boere-baroque. You can still hear the echo of power, as yesteryear's small men with wagging fingers and darting tongues condemned 9% of the population to kaffirdom, because they believed that their God was a white Afrikaner. So what were 15 golli-whites doing here? They hated us anyway, so what did they expect from Evita? A recipe or a blowjob? They got neither.

The new South Africa came to the rescue. A sudden screech of tyres outside as the busses arrived from the township. The kids knew we were there and wanted to also be there, but their township is many kilometres out of town and so they had to either wait for their transport, which was late, or just stop someone else's transport, which they did, and here they were. Within minutes the grim Potchefstroom Reichstag was full of energy with the black kids all wanting to ask questions of Gogo Evita. All excited; all there. The small laager of horrified golli-whites looked as if trapped in a rerun of the Battle of Blood River!

'Are you going to vote on 2 June?' asked Tannie of those obviously over 18.

'Yebo!'

‘Are you excited?’

Yes.

‘Do you have your ID with your barcode?’

Laughter.

‘You must have a barcode in your ID to register.’

More laughter.

‘What will you do on election day without a barcoded ID? And not having registered?’

Great applause and a loud voice answered.

‘Antie, we’re going to vote! Will you stop us, madam?’

So is that why, on the days after the election, they were still counting millions of unregistered unidentified votes? I’ll take 6.000; you take 20.000; you take 12.000 and you shut up. It’s a free and fair election!

It was on that night in Potch that we were brought down to earth by a chilling soundbite, when a young man, 18 years old, ready to vote for the first time, tall, proud and beautiful and we thought passionately excited about his future in his beloved South Africa, stood up and said to the icon on stage, this other Evita who doesn’t sing or exist: ‘Madam! We fought for freedom; all we got was democracy!’

In 1965 I went to Germany for the first time. My mother was from Berlin and I wanted to explore the supposed Eurocentric part of my roots. During those times there were people of a certain age in Germany and when you saw them, you inevitably thought: what did you do during the war? If you were tactless enough to ask, they often would smile with their friendly answer: ‘The war? No, we didn’t know. We didn’t know about anything. Wir haben nichts gewusst; we knew nothing. Besides, how could we? We’re Austrian.’ And today we see people of a certain age, not all of them white, but most of them white, and we ask: what did you do during those apartheid years?’ I bet you some answers are very clear: ‘I was in the struggle!’

(Light change)

(PDU into Policeman Goosen at the Truth Commission)

GOOSEN: My name is Hendrik Barend Goosen. I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help me God. And Archbishop Tutu? You people don't have to translate everything from the Afrikaans into English and then back again into Afrikaans. I'm okay with English.

Oh, and yesterday when I told the Truth and Reconciliation Commission how in the old days of apartheid we would tell jokes during the interrogation session just to lighten things up? I think your people translated the joke wrong from the Afrikaans. The joke should be: 'When does a married man stop masturbating? When he's divorced.'

Ja well, it does sound funnier in Afrikaans.

As you will remember, I was telling the commission yesterday how my father always played us sentimental Afrikaans songs on the gramophone to make us feel special. My father was a policeman. He hoped that I would also be a policeman. He said it was a noble thing, protecting the people you love; the land you love.

Of course when we grew up in South Africa in the 1950s, 60s, 70s, even the 1980s, those apartheid signs were everywhere. Slegs blankes/whites only. Europeans only. No dogs or natives allowed on the beach. It was normal. Like a stop sign, a one way sign, a no parking sign. It was rules and regulations, law and order. Whites here and blacks there. Nobody said it was wrong. In school and church it was never even talked about because it was normal.

In those old days.

Blacks were everywhere but always in their place. They did their jobs during the day and then went back to their locations and we would be in the dining room having supper and the maid was in the kitchen and everything was fine. No one ever said: shame, poor blacks, because we regarded them as being privileged. Being so close to us, sharing so many things with us: the food we didn't eat and the clothes we didn't wear. And sleeping nice and warm in the room at the back with the dog. They were lucky. We were never frightened of blacks. In fact I can't remember ever hating a black.

There was no time; we were too busy hating the English.

As long as I can remember we were taught to hate the English for what they did in the Boer War to our Afrikaner women and children in the concentration camps. Our Auschwitz. Our holocaust. But blacks? Why hate blacks? They were nice to us. They liked us. They were even ...wat is die woord in Engels vir liefdevol? ... affectionate. Well, that doesn't sound quite right in English, but yes, let's say affectionate. But always in their place. You cared about your blacks. You didn't want bad things to happen to them. You wanted them to stay healthy and alive because they were good workers. And as you got to know them through the years you even loved them. Like you would your ... troeteldier? Ja, your pet. Like you loved your dog.

That's how we saw them in those days. No one told us any different. When we were children we used to go to the bioscope on a Saturday afternoon and the bioscope was for whites only because it was normal. And I remember one afternoon there was this newsreel called African Mirror. And suddenly on the screen appeared a black woman driving a car in Johannesburg. A kaffir driving a Chev! We'd never seen this before. It was the funniest thing we'd ever seen. Man, the whole bioscope laughed, like you would laugh when you see a monkey drive a tractor. She was not a person, she was a k ... she was a joke.

In those days.

Of course I also had feelings for blacks. I'm a Christian. Those black girls we had to arrest under the terrorism act and lock them up because of the terrible things they could do to our country and to us and our children. And we kept them locked up until we found out what they could do. In today's terms you'd call them beautiful young black women. But then we just saw them as pretty baboons with firm breasts and, listen man, there were some of the other police who even had thoughts in that direction. But that was impossible. They were animals. It was a crime to even think about them humanely.

In those days.

Yesterday one of the advocates ... you, sir? Comrade, you mentioned the police station in Potchefstroom. You will see in my affidavit that I was there on duty from 1984 to 1986, but please keep it in the right

context. I was just obeying orders. I remember there was a cell in that police station with the sign on the door that said Whites Only. I swear no white ever stayed in that cell. It was always full of suspects who were not white, but no one ever took down the sign. Now this deceased black girl ... sorry, what is her name? Nomatise Khumalo. Ja, her. She was in that cell. She lay in the corner on the stone floor. Her arm was broken and she was bleeding and crying, and the rats ...

The rats were getting closer.

I even mentioned it to my superiors and they laughed. 'Ja Goosen, you'd fight communists with bare fists rather than kick a fucking rat!' I know rats are attracted by fresh blood and there was a lot on the stone floor. I stood looking through the peephole. I couldn't see any rats but I knew they were coming. I wanted to go into the cell and take her away from the rats. Like I would a cat with a broken paw because I love cats and know how frightened small cats are from big rats. But she wasn't a small cat. It was impossible showing some concern. It would be misconstrued. It would be the end of my job. Even my marriage. But I remember how it worried me all night. She was a black in a whites only cell.

And that was illegal.

And so in the morning, it was still dark, I opened the cell door and went in. There was no air ... the smell ... I just held my breath, picked her up and carried her out of the cell into the passage. She weighed nothing. I carried her down to the big room where we have the interrogation ... where we have those discussions. I put her down carefully on the table which was still slippery with blood from the night before and, yes I can swear there was a black finger lying in the ashtray among the other stompies. I covered her nakedness with a *Sunday Times*. There was a nice colour picture of the new Miss South Africa on the front page.

Her white face went black with the blood.

This girl, Khumalo. Her face was so smooth. We'd left no marks. Actually if you dimmed your eyes and looked at her sideways, she didn't even look like a kaffir. She could have been one of those Italian film stars. And now you people here on the Truth Commission say that I am

responsible for what happened to her? Archbishop Tutu? I appeal to you as a fellow Christian. What could I do? I swear on the Bible: I did not kill her. Or rape her. She was already raped and half-dead when I found her in the cell.

But I do remember her.

Every night when I close my eyes, I see that smooth black face in front of me. Like I keep hearing those sentimental Afrikaans songs my father played for us on the gramophone to make us feel special. I remember this black girl and she makes me feel special. Because with her, for the first time in my life, I allowed myself to break the law and think of a black as a person, and not just another animal.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(PDU changes into the white voter)

(Light change)

THE WHITE VOTER THEN: I'm a white South African and I'm proud of it And my ma was a white South African and my pa was a white South African and my grandparents was white South Africans and we've all lived here in South Africa forever since 1900 and even before so fuck you all.

I'm a white South African and I live in a whites-only area because that's what I vote for and why I vote. And we are proud of our police and our politics So fuck you all So fuck you all!

(Light change)

PDU: And we were fucked, because he ruled South Africa. He was in government, in the civil service, in the police, in the army, soon to be in the Broederbond. Today people say: 'Don't you miss them? Those

boer fascists who ruled South Africa? Don't you miss doing them in your show?' No. We're still here.

(Light change)

THE WHITE VOTER NOW: I'm a white South African and I'm proud of it I used to live in a whites-only area Because that's what I voted for and why I voted and anyway who wants to live next to kaffirs who is stupid like baboons and can't even behave in public like a decent human being So now we have to live on the smallholding next to the railway line to the black location Because the kaffirs now live in our old areas and we can't even try and buy our houses back because now they're too expensive and the communist banks won't lend us money so fuck them all

I'm a white South African and I'm proud of it because white is not a colour in the Rainbow and all I have to do now is sit at home and drink and watch rugby on SuperSport and wait for AIDS to kill all the kaffirs because then apartheid can come back Because apartheid was decent and protected us whites from communists and Coloureds and kaffirs and crooks and coolies and queers and all that kak And anyway apartheid used to be in the Bible until Nelson Mandela rewrote the Bible so fuck him also I'm a white South Africa and ... ah ...

(He grovellingly reacts as his employer appears)

... sayibona, Dr Professor Mazibuko. Yes, master, I've finished cutting the lawn ...

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Hillbrow used to be one of the cosmopolitan areas of Johannesburg. It's there I had my coffee mit Schlackzahne at Café Mozart, my schnitzel und sauerkraut at Café Berlin, mein Apfelstrudel at Hilde's Café. Today Hillbrow is Afrika and home to thousands of people from all over the continent, squeezed into the skyscrapers, most of them illegal.

It's vibrant and dangerous. Drugs, AIDS, violence, crime, gangs. And everyone speaks French!

But every now and then you might see an old white bobba, in her black shawl, clutching her maid with one hand. Going shopping in Hillbrow as she has done for the last 52 years. She lives up there on the 12th floor of that block of flats. It's taken her one hour to come down the stairs, because there are two Somali families living in the lift. But she's going shopping in Hillbrow and nothing is going to stop her!

(PDU changes into the Countess in Hillbrow. During her monologue, she is putting on makeup, so that PDU is ready for the next sketch with Nowell Fine)

(Light change)

THE COUNTESS: *(She is sorting out her makeup on a small tray with mirror. She calls. Her German accent is prominent)*

Schwieger-Schwester? Nurse? Hey Zulu? Where are you? You are supposed to help me get ready to go and do the shopping. Zulu? I know you are in the kitchen. Why you pretend you do not understand me? You always do this, unless you want money. Then you understand everything, even my English. Ach, du Lieber Gott, mein Englisch! Not even I always understand my English. When I left Europe all those years ago, I had so many choices: Russian, or Italian, or French – even Dutch. But no. I am now trapped in the logic of English.



PDU as the Contessa in Hillbrow

What you read is not how you speak. 'My daughter is full of lafter'? Ja?
Why not: 'My dafter is full of laughter'?

And Zulu, I did not run away from the Nazis and the death camp of Treblinka just to end up here in Johannesburg and vote for apartheid. I hated all that. I was never involved in politics. You say that to me every time you want more money. You say that and you make me feel white and racist and Eurocentric and Jewish and guilty. And then I give you more money. Liebchen, you are so easy to please. All you want from me is money. Where I come from they wanted my skin for a lampshade.

(She sings softly while she puts on her makeup)

'Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten

Das ich so traurig bin

Ein Märchen aus altem Zeiten

Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Zinn

Die Luft is kühl und es dunkeld

Und ruhig fliesst der Rhine

Der Gipfel des Berges funkelt

In Abendzonnenschein'

You know, Zulu, I come from a world war. I survived a holocaust. You just came from a struggle. I come halfway across the world. You come from down the road. My life had terrible drama. We had Nazi gas ovens. You just had Afrikaner gasbags, your mediocre monsters. I remember how they would say to me back in the 1950s: 'Contessa, we Afrikaners are not as bad as the Nazis. We never killed six million blacks.' Only because you're an amateur, liebchen.

I know you're in the kitchen, Zulu. I can smell your African perfume. Hey, don't steal my things. I've counted the toilet rolls. Everything in the kitchen is marked. The coffee is marked. The milk is marked. The sugar is marked. I am also marked. Like an old antique, I carry my number on my wrist. My apartment is also marked. I spray it every day with my perfume like a tomcat, because it is mine.

I don't care what happens outside in the world any more. I remember Hillbrow when I came here from Stuttgart in 1953. Hillbrow had the best of Old Europe. You heard German and French and Polish and

Hungarian. The songs of Piaf, the sayings of Sartre. You smelt goulash, apfelstrudel and real real coffee. Bratwurst. Eisbein. Not that we ate that, you understand, but it was not against our religion to smell it in the air. Schweinefleisch schnitzel! Now Hillbrow stinks of the perfume of the great African Renaissance: garbage, rotten food, dried blood, drugs, death. And you are chasing us away, Zulu.

We who could help you confront all the new changes and old fears. We who understand Mozart, the only ones who can spell Rachmaninoff and Schnittke. You chase us back to Germany, to Canada, to London, even, dear God, even to Australia. And so you will sit alone in your candle light, because once upon a time you even had electricity. Thanks to us.

But I made a mistake in 1953. I should have gone straight from Germany to America, but I took a left turn and ended up here in the Transvaal! But they loved having me here during the old days, those Afrikaner pigs. You see, I gave them their great European culture. They would say: 'Here is the contessa.' Never mind I'm not. 'The Russians bombed her house in Poland.' Never mind it was the British in Germany. And then someone would say: 'Is that a telephone number on your wrist?' And I would smile and say: 'Why don't you phone them and see who answers?' And then they would say: 'Ja, tell us about the Nazis?' And I would say: 'Just look in the mirror.'

I always wore my jewellery to the ballet in Pretoria. Till you steal my jewellery. Zulu? I know you and your friends come and steal from me when I was sick. You think I lie there dead, but I watch you through closed eyes. And everything you steal is just a cheap copy of the original. Ha ha! Everything here is a cheap copy of the original. Except me. I am real. And memory is real.

Sometimes I smell the bread being baked down in the street and close my eyes and see the ballet shop in the street where I grew up near Nuremberg. Bakery. Ballet shop. Schul. In the window there was a little wheel with two pink ballet shoes going round and round and round in the spotlight. Every day I would stand there and say to my mother: 'Mutti? Ich wil tanzen. Bitte...? Mutti? Bitte.' And she would laugh and look at me, fat and short.

But then when I was older and not fat and yes, taller and ready to dance, the war came. The war. We were treated worse than you blacks here. I had to wear a big yellow star. That's when I decided that yellow would never be my favourite colour. Then came the bombs. Everyone bombed us. The British, the French, the Americans, the Russians. I think we even bombed ourselves. And when it stopped and we came out of the cellar everything was gone. The Schul with its sign *JUDEN RAUS?* Weck. The bakery. Gone.

Just the little ballet shop was there. And in the window, still on the little wheel, were the two pink ballet shoes going round and round like magic. Round and round. I could have just stretched out my hand through the broken glass and taken them. No one was there to see. I could have taken the ballet shoes and gone to America and become a great dancer. But I was well brought up never to take anything. So I just looked. And there they found me and took me to the station and on a train and sent me to Treblinka. And here I am, a verkakte old relic from a forgotten heaven and hell. The only one still left in Hillbrow Johannesburg Gauteng South Africa. Viva Viva Shalom Shalom.

Ja, Zulu mein Liebchen, nobody really likes Jews. Whites don't like Jews. Blacks don't like Jews. Even Jews don't like Jews. Unless you're an artist. Then they don't mind you being a Jew. But God help you if you're a Jew who has suffered. And keep reminding them how they made you suffer. And that you're still here.

But never worry, my dear Zulu. I'm no longer a Jew in Hillbrow. I didn't jump from the frying pan into the fire wearing that same yellow star. I will now be an African, or an affirmative Christian, or even a fundamentalist Muslim – depending who is holding the biggest gun to my head. But I didn't come to South Africa in 1953 to support apartheid and white racism. Why would I leave Nazis in the north for Nazis in the south? Never in all my years living here in Hillbrow, did I ever sit on an apartheid bench that said 'Whites Only.' Never! I only sat on benches that said 'Europeans Only'.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: So it isn't just blacks who are in a struggle; everyone everywhere seems to have a struggle. For some it's a struggle to gain power; for others a struggle to retain power. And what about the present struggle that whites have? To get the right documents so that they can vote? For the 1994 election no one had the right papers. Tourists went into corner shops to buy cigarettes and chocolates and with their change they got a ID to vote! But for this second election we had to get our new green ID books, this time with barcodes. We have to compile a voter's role for all South Africans, and you can only register there if you have a barcode here ... in your ID book. So the queues have been going on for kilometres. The struggle continues! *Alula continua!*

(PDU changes into Nowell Fine)

(Light change)

NOWELL FINE: Rainbow nation. Mandela miracle. Free and fair elections. As true's God, if I hear the word 'democracy' again, I'm going to have a nervous breakdown on the spot. I mean, how long must I stand in a queue in order to be able to vote on 2 June? It started three months ago, when I had to replace my blue ID book with a green ID book, the one with a barcode. I said, I have a barcode in my passport. No, they said, you must have a barcode in your new ID book.

I think Mandela is very sentimental. After 27 years behind bars, he now wants us all to have bars in our books. So for days I stood in the queue. Three of those days, I was in the wrong queue. When I get to the desk, they say it's now too late to get the green book, but they will give me a nice certificate saying that my green book is on its way and so I will be able to register.

So I leave the building and my handbag gets stolen! So back to the old queue, and then into another queue to register. Then they say: check the voter's roll to make sure you're on it, because you never know. So

back into that queue I go. As true's God, I'm not on the voter's roll in Johannesburg; I'm on the roll in Umtata!

So now I have to queue up to de-register there and then queue up to re-register here. And in the post comes my ID book just in time and there's a black man in my book! I swear to God! So now I'm back in this queue in order to get him out of my book and me back in my book. Wake me when it's over!

Why are they making it so complicated? All I want to do is vote, because I know who to vote for. My maid Dora told me. No, I mean it. She said: 'Madam, who are you voting for?' I said I didn't know. I said, I'm sick of it all. Paying township debts, the crime, the violence, the corruption. This democracy is a joke, I said, and I'm not interested. So she says: Well, madam, if you don't vote for the ANC, I'll leave you and you will have no maid! So okay, I'll voted for the ANC. Rather a good maid, than a good government, that's what I say.

Anyway, yesterday, my last day of all this shit, I find I'm standing behind this woman I can't stand. Such a Portuguese kugel; gives us Jewish-African princesses a bad name. Compulsive semigrant. Sees a black face in power and packs the Gucci bags. What a world traveller – from Lourenco Marques to Beira to Luanda to Salisbury to Windhoek to Kimberley to South Joburg. Where can she move to from here, I ask myself! Then I put two and two together. You read it in what's-his-name's *Sunday Times* column. That woman who keeps all her security keys on one key ring?

First lesson in survival: don't even keep your spare security keys in Joburg! Mine are in Boston with my daughter. But no, this madam has all her keys on one keyring. The keys for the outside gate, the inside gate, the outside door, the inside door, the keys to unlock the safe, the car keys for the 4x4 and the Lexus – all on one key ring. It's so damn heavy when she puts them in her sling bag, she dislocates her shoulder, rich bitch.

Spends her days lying next to her pool. Topless. At her age? It's disgusting and provocative. No wonder there are so many crimes perpetuated against women in Gauteng. There she is topless, tantalising

the garden boys. The trees around her property are groaning with black garden boys being tantalised. Then on top of it, she's also a snob. When she has a dinner party, which I have never accepted invitations to, I might add, she doesn't order flowers from a florist like any normal hostess.

Oh no, she has to go out onto the pavement and cut the roses hanging over her security wall so that she can say to her guests: 'Look at my lovely roses. I risked my life going out onto the pavement.' And the blacks hate those damn rosebushes hanging over the pavement – their Velcro gets caught in the thorns! Anyway, the story goes like this: she needs roses for her evening dinner party. So she puts her skimpy top back on, takes the shears, grabs her sling bag and triples out onto the pavement. Looks left, looks right. No one there with a gun.

So she quickly clips some roses, when a gust of wind slams the doors shut. Inside door, outside door, inside gate, outside gate. Damn, she sighs. Keys in my bag. No. Keys inside house on same key ring! So there she is at 3 p.m. in the afternoon, outside on the pavement in her skimpy bikini without a stitch of makeup and her hair looks like drek.

This woman is now on the verge of a major platz. Luckily she sees the garden boy from the rich Indians next door on his way back from a few drinks at a local shebeen, of course, as pissed as a fart. She hides behind a shrub and calls him: 'Oi, boy!' He thinks she's a burglar and throws stones at her. She takes off her top. Her tits hit her knees. Now he recognises her!

She says: 'Listen boy, Madam's locked herself out of her place. Please climb over the security wall and set off the burglar alarms. At least then the security firm can see the red lights flashing. They'll think I'm being burgled, dash over here, see me like this and unlock the door for me.'

'No,' says the garden boy, 'I'm not a burglar!'

'Don't be so difficult,' she says. 'I'll give you 40 rand.'

No, he's too scared of her dogs.

'The dogs all died yesterday,' she says, lying through her teeth.

So this poor drunk schwartze climbs the tree, scrambles over the high security wall, tearing his clothes on the jagged barbed wire along the

top. Before the alarms can even go off, he's hanging upside down into her garden with three man-eating Pitbulls trying to chew him from the face in.

All the barking and screaming attracts the neighbours from watching sport on TV. They look out of their window and see the black man and the dogs. They grab their guns and start shooting. But they're so drunk and high on coke, they can't shoot straight. Luckily one of their bullets hits the panic button next to the Jacuzzi at the pool. All the alarms go off. Now the security people know there's a problem.

Of course they take over 40 minutes to get there. The first thing they see is a half-naked old white woman crying on the sidewalk and inside hanging upside-down, a black man being licked by three dogs. They shoot the black in self-defence. And now this stupid woman is being sued by her Indian neighbours because their fancy garden has gone to shit.

Anyway, there I am standing behind her and not letting on that I know the whole story.

I say: 'Howzit.'

She says: 'Whozit?'

I say it's me. I didn't see you at the last DA election briefing. So what's happening?'

She says: 'Don't ask. I'm so sick of this damned country. Fed up with the crime and corruption, the violence and the theft, with the townships being subsidised by me because they don't pay for their electricity and their water. I'm going back to Portugal.'

'Oi, the last resort,' I sigh. 'But listen doll, don't keep all your keys on the same key ring in Portugal. You might be mugged in Lisbon by a real refugee from Africa.' Well no, I didn't say that but I should've.

'So what are you doing in this queue,' I said, 'also getting your ID book sorted out?'

She says: 'ID-SchmID, I'm getting my new passport. The old one was stolen.'

'A passport?' I ask innocently. 'You're in this queue for a new passport?' 'Yes, already for three days.'

‘Doll, it breaks my heart. You’re in the wrong queue!’

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

PDU: Yes, South Africa has terrible violence, shocking crime, widespread corruption. It’s tough. But it could have been so much worse. At least our democracy is sort-of working. And it’s a great success, because we’re all equally pissed off! We whites must be the biggest whingers in the world. You’d swear apartheid was just a minor speed-wobble and that we whites are being punished for being so democratic.

We sit in our lavish homes surrounded by expensive security systems, surfing the Internet, planning holidays in Mauritius and moaning about the crime, kvetching about the corruption, and complaining about politicians who lie to tell the truth and admit that the truth is just a lie. What would we whites be saying if Nelson Mandela and his comrades had come out of jail and out of exile angry? Without forgiveness and reconciliation? If they came out determined to do to us what we had done to them? We whites wouldn’t be in South Africa tonight, that’s for sure. We’d be in the refugee camps on London’s Clapham Common.

But CNN would be in South Africa. Fresh from the blood sports of Kosovo and Belgrade, the mysterious and famous, the beautiful Christiane Amanpour is standing at the very gates of the Victor Verster Prison where Nelson Mandela took his first steps to freedom nine years ago. She looks back at the Mandela era in this report, not remembered for its humour, reconciliation and nation building, but reviled for the turmoil, terror and it is claimed, the seven million dead.

Of course under these circumstances all media reporting from South Africa is subjected to certain restrictions from Pretoria, based on a press-control law inherited from the hated former apartheid regime. Even correspondents from CNN have to stick to the facts devised upon the night before by the minister of information, health, nuclear-storage

and foreign affairs, Comrade Professor Doctor Princess Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

(PDU changes into CNN'S Christiane Amanpour)

(Light change)

CHRISTIANE: Thank you Wolf Blitzer.

How would apartheid end? The question always had a simple answer: in a bloodbath. And yet some said apartheid would not end, could not end; that it was just too successful to end. A few even suggested that apartheid might end with a handshake of reconciliation and forgiveness, a concept as ridiculous and farfetched as, for example, seeing Nelson Mandela walk onto a rugby field wearing the Springbok captain's Number 6 jersey.

After the first democratic election in April 1994, when predictions of an immediate bloodbath did not materialise, the last white leader, FW de Klerk, negotiated a blanket amnesty for himself and his cabinet, and handed over power to the victorious and democratically elected African-National-Congress-led government, it looked as if the handshake would work. The world held its collective breath, but 360 years of hate, brutality, torture, genocide, executions, racism and white greed could not be brushed aside with a charming smile, or a few Madiba jive steps.

The RDP – Reconciliation and Development Programme, also called the Revenge of the Dark People – took effect in many ways. The first law passed in 1994 by the new Parliament banned the use of the Afrikaans language. The death penalty was retained for those who read Afrikaans, spoke in Afrikaans, sang in Afrikaans, or were just thought to think in Afrikaans. Mass executions of Afrikaans journalists, newspaper editors, poets, novelists and a satirist soon led to the abortive Ventersdorp Revolt, as die-hard boers reverted to their armed struggle under the collective leadership from the right of Eugene Terre'blanche and from the left, Max du Preez.

While the world tried to intervene – NATO offered to send objective observers and the United Nations doubled its aid to the Nelson Mandela Save the Black Children's Fund – South Africa still had years of bloody turmoil ahead. We apologise for lack of visual footage, still under embargo under the seventh state of emergency. Once the iron lid of apartheid had been removed, age-old ethnic hatreds boiled to the rim. Within a year, Natal Zulus slaughtered half a million Durbanites of Indian descent, culminating in the infamous Night of the Flaming Sari. Today fewer than 200 Indians remain in South Africa, all safely under house arrest and restricted to the former town of Richmond, now merely referred to as Ghetto Ginwala.

Once the Indians and Afrikaners who had supported the National Party were exorcised from the rainbow nation, it was the turn of the Cape Coloureds, and by August 1997 most of them who did not publicly embrace the ANC/SACP doctrine – especially Coloureds who refused to wear Ukrainian-made false teeth – had fled across the Orange River into Namibia, where they are still being held in Nkomo Kalahari Transit Station Number 4G. The Clinton/McBride Peace Accord has up to now contained the Xhosa/Zulu power struggle. International aid has been closely linked to the success of this treaty. For his contribution to the process of nation building and the fate of battered women, the Nobel Peace Prize was this year awarded to Robert McBride.

Former South African leaders who once led white, Coloured, Indian, Jewish or gay political groups, now still banned in South Africa, keep up a brave face in exile – from Australia to Paraguay. CNN's Q&A with Riz Kahn at 14h00 GMT will host a live debate via satellite between Tony Leon – a former white liberal politician, now city councillor in Waga-Waga Australia – on the one hand, and former Afrikaner co-leader of the ill-fated small breakaway Freedom Party, Dr Roelf Holomisa-Meyer. Dr Meyer, who is on death row in Diepkloof Prison, comes exclusively to CNN live, after special permission was given by the deputy minister of child welfare and correctional services, Comrade Winnie Mandela ... (*Listens to message in her ear piece*) ... It seems the debate has been postponed ... we'll keep you informed ...

And yet, five years after an ANC victory at the polls, a white face is a rare sight in this country, except in the arenas of business and commerce. Those few whites still working in South Africa are required to display bar-coded ID numbers branded on their foreheads. *(She pats her lapel)* Luckily we in the media only have to display them on our person. While the terrible cost in human life has been condemned throughout the civilised world, in the light of what the white perpetrators of apartheid did to their innocent black victims, the Revenge of the Dark People is seen as inevitable and, while not condoned, understood.

Standing here today at the legendary Victor Verster Prison, amid the vineyards and mountains, it can only be hoped that the bloody ethnic cleansing that since 1994 has allowed South Africa's blacks to reclaim what was always theirs, will make way for some form of national reconciliation. How this can happen at the southern tip of a blood-soaked country at the end of a bloodstained century is still a question that has no comforting answer. This is Christiane Amanpour for CNN, censored in Azania.

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

(PDU changes into the homeless bergie)

(Light change)

THE BERGIE: Oooo, I love this time of the year, time of good cheer! When everyone is so nice to everyone else. And they throw away such nice things in our direction for us to find, to make our festive season festive and nice. Look, a nice cap that makes me look windgat! And this nice cape that could be a nice tent?

(He picks up the ostrich egg)

And a nice crystal ball. Ja, it might look like an ostrich egg, but it's a crystal ball. Hey, if a kaffir is a klerekas, then this egg is a crystal ball!

Although maybe I laid it in my sleep? Easier for me to lay this, than for Finance Minister Trevor Manuel to balance his budget.

(He looks into the egg)

I see ... I see ... Ja, I've been telling the future since 1652. That's when I took refuge under the Table. I've slept under a bush on the slopes of Table Mountain for 300 years! Till they put those bleddie searchlights on every night for the tourists and me and the dassies have eyes like this. *(He screws up 'unsleeping' eyes)* So I moved into town, a nice doorway in Burg Street. But now I'm scared to be murdered. Every night, homeless children with dead eyes and no hope. They kill for fun. That's also in the future. I see ... I see...

Reverend Alan Boesak ... he led the ANC here in the Western Cape in 1994 and then got caught embezzling funds from Denmark! Kabouter! Six years in jail! He's happy with his criminal record. Now he has all the qualifications to become an ambassador! I see ... I see ...

Saddam Hussein is angry again! He hasn't been bombed for a long time. He says: Bomb me on the CNN News tonight or I resign from the CIA!' I see ... I see ...

Bill Clinton! Sex mechanic? He doesn't inhale and she doesn't swallow! To divert attention from his sex life, he bombs Belgrade? But now the war is over; now they say: 'Is that a gun in your pocket or has Miss Monica just licked her lips?' Bill Clinton has cancelled his visit to South Africa when he found out the Morocco Swallows were just a local football team. I see ... I see ...

Here is a message for those of you who take Viagra! If you take Viagra every day, you must also take it with Prozac: because if you don't get a fuck, you won't give a fuck! I see ... I see ...

The Cape Flats, rubbish heap of the cream of the past. Centre of violence and crime and drugs and hell and yet ... I see ... I see ... like everywhere else in this rainbow nation, the children love and laugh at its colours. Children without baggage of hate; children without colour. The little person with a skin that reflects the darkness of night, holding hands with a small blonde person, one negative to another's positive. And they speak 11 languages and understand. They have dreams,

going to school without schoolbooks of lies. Just dreams. I see ...
I see ... a new century ... a new country ... a new dream of the new
generation of Hot *en* Tot. The guardian angels of Thabo Mbeki's
African Renaissance.

And here comes the sun. And it is smiling? Ja, after 350 years, the sun
is smiling again, because at last, the people of the south have become
d e k a f f i r n a t e d!

Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me.

(He sings to the tune of 'Nkosi Sikelele')

Uit die blou van onse hemel

Uit die diepte van onse see

Oor on ewige gebertes

Waar die kranse antwoord gee

Waar die Klerekas antwoord gee

Waar die Christmas Cake antwoord gee

Waar die Melktert antwoord gee

Waar die Perlemoen antwoord gee...

(Light change)

(PDU sits at the piano and with one finger plays the first verse of the national anthem)

PDU: I have a tough job ahead of me before this twentieth century ends.
I have to find my impersonation of a new president, Thabo Mbeki. Not
an easy target to pinpoint. Nelson Mandela wasn't easy to pinpoint
either, but at least when he became president he said: 'Pieter, what do
you want me to do ... to make things easier for you ... to do me on
stage? Should I wag my finger ... like PW Botha?'

I said: 'No, Mr President please ...!'

'Should I lick my lips ... like PW Botha?'

I said: 'No, President Mandela, please not ...!'

'But Pieter tell me ... what do you want me to do ... to make things
easier for you ... to do me?'

‘Well, President Mandela, if you really want to help me: why don’t you wear some really shit shirts?’

(BLACKOUT)

(Lights)

CURTAIN CALL

(The audience leaves)

THE END



OFFICE OF
THE PRESIDENCY
Union Buildings
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Ref: 15181/99 (MMS)

KANTORO YA
MOPRESIDENTE

22 December 1999

Union Buildings
Mokotla tsa Pasa X1000
Pretoria 0001

Ms Evita Bezuidenhout

OFISI YA
MOPRESIDENTE
Union Buildings
Mokotla tsa Prasevetsi X1000
Pretoria 0001

P. O. Box 175
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OFISI YA
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LIHOVISI LA
PRESIDENTE
Union Buildings
Sikwasa ya Pasa X1000
Pretoria 0001

Dear Ms Bezuidenhout

Thank you for the invitation extended to President Mbeki to attend the
Real Millennium Dress Rehearsal.

OFISI YA
MUPHURISIDENTE
Union Buildings
Tshingana tsha
Pasa X1000
Pretoria 0001

Regrettably due to prior commitments, the President is not able to honour
your invitation.

HOFISI YA
PRESIDENT
Union Buildings
Saka tsa Pasa X1000
Pretoria 0001

We also would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you for
your consideration and we wish you a successful event.

KANTOOR VAN
DIE PRESIDENT
Uniegebou
Private Bag X1000
Pretoria 0001

With kind regards

LOFISI
KAPRESIDENTI
Union Buildings
Umgodla wePasi X1000
Pretoria 0001


Abigail Maduna (Ms)
ASSISTANT PRIVATE SECRETARY

LOFISI
KAPRESIDENTI
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Oops, the new president doesn't want to play

SHOCK & AWE

The world tour of South Africa

A theatrical masterpiece. Uys shows a dark sinister side: intensely powerful. He's always been the royal jester; the exquisite clown who's allowed to say exactly what he thinks of the proletariat, the aristocracy as well as the king. Our Rainbow Nation is dazzled almost into oblivion in Pieter-Dirk Uys's latest foray into the absurdities and paradoxes of living the South African experience. In the true tradition of satire à la Uys, you find yourself laughing at the lines, but the sting in the tale is also a jolt into a keener consciousness.

– *The Cape Argus* (Cape Town) December 1998

Uys kry dit reg om die rou senuwees van die kollektiewe Suid-Afrikaanse psige eers met 'n veertjie te kielie, en dan in 'n onverbiddegreep te klem om te sê: kyk hoe absurd; kyk hoe seer; lag en dink!

– *Beeld* (Johannesburg) Februarie 1999

He's as acute as ever at exposing the follies of the high and mighty. He makes you laugh until you cry. He makes you squirm as unpalatable truths hit home. And he blinds you with his sheer intelligence. Uys has never been sharper.

– *The Star* (Johannesburg) February 1999

He is a brilliant satirist who is a sharp as ever and exceptionally funny

– *Independent on Saturday* (Durban) April 1999

In a brilliant career which has seen him dominate local and world stages, it is doubtful whether Pieter-Dirk Uys has been in more caustic, yet hilarious form than in his current show. The master satirist has penned a classic, which cuts through every sinew of prejudice and preconception you may still have had – or still horde in the mind. Uys's razor-sharp wit and unpalatable truths hit home as hard as ever

– *Daily News* (Durban) April 1999

New depth and dimension in Uys's work. The pieces are startlingly evocative. They show there are dimensions to this man you might not have dreamt of. Go see him work. He is very much the master of his profession

– *Sunday Tribune* (Durban) April 1999

Daar is 'n uiters geslaagde spel met swart komedie en daar is ook 'n afgerondheid waar die gewaagde semantiese spel met taboe-woorde uitstekend saamgevat word, en 'n verrassende dimensie bykry wat aan die tragiese, en selfs skok, grens.

Dekaffirnated bly by jou en lank ook. Dit is 'n vyfster-

produksie

– *Tempo* (Durban) April 1999

With *Dekaffirnated*, the amiable and intelligent Uys, as usual, comes armed with a battery of satire and sarcasm, offering a load of acute observations and lightning switches between languages, accents, sexes and characters, real, exaggerated or imagined. This seasoned playwright and performer keeps his customers more than satisfied, constantly impressing with his charm, versatility and impeccable comic timing

– *The Mercury* (Durban) April 1999

Pieter-Dirk Uys has never been one to shy away from issues people prefer to ignore. Instead of wishing this away, he faces them head-on. Yet the style in which he presents his satire makes his work appealing to a wide cross-section of people. Uys is a powerhouse of talent. His satire is sharp and his stagecraft practiced and smooth. His ability to keep the audience in the palm of his hand is uncanny

– *The Citizen* (Johannesburg) May 1999

Pieter-Dirk Uys is a satirist, so he can turn words and meanings to his own benefit in order to gain laughter. He has a marvellous licence to speak in a manner that is not only politically and emotionally incorrect, but to revel in it. *Dekaffirmated*: coffee with a dash of freedom

– *The Star* (Johannesburg) May 1999

We have in Pieter-Dirk Uys a satirist who registers our crunch moments. He captures perfectly the blend of naivety, courage and self-deception that once sent us wandering down this cul-de-sac. He explores the clash of entrenched mind-sets and the glorious resilience of forgiving souls. While dissecting the anatomy of a nation and the individual, he searches for the painfully random event that defines our psyche. Throughout, Uys is a wordspritzer, constantly challenging his aesthetic range. As he analyses the alienation effect with aerial shots of the appetites and egos of ordinary folk, he has the quiet cool of passions contained. He is enormously intelligent company

– *Business Day* (Johannesburg) May 1999

Dekaffirmated is Uys op sy skerpste. Dit is 'n satiries-ironiese reis was niemand maklik van hom of haar sal kan afskud nie. Vertroel dit as 'n mylpaal van ruim 1,800 demokratiese dae in 'n nuwe Suid-Afrika wat reeds afgelê is. Uys slaag daarin

om deur die vars perspektief, lewe in die geskiedenis te blaas. Jy verkneukel jou aan die nuwe begrip wat dit met hom meebring – *Beeld* (Johannesburg) Junie 1999

Dekaffirnated is a tour de force of Afrocentric South Africanisms. Playing on all our fears and eccentricities, Pieter-Dirk Uys even went so far as to try and allay our fears with regards to the elections – *Bedfordview Times* (Johannesburg) June 1999

In *Dekaffirnated* deel hy so tussen in, sy hou-vir-hou politieke kommetaar hou van sy eie uit. En baie van hulle is laag, of sommer so in die tande. In sy sketse weerspieël Uys nie net die diepgaanse kennis van Suid-Afrika se mense met hul sterk en swak eienskappe nie, maar ook 'n seldsame begrip vir die ganse mensdom. Dis nie net Uys se toneelspel en mensekennis wat jou weereens opval nie, maar ook sy vernuf met taalspel en semantiek – *Rapport* (Johannesburg) Junie 1999

Dekaffirnated is often achingly funny. Using his right to say what he wants and damn the consequences, he cuts through cloaks of smugness and selfishness to expose something simultaneously painful, poignant and pathetic. Scathing and sharp by turns, he twists the blade. Sometimes he trims away the flesh of a dead past, liberating his listeners with laughter. But he also cuts through the thick skin, getting almost too close to the bone and the heart for any kind of comfort – *Cue* (Grahamstown Arts Festival) July 1999

Hoef 'n mens nog te sê: Pieter-Dirk Uys is inderdaad genial. Met 'n vlymskerp verstand en ekspressiewe lyf, lewer hy al dekades lank bytende en dikwels skreeusnaakse kommentaar op die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing. Tot sy krediet bestee Uys

heelwat tyd in *Dekaffirnated* om die grens tussen werklikheid en fiksie te beklemtoon deur afwisselend as homself en as sy karakters op te tree. Dit laat jou wonder: miskien moet Uys nou uitvoer wat hy (heel korrek) verkondig – dat Suid-Afrika 'n groot swart land met 'n klein wit soom is – en baie minder tyd aan die minderhede bestee

– *Die Burger* (Kaapstad) Oktober 1999

The nitty-gritty of his new revue is that he neatly counterbalances a mordant commentary on the not-always universal joys of true democracy with the not-always comfortable changes it has brought. The humour is wry, sometimes biting, other times searing. In *Dekaffirnated* Uys seeks to defuse the offensive effect of the K-word. It will take some doing, given our rough political history, but there can be no harm in tackling the attempt with wry humour

– *The Cape Argus* (Cape Town) October 1999

Uys is doing absolutely swimmingly, his craft having kept pace with South Africa's passage to democracy. Fearless as always, his new targets are the disturbing tendency to political correctness, the whingeing of white liberals and myth of real democracy. From start to finish and title included, *Dekaffirnated* sees Uys take his audience on a hilarious tour of these darker reaches of the national psyche. As always, Uys is utterly convincing in his character sketches. It's his sheer hopefulness that gets to you. There is work to be done and with much fun and laughter, because we have been sad for so long...

– *The Cape Times* (Cape Town) October 1999

At the Tricycle Theatre, London NW6

South Africa satirist Pieter Dirk Uys returns with a completely new and completely politically incorrect look at the state of the Rainbow Nation. Plenty thought his brand of satire might become redundant in post-apartheid South Africa, but his ability to cut through bigotry and to say what others think but dare not voice, stood him in good stead

– *The Guardian* (London) July 1999

Uys is still dangerous and he, and Evita, still matter because he still knows where to look. And ‘when satire runs out of targets, look in the mirror,’ he says. ‘When the jokes run out, there’s always the truth’

– *Metro Life* (London) July 1999

Uys injects real politics into the laddish cosy world of stand-up comedy. And you learn a lot about his uneasily developing country in two hours of satirical delight

– *Daily Mail* (London) July 1999

It is in his mercilessly accurate dissections of both the die-hard nationalists and mealy-mouthed white liberals that he is his sharpest. Uys is a funny man and *Dekaffirnated* is a very funny show

– *Sunday Business* (London) July 1999

It’s only by watching Pieter-Dirk Uys that one begins to realise what we have lost in the UK. What you take away from *Dekaffirnated*, quite apart from having been entertained by a brilliant impressionist-cum-satirist-cum drag artist, is his

stamina, enthusiasm and commitment to democracy, his unfettered, unconditional embracing of the messy, violent, trials-and-tribulations-experience that is the new South Africa. He seems to relish it. 'For every negative' he says 'there are three positives.' The man is an inspiration
– *Jewish Chronicle* (London) July 1999

By turns hilarious, poignant and downright uncomfortable, *Dekaffirnated* takes all the negativity that seems to portray South Africa and turns it into something positive. After all, there has to be hope as long as we can laugh at ourselves
– *UK South Africa Times* (London) July 1999

Taking the word 'kaffir', Uys attacks both racism and political correctness. He even goes so far as having a gollywog on stage, either to remind us or to rub our faces in it. He presents a grotesque view of apartheid and black suppression, and the difference it has made since South Africa's recent election of a new president. There can be no doubting Uys's sincerity when he proffers such *bon mots* as 'The British taught us that hypocrisy is the Vaseline of political intercourse', and that 'Mickey Mouse cartoons are the only black things we can laugh at on TV.'
– *What's On* (London) July 1999

Devastating; nor is our own system spared! Uys always does his homework. Any aspiring political comedians should camp outside the box office and bring a notebook and pen
– *Evening Standard* (London) July 1999

Pieter-Dirk Uys likes to remind us that South Africa is a country that has been given a second chance. Still a wonderful performer, Uys has mellowed.
– *The Sunday Times* (London) August 1999

When apartheid came to an end, many predicted that Uys's satirical darts would be blunted. Sadly, the new political set-up has presented him with nearly as many sitting targets as the old. In the character sketches of various South Africans that comprise the show, Uys demonstrates the frequent absurdity of politics. Like all the best political comedians, he deftly intermingles light and shade, finding humour in subjects where by rights there shouldn't be any. Satire is alive and well and living in South Africa!

– *The Independent* (London) July 1999

Apartheid can be a laughing matter when ticked by Pieter-Dirk Uys's *toyi-toying* tongue. Some cultural bullets probably missed British targets, but the optimism certainly hit home. There is hope for South Africa, especially with people like Uys around.

– *Camden New Journal* (London) July 1999

Oh PDU, we so need you here! Dissecting the good, the bad and the downright evil, *Dekaffirnated* is a reminder of how far we have to go to build our own rainbow coalition. PDU's satire is right on target and just as lethal, even after all these years

– *Glasgow Herald* (London) July 1999

It's from Uys's stories of his (election trek) adventure that I found his latest one-man show sprang to most vivid life.

– *What's On* (London) August 1999



SIR IAN McKELLEN ON...

PIETER-DIRK UYS'S DEKAFFIRMATED

HOT TICKETS 16 - 22 JULY

If you want to discover the funny truth about the new South Africa, then Pieter-Dirk Uys is your man – and his alter ego, Evita Bezuidenhout, your woman, of course. With wit, love and a little savagery (plus many disguises), Pieter-Dirk Uys is jester at the ANC Court, although in his show *ANC stands for A Nice Cheque*.

Never one to shy away from issues other people choose to ignore, you can see and feel people cringe at some of the things he pinpoints, toying (or toyi-toying) with one sacred cow after another as he moves about his fascinating characters. Each beautifully

realised – from the pot-bellied Afrikaaner to the witchdoctor to the aged Russian Jewish “con-tesa” to ex-President Mandela. The characters are as familiar as Table Mountain. He makes you laugh till you cry, he makes you squirm as unpalatable truths hit home and he blinds you with sheer intelligence.

His latest foray into the absurdities and paradoxes of the South African experience is called *Dekaffirmated*. He has never been sharper. We are blessed to have him back at the Tricycle. **Hil-**arity guaranteed.

**Pieter-Dirk Uys's
Dekaffirmated,
opens Mon 19 Jul,
Tricycle Theatre,
Kilburn High Road,
NW6 (0171-328
1000).**



Shock & Awe coming from Gandalf!
Ian McKellen column in *Evening Standard*

Amsterdam, Beusichem, Den Haag in Holland

Politiek incorrect. Pieter-Dirk Uys blijft een aparte verschijning. Maar in zijn nieuwe voorstelling *Dekaffirmated* is ook plaats voor luchtige onthullingen. Zo illustreert Uys hoe amusant het is om illusies letterlijk en figuurlijk te ontmantelen. Desondanks kan deze Zuid-Afrikaanse cabaretier nog altijd boeiend vertellen en wemelen zijn verhalen van venijnige adders onder het gras

– *Het Parool* (Amsterdam) September 1999

Uys is een sympathiek verteller, die verhalen meer dan dragelijk maakt door te strooien met kleine, maar zeer veelzeggende grapjes. Maar op zijn sterkst vind ik hem nog steeds als hij in compacte monologen de uiteenlopende stemmen van zijn landgenoten vertolkt. Uys is en blijft een begenadigd typeur. Voor een Europees publiek, dat na Mandela de belangstelling voor het land een beetje heeft verloren, heeft *Dekaffirmated* ook een bijpraat-functie. Er is nog meer dan genoeg over te vertellen. Zeker door Pieter-Dirk Uys, die bewijst dat hij zijn onderwerp nog lang niet kwijt is. Voor hem lijkt het nu pas echt te beginnen

– *NRC Handelsblad* (Amsterdam) September 1999

Uys heeft de handdoek niet in de ring gegoooid. Hij is absoluut niet blind voor de manco's van de Zuid-Afrikaanse democratie, en hij spaart de nieuwe leiders niet. Maar hij vindt dat je niet kunt verwachten dat een kind van vier al volwassen is. De voorstelling is vrij sober en daardoor een zeer indrukwekkend verslag. In de dagen van de apartheid waren zijn vijanden duidelijk zichtbaar. Nu moet hij intensiever en met al zijn zintuigen zoeken. Dat levert fascinerende resultaten op, want 'de apartheid is dood, maar het lijk stinkt noch.'

– *De Volkskrant* (Amsterdam) September 1999



Evita with the Madam & Eve creative team



MADAM & EVE

BY S FRANCIS, H DUGMORE & RICO

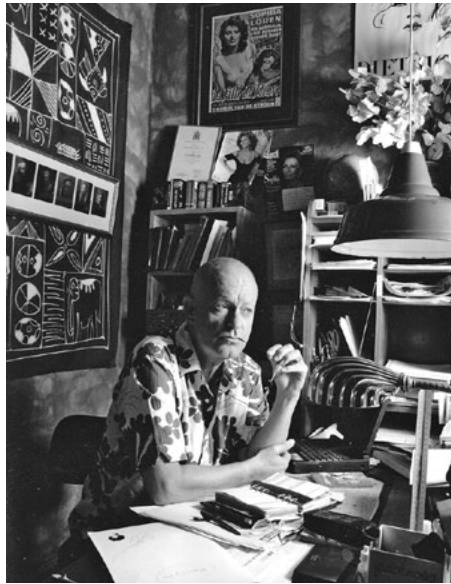


MADAM & EVE

BY S FRANCIS, H DUGMORE & RICO



LOOKING AHEAD



PDU at his desk

It is a new century: the 21st.

There is a new president in South Africa: Thabo Mbeki.

Nelson Mandela is retired.

HIV/AIDS is now endemic in South Africa.

South Africa as a democracy is nearly six years old.

This volume has focused on the 'mock' in democracy. We now enter the African Renaissance of President Thabo Mbeki and will confront the 'con' in reconciliation.

Watch this space.

The Argus, Monday September 28 1992

CURRENT AFFAIRS

A play for today

"ADOLF Hitler, you are
guilty of the cold-blooded
murder of six million Jews!"

"Nein! It was politically motivated!"

"Oh, well, that's different.
Sorry. Next?"

PIETER-DIRK UYS

Pinelands